

Board of Parole Proceedings
ATTN: Pre-Processing CORRESPONDENCE
P.O. Box 4036 Sacramento, CA 95812-4036

Subject: Inmate Raul Higgins P29949

Prison: California State Prison – San Quentin
Parole Hearing Date: May 30th, 2019 8:30am

My name is Melissa the oldest daughter of Carolyn. There is not a day that goes by that I don't think about my beautiful mother. I miss her everyday. Mother's Day just past which makes it worse, but honestly I miss her everyday. When I am in the kitchen and I have no idea what to cook for dinner. When I'm at my sewing machine and I keep making mistakes. When I drive my kid to school and I want to call and say good morning. When my toddler is screaming and acting out I want to call and ask what I should do. When I am trying to remember the past I know she would be able to fill in the blanks. Raul Higgins is a curse to our family and I will tell you why.

I saw my mom three days before she was murdered. My brother Tim and I had driven up from Santa Barbara, where we lived, for a two day birthday celebration of Stephen and Megan birthdays, which are a day apart. I remember my mom was so happy to have all her children under her roof after years of separation. Here are the pictures to prove it which were taken those days. (will present three pictures) This is the last memory of our mom which is a faded memory having been so long ago now. When we all gathered for Stephen's and Megan's birthday party the inmate just shows up out of the blue. This shocked all of us. There was no mention from our mom that he was invited or that he was coming over.

I had only seen the inmate once before in the summer of 1998. My Mom, Stephen, Megan, Joseph and I, went to the Farmers Market to see some live music. We were sitting in the grass watching my little seven year old sister dance in circles with her little cute face painted. Then I noticed my mom talking to someone softly next to her, but not really looking at him. I noticed she was trying to keep him at a distance. She didn't introduce me to this man. He got up and walked away soon after. I asked her, "Who was that, Mom?" She said, "Nobody. Just someone I know," and avoided him all together.

So when he showed up uninvited to the birthday party, I could see that my brother Joseph instantly became unhappy. Joseph had repeatedly told my mom that he didn't ever want to see Raul in the house yet here he was. Joseph was 16 at the time. I asked him what was up with this guy and all he could say was the guy is a creep and that he didn't like him at all. That's when I learned that Raul and my mom had been in a relationship, but it had ended a while ago. I didn't think much of it because my mom didn't give him the time of day. None of us did. We all thought it was weird that he showed up in a silver suit with brand new bikes. Who was this guy?

I had no idea how evil the man was who lingered in our house that night. If I would have known all the details leading up to the worst day of my life, you better believe there is no way I would have let my mom date this guy! And she of would listened. Just like she asked me when I was 16 if she should divorce my father. And I told her yes and she packed all four of her children up while she was pregnant with the fifth. Her children were the most important thing in

her life. She fought tooth and nail in court to protect my younger siblings from a violent, emotionally and physically abusive alcoholic father - my dad. That day, while we were hanging out on my brother and sister's birthday - all of us together - there was no Raul in our life. Three days later, my mother would be dead. Looking back I believe that Raul was triggered by all of her children being under one roof for the first time in a long time. Raul saw how happy Carolyn was without him. Raul saw that something good and beautiful was taking place. Our family was becoming whole again. Our family was entering a new chapter in life. Raul saw the love that he would never be able to have from my mom.

This inmate continued to harass my mom for weeks if not months after she attempted to break it off. He couldn't take the word NO. She said NO. A woman asserting herself. I can hear her saying it now. NO, get out, leave me alone. Stay away from my children. Stay away from Joseph. I don't want to lose him. You are driving him away. NO Raul. NO! And with that he grabbed her and forced death upon her destroying our family. With no regard whatsoever to all of us sitting here before you. Not even to his OWN child. He had a plan to kill himself! Who would help to raise his child? If it was so important for him to have my mother help fill out custody papers on that fateful day as the inmate has previously stated, how could he completely disregard that and attempt to commit suicide? What damage has he already done psychologically to his child Isaiah.

Raul said at the last hearing that he used the choking behavior in previous relationships. This inmate is dangerous!!!! Please I cannot tell you enough how much we all fear this man. This inmate is in a controlled environment and is lucky for him so as to not endanger and hurt innocent, good-hearted people ever again.

The murder of my mom was a shock wave throughout my entire family, a tsunami that came over us and drowned us in fear. A tornado that left us without a home to go to only to drive by and see it sectioned off by yellow crime tape. A hurricane that left us in a puddle of tears. I can not describe the amount of psychological pain this has had on us. There were earthquakes that happened a few days after the murder and according to the US geological survey it was a 5.1, 4.6, 3.4, and a 3.1. My whole life living in Redding not once did I experience an earthquake. When I felt these earthquakes I was in a hotel with all my siblings and extended family members trying to figure out what to do next. Little did I know that life would get even more tragic with losing any type of visitation with my siblings for years after. Robin and Tim spent roughly 50,000 dollars trying to get visitation. Robin Bolger expresses the details about that in her statement. I ask the commissioners to please let her read her statement. As strange as those earthquakes were, we took them as signs from our mom. She was angry, so angry that she would never ever see her children again and what they have become. And I will not go into those details because Raul doesn't deserve to know what has become of us. Raul Higgins took my guiding light. He took the only mom I will ever have who taught me how to love and nurture and take care of myself. He took away so much knowledge and guidance. He took away my foundation, my roots, my childhood. He robbed me of things I wish I could ask my mom every day!

And now it is twenty plus years later and the angry feelings, the tumultuous emotions, the fear, the loss is exactly the same I felt when Diane Weltch who sits with us today, called me to tell me the fate of my mom. The trauma does not go away. And through these years, time has

not healed me, time has not made me normal, time has not made me happy. He changed the course of my life without me having any choice of my own. He made me a victim taking my dignity away. He made me turn into a survivor. I have never had the money to get myself therapy. Who can afford lifetime therapy! This is embarrassing to have to say this in front of you, in front him, and in front of my family. I feel shame around my mother's death. I am jealous of other people and their relationships with their mothers. I don't know how to reach out. People don't know how to reach in with such a gruesome event. No one ever asks. I wish people would ask, so I could talk about it. I long for a normal relationship with a mother figure. But I'll never have it. My mom was always in the kitchen cooking something wonderful. God I miss my mother's cooking. My little boy misses out on knowing a true caretaker, a devoted mother, a loving and protective mother. So protective that it cost her her life.

If this inmate got out, it would be devastating to all of us. It would cause havoc inside our minds that are already so scarred by this inmate. The power of us being here today, the power that we all bring to this table to fight for justice together in hopes that we keep this man behind bars. Raul took another life, a planned attack on my mom, her children and her family. Raul didn't just hurt one person. He has hurt many.

How can this man with any conscious walk into a family's house on numerous occasions and sit at the table, eat my moms cooking, sleep on her couch, even sleeping next to her! What sick minded person would drive my brother and sister to school, then come back and kill the mother of those same children with his bare hands? A power hungry, unstable parasite. Raul used my mother in every way - financially, sexually, and emotionally. When she said "No" he retaliated by killing. A killer once. A killer always. When he drove Megan and Stephen to school he said he would never see them again. He planned on murdering Carolyn. He knew very well what he was going to do. Kill my mom and then kill himself. Just like he said he wanted to die. The little man doesn't care about life. He attempted suicide three times!! And all of them were because he did something guilty!! He did something violent! And then he just runs to suicide because he can't handle what he's done!

Do you not think that is someone who is unstable and psychotic!? No regard for himself, no regard for a mother of five!!!!!! He takes a bunch of pills and "just wanted to pass out, crash into anything and kill himself." I wonder what happened to the man you almost killed on that highway. I wonder if he is crippled because of you. At the last parole hearing the commissioner asked "do you believe you paid for your crimes? He said, "No. I can never, there's never enough amount of time that one can do to pay for a murder of life of a human being." If he truly accepts this then he should accept his life sentence and stop asking for parole and live the rest of his life in prison with other people like him. Murderers belong behind bars. Period. Let us be at peace knowing this inmate is left behind bars for good. And I'm glad he didn't get away with death. "Because death is just forgetting. Being forgotten because no one cares about you not even yourself. If we forget where we've been and what we've done we're not men and women anymore. Were just animals." Raul is a prisoner for a reason. And that reason should not be undone. Please do not forget what he has done. We did not come here today to hear you erase his crime. He must stay in prison to remember every day that he took a women, a mother, a friend, a sister, an aunt, and a grandmother's life and to remember what the last image of my mom was on this earth. Raul is a master at "normalizing his wrong doings" I wonder how he

normalizes the sound of a dying women. Raul will always have the memory of a dying women that he choked to death. This memory has impacted all of us. Because of him we all get to visualize this disgusting act that was perpetrated on our Mom. It saddens me deeply that my brother Joseph's last memory of her is finding her dead with black and blue marks and blood. Memories forever clouded by this cruel and horrendous crime. A flashback we always have to relive. My family will never be complete because our mom is missing. I hope you're listening to us Raul. Our beloved mother is speaking through us. Carolyn would never want you to be free.

Please hold back parole indefinitely. We would not be able to deal with that situation. Thank you for your time and consideration.