

June 3<sup>rd</sup> 2007

Amelia Garrison

Honorable Judge Elden Fox  
West District Courthouse of Beverly Hills  
9355 Burton Way  
Beverly Hills, CA. 90210

Dear Judge Fox,

My name is Amelia Garrison and this is probably the most difficult letter that I have ever had to write in my life. I never imagined I would have to do this for someone who has always been there for me in times of great need. Lane is my older brother and the person that I know better than anyone. Growing up together, Lane and I faced constant adversity in an extremely dysfunctional environment. We never really had parents your Honor, the only parent I ever really knew was my brother. My mother, Lisa, as far back as I can remember, was always in the hospital sick, which left me with my abusive alcoholic father, Lee. I would have to come home to him passed out with a bottle of Vodka in his hand, or to him cussing at Lane and I, or to him screaming on the phone at my mother who was still in the hospital. The only person that could protect and comfort me during these rage filled tirades was Lane. But being constantly subjected to this torment, my brother couldn't handle it any longer so he packed a bag and quickly left, reassuring me that he would be back soon to get me.

Without my one refuge, I grew extremely depressed and I decided that the only way to stop the pain and the misery was to try and take my own life. So I downed my mother's medication and overdosed on pills at age 10. I was rushed to the hospital where they pumped my stomach and sent me to a treatment program at Children's Hospital in Dallas. There, my brother found time in between school, sports, work and bouncing from home to home to sit in numerous counseling sessions with me and encourage me to keep fighting. I guess in looking back, the only thing that was preventing me from really following through with it was knowing how devastated my brother would be if he lost the only thing that mattered to him. The beginning of my 5<sup>th</sup> grade year Lane had no other choice for the sake of me but to contact Child Protection Services and have me removed from the home. The State then placed me in an orphanage for months while my brother, who was only 17, fought my parents in court to try and get custody of me. My brother, was deemed too young and my mother was deemed to incompetent to take care of me. So I ended up living with my grandparents for 90 days. Shortly after that, my mother, in coercion with my grandfather, disobeyed the State and took me back to live with her in a broken down home complete with no plumbing. I was stuck in hellish living conditions and too young to know what to do. I needed the one person I trusted and looked up to for strength, Lane. But my mother would keep me from ever being able to see him in fear that she would be reported to CPS again, which she should've been.

In a reverse of parent to child, Lane was strong enough to pick up the phone one

more time and apologize to my mother for all of the problems, even though he had done no wrong. He did this not for his or her sake, but for mine. He knew that this would be the only way to check in on me and really be able to make a difference in my life.

Soon after that, my mother grew very ill and I found her nearly lifeless body in the shambled living room. I had to call 911 and administer CPR at only the age of 14. The doctors were able to save her life but she had severe brain damage and would never know who we were again. She would stay in Intensive Care for months and then go on to Assisted Living. With Lane pursuing his dream in California and my father still constantly drunk, I was taken away by my mother's sister, Aunt Lynette. Swamped in her work and not wanting to deal with another child, she sent me off to Montverde Academy Boarding School in Florida. I would call my brother as much as possible and say to him, "Please come get me out of here, I want to come live with you!" He would always make sure I understood that every dream he was endlessly working for was not just for him but for us. He promised me that he was going to make it so that I could live with him in Los Angeles and we could finally have a better life. I knew he wasn't lying but I had nobody at school to turn to, no one that would understand the hurt and devastation I was going through.

Unable to pay the tuition any longer, my aunt decided to send me back to Dallas to live with my mother's other sister, Aunt Marilyn while my father tried to get back on his feet. Eventually he did and he rented a cramped two bedroom apartment where he said I would be home schooled. But before I knew it, home school turned into no school. My dad would go out of town for weeks with the Power Conversion company he was working for. While my 8<sup>th</sup> grade friends were worrying about what to wear for their boyfriends the next day to school, I was left to worry about taking care of myself and paying the bills for my absent father. Lane would always send what money he could and walk me through everything over the phone. I could tell it was driving him crazy inside that he couldn't fully take care of me.

Then the morning of New Years Eve 2000 came and my father received a phone call saying that my mother's kidneys were failing and that she was seconds away from death. I was staying at a friends house and arrived at the hospital to find my family, with my brother who was in town, in the Emergency Room. It was too late, she was gone and the doctors let Lane and I go in and say goodbye to her one last time. We walked in the still room and looked at the woman who had always been sick, who had not always been the best mother to us and cried tears of anger and sorrow. I fell on the ground sobbing as my brother kissed her feet and wished her peace and joy. He then picked me off the ground and looked me in the eyes to reassure me we would get through this together as we had always gotten through everything else. He made sure I understood that I would never be alone and that he was always there no matter what or how far away he was. Even during this, Lane was being a parent and he had to be there not just for me but for our father as well. That is the kind of strength that lies within him your Honor, that's the real Lane.

Shortly after that, my brother had to return to Los Angeles to continue his work. The thought of having to leave me was horrifying but he knew he had to in order to help me in the future. A few months went by when I overheard my father telling my uncle that he had cancer and it had gone untreated for a year. I was so hurt to hear the words, "I do not want my children knowing I am sick." A year would go by where I would watch my father everyday and night in so much pain. Lane sent me to Los Angeles to stay with him while

my father had surgery to remove the cancer. Unfortunately my father lied to Lane and I and said he was all better but it was far from the truth. The cancer was terminal and he didn't tell us. With Lane going away to shoot an independent film, I went back home and on July 20<sup>th</sup> 2004 I woke up to find that my dad unconscious on the outdoor patio. Once again I had to call 911 and perform CPR as I waited for the paramedics to confirm that he was dead. My brother quickly jumped on a plane and rushed to my aide. Not only did he have to help plan another funeral but in the mere four days he was home he changed my life for good. He helped me get my license by teaching me to drive, he bought me a car and he got my life organized. All of the things our parents were supposed to have done, he did. He ended up paying for the remaining portion of our apartment until the lease was up.

Lane returned home to work on his dream in film and it was finally starting to happen for him after years of struggling. A few months later, just like he promised, I got the call I had been waiting for. Lane said that he and his writing partner sold a script and he would have enough money to move me to Los Angeles. That was the happiest I had felt in so long, I knew I would finally be safe. When I arrived here he gave me money to live on while I got situated, made sure I had food and clothes, introduced me to people so that I would have friends and made sure that I was getting emotionally strong for this extremely tough and cut-throat town. But most importantly, Lane helped me get a job working for his producer Sunil Perkash at Walt Disney Studios in Burbank. It has been an amazing job opportunity considering the lack of education I have. I am the youngest employee at the studio in my position. Most are 26 to 30 years old with degrees from Harvard, Yale, Brown, Stanford and the elite ivy schools. I could not have done any of this without my brother. He has given me an unbelievable opportunity and shown me that with hard work I can accomplish anything. I tell you all of this because Lane is all I have left. He is my strength in every sense of the word and it will be difficult for me if he is sent away for a long time. I know that the family of the young boy is going through something so beyond words. I also know that feeling better than anyone, and so does my brother. After he found out that someone had died he was despondent and near suicidal. It is the only time I have ever seen him be so weak. But it's because he loves people and would not want to harm anyone, even someone who dislikes him. Lane knows he has to pay a consequence for his mistake and that is why he is taking full responsibility. He knows that by doing this he can go on to help influence countless others to not make the same mistake. I am sorry for taking up so much of your time but I just wanted you to see the person my brother is and the amazing joy he brings to my life and to others.

Sincerely from my heart,

Amelia Garrison

Lane Garrison

June 11, 2007

Honorable Judge Elden Fox  
West District Courthouse  
9355 Burton Way  
Beverly Hills, CA. 90210

Dear Judge Fox,

My soul aches knowing that my juvenile behavior that night has caused the Setians to lose their only son. To them, I am ashamed and eternally sorry. My heart breaks for the suffering they are forced to endure because of my atrocious actions. If I could, I would apologize to them personally, but since I cannot, I will instead do everything in my power to try to reach out to both young people and adults to convince them not to drink and drive. More than anything, I wish Mr. And Mrs. Setian could have their son back.

Having lost both of my parents in recent years, I am familiar with the death of loved ones, but can only try to understand what the Setians are going through... As a child, you expect your parents to die before you, and although it is intensely painful, you know that it is inevitable. To have it happen the other way around, to be a parent and to have to face the death of your child, is the saddest thing I can imagine.

Since the morning of December 3<sup>rd</sup>, when I woke up in a real life nightmare, there has not been a single day that has gone by that I don't see that young man's face or I don't think of all the bad decisions that led me up to the accident. Those decisions and choices have affected many lives and many families and will haunt me for the rest of my life.

It makes me sick to my core to know that I am responsible for the pain that comes with losing a loved one... I am extremely remorseful for my mistake and pray that you can give me a second chance to live with integrity and use whatever influence I may have to persuade others not make the same mistake that I have made.

I'm praying to God that somehow they can find it in their heart to one day forgive me. I'm praying that taking full responsibility can somehow ease some of their pain. I'm praying that this can be a wake up call for many people, young and old. I'm praying that the Setians and I can somehow unite to spread a powerful message using Vahagn's name to save many. And last but not least, I'm praying that you, Your Honor, can see my true character, heart and who I really am, not the character I portrayed on tv or who the media has deemed I am. I'm hoping that you can see an extremely remorseful and grieving young man, who recognizes what horrible, inexcusable mistakes he made that night. I'm praying that you can give me a second chance to live with integrity and use the gifts and the platform I've been graciously given to influence others to not make the same mistakes.

No matter your punishment, I thank you for being an honorable man and judging me fairly.

Sincerely,

Lane Garrison

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