

Dear Judge Boardman,
I would like to begin by apologizing to Justice [REDACTED] and his family. I put them through a harrowing experience and for that I am truly sorry. I am very glad I did not continue. I am also sorry for contributing to a trend of political violence in American politics. I can now see how destructive and misguided such acts are, and am ashamed not to have recognized these things sooner.

I and people who know me well do not think this is representative of who I am, so I would like to briefly explain what I believe my real character is. I was raised by conservative Christian parents who loved me and still love me. They raised me to focus on spiritual and moral values as opposed to wealth or fame. I was taught that everyone was equal, everyone should be allowed forgiveness, and to love others as I love my self. These are views I still hold today and motivate me to help people when I can.

I was also a Boy Scout, which gave me many opportunities to engage with nature as well as serve the community. I attained

the highest rank, Eagle, before my 18th birthday. This involved learning many skills, being a leader within the troop, and organizing a community service project.

I was an honors student in both high school and college. I have a love of learning, and had been accepted to a Masters program for philosophy before covid shut it down.

College was when I began to be politically conscious. After leaving Christianity, my views began to drift from those of my conservative parents. I began to understand that politics weren't just in the news or history books, it has a significant impact on real people. I gained a bigger appreciation for how difficult life was for many people and a desire to help. However, we have little control as individuals.

I would like to ^{explain} how mental illness played a part in my actions. First, I would like to make it clear that I don't believe mental illness excuses what I did. Nothing excuses the actions I took. However, had I not been actively suicidal, the idea of

committing an act of violence would never have occurred to me. I had my first suicide attempt in freshman year of college. I went to therapy weekly for 5 years after that. I also took medication and found both to be helpful over time, my psychiatrist lowered my dosage. Then in 2020, covid hit and I didn't want to do therapy virtually. Later that year, I began to question my gender identity. I told my sister but stayed in the closet to my parents due to their conservative views. So when 2021 came around, I was still in the closet and had not been taking medicine or going to therapy for two years. When the draft leaked my self esteem was at rock bottom along with my hope for the future. I had started to plan suicide before the leak, so when it happened I was deluded into thinking this was a way I could make significant change before killing myself. Once I actually arrived in his neighborhood my whole perspective shifted. I had become so focused on the effects policy has on people that I forgot the judges and politicians making policy are real people too. That became immediately clear to

me and I wanted to leave. In this moment I reconnected to my true self, the person my parents raised. I realized how far I had let myself slip.

I've spent 3 years thinking about that night and where I went wrong. I have gained a much clearer idea of who I am and what I want. I am taking multiple mental health medications along with my hormones. I am out to my entire family now and they have been very accepting. I now recognize my need to attend therapy and plan to do so for the rest of my life. While there are many things in the world I am still upset about, I now recognize that violence (political or otherwise) is not the solution. The thought that my actions may have inspired anyone else to act violently disgusts me and makes me feel extremely ashamed. When I get home I will pursue peaceful, legal means of improving my community on whatever scale. Maybe I can even use this experience to help others and even prevent someone from following in my footsteps.

All I want is to go home to my friends and family and see what good I can do out in the world. Please, for their sake as much as mine, give me the chance to be the best version of myself. Thank you for reading.

Sincerely,
Josephine Roske