

Statement of victim's sister at 10

My name is (redacted) and I'm here to tell you how Steff's actions hurt me.

I thought because I wasn't beat and because I was allowed to eat, that Steff loved me, but that is not the truth.

Every day I watched her do horrible things to my sister, like miss out on every holiday for no reason, sleep next to Steff naked in a freezing room and never be allowed to play outside with me or my brother like a normal kid.

Watching all of this hurt and confused me. She had to stay inside and write 800-word essays every day while I was allowed to play. By Steff doing this, I missed out every day on having a good relationship with my sister. I feel like our bond was broken and we weren't allowed to be sisters.

Not only did Steff hit (my sister), she made me hit her too. This really confused me because I never saw (my sister) do anything wrong. Every day at Steff's house my heart hurt because I never wanted to hit (my sister) with a metal spatula, but I was afraid if I didn't follow Steff's rules, I would get hit too.

I have the best therapist who tells me every session that what I did is not wrong and it took me a long time to believe that. You were supposed to take care of and protect us, but you didn't. You hurt us all in different ways.

Even though I wasn't hit as much as (my sister), the mean things you did brought a lot of pain to my life. I am so upset that you lied to me about being my mom. By you doing that, it has made it hard for me to trust the people who I know care about me.

My relationship with my real mom is hard because of you. Why did you keep me away from my real mom who cares about me? She has shown me what real love is but you never did that. Your love was not real because if it was, you never would have hurt us.

Because of you, I have had to work with my therapist to understand why you would bang my sister's head on the wall until she passed out and then bribe her with a peanut butter sandwich to try to wake her back up. And even with help, I still don't understand a lot of the mean things you did.

Sometimes I cry when a memory comes into my mind.

Me and my siblings are a lot stronger now and I will always love my siblings. Nobody will ever hurt us the way you did.