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The Justice Coalition's

Victims' Advocate

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Laura Messina Story...

from page one

into trouble again, she would divorce him – and she did. He wrote letters with veiled threats that she took to court seeking an injunction against him, but the judge turned her down because the threats weren't explicit enough. Eve suggested Laura seek help through the Betty Griffin House, and their attorney accompanied her to court. She got her restraining order, along with a protective device from the police and their direct telephone number to call for help.

It was only at this time that her family and friends realized the danger she was in. They all begged her to stay with them or go to the shelter, but she refused. She wasn't going to let her deadbeat ex-husband run her out of her own home. Her son James was working and living at home with her, and she felt sure she would be all right.

Jimmy Robinson was released from prison, but

within a day or two was arrested for driving a moped without a license. The police officer told Laura that because he violated the provisions of his parole, Robinson would be sent to prison for five years; instead he was released during the night and never made an appearance in court. Four days later, he stole an old .38 caliber revolver from a friend, went to his ex-wife's house and killed her in cold blood.

James and his girl friend had left the house briefly that evening for a quick trip to the store and came home to find his mother dead in the bathroom, where she had apparently tried to hide from her murderer. Covered in blood, Jimmy Robinson ran from the house and tried to get several people in nearby houses to give him a ride. He was barefoot, apparently having thrown his shoes (and gun, which was never found)

into nearby swampland. He then tried to hijack a van about a mile from the crime scene, but was soon apprehended by police. He is now serving a sentence of life without parole.

A beautiful life cut short

Eve mourns every day for her beloved, talented daughter – a young woman who had so much to give and gave willingly to everyone. She baked and specially decorated birthday cakes for each family member; she grew flowers, cared for pets, made beautiful needlework items cherished by everyone in her family; she earned a black belt (awarded posthumously) in Tai Kwan Do and taught the martial art to young students at FSDB.

Eve wonders every day: Why would someone want to take the life of this beautiful, vibrant young woman? Can anyone tell her why?

Can anyone tell me why?

(An open letter from Laura Messina's mother)

There's nothing now that I can do to help my daughter – nothing! I should have protected her. I should have known that there was a **monster** hurting her, causing her misery, and finally destroying her!

That monster was her husband, the **man** that had promised to love, honor, and **cherish** her. And she did **nothing** to deserve harm. She was a woman, a mother, a child of God. She deserved to be protected by the man she married, not to need protection from him.

Men are physically stronger, more muscled than women for a reason – so they can work to provide for the women and children in their family and protect them from harm. No so they can lord it over the smaller, weaker people...not so they can hurt them and cause them suffering.

Talk about "Happy Holidays" – that's a laugh! My family will never have another happy time, never! Any good thing that happens in our family is tainted by the **extreme** hurt that we have suffered.

Talk about **healing**; that's a laugh. This is a hurt that will **never** heal. Our hearts are **broken**; they cannot grow back together. We are devastated. That does not heal!

Why is it necessary for us and other families of victims to suffer this way? Why do men continue to feel free to hurt women in this modern age? There is absolutely no excuse! They know better. They have to **stop!** They **must stop!**

We shouldn't be expected to live this way. We are expected to live, work, be responsible citizens, be normal. How? How can we do it? We are broken! Can you hear me?

When Laura's life was viciously stolen, our family was irrevocably damaged. We are damaged and will never be anywhere near the same. We miss Laura. One part of the whole is missing. We are now incomplete.

For no good reason!

What was the reason? That after 22 years Laura wanted the pain to stop? Is that it? Didn't she deserve some peace in her life? Yes! She did. She was good. Who can find one negative thing to say about her? No one.

She did everything in her power to help her husband as long as she could. But it was not appreciated; it was not valued. She was not valued and that really hurts me because my daughter was an extremely valuable and worthwhile human being.

She was 5'1" tall and weighed 100 pounds. Did she deserve to be shot four times with a 38?? Her little body was torn apart inside.

My baby.

My whole family has been hurt! None of us will ever be the same. We are always aware of the hole and damage in our small group. We have a small family and could not afford to lose one, but we did and the suffering never stops!

It is an outrage! One low-life alcoholic excuse for a human being caused this damage. Why? I don't know. But now he is living on the taxpayers' money, able to lounge all day watching TV, going to the library, using the computer, attending group meetings, going to the exercise room or outdoors, having all meals prepared and served, receiving complete medical and dental care, haircuts, laundry – all provided with no effort from him.

This is exactly what he always wanted. He never held a job. The Social Security Administration can confirm that. He has no redeeming qualities, yet he felt free to take the life of a beautiful, loving young woman, a worthwhile person.

Why? That is my question. It is directed to the men in my community. Why are there men who must hurt and kill women? Do you know? Can you tell me? If you can, please do tell me. If you don't know, please help me to find out.

And not only that, please help to **stop it!** It has gone on much too long. **It must be stopped!**

Please tell me what to do to prevent any more women from being hurt. Please tell me how to prevent any more women from having their **very lives** stolen from them. My daughter should be here now for this holy season with her son, her sister and brother, her aunt and uncle, and with me. Then, we could have happy holidays again.

— Eve Simpson, December 2004