



Every year I receive a letter letting me know they wait for me to die

By Mark Gerald, on death row in Florida, 2011

The crime occurred early 1989, and each year, since my coming to the row I receive a letter around that date.

From one, sometimes two family members, basically letting me know they hate me and can't wait for me to die.

It is painful and makes me sad, not because they say how they feel, but because I was part of something that caused them to feel this way. I wish I could remove that shadow from their lives. I pray that they will find a measure of peace.

I have never told any attorney, never shown one to anybody. I do not keep them, though I once kept one for several years, as a motivational tool. It is painful, but I view pain as a tool, occasionally it is the best of tools.

Now I do not need it, so I just check the letter to see if it is hateful and throw it away.

What can I tell you, I would not write something critical, I am unable to say they are wrong for being angry.

When I think of it, I want to take their side, I want to defend them, because I am responsible for their loss, their pain, and therefore their hatred. If not for my actions, they would have no cause to hate. That being said, I am not a proponent of hate, not an advocate for hostility. I do not believe hate can accomplish positive things, but still we find reasons to hate.

What right do I have to expect forgiveness from my victim's family? What if only my execution will bring them relief? Even if I believe such feelings are more harmful than helpful, what right do I have to tell them how to feel?