

Next to speak was Pamela's son Mario Vitale, 31. His voice was very strong and filled the courtroom. He said he got the worst phone call of his life on October 15, 2005, when Daniel Horowitz called him from the back of a squad car and described a nightmare – Pamela was dead. "Blood everywhere, dead, dead. Not sick, but dead and gone." Then Mario experienced the second worse phone call of his life. He called his sister Marissa and told her "Mom is dead." The Vitale children tried to book the next flight out of Los Angeles. They could not. So Mario and Marissa immediately drove the long night through from Los Angeles to Lafayette, California.

Mario then addressed Dyleski to his face, "For long days I have been agonizing. You cut a symbol in Mom's back. You killed a woman who had every right to live. She would have helped you. She was the quintessential humanitarian. She would have bent backward to help you. But you snuffed her. She will not see her kids get married or see her grandchildren or the fruits of her labor, her dream house. She never had a house of her own. This has been horrible for my grandparents, for her not to come back – her laugh, her huge smile. Scott, you robbed us of a mother, a daughter, a wife."

Then Mario addressed the question "why". He said, "I don't know exactly why you did what you did." Suddenly Mario's anger seemed to sink, and he spoke softly with compassion. Perhaps the spirit of his mother was on his lips. He said to Dyleski, "We have a lot in common. We were both raised by a single mother. We wanted to go to music recording school. We were considered weird when we were growing up. Now I have a music recording job. But somewhere you got lost. Plenty of others had living circumstances worse than yours and did not become murderers."

Mario addressed the judge, "Scott Dyleski is now asking for leniency. But the time for leniency is when he pleaded and said he didn't do it. He wanted to get away with it. Now he wants mercy. He should be given the maximum. Now Scott feels this is inconsistent with his character – he played on the Frisbee team and was well-liked."

Mario turned to Dyleski, "No, you went the way of Ted Bundy and Scott Peterson and John Wayne Gacy and you killed a woman out of greed and malice. Then there's Scott Dyleski, loved by Frisbee coaches and art teachers alike. You messed up. You made your bed; lie in it! This is not a crime of passion, or self-defense. You had no reason to hate her. Yet you beat and stabbed her to death. Your carving a symbol in her back is despicable. You only felt self preservation. You took her life."

Mario addressed the judge and asked that Dyleski be sentenced to life without the possibility of parole.

Why? Mario could not believe a woman as wonderful as his mother was killed by someone whom she could easily have helped. Throughout his speech, Mario waited for Scott to break down – to cry -- to even bow his head in shame. He did not. He maintained the same expressionless mask – his own face. Mario mentioned that Dyleski could have pleaded guilty and sought leniency. Dyleski did not react. For Mario, the question – why did his good mother have to die at the hands of this merciless 16-year-old killer – would not be answered. Dyleski

would admit nothing, not even to obtain leniency. Nor would he protest that he was innocent.