

**Vanessa A. Mansson
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April 9, 2002

Justice Tina Nadeau
Strafford County Superior Court
Dover, New Hampshire

Re: State of New Hampshire vs. Chad Evans

Dear Judge Nadeau:

To start this letter by saying I am writing on behalf of Chad Evans would not be totally accurate. To say that I am writing a letter on behalf of myself would be more so.

As selfish as I may seem, I am writing to tell you of the reasons why I need Chad in my life and how this beautiful, imperfect person has and continues to touch my life, everyday.

The year was 1976 when I first met Chad. As a four-year old child I had no idea what an influence and a true friend he would be to me.

During the trial, I stated in your Courtroom that Tuesdays were a special day for me. Chad's father owned a rubbish removal business and Tuesday was trash pick up day. I would wait by the window those mornings because I knew Chad would be on the "route" with his dad. Although at that time we rarely had opportunity to speak to one another, I would still wait for his happy wave and his goofy smile.

Chad and I attended Kindergarten together that next year. Unknown to me until many years later, Chad named a cow from his grandparent's farm, Vanessa. To some, that may not seem like flattery. However, I have had the pleasure over the years to know how important Chad's family is to him. Anything that is important to his family is even more so to him. Farming is one of his grandparent's greatest achievements, therefore, it was of utmost importance to him. In the Evans family to have a cow named after you was an honor. Just as having Chad as a friend is an honor, a gift.

During our elementary school years Chad and I went to different schools and did not have the opportunity to see one another very often.

In junior high school (6th-8th grade) we attended the same school. During that time period Chad and my social groups were different, but we were good friends and had a special bond.

It was not until our first year of high school that Chad and I realized the depth our friendship.

On November 16, 1986, a very dear friend of ours shot and killed himself. Upsetting at any age, for a fifteen and fourteen year old it was devastating. Chad and I did not learn of Regan's death until we got to school. I remember Monday, November 17, 1986 as if it were yesterday. I remember seeing Chad and his father near the main entrance to school. Chad's father was there to bring Chad home and my mom was there to bring me home. We both were sobbing uncontrollably, trying to make sense of the information we had just learned of and through Chad's own grief and sorrow he was able to say to me, "It's going to be okay Vanessa, TOGETHER we'll get through this." Together...

Since that very moment it became clear to me that Chad is the type of person who would always put others first. He is the type of person who gives 100 percent of himself in every situation. He believes that no matter the hand life has dealt you, you deserve more and he is always the one to go the distance for you.

I think of myself as more of a realist than Chad. Perhaps pessimist would be the more appropriate term. A person needs to show me why I should believe in them. Chad is such that he believes in you until you convince him why he should not. Convincing him is not an easy task.

I do not trust easily, Chad sees no reason not to trust.

I have a difficult time sharing my feelings and experiences. Part of the reason for that difficulty is I am afraid those feelings won't be mine any longer and that sharing would leave me vulnerable. Composing this letter has not been easy for me. To share with you the powerful impact Chad has had on my life, and the special reasons Chad is my friend is scary because I fear that I will somehow lose the special intimacy that my best friend Chad and I have

It was not until March 13, 1987 did I fully comprehend what Chad Evans meant to me or how important he would and continues to be in my life. March 13, 1987 I attempted to end my life by ingesting an overdose of medication. As I sat there, alone, waiting to die, Chad's words kept ringing in my head, "It's going to be okay Vanessa, TOGETHER we'll get through this." I found I did not want to die, I thought to myself, if I die who will be Chad's "together". I could not abandon him. He would never abandon me. I do not believe Chad even knows he saved my life that night.

There have been other times since then that Chad has saved me.

In 1988 I was the victim of a date rape. One of our school's football players was the perpetrator.

Never had I seen Chad as angry as he was when I finally broke down and told him what happened.

I wanted that boy to suffer, to hurt emotionally and physically, the way I was hurting. Knowing how angry Chad was I asked him to seek revenge for me, Chad would not. He told me it would not make my hurt go away.

At a time when it made me vomit to have anyone touch me, Chad would hold me for hours. He let me cry, he let me hit, he let me yell, more importantly he helped me believe that there was good in this world and that this was not my fault.

Chad and I had an ongoing joke in high school. He was not to date anyone without my approval and I was not to date anyone without his. We both stunk at choosing partners. Anyway, Chad started dating a girl he worked with at McDonald's. I told him "NO WAY". He relentlessly tried to convince me she was a nice girl. I told him nice girls don't slap their boyfriends and call them names. I thought she was crazy. Chad, I believe, felt sorry for her and wanted to give her everything she didn't have. It certainly was not a secret that I did not approve and I stood by, waiting for the next time she would hurt him so I could try to make things better.

It was during one of his many break ups with that girl (they dated on and off throughout high school) that Chad and I became romantically involved.

He was a great boyfriend, always there for me. He brought me the sweetest gifts-nothing fancy-but always from the heart.

I tend to be a "button pusher" and was constantly pushing Chad's buttons. Never was he physically, verbally or emotionally abusive to me nor was he ever controlling or manipulative. He was a great friend and love and I have always used the excuse that he was too much like a brother to continue an intimate relationship. I have always felt Chad has so much to offer people and as much as I care about him and want to protect him from being hurt, I knew there would be so many others that needed to feel his magic and love.

No matter how far apart we lived from one another or how hectic our lives became, he has always been just a phone call away from me.

In all the choices I have made in my life my thought process started with "what would Chad do in this situation."

I lived in California when I was first married and my son was born. The first person I sought out when I visited New Hampshire was Chad. The same was true when I lived in New Jersey and my daughter was born. I could think of no one else with whom I wanted to share those joyful moments with.

I left my husband in 1995 and moved to New Hampshire with my children. Chad was my rock.

Unfortunately, due to work schedules and my trying to care for my kids alone, we did not communicate as often as we would have liked.

Chad called me one Thursday night and said he was getting married that weekend and that he and fiancé were expecting a child.

If you could bottle the excitement in Chad's voice when he told me he was going to have a baby, it would be a top seller!

Shortly after his son Kyle was born, Chad brought him to my house. I will never forget the joy and pride on that man's face when he arrived. I remember he told me that caring for a child is like nothing he had ever felt before. He explained to me about the "little things" in life that used to annoy him, seemed to no longer matter. He spoke of how beautiful the innocence of a child is.

That day while Kyle slept, Chad played endlessly with my children. I remember watching him, he was so at ease, so comfortable, so gentle and such a positive influence. My children constantly ask when can they play with Chad again.

It is as though all the love and kindness Chad has within him could finally be put to good use, caring for children. Making a difference.

Over the years Chad is the only person besides my family that I have trusted to care for my children. He never belittles their opinions or ideas. He always has encouraged them to be the best they can and has been there for them when they couldn't quite reach the top, just as he has been for me.

To say I owe Chad my life is an understatement. He believed in me when I could not believe in myself. He kept me talking on the phone for hours about absolutely nothing so he would be sure I was safe. He put his life on hold countless times because I, or the "geeky" kid without any friends or the complete stranger needed someone to pay attention. Many of the people Chad has helped have not been lifelong friends, many he had never met before, he helped because it was the right thing to do. Chad has never expected or asked for anything in return. Chad has more love to offer than anyone I have ever known.

Whether I feel the verdict was right or wrong does not matter now. Whether I feel some of the choices Chad has made were right or wrong does not matter now. What does matter now is this beautiful man deserves a second chance.

We have all suffered a great deal over the past 17 months. None more so than Chad. He has lost his son, his family, his home, his job, his girlfriend Amanda and their precious daughter Kassidy. I say "their daughter" not by mistake. Chad offered his home to Amanda and Kassidy so he could give that little girl a chance at a good life. He loved Kassidy as though she was his own. He was raising her as though she was his own. Chad bathed her, fed her, clothed her and cared for her. He provided Kassidy with the stability Kassidy's teen mother could not. None of these things were done because he wanted something in return, they were done because he has a heart of gold. Amazingly, through all of the horrific events of the past 17 months, Chad still has faith in people. He still has a heart of gold and continues to touch the lives of many with his caring ways.

I need Chad in my life, everyday. His son needs him in his life everyday. Please, find it in your heart to allow Chad to make a difference in so many lives, he has so much to offer this sad world.

Thank you for your time. I wish you could have had the opportunity to meet Chad under different circumstances. He truly is a gift from God.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Vanessa A. Mansson". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Vanessa A. Mansson