

*MONOLOGUE #1 (DENNIS SHEPARD)*

My son Matthew did not look like a winner. He was rather uncoordinated and wore braces from the age of thirteen until the day he died. However, in his all too brief life he proved that he was a winner. On October 6, 1998 my son tried to show the world that he could win again. On October 12, 1998 my first born son and my hero, lost. On October 12, 1998 my first born son and my hero, died, fifty days before his twenty-second birthday. I keep wondering the same thing that I did when I first saw him in the hospital. What would he have become. How could he have changed his piece of the world to make it better? Matt's beating, hospitalization and funeral focused worldwide attention on hate. Good is coming out of evil. People have said enough is enough. I miss my son, but I am proud to be able to say that he is my son. Judy has been quoted as being against the death penalty. It has been stated that Matt was against the death penalty. Both of these statements are wrong. Matt believed that there were crimes and incidents that justified the death penalty. I too believe in the death penalty. I would like nothing better than to see you die Mr. McKinney. However this is the time to begin the healing process. To show mercy to someone who refused to show any mercy. Mr. McKinney, I am going to grant you life, as hard as it is for me to do so, because of Matthew. Every time you celebrate Christmas, a birthday, the Fourth of July, remember that Matt isn't. Every time you wake up in your prison cell remember that you had the opportunity and the ability to stop your actions that night. You robbed me of something very precious and I will never forgive you for that. Mr. McKinney I give you life in the memory of one who no longer lives. May you have a long life and may you thank Matthew every day for it.