

Victim Impact Statement Scenario

Christie and Jack Reed were excited about going on their long-planned vacation with their two kids. They arranged for their neighbor's 14-year-old son Mike to pick up their mail, water their yard, and keep an eye on the place,

After a restful week at the shore, the Reeds returned home tanned and relaxed. Their kids, Betsy and Jack Jr., were excited about meeting up with their friends to tell them about their holiday. When they drove into their garage, Jack immediately noticed that the rack that usually held the family bikes was completely empty. Jack Jr. started crying. Jack and Christie's hearts sank. "We've been robbed," Jack said quietly.

When Jack ran to the house to call the police, he determined that there had been no forced entry. Yet another shock greeted him. He and Christie walked into their living room, which was trashed. Their stereo and television were missing. Every drawer had been dumped on the floor, their contents scattered across the room. Each room in the house was the same. Christie's lingerie drawers were askew; the jewelry she kept hidden there, including several family heirlooms, were no longer there. Betsy's huge collection of Beanie Babies was missing. Jack Jr.'s computer was gone.

Jack called the police, and then called their neighbor Mike. Mike came over with his mom, and appeared shocked as well. He said the last time he checked the house was Friday; then, "no," he said, "it was yesterday. Everything was fine." The more Jack questioned Mike, the fewer details the teenager was able to get straight. Mike's mom asked him if he was telling all he knew.

When the police arrived, Mike burst into tears. He confessed that he had told his two 17-year-old buddies, Joseph and Billy, about the empty house, and they persuaded him to leave the back door unlocked. When the police confronted Mike's two friends, they quickly admitted their involvement in the burglary. The police were able to recover all the stolen property except for a diamond bracelet that had belonged to Christie's mother and Betsy's Beanie Babies.

Mike had no delinquent record. Joseph had a long history of drug offenses, larceny and burglary, and was currently on probation (and Joseph said "there'll be hell to pay if I end up in jail!"). Billy's record appeared clean, but in reality, he had completed a juvenile diversion program following a larceny and his record was expunged. The prosecutor told the Reeds that a plea bargain was the best bet, but wanted to make sure the Reeds had input for all three cases through a victim impact statement from the Reeds.