

## **Impact statement from Brooke Hanson:**

When I was told I could write an impact statement and read it out to the court today I panicked. I thought, how am I going to write a statement that everyone will be able to understand. How can anyone feel how I am feeling? I will try my hardest to explain to you how my brother's murder has affected me.

On the night of the 11th of October 2015 (11/10/2015) my life changed forever. My younger brother Josh was taken from us in a totally unprovoked attack.

Josh was not just my brother he was my best friend. The hardest thing to do is to explain my pain and heartache since losing Josh because I shared a very special 21 years of my life with him and the memories that I have I will cherish forever. But memories are not enough.

Every morning I wake up feeling deflated and lost. I used to feel free, happy, and complete when Josh was here with us. The saying you don't know what you have until it's gone is not true for me because I knew what I had. I had an amazing life with an amazing family, myself Josh and mum and that is all I could of ever asked for.

I have lost myself, I don't know who I am and I don't like the life that has been given to me without a say. I am left without a brother and I am now an only child. I struggle with anxiety and PTSD and I am scared to walk down the road most days as I have flashbacks of what happened to Josh as I have a fear that it is going to happen to me. Normal everyday chores are a struggle for me. I have had a very limited life since losing Josh and I know I will suffer with anxiety, grief, and PTSD for the rest of my life.

I would never of thought at the age of 25 I would go to sleep having a brother and be woken to be told that he had been murdered. I spoke to my brother 4 hours before his life was taken in the most horrific way. We said we loved one another and wished each other goodnight.

My job was to love and protect my brother until we were old. Every day and night I ask myself the question, what if I was there would I of been able to have saved my brother, protect him from the evil that took him away from us.

Josh was the most purest soul and he had such a bright future ahead of him and as his big sister I was so proud of the man he was. His smile was infectious, and his laugh was addictive, his presence was magical, and he was one of a kind.

Josh was so popular, he had so many groups of friends, from school, college, work and the gym. He touched so many hearts and he touched mine from the minute he was born. My brother was supposed to live a long, healthy, happy life. I am so hurt and angry with what has happened.

Josh has had so much taken from him. His life, his family, his friends, his job, holidays, his future, maybe marriage and children, and so much more.

I struggle daily trying to process my emotions, and deal with my grief. The thought of living the rest of my life without my brother by my side physically hurts me. We did so much together, and I adored/adore him.

Walking in to court to hear the plea was a heart breaking experience. Hearing a not guilty plea has added even more stress and anxiety. Knowing that there will be a trial has left me feeling very emotional and lost and I know that it is going to add so many more mixed emotions to my PTSD and my grief.

I hold my emotions close to my chest because saying them out loud feels like I am accepting he is never coming home.