

A Mother's Story

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Have you ever wished that another person were dead?

This mother did. Read the story and find out:

Why did she want a man to die?

My heart jumped with joy when he was dead. I knew then, when the electricity was sent into that man's body, that I would finally have peace.

Am I a monster? Am I thirsty for blood? Do I get excited when people are killed? No, no, no! I am not a monster. I am a mother whose 18-year-old son was killed during a robbery.

Before Wang was killed, I had not thought much about capital punishment. Maybe I thought it was wrong. After all, killing someone who has killed someone else really doesn't help much. The other person is still dead, and killing the murderer just adds to the violence.

But that all changed when my only son was killed. It happened five years ago. Wang was working at a grocery store. He had just finished high school and was going to go to a good university in a month. He

was working to earn money to help pay for his education.

Two men entered the store. They told my son to take all the money from the cash registers and put it in a bag. He did this. Then they ordered Wang to open the safe. Wang told them that he did not have the key. One of the men had a gun and threatened to shoot Wang. My son pleaded with him and told him that only the owner had the key. The gunman then shot him five times in the face and heart. My son died instantly.

Both robbers were captured. The one who shot my son was sentenced to death in the electric chair. I asked to see him die. I wanted to be there. I needed to be there. My son's death had to be repaid.

So I watched when they strapped him in. I saw him begging for his life. Good, I thought, beg all you can. You must die for what you did.

I think about capital punishment often now. Killing is wrong. But if you kill, you should pay with your own life. It's the only way we can stop all the violence.



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Which opinions do you agree with?
Check as many as you want.

If you kill someone, you have to die, too. That is your punishment. The only exception to capital punishment is self-defense.



People who kill are crazy, insane. No one in his right mind would kill another person. That's why I think murderers should be put in mental hospitals.



Capital punishment is wrong. We should never kill anyone, no matter how terrible the crime.



Capital punishment is necessary. It helps prevent murder.



Life in prison is the right sentence for a murderer.



Now exchange your ideas with a classmate.

TURN TO PAGE 89 FOR AN INTERACTION TIP.

LOOKING AT THE ISSUE

In which situations do you think it is OK to use the death penalty?

- Criminal A kidnapped and killed a young child.
- Criminal B set fire to a house, and the fire killed three people and injured many others.
- Criminal C broke into a house, killed the two residents, and stole their money.
- Criminal D went into a school yard and fired a machine gun, killing many schoolchildren.
- Criminal E set a bomb to explode in an office building, killing many people.
- Criminal F raped and killed several women.
- Criminal G had her husband killed so that she would receive a large sum of insurance money.
- The death penalty should never be used in any situation.