

These are three of twelve erasure poems I crafted out of the original notes I took at my mother's criminal trial. I scanned pictures of the notebook onto my iPad, and by combining my note-taking skills as a journalist and my ability to craft poetry, I was able to mix these two mediums and create erasure poems that perfectly capture the emotion in the courtroom. In the case of Angel Sawyer against the state of North Carolina, there were many emotional turmoils I had to overcome, and I used poetry as a way to juggle my own thoughts as I sat in the courtroom and watched my mother get sentenced to life in prison by twelve strangers.

-Mikaela Kesinger

IN the court room
no words
express
the court room
where
the saga continues.
stomach in throat
-everyone too close
to be impartial.
The cop brought
in the
family while pointing out
he "doesn't
know that girl
-unquenchable
silence

[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted] don't recognize her. [redacted]
[redacted] I decide I [redacted] will
never [redacted] again [redacted]
[redacted] breathe [redacted] - [redacted] scared [redacted]
[redacted] - I guess [redacted]
[redacted] to live.
[redacted] mom [redacted] isn't ok
[redacted] fucking endless beeping [redacted]
[redacted] - DING-DING-
[redacted] DING! - I could [redacted]
[redacted] stop [redacted]
- crying [redacted] - [redacted] the beeping would
continue [redacted] [redacted]
[redacted] dissociate [redacted], my throat swells]
- once I'm done [redacted]
I should do [redacted] poetry [redacted]

[redacted] barely [redacted]
[redacted] a UNANIMOUS
[redacted] death [redacted]
[redacted] ^{CLASS A}
[redacted]: guilty
[redacted] conspiracy: guilty ^{CLASS B2}
- jaw clenched as [redacted]
[redacted] the judge
- [redacted] asked [redacted]
[redacted] each juror seperately
↳ [redacted] 12 times
- " [redacted] your verdict?" "yes"
" [redacted] still [redacted]?" "yes"
- [redacted] powerful repetition [redacted]
[redacted] to see poetry in real life
[redacted] part of me died by juror 8
- how will I stand? [redacted]
- [redacted]