

## **An open letter to Alejandra and Lorena Lara:**

Alejandra, you know that you do not remember the face of your attacker, even telling your boyfriend, Mitchell, that you can't put it back together, that you're trying to throw the memory away. You never got a good look at your attacker's face, and even if you did, it's unbelievable that nearly two years later you claim that you can recognize him and that now you're claim you recognize Mark as your attacker.

Lorena, you picked out Mark's attorney, who is a light skinned black at the June 22, 2007, hearing. Before you entered the court room the prosecutor had coached you who to pick out "as light skinned", and you did. Only it wasn't Mark, it was one of his attorneys, Cary Lackey. When you were previously shown a photo lineup of suspects before the trial, you shook your head and told the detective "I can't remember." And yet, now you claim you can. Your nerve is unbelievable.

Now you are accepting money from the State. I know it's been cloaked as a safety issue, and you relocated, but Alejandra did not and evidently feels safe enough to stay. I understand \$1,100.00 a month for one year is hard to walk away from. After all, the State is only asking you to testify against Mark. In other words, you're being paid for your testimony. Do you not think that if I offered to testify against Mark the state would pay me money as well for "safety." But since I refuse to lie about an innocent man there has been no offer of payment.

And Alejandra, you picked out FOUR DIFFERENT MEN, not once picking Mark's picture in these numerous photo lineup. Even though you were given the chances again and again, you NEVER picked Mark's picture out. Now you come to court and try to convince us you recognized Mark as your attacker.

Both of you claim you can now recognize your attacker and you falsely point your fingers at Mark. Neither of you can recall the face of your attacker since it was dark, you were told to look at the ground, your focus was on the gun, and the sheer stress and trauma. Why is it that you would make such an accusation when you both know in your hearts that you can't pick out your attacker, much less Mark? - an innocent man who had nothing to do with what happened to you.

You've both allowed yourselves to be coached and persuaded by overzealous prosecutors who want nothing more than a conviction of somebody. It was only after Susanne Cohen, the prosecutor, visited you both at your home June 2006 and coached you into saying Mark looks like your attacker since you had NEVER done this before, not even after his face was splashed all over TV. Neither of you had even said to each other or to other family members "that's him!" You couldn't even pick Mark out of a photo line up the day of his arrest.

The prosecutor convinced you that Mark's DNA is a match, when in fact Mark's DNA only matches three genetic markers out of 13 - a far cry from a DNA match. The DNA does not put Mark at the scene of the crime. Guilt or innocence doesn't matter to the prosecutors, only a notch in their belt of convictions. Why you both would allow yourselves to be so mislead and gamble ruining the life of an innocent person is beyond me. Mark was a happy, hard working, caring person who loved live and lived it to its fullest. He did not harm you.

It's ok to say you can't remember. People would understand that. You don't know who attacked you and you will never be able to recognize him. What you two are doing to Mark is no less of a crime than what happened to you. What you are doing is ultimately between you and God.