

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Louisville, Kentucky 40219

November 21, 2014

Dear Ms. Hayden

I am writing you to say a special thanks for what you were able to do for me earlier this year. A simple thanks is not enough. Let me explain. As you learned, after fate - or luck - brought you into my life. I am an ex-offender. I did something really dumb and I paid the price with incarceration. A most unpleasant experience. One I would not wish on anyone. But I did the crime and paid with time, as they say.

However. And this is where you come in. After my release, my life remained complicated. An ex-offender when applying for a job is first and foremost, an "ex-offender". The stigma stays with you. The jobs you are offered are not always the best. I took a job, and am thankful to have it. It is good honest work - and it is hard work. As you might expect it does not pay a high wage, but it is fair. Because of some rules as to taxes, I did not totally understand, I was responsible for a great amount of debt. Between this debt and back payments for child support, after a week's work, my take home pay was barely enough for food. I was lucky to have housing with my loving, aging parents.

Because of the above predicament I was drowning. I couldn't swim fast enough to stay afloat. I was slipping under and feeling desperate. When desperate you begin to think stupid thoughts. You begin to grasp at any limb hanging in the water. I was at this point. And then in my darkest hours - you happened. A light at the end of the tunnel. A way out. A new chance at survival. A new chance to get on with my life. A new chance to say to my parents, "it's going to be OK. - I'm going to make it now". A new chance to look people in the eye and not feel they are judging me for only that brief time in my life when I was stupid. A new chance to be a man in the eyes of my child. A new chance to just be me. Not me the ex-con.

You allowed all of this to become reality.

I bet that you work your butt off up there. I would also bet that most people you know are not really sure what you do on a day to day basis. You can tell them that you help the State collect the revenue owed by people. Which is why you go to work every day. But now you can tell them, "*on occasion I save lives*".

With more appreciation than you will ever know, respectively,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
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