

To whom it may concern,

My name is Madison Tandberg. I am SSG Robert Bales' niece, and to me, he is Uncle Bob. I first met my uncle at his wedding reception held at my house in 2005. I was six years old, and while bits and pieces of this memory have become distant, I remember clearly how much I loved him instantly. His personality was friendly and open and I was drawn to him quickly. I also remember the wedding cake. I have no idea what this cake looked like or tasted like. However, I do remember what this cake looked like on my aunts face. Following a traditional wedding tradition, my aunt and uncle were doing the put cake in the other persons mouth. Most newly-weds are nice and put the piece of cake sweetly in the other persons mouth. Not my uncle. He grabbed his cake and it went straight to my aunts awaiting mouth, and she got a large white colored surprise that did not make it into the mouth. I remember clearly the grin he had from ear to ear as my aunt stood there with her mouth wide open and covered in frosting, and of course, lacking cake. All night long, my aunt tried and tried to get him back for this cake flavored attack, but Uncle Bob was quick and escaped the assailment. When I look back on this memory, it always makes me happy, and can put a smile on my face, which was something that Uncle Bob was always able to accomplish. Now, flash forward a few years, I am maybe 8 years old. Maybe. Uncle Bob is again at my house for a get together of some sort. I am not sure what for, but he was at my home. He was walking in our backyard next to the pool, and all of a sudden, my older brother pushes Uncle Bob right into the pool. *kaplunk* Shoes, jeans, wallet, phone, and all. What incited this behavior from my brother? I have no clue. But this was great. My uncle came up from the water and is just laughing his butt off. He was proud of his nephew and what he had accomplished. Now of course, this swim was not going to come free for my brother. Later in the day, Uncle Bob picked him right up off the ground and launched him into the water to take a dip of his own with my brother laughing all the way in. Remember now, my brother and I are still kids, so this created the new game we called, "Do it again Uncle Bob! Throw us in!" Uncle Bob was doing this until he couldn't pick us up anymore. With how much my brother and I were loving every minute of this game, Uncle Bob was enjoying playing with us and seeing us happy in his company. Even what Uncle Bob was not with us, he made all of our family feel loved. During the many tours Uncle Bob did in Iraq and his last one in Afghanistan, he called us as many times as he could to keep us with our ever-changing lives and always said how much he loved us. In our family, Christmas was a holiday spent with the family. When Uncle Bob was unable to be there with us, he was there on the telephone talking to each of us individually to make sure we all felt the love. Every time he missed a family occasion, he always told us that the next year would be all the better when he could be there to celebrate, and we treated those as so. I love my uncle more than I can put into words, but I hope that these few stories, which are only a fraction of the number there are, can show you my love for him. I am proud to call him my Uncle Bob. As you consider clemency, please look at my uncle as a whole. I have spent much time thinking about my uncle and all the things he has had to overcome as a person throughout his lifetime, and I hope that you will too. My uncle has been nothing but a great influence on all the people he has met since I have known him, and I hope that you will take all of this into account.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Madison Tandberg