

"They are navy blue," I told him. "Your school's dress code says black or khaki pants only."

"They told me I could wear these," he insisted. "You're a stupid bitch. I can wear whatever pants I want to. This is America. I have rights!"

"You can't wear whatever pants you want to," I said, my tone affable, reasonable. "And you definitely cannot call me a stupid bitch. You're grounded from electronics for the rest of the day. Now get in the car, and I will take you to school."

I live with a son who is mentally ill. I love my son. But he terrifies me.

A few weeks ago, Michael pulled a knife and threatened to kill me and then himself after I asked him to return his overdue library books. His 7 and 9 year old siblings knew the safety plan—they ran to the car and locked the doors before I even asked them to. I managed to get the knife from Michael, then methodically collected all the sharp objects in the house into a single Tupperware container that now travels with me. Through it all, he continued to scream insults at me and threaten to kill or hurt me.

That conflict ended with three burly police officers and a paramedic wrestling my son onto a gurney for an expensive ambulance ride to the local emergency room. The mental hospital didn't have any beds that day, and Michael calmed down nicely in the ER, so they sent us home with a prescription for Zyprexa and a follow-up visit with a local pediatric psychiatrist.

We still don't know what's wrong with Michael. Autism spectrum, ADHD, Oppositional Defiant or Intermittent Explosive Disorder have all been tossed around at various meetings with probation officers and social workers and counselors and teachers and school administrators. He's been on a slew of antipsychotic and mood altering pharmaceuticals, a Russian novel of behavioral plans. Nothing seems to work.

At the start of seventh grade, Michael was accepted to an accelerated program for highly gifted math and science students. His IQ is off the charts. When he's in a good mood, he will gladly bend your ear on subjects ranging from Greek mythology to the differences between Einsteinian and Newtonian physics to Doctor Who. He's in a good mood most of the time. But when he's not, watch out. And it's impossible to predict what will set him off.

Several weeks into his new junior high school, Michael began exhibiting increasingly odd and threatening behaviors at school. We decided to transfer him to the district's most restrictive behavioral program, a contained school environment where children who can't function in normal classrooms can access their right to free public babysitting from 7:30-1:50 Monday through Friday until they turn 18.

The morning of the pants incident, Michael continued to argue with me on the drive. He would occasionally apologize and seem remorseful. Right before we turned into his school parking lot, he said, "Look, Mom, I'm really sorry. Can I have video games back today?"

"No way," I told him. "You cannot act the way you acted this morning and think you can get your electronic privileges back that quickly."

His face turned cold, and his eyes were full of calculated rage. "Then I'm going to kill myself," he said. "I'm going to jump out of this car right now and kill myself."

That was it. After the knife incident, I told him that if he ever said those words again, I would take him straight to the mental hospital, no ifs, ands, or buts. I did not respond, except to pull the car into the opposite lane, turning left instead of right.

"Where are you taking me?" he said, suddenly worried. "Where are we going?"

"You know where we are going," I replied. "No! You can't do that to me! You're sending me to hell! You're sending me straight to hell!"

I pulled up in front of the hospital, frantically waiting for one of the clinicians who happened to be standing outside. "Call the police," I said. "Hurry."

Michael was in a full-blown fit by then, screaming and hitting. I hugged him close so he couldn't escape from the car. He bit me several times and repeatedly jabbed his elbows into my rib cage. I'm still stronger than he is, but I won't be for much longer.

The police came quickly and carried my son screaming and kicking into the bowels of the hospital. I started to shake, and tears filled my eyes as I filled out the paperwork—"Were there any difficulties with... at what age did your child... were there any problems with... has your child ever experienced... does your child have..."

At least we have health insurance now. I recently accepted a position with a local college, giving up my freelance career because when you have a kid like this, you need benefits. You'll do anything for benefits. No individual insurance plan will cover this kind of thing.

For days, my son insisted that I was lying—that I made the whole thing up so that I could get rid of him. The first day, when I called to check up on him, he said, "I hate you. And I'm going to get my revenge as soon as I get out of here."

By day three, he was my calm, sweet boy again, all apologies and promises to get better. I've heard those promises for years. I don't believe them anymore.

On the intake form, under the question, "What are your expectations for treatment?" I wrote, "I need help."

And I do. This problem is too big for me to handle on my own. Sometimes there are no good options. So you just pray for grace and trust that in hindsight, it will all make sense.

I am sharing this story because I am Adam Lanza's mother. I am Dylan Klebold's and Eric Harris's mother. I am James Holmes's mother. I am Jared Loughner's mother. I am Seung-Hui Cho's mother. And these boys—and their mothers—need help. In the wake of another horrific national tragedy, it's easy to talk about guns. But it's time to talk about mental illness.

According to Mother Jones, since 1982, 61 mass murders involving firearms have occurred throughout the country. Of these, 43 of the killers were white males, and only one was a woman. Mother Jones focused on whether the killers obtained their guns legally (most did). But this highly visible sign of mental illness should lead us to consider how many people in the U.S. live in fear, like I do.

When I asked my son's social worker about my options, he said that the only thing I could do was to get Michael charged with a crime. "If he's back in the system, they'll create a paper trail," he said. "That's the only way you're ever going to get anything done. No one will pay attention to you unless you've got charges."

I don't believe my son belongs in jail. The chaotic environment exacerbates Michael's sensitivity to sensory stimuli and doesn't deal with the underlying pathology. But it seems like the United States is using prison as the solution of choice for mentally ill people. According to Human Rights Watch, the number of mentally ill inmates in U.S. prisons quadrupled from 2000 to 2006, and it continues to rise—in fact, the rate of inmate mental illness is five times greater (56 percent) than in the non-incarcerated population.

With state-run treatment centers and hospitals shuttered, prison is now the last resort for the mentally ill—Rikers Island, the LA County Jail and Cook County Jail in Illinois housed the nation's largest treatment centers in 2011.

No one wants to send a 13-year old genius who loves Harry Potter and his snuggle animal collection to jail. But our society, with its stigma on mental illness and its broken healthcare system, does not provide us with other options. Then another tortured soul shoots up a fast food restaurant. A mall. A kindergarten classroom. And we wring our hands and say, "Something must be done."

I agree that something must be done. It's time for a meaningful, nation-wide conversation about mental health. That's the only way our nation can ever truly heal.

God help me. God help Michael. God help us all.

SENATOR DANIEL INOUE

(Ms. PELOSI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleague in speaking about how sad we are in the passing of Senator DANIEL INOUE. His passing marks the end of an era but the beginning of a great future built on the legacy he brought to the Congress.

For the people of Hawaii and the country, he was a public servant from start to finish. He was a war hero, earning a Medal of Honor for his actions on the battlefields of World War II before his State was even admitted to the Union. And imagine, of Japanese American heritage; at a time when Japanese Americans were in camps, he was fighting for the freedom that they were not enjoying. He is a true patriot.

He was Hawaii's first Representative in the House, a source of great pride for all Members past and present that we could call him colleague.

Senator INOUE was a patriarch of Hawaii, and all Hawaiians will long remember his unyielding devotion to the economic vitality, progress, and success of his beloved home State.

Senator INOUE led a life of principle, passion, service, and sacrifice. He was the highest ranking Asian American in our country, and he was for a long time. His story—as an Asian American who lived the American Dream, a soldier who served with bravery and courage, an elected Representative who served with dignity—reflects the best of America. We only hope it is a comfort to his wife, Irene; his son, Ken, and the entire Inoue family; and his many, many friends that so many share in their grief at this sad time.

I want to praise him personally but also bring words of comfort to his family from my constituents in California who considered him a very, very special leader in our country.

PELOSI STATEMENT ON THE PASSING OF SENATOR DANIEL INOUE

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi released the following statement tonight on the passing of longtime Hawaii Senator and the Senate's President Pro Tempore Daniel Inoue:

“Senator Daniel Inouye’s passing marks the end of an era—for the people of Hawaii, the country, and the United States Senate. He was a public servant from start to finish. He was a war hero—earning a Medal of Honor for his actions on the battlefields of World War II before his state was even admitted to the union. He was Hawaii’s first Representative in the House, a source of great pride to all Members, past and present.

“Senator Inouye was a patriarch of Hawaii, and all Hawaiians will long remember his unyielding devotion to the economic vitality, progress, and success of his beloved home state. He was the second-longest serving Senator in American history, and his fellow Americans will long remember his leadership in protecting our men and women in uniform, strengthening our national security, reaching across the aisle, and investing in a future of prosperity for all. By his actions, he stood firm for the independence of the Congress, the strength of our democracy, and the values of the American people.

“Senator Inouye led a life of principle, passion, service, and sacrifice. He was the highest ranking Asian American in our country. His story—as an Asian American who lived the American Dream, a soldier who served with bravery and courage, an elected representative who served with dignity—reflects the best of America. We only hope it is a comfort to his wife Irene, his son Ken, and the entire Inouye family that so many share in their grief at this sad time.”

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. CULBERSON (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of personal reasons.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of flight cancellation.

Mr. JONES (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of official business.

Mr. TERRY (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of travel delays.

Mr. CLYBURN (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of attending a funeral.

Mr. HOLT (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of official business in the district.

Ms. MOORE (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of district business.

Mr. REYES (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and for the balance of the week on account of family medical reasons.

SENATE BILLS REFERRED

Bills of the Senate of the following titles were taken from the Speaker’s table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 2045. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to require judges of the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims to reside within fifty miles of the District of Columbia, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

S. 3313. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the reproductive as-

sistance provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs to severely wounded, ill, or injured veterans and their spouses, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

S. 3472. An act to amend the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 to provide improvements to such Act; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

S. 3687. An act to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to reauthorize the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program, to designate certain Federal buildings, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. In addition to the Committee on Natural Resources; and to the Committee on the Judiciary for a period to be subsequently determined by a Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 2838. An act to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal years 2013 through 2014, and for other purposes.

SENATE ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to enrolled bills of the Senate of the following titles:

S. 1379. An act to amend title 11, District of Columbia Official Code, to revise certain administrative authorities of the District of Columbia courts, and to authorize the District of Columbia Public Defender Service to provide professional liability insurance for officers and employees of the Service for claims relating to services furnished within the scope of employment with the Service.

S. 1998. An act to obtain an unqualified audit opinion, and improve financial accountability and management at the Department of Homeland Security.

S. 3315. An act to repeal or modify certain mandates of the Government Accountability Office.

S. 3542. An act to authorize the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security (Transportation Security Administration) to modify screening requirements for checked baggage arriving from preclearance airports, and for other purposes.

BILLS PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on December 12, 2012, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bills:

H.R. 3187. To require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition and celebration of the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the March of Dimes Foundation.

H.R. 6582. To allow for innovations and alternative technologies that meet or exceed desired energy efficiency goals, and to make technical corrections to existing Federal energy efficiency laws to allow American manufacturers to remain competitive.

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on December 13, 2012, she presented to the President of the

United States, for his approval, the following bills:

H.R. 4014. To amend the Federal Deposit Insurance Act with respect to information provided to the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection.

H.R. 3319. To allow the Pascua Yaqui Tribe to determine the requirements for membership in that tribe.

H.R. 4367. To amend the Electronic Fund Transfer Act to limit the fee disclosure requirement for an automatic teller machine to the screen of that machine.

H.R. 2467. Bridgeport Indian Colony Land Trust, Health and Economic Development Act of 2012.

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on December 14, 2012, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill:

H.R. 2838. To authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal years 2012 through 2015, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o’clock and 44 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, December 18, 2012, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker’s table and referred as follows:

8787. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting a report of a violation of the Antideficiency Act in the Department of Veterans Affairs Construction, Minor Projects, Treasury Symbol 36X0111, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1517(b); to the Committee on Appropriations.

8788. A letter from the Acting Principal Deputy, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Purl K. Keen, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

8789. A letter from the Assistant to the Board, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting the System’s final rule — Supervisory and Company-Run Stress Test Requirements for Covered Companies [Regulation YY; Docket No.: 1438] (RIN: 7100-AD-86) received December 6, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

8790. A letter from the Assistant to the Board, Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting the System’s final rule — Annual Company-Run Stress Test Requirements for Banking Organizations with Total Consolidated Assets over \$10 Billion Other than Covered Companies [Regulation YY; Docket No.: 1438] (RIN: 7100-AD-86) received December 6, 2012, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

8791. A letter from the Assistant Director for Legislative Affairs, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, transmitting the Bureau’s Fair Lending Report; to the Committee on Financial Services.

8792. A letter from the Chairman and President, Export-Import Bank, transmitting a