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Monsters University:  
An Honor Council Academic Trial  
Released Spring 2019

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Key:
Confronted Party: Sulley
Confronting Party: Professor Wazowski

Summary:
This trial involved a violation of the Honor Code when a student, Sulley, did not adhere to the time restrictions for the final examination of Professor Wazowski’s class. After confrontation by Professor Wazowski, Sulley self-reported to Honor Council. This trial was run under extenuating circumstances, so there were only 9 jurors.

Fact Finding/Jury Deliberation:
The jury met to ask questions of the parties regarding the sequence of events around the time of the violation in question. Professor Wazowski Skyped into the meeting. After introductions, both parties were given the opportunity to speak about their interpretation of what happened.

Professor Wazowski spoke about an exam that he had given, in which the only restrictions were not to collaborate and to take the exam in the allowed 3-hour time block in a single sitting. This exam was a final examination, and Professor Wazowski emphasized that these were the same exam instructions as were on the midterm. Professor Wazowski began to suspect that Sulley had violated the Honor Code when he noticed the unusual length and quality of the exam. He then explained how he checked the document metadata, which revealed to him a total document editing time of 1,735 minutes for Sulley’s exam. Professor Wazowski then reached out to Sulley via email to inquire about the exam. Sulley replied that he had taken the exam within the allotted 3-hours, but over 3 days because of time constraints. In his email he described “pausing” a timer to keep
track of his total work time, and recognized that this choice was in violation of the Honor Code and was apologetic in his response. At that time, Professor Wazowski encouraged Sulley to self-report to Honor Council, which he did in a timely manner. Professor Wazowski believed Sulley had both taken the exam over a longer period of time than was allowed, and had worked on the exam for a total of more than three hours, despite Sulley’s claim that he had not.

Sulley generally confirmed Professor Wazowski’s account of events, acknowledging that it was not adherent to the exam instructions to take the exam in multiple blocks of time. However, Sulley maintained that he did not take more than the allotted 3 hours to work on the final. Sulley stated that he opened the exam around 1 AM, and saw a statement on the first page that said that the 3 hour time limit began when the exam was opened. Upon reading this, he worked on the exam for about an hour. However, he felt exhausted, and had to give an important presentation in another class the next day, so decided to stop the timer, go to sleep, and resume the exam the next day. Sulley then worked on the exam for Professor Wazowski’s class for about an hour, but stopped the timer again because he was interrupted by messages from his group partners. The next morning, he flew home, and finished the final portion of the exam on the third day.

The jurors asked Professor Wazowski about how Microsoft Word records document metadata, and whether it was an accurate source of information. They also asked about Sulley’s timing methods, the exact sequence of events over the three days, and which questions on the exam were completed during each time block. Sulley described that he did not come into the exam with the intention of violating the exam guidelines, but made the decision after having started the exam and under pressure. Professor Wazowski noted that the exam cover sheet was available separately from the exam on Moodle many days prior to when Sulley started the exam, and that Sulley had accessed that specific page. Both parties seemed to agree about what had happened with the key exception of whether Sulley had spent more than 3 hours working on the exam. Sulley was given the chance to answer questions without Professor Wazowski in the room. He explained how he felt that Professor Wazowski was unhelpful when he had sought advice on assignments earlier in the course.

**Statement of Violation:**
After reviewing Sulley’s exam and a blank exam provided by Professor Wazowski, the jury began to discuss a possible statement of violation. There was much discussion over phrasing and how broad or specific to make the statement. After many drafts, the jury consented to the following statement of violation:

**Statement of Violation:**
*By taking the exam over a substantially longer period of time than was permitted, Sulley did not adhere to the exam instructions and consequently violated the Honor Code.* (8 jurors consent, 1
stands outside in absentia)

**Circumstantial Portion:**
The jury met with the parties to gain a better perspective of Sulley’s circumstances at the time of the violation. First, Sulley was given a chance to express anything he felt was relevant for the jury to know about his circumstances. He explained that his main concern was that when he saw the phrase “If you’re seeing this, you have three hours to complete the exam” he felt that he had to finish the exam right then, which worried him because he didn’t want to be tired for a presentation the next day for a class that was in his major. Although he intended to complete the whole exam, he explained that he realized in the moment it was an extremely poor time to start the exam.

Professor Wazowski reiterated that the cover sheet was made available on Moodle to the students days before Sulley had started the exam, which to him eliminated any element of shock or surprise that the statement could have. Sulley confirmed that he had accessed the cover exam sheet prior to the exam. He also emphasized that at the time, he justified this action to himself by attempting to be strict with stopping and starting the timer so that he would not spend more than 3 hours on the exam, and that he primarily made this decision because he felt strongly about being capable of giving his best possible presentation the next day. Sulley stated that he understood how his actions gave him an unfair advantage. Sulley was then asked to step outside for a moment for the jury to speak to Professor Wazowski alone.

Professor Wazowski briefly discussed the case alone with the jury. He asked about the jury’s conceptualization of the importance of academic honesty on self-scheduled take home exams vs. self-scheduled exams, and if the jury felt he was clear in his instructions on the exam. The jury largely felt that there was no difference, and that he was very clear. A juror asked how Professor Wazowski would have liked Sulley to handle this situation. Professor Wazowski responded that since he had sent out the cover sheet beforehand, if a student opened the exam, saw the statement that they have 3 hours from this moment to complete, and immediately felt that they weren’t ready, that they could simply start the exam at another time since the exam questions were on a separate page. He explained that although it is frustrating to feel disappointed in one’s work on a timed exam, it is more important to turn in honest work. He noted that some students’ exams were very rushed, and not completely fleshed out because of the nature of timed exams, and it is not fair to these students, who are also tired, for Sulley to have given himself the chance to sleep and reflect.

The chair then asked Professor Wazowski if there were any resolutions he would like to recommend. Professor Wazowski did not have specific resolutions in mind, but did feel that Sulley should not receive credit for the exam or the class. Professor Wazowski expressed frustration and disappointment surrounding this violation particularly because of the advertisement of self-scheduled unproctored exams to prospective students as a pillar of Haverford, and felt like
Sulley’s decision to take advantage of this was not a misunderstanding but rather a very severe violation of the Code. The jury also heard Professor Wazowski’s thoughts on separation from the community.

Both parties were given a final chance to mention anything related to circumstances before the Chair would end the call with Professor Wazowski. Sulley stated that he did some research, and found that Microsoft Word counts time for an open document, even if the computer is closed, as editing time.

The jury then had the chance to speak to Sulley alone. Sulley generally felt that he should’ve emailed Professor Wazowski with his concerns when he first opened the exam, but that he was scared to do so. A juror asked what plans Sulley had to prevent a situation like this in the future, to which Sulley responded that although he did not have anything concrete, having a few months to think about this situation over the following summer had impacted his studying habits, including being more proactive. The chair asked what resolutions Sulley might recommend to the jury. Sulley was unsure, but stated that he felt that writing a reflection on the experience might be helpful.

**Jury Deliberations and Tentative Resolutions:**
The jury began to think about crafting resolutions by considering what concerns they had and what things they wished the resolutions to address. They reviewed discrepancies that they saw in the facts of the case, specifically whether or not they felt Sulley had taken more than three hours to work on the exam. They also considered what they felt to be Sulley’s prioritization of his grades over considering the Honor Code, and then discussed the difference between the letter of the Code and the spirit of the Code. Questions were brought up about how to restore Sulley to the community, feeling that this breach was severe in nature and violated community trust. The jury discussed that there are generally cavalier feelings toward breaches of the Honor Code in the Scaring department, Sulley’s major, in general, and that Sulley did not seem to be taking his actions as seriously as he should be. The jury then discussed faculty concerns about self-scheduled exams, specifically noting the betrayal that Professor Wazowski expressed. The jury pondered different ways that Sulley’s relationship to the student body, faculty, and Professor Wazowski, could be repaired as well as how to address these concerns in general. The jury then had a lengthy discussion about a grade change for Sulley, unanimously feeling he should receive a zero on the exam, but unsure about the professor’s suggestion for Sulley not to receive credit for the class. The jury discussed the difference between a “0.0,” “NCR,” and several other options, the majority of which were not applicable. All of the jurors expressed uncertainty about the impact failing this class would have on Sulley, but also were concerned about accountability and the severity of Sulley’s actions. With all of this in mind, the jury began to come up with ideas for resolutions, specifically attempting to craft resolutions that would demonstrate to him the negative impact his
actions had on his classmates, the community, and faculty trust of students.

**Tentative Resolutions II**
The jury met a few days later to craft tentative resolutions. The meeting began with a review of the suggestions and concerns that had been voiced at the previous meeting. The jurors began by discussing the possibility of a grade change and used online resources to determine if options like “no credit” exist at Haverford but found that such an option exists only at Bryn Mawr and Swarthmore. The only changes that could impact Sulley’s ability to receive credit for the class were a “0.0” in the course, an “INC” for approved incomplete, or “W” for approved withdrawal. Because the course had already finished at this point, a “W” was not feasible. The jury then discussed if they felt it was necessary to recommend a change for Sulley’s overall class grade, or if a 0.0 on the exam was sufficient. Some jurors felt that a zero on the exam alone would not be representative of the scope of the impact of Sulley’s actions on his classmates and the Haverford community in general. The trial chair expressed a possible perspective on cheating as a failure to fulfill a fundamental portion of the class, representing honest work. Some jurors expressed feeling differently, that it was unfair for this breach to affect an entire semester of honest work with a course grade change. The jury discussed the nuances of whether or not the incident was premeditated or in the moment, and whether or not it should matter in determining a grade change. Some jurors felt that because Sulley made the choice to “stop the clock” more than once, and over consecutive days, this represented a much more severe violation, and moreover represented multiple choices to value his grade over academic integrity. Multiple jurors felt unsure if they could trust Sulley’s account of events and reasoning for beginning the exam given that he had accessed the exam cover page in advance. A suggestion of recommending Sulley receive the lowest passing grade was made, as a middle ground between a zero in the course and only a zero on the assignment. Some jurors expressed being uncomfortable with the arbitrary nature of the grade change and challenged whether or not it achieves accountability at all. The jury then discussed other methods of achieving accountability and decided to return to the grade change later.

A meeting with the OAR to work on time management was suggested, and the jury discussed whether or not their concern was that Sulley didn’t manage his time well or that he chose not to abide by the time limit. Jurors also suggested a resolution that Sulley meet with his professors before each midterm and final exam periods to review guidelines, but some jurors felt this unnecessary for the same reason as the OAR. A juror asked whether it was possible to take away Sulley’s self-scheduled exam privileges. The majority of the jury felt that this would be the natural consequence to Sulley’s actions, but that the logistics and confidentiality issues involved would not make it feasible. The jury also discussed whether it would be right to put Sulley in a situation in which he felt undue anxiety as a result of taking all of his exams under supervision. Instead, the jury discussed ways to encourage Sulley to take his exams in environments that would set him up
to be academically honest, and crafted a resolution based on this sentiment. Different projects and reflections were then suggested to fulfill the education and restoration trial goals, and the jury discussed what kinds of reflections or projects would best restore Sulley to Professor Wazowski and the Haverford community. A facilitated meeting between Professor Wazowski and Sulley was suggested, which all the jurors agreed would be a beneficial conversation. The jury discussed that while Professor Wazowski felt this violation was very severe, Sulley did not feel the same way, and a conversation between them might help Sulley see the violation from Professor Wazowski’s perspective.

The jury finally returned to the grade change. After nearly an hour of discussion on of the impact of different levels of grade change, the jury felt that they were not in a place where they could consent to one recommendation or consent to offering a range (eg. a reduction of 0.3-0.7 in Sulley’s course grade). The jury felt that it would be appropriate to recommend different grade changes to reflect their thought processes but to receive feedback from the parties before moving forward. They decided that the trial chair would send an email to Professor Wazowski explaining the recommendation so as to further explain why the jury was not making one recommendation. The jury then consented to the following tentative resolutions:

**Tentative Resolutions:**

1) The jury recommends that [Sulley] receive a 0.0 on the exam. The jury also recommends that Professor [Wazowski] give [Sulley] either:
   a) The grade in the class which he would receive should he receive a 0.0 on the exam.
   b) 1.0, the lowest passing grade.
   c) 0.0, no credit received.
   (9 jurors consent)

2) [Sulley] will have a facilitated conversation with Professor [Wazowski] (if the latter is willing), and a member of the jury about the impact of his violation on himself, his peers, and the community at large.
   a) After this conversation, [Sulley] will write a letter to the community reflecting on his decision and what he took away from the meeting.
   b) [Sulley] will also write a letter to faculty about how abusing privileges such as self-scheduled exams impact the trust between professors and our academic community.
   (9 jurors consent)

3) The jury strongly recommends that [Sulley] take all future self-scheduled exams in Stokes, Chase, Gest or the KINSC, except for in any circumstance where it presents an excessive burden. (8 jurors consent, 1 stands outside)
4) [Sulley] will develop an exam schedule before all future finals week periods detailing where and when he plans to take his exams. This schedule will be sent to the Honor Council staff support person before each finals period. (8 jurors consent, 1 stands outside)

5) [Sulley] will develop a written or digital project designed to educate students on how to prevent violations of the Honor Code. [Sulley] will meet with a member of the jury once to confirm what this project will entail. (9 jurors consent)

(9 jurors consent to resolutions as a whole)

Statement on reporting:
Some jury members feel that due to the severe nature of the violation, this incident should be reported to institutions of higher learning. Some members do not feel comfortable being a part of the process that determines whether [Sulley]’s trial is reported to institutions of higher learning. Consequently, the decision will be made by the administration member responsible. (9 jurors consent)

Finalized Resolutions:
The jury reconvened to hear the parties’ feedback on the tentative resolutions and make final changes. Both parties were present. Professor Wazowski felt that the resolutions were appropriate and well reasoned, and had very few concerns about them. Sulley generally affirmed that the resolutions seemed appropriate, and that he had a few concerns.

The jury then used the vast majority of the meeting time to discuss how to move forward with the first resolution. All of the jurors expressed frustration with not feeling like any of the grade recommendations would represent all of the voices in the room. Some jurors agreed wholeheartedly with Professor Wazowski’s assessment of Sulley’s actions, while other jurors felt that while they agreed the violation was severe, giving Sulley a failing grade for the course was far too punitive. Although all of the jurors seemed to understand where those who disagreed with them were coming from, there was not enough agreement to come to consensus on one recommendation. The jury then debated the responsibility and role of the jury in Honor Council trials, specifically that the jury’s job is to represent the student body voice and to put in the work to ensure that a wide array of voices factor into the way the school handles breaches of the Honor Code. The jury then continued to consider the tangible effect this grade change would have on Sulley, such as the fact that this course did not fall within his major or minor. Ultimately, and after much more discussion, the jury reached consensus recommending the two lower options previously outlined.
Final Resolutions

1. The jury recommends that [Sulley] receive a 0.0 on the exam. The jury also recommends that Professor [Wazowski] give [Sulley] either:
   a. A 1.0, the lowest passing grade, or
   b. A 0.0, no credit received.
   (8 jurors consent, 1 stands outside)

2. [Sulley] will have a facilitated conversation with Professor [Wazowski], if Professor [Wazowski] is willing, and a member of the jury about the impact of his violation on himself, his peers, and the community at large.
   a. After this conversation, [Sulley] will write a letter to the community reflecting on his decision and what he took away from the meeting.
   b. [Sulley] will also write a letter to faculty about how abusing privileges such as how self-scheduled exams impacts the trust between professors and our academic community.
   (9 jurors consent)

3. The jury strongly recommends that [Sulley] take all future self-scheduled exams in Stokes, Chase, Gest, or the KINSC, except for in any circumstance where it presents an excessive burden.
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Statement on Reporting:
Some jury members feel that due to the severe nature of the violation, this incident should be reported to institutions of higher learning. Other members did not feel comfortable being a part of the process that determines whether [Sulley]’s trial is reported to institutions of higher learning.
(9 jurors consent)

Post-Trial:
The resolutions to this trial were not appealed.

Discussion Questions:
• Are Statements on Reporting to graduate institutions consistent with our values of
restorative justice?

- What should have Sulley done when he realised that he wouldn’t be able to complete the assignment in a single sitting (as was mandated)?
- Should Honor Council have the power to prevent a student from taking future self scheduled and unproctored exams after a conscious violation of the Honor Code?
A Letter to the Haverford Community

I’ve heard it said that one thing you’re never prepared for is to be caught in a lie, and I believe it. Between where I am now and where most of my fellow students are - the same place I was a year ago - is a yawning chasm of imagination. I could not have known then how bad it has felt to reckon with my choices. It is almost impossible to mentally simulate the experience of acknowledging a breach of the honor code, and the surreality every time I sat with my jury, every time I even thought about the situation then, made me feel like an outsider and a traitor in my own skin. During the weeks I was undergoing trial, guilt wove a creeping anxiety underneath every moment facing my peers and professor, and the fear of others finding out has even infected in its own way the anticipation of graduate school, job seeking, or ever again showing anyone my transcript, with its black stain upon it. I don’t recommend learning the feeling firsthand.

What I feel is an appropriate use of this written space is to state the things I know now that I didn’t know before I took the exam, in part to give myself a concrete reference to my experience, and in part that anyone reading it should be able to understand what I know - not only that disingenuity is never worth it, but how it feels to commit and acknowledge disingenuity, and maybe some things it can take to guard oneself and one’s community against it. What I can hope is that my documentation of the events may allow my fellow Fords to learn some of the rather surprising observations I’ve taken from them.

The predominating lesson I’ve taken is the utmost importance of empathy with those who do wrong. By empathy I don’t mean lenience - I don’t wish lenience for myself or anyone in my position - but rather seeing the kernel of deception within ourselves. I should add, by the way, that in this letter I make attempts to explain the role of circumstance and learned experience in my behavior. This is not to minimize the importance of character or to shift responsibility from myself, but simply done in recognition of the fact that no human behavior can be understood or anticipated devoid of context, and that my only means of bettering others is to offer my own experience as proxy, and to discuss the ways in which I believe that staying aware of the circumstances we set ourselves can help us monitor our own behavior.

In the interest of instilling understanding of how it feels to watch oneself make the wrong decision, I want to describe in detail the psychological reality of the moment when I decided to breach the honor code. I can count three emotional reasons: The first was a lazy, entitled accustomedness to being right and doing well. I do not want to self-aggrandize - I describe this as truthfully as possible because it was an important leading cause of my behavior. I have known the experience of finishing first and doing the best on challenging exams. I have gotten good grades at Haverford, facing 3.7s with sullen disappointment. This success has detached me from many facets of Haverford academic culture - I almost never go to TA sessions, ask professors for help, or seek the academic advice of my peers. I am not practiced in denying myself the temptation of academic honor code violations simply because I am not used to wishing for some way to do better.
The circumstances of the fateful night were somewhat different than normal - not only was it finals, but I had an abbreviated period, leaving early to an obligation that would take me away from my computer for the last several days of finals. I could have been more proactive, but the relative relaxation among my friends was contagious and, 36 hours before leaving, I still had components of all four of my final exams/assignments to contend with. In a moment of panic, the fear that a late night would negatively impact my performance on the sprint I’d set myself up for moved me. And after all, I wanted to believe, the parallel universe in which I had managed my time better, the universe in which I had not, perhaps, been lulled into relaxation by the attitudes of my peers who had far more time ahead of them, was not so different from our own. The universe I was retroactively creating, in which I had time to fit in the exam without exhausting myself, seemed plausible. The second was a soft self-pity. I paused the exam after an hour to avoid a night of four hours of sleep. I had a presentation in the morning and I’m a particular diva about sleep - I’ve risked missing flights for the sake of an extra hour. It was better to pull one all nighter, which at that point seemed inevitable, at the end of this long slog than at the beginning.

Another byproduct of doing well was an unfamiliarity with sacrifice in service of school. Certainly, I do not endorse students neglecting their health and well being, but the comfort of a fuller night’s sleep has been more than made up for by the nighttime hours spent with my eyes open in dread and embarrassment about that night, and I should have expected as much.

The last, and I think important to note due to its unusual nature, was a petty disappointment with my professor. I had enjoyed his class thoroughly for most of the semester - he is a witty and engaging speaker and was covering a fascinating set of topics. However, later in the semester I began to hold some resentments. When I went to meet with him once near the end of the semester I found him cool, seemingly unconcerned with my and my classmates’ anxieties, and even with the details of his own assignment. And I still remember the sentence at the top of the exam cover sheet, which in the moment felt like an ambush. Up above the exam instructions and questions it read: “if you are reading this, you have three hours to complete the exam.” One moment I found myself trying to double-check the guidelines of the exam, the next I was trying to determine how literally to take that instruction, and in a reckless moment I don’t even remember as distinct, I resolved to move ahead and start.

It sounds strange that my feelings toward my professor should have affected my private actions only an hour later, but that frustration really was particularly crucial to the way I handled the situation. I felt that I had not been shown concern as a student, and I felt that a lack of concern for his wishes was behavior in kind. Myself at six years old would be perhaps more prepared than I was in that moment to recite the quintessential lesson that two wrongs never make a right, not to mention that I was of course missing the big picture - the harm to my peers and the rupture of a carefully built dynamic of trust - by allowing myself to be preoccupied by thoughts of an essentially immaterial slight. This single factor certainly did not make me want to act in retribution - none of the factors here could on their own have pushed me to the point
that they jointly did - but one of the funny self-observations I’ve taken is that things which feel like inalienable convictions are in fact different from other motivating factors only in weight, not in type, and can always be placed on a scale against a collection of other reasons and come up the lighter. This relative lack of feelings of mutual respect with a professor I felt at that moment, something I’ve been lucky enough to almost never feel within the Bi-Co, was a factor against whose effects I was unprepared to guard myself, and which pushed that night to a different outcome than any other late night I’ve had.

I want to add an unequivocal note that I do not, in retrospect, believe that my professor behaved unfairly. He did have a personal manner I had difficulty with when we met, but I think I would hardly have given it another thought had I not felt it denied me the measure of certainty I was seeking on that assignment at that time. And the heading of the exam was again something I think I only responded to negatively because of the predisposition I had gained to the professor by that time.

But of course, the key issue in all these mini-justifications is that all of us deal with moments like this all the time. Any of us knows well enough from the times we’ve begun on tasks as late as reasonably possible, that in front of an unpleasant task, the opportunity to avoid it even in the short term can be hard to pass up at times. We cannot, maybe, remove procrastination from our arsenal of ways to relieve ourselves of duty in the now. But if dishonesty in any measure is permitted to enter that toolkit, it risks incrementally becoming routine in the same way minutes tick by on a procrastinatory afternoon, rendering supposed academic achievements meaningless and eroding the hard-won trust that makes all of us proud of our community.

Much of what takes up our collective consciousness right now is stories of flagrant, confident lying, inspired by the experience of having never seen consequences. I will not let myself off the hook so easily as to say that I was lulled by a normalization of deception into thinking that it was acceptable; rather, I was surrounded by an intellectual community that largely built a collective identity around repudiation and disbelief at those who lie, outside and within the community. I began to share in the idea that my kind defined itself by opposition to the liar and the cheat, that by my very nature I was immune to bad behavior, and that I need not question my own discretion.

This confidence, this distance from ever being allowed to recognize selfishness and lying in myself and or specific members of my peer group, led me to disregard the signs, in a moment, that I was exhibiting a startling and appalling acceptance of bending the truth. My crime was less brazen in contrast to other, more titillating stories of fraud, never requiring me to look into someone’s eyes as I lied to them, or to imagine a specific peer I’d be hurting, making it far easier to perceive as a separate phenomenon. And since I had never seen evidence of someone I considered a peer and cohort committing academic dishonesty, I managed to forget that it was a possibility. It bears reminding that all of us are capable of doing the wrong thing, and that active vigilance is required to ensure that we are being our best selves.
The challenge I hope to never now forget to set for myself, and that I imagine may serve as a useful exercise to anyone, is to actively imagine how things will go wrong. All of us have memories, probably very recent, of doing something small that we wouldn’t advise ourselves to do given an objective vantage point - procrastinate, overindulge on unhealthy food, let slip something unkind to or about a friend. These little moments deserve constant scrutiny, because they offer valuable windows into the more dramatic ways, subtle or chronic, that we may fail ourselves. Integrity is something continuously maintained and reexamined, not attained and put away in a glass case. The line between ourselves and people whose actions we cannot fathom is always far thinner than we think, and the more we cannot fathom their actions the more likely it is that placed in their circumstances we would repeat them. It is a deep-set flaw of humankind to ascribe other’s failings to matters of essential character, while in retrospect we always see in crystalline clarity, and dwell on, the constellation of external forces that have pushed our own hands to ill deeds. All moral convictions have this in common - in the abstract, or otherwise distant from intimate knowledge of a wrongdoing, it easy to be absolutist, even performatively so; but set in alone in a room with someone fallen from grace we are shocked to discover all the individually conceivable links in the chain, and all the more shocked if that someone is ourselves.

I hope I can avoid that bias of letting myself see what I did as a product only of an unparalleled situation. This experience has been a very powerful one and has wrought some real changes to me, with a tolerance for even everyday exaggeration and spin grown thinner, and a much more active imagination for how I might not be the best person in the room. It’s not so much a lesson as a gut reaction at this point, but undue anxiety about my grades has come to feel oddly out of place; I am mostly satisfied with doing as well as I do - I still take school seriously but if other concerns make school take a hit, I cannot but embrace the fact that the many important aspects of life are sometimes at odds. And having gotten the chance to speak with my professor about the ways in which my breach of trust impacted him, coming as an unexpected occasion to learn about the potential shortcomings of students and ultimately causing him to alter the ways in which he conducts his classes, I have developed a greater measure of empathy for those who dedicate their lives to challenging me and the people I’m proud to call peers.

But already a little under a year out it feels as though life is moving on, and the poltergeist of guilty memory whose dark shadow once cast over all my vision is beginning to doze in a corner as I try to keep it still awake enough to remind me of what I’ve learned. I want to keep strong the muscle of proactive integrity, and I would challenge anyone to do the same.

I want to make a last note on how I believe a community more resilient against dishonesty can be built. Even as I write this with the conceit of imagining a peer or other community member reading it I am cognizant that few are likely to. As someone who has during my time at Haverford had an, I’d estimate, 70th percentile interest in Plenary and discussions of the Honor Code, I still never more than skimmed an abstract prior to my trial - it
didn’t seem relevant to me. This is unfortunate, because I’ve come to believe that the strongest preemptive guard against breaches of the Academic Honor Code is an intimate familiarity with the stories of those who’ve done wrong, and as importantly of those whom their actions impacted. Philosophical discussion, even, of the ways in which crimes that feel victimless can erode a community, may help transform any mere acceptance of the values claimed in our community’s public spaces, into an understanding made personal of how we stand to be hurt by breaches of trust. I don’t lay claim to knowing how best to do so, but finding a way to encourage all Haverford students to mindfully familiarize themselves with real accounts of misconduct and envision themselves in the shoes of everyone impacted by them would, in the view I’ve taken, help everyone engage in proactive integrity.