Attention: “You gain strength, courage, and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in face.” A quote from Eleanor Roosevelt found on the Leading Thoughts website. Take a second, please, to think about what it is really like to look fear in the face. Recently, a young woman from our college campus looked fear directly in the face and described to others what fear looks like to protect the rest of us.

Motivation: As a female student on this campus, I do feel different when I walk on campus at night, even in the morning too. I know that I cannot identify with what she has been through but I feel one with her in that I am a female, a target of the man that we will call fear.

Thesis/Overview: I hold great admiration for this woman that I do not know because she showed courage and chose to protect me, a fellow student that she does not know either, I can only do my best to return the favor.

I. Do you have that kind of courage?
   A. I thought about what it was like and how I would have reacted.
      a. How would I have reacted?
      b. I would not have even had the courage to be here.
   B. Courage is defined as firmness in mind and will in the face of danger or extreme difficulty (Webster’s Online).
      a. How many of us in here would still be here today?
      b. I would have moved home searching for any amount of comfort and protection that I could find; only to realize there is not a safe place but a safe state of mind called courage, and that can be found anywhere, including here.
   C. What I sued to think courage was.
      a. I sued to think that courage was getting up in front of classmates to give a speech like this.
      b. Courage is actually standing up in front of a large group of the student body and giving them a face to go with the story they have heard; it is putting all shame aside and telling them what it feels like.

II. “One of the most startling aspects of sex crimes is how many go unreported. The most common reasons given by women for not reporting these crimes are the belief that it is a private or personal matter and the fear of reprisal from the assailant” (American Rape Statistics).
   A. When I do meet this woman from our campus, I will offer her a thank you for her choice to inform authorities of the tragedy.
a. Because of her choice, we are aware, informed, and maybe as cautious as we should have always been.
b. Sometimes we get to a point in our lives when we feel no one can hurt us, we should be conscious of the fact that fear is out there.

B. Recalling the night would be one of the hardest things to do.
   a. I feel such gratitude to her for her attempt to describe fear to the police so that we can have a picture.
   b. She sacrificed what it feels like to see the picture everyday on campus so that the rest of the student body can be protected.

Underview: Words cannot describe what this woman experienced; despite the horror, she rose above it and with courage and strength chose to warn and protect others.

Last thought: Maybe I have taken this more personally than the rest of you, but I feel like this woman was really thinking of me when she decided to go public with what happened. I feel so indebted to her for what she did for us. She really deserves our gratitude and respect for looking fear in the face and choosing to protect us.