

# John Lee is like a nightmare that won't end

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**Devin Rokyta/Moscow-Pullman Daily News**

We had all hoped we would never hear from John Lee again after he was sentenced in May to life in prison without the possibility of parole for murdering three Moscow residents and wounding another in January 2015.

Many at the time wanted to see the death penalty, and while that sentence was not handed down, we were all able to take some solace in knowing the man would never walk free again. And since Lee waived his right to appeal as part of his plea deal with the state, most of us felt secure in believing we would never hear from the murderer again.

But like a terrible nightmare, he just won't go away.

Last week, Lee filed documents to withdraw his guilty pleas and argued in a two-page handwritten motion that he was "not in the right state of mind" when he entered his pleas. In his motion, Lee wrote he felt he didn't have "free will" and that "the guards and certain people were pressuring" and "in some instances torturing" him to make him confess or accept a plea deal. He also indicated he no longer approved of the conditions of his plea agreement, including the waiver of his right to appeal.

"Noises were effecting (sic) my decision making and I didn't feel I had free will," Lee wrote. " Now that I am properly medicated, mental health problems will no longer interfere with my decision making."

The motion comes after Judge John R. Stegner rejected Lee's request to have his sentence reduced because Lee's plea agreement does not allow for modifications to his sentence. Lee has also filed an appeal with the Idaho Supreme Court and is still awaiting a response.

If he were currently in the "right state of mind" he wouldn't be torturing the families of the victims and the community once again.

It doesn't take a doctor or a psychiatrist to see Lee is still a very ill human being, one who will likely never be well again, which is among the reasons why he should never set foot in public again.

No one who was living in Moscow at the time of Lee's crimes will ever forget Lee's acts or his victims - Michael M.M. Chin, Terri L. Grzebielski, David M. Trail and Belinda G. Niebuhr - but hopefully the day will come that he will accept his fate and quietly await his death in prison.