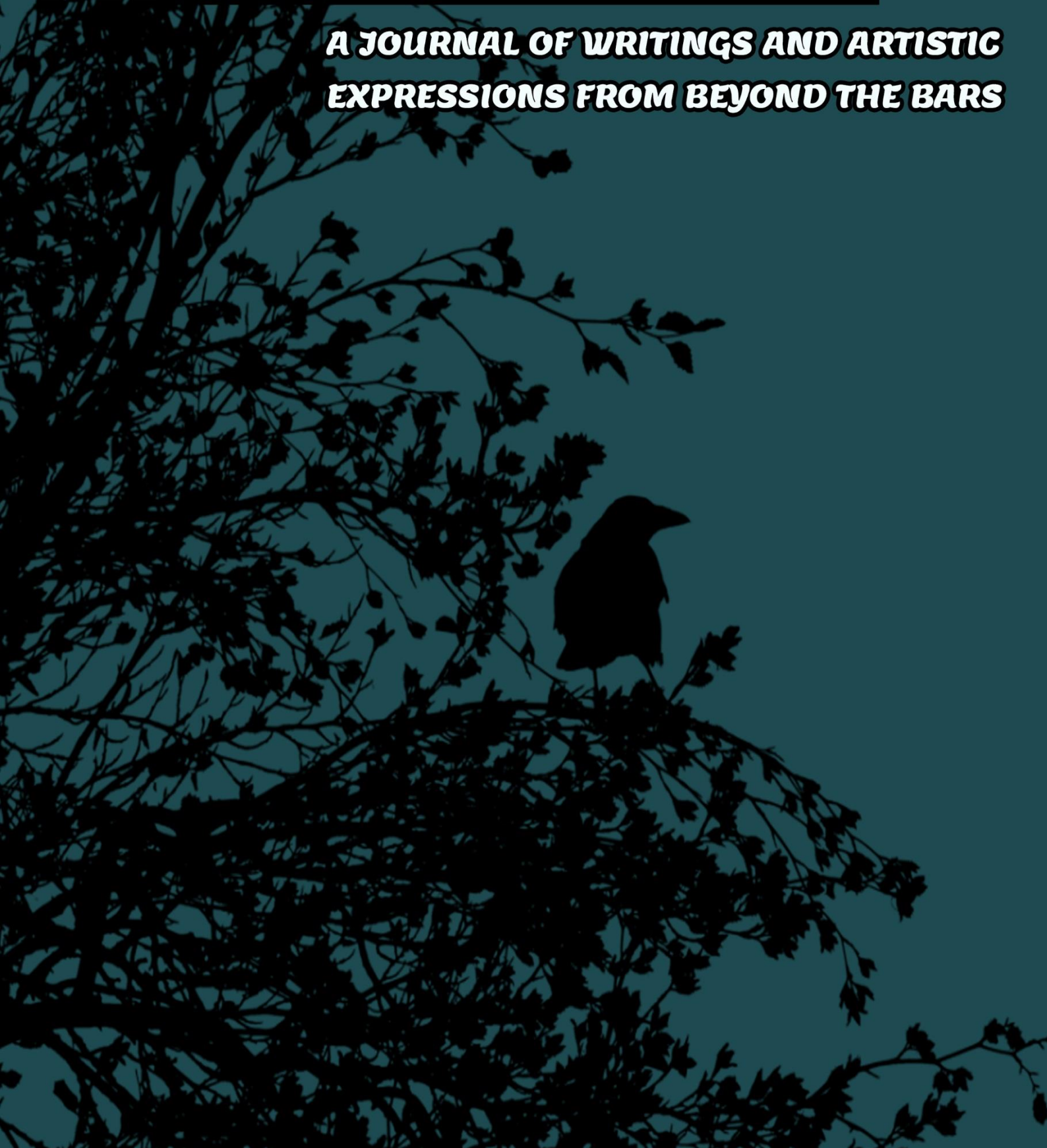


ISSUE 4, 2021 - FREE PUBLICATION

PAPER CHAINED

**A JOURNAL OF WRITINGS AND ARTISTIC
EXPRESSIONS FROM BEYOND THE BARS**



CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

WE WELCOME CONTRIBUTIONS FROM:

PRISONERS

EX-PRISONERS

FAMILY OF PRISONERS

If you are currently in prison, have experienced time in prison or have a loved one in prison, we welcome your contribution to the next edition of this journal.

Submissions for Issue 5 close end of November, 2021.

RUNNING WILD

EMAIL:

runningwild@riseup.net

WEBSITE:

runningwild.noblogs.org

POST – **NEW ADDRESS**

Paper Chained

PO Box 2073

Dangar, NSW

Australia, 2309

MORE ON CONTRIBUTIONS

Contributions can be writings in any style. We ask that text does not exceed 1, 500 words per contribution.

Contributions can be anonymous.

Writers are welcome to include any/all of the following if they wish to, but we would like to stress that there is no obligation to include any identifying information about yourself at all.

- Your name or a pseudonym
- Your age
- Your charge/s
- Your sentence duration and expected release date
- Your occupation/hobbies prior to incarceration
- Any other details you would like published about yourself

You are also welcome to include the following, which would never be published or shared:

- An address for you to receive a copy of the published journal (this could either be your address in prison or an address on the outside you can access at a later date – we understand your prison address may not be reliable if you are moved)

TERMS OF PUBLICATION

Handwritten contributions will be typed unless the author requests to have a scan of the original text presented in the journal. Contributions will be edited in regards to spelling and grammar unless the author specifies NO EDITS on their entry. We will then type the piece exactly as presented to us.

We will not publish any contributions that directly or indirectly contain: racism, sexism, transphobia, nationalism, xenophobia, ableism, evangelism or any other form of oppressive language.

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A LETTER FROM THE INCOMING EDITOR

I'd written an article for this issue of *Paper Chained* before I was asked if I'd be interested in taking over as the journal's editor from the next edition. As you'll read in that article, I wrote a now published novel in prison. However, long before that was done, I'd also written a couple short stories. While I was proud of this, I was also frustrated and disappointed to not know of any magazines or newsletters I could submit them to. Writers were a rare breed in prison. I had a reputation for being *that guy*, the one always slouched over the table in the common room writing another letter, chapter of my novel or short story. I made friends with a couple other writers inside, and they were in the same position I was. Sure they could lend copies of what they'd written to friends inside, or even post them to people on the outside. But the day of the writing journal ended a long time ago. We didn't even have a chance to see our work in print, because none of us knew of a publication that would accept submissions. Especially from prisoners.

I'd been released from prison for almost a year when I heard of *Paper Chained* via a call-out for submissions in the 2017 Winter edition of *Inside Out*. *Inside Out*, to the best of my knowledge, is the only other prison newsletter based in Australia. It's a wonderful publication, aimed at LGBTIQ inmates, though open to everyone. They'd already accepted some of my artwork I'd sent them from prison (I still send them artwork to this day), though they don't print fiction. My stories remained unpublished.

Even before my novel was released, I'd been selling opinion pieces on the prison system to the Network Ten news website *10 daily*. However, I'll never forget the first time my work was printed was in the debut issue of *Paper Chained*. If you can track down that issue, you'll be able to read *Contact Front*, the first story I wrote in prison.

I'm quite proud to say I've submitted something to every edition of *Paper Chained* since, and since I know how important it is for a publication like this to exist, I've also helped with fundraising. So when the previous editor reached out and asked if I was interested in taking over, I didn't even have to think twice about it.

'Be the change you want to see in the world' has always been my motto. While I accepted a long time ago that I can't change the system myself, I know I can at least make a difference for some people by giving them a voice. I hope this journal brings some joy and hope to inmates, as I know it would have brought to me while I was inside. I'm proud to be keeping *Paper Chained* alive, and I look forward to getting submissions from you soon.

Stay strong,
Damien Linnane

PEN-PAL INITIATIVE

We believe it is beneficial for people in prison to be connected with others and in 2020 we started a pen-pal program. This initiative is open to anyone, whether you are in prison or not. If you are interested in being listed on our Pen-Pal List, please send in your information following the template below. This information will be made available to anyone else on the Pen-Pal list, but will not be published in any public contexts. To have your information removed at any time, just send us a letter and we will remove your name from the next listing that is sent out.

TEMPLATE FOR ADDITION TO PEN-PAL LIST

Name:
MIN (if in prison):
Charges (if in prison – optional):
Address:
Hobbies/interests:
Why you'd like a pen-pal:

Send your request to:

Paper Chained
PO Box 2073
Dangar, NSW
Australia, 2309

I FEEL SO LONELY

I feel so lonely
trapped in a cage surrounded by warehoused
bodies
Oh so lonely
as I eat meals alone, day after day;
year after year
So lonely
amongst the volumes of words, yells, screams,
banging and complaints
I feel so lonely
when I stare into the late night darkness
of my cement box

I feel so lonely
not being able to be a father, uncle and son
Oh so lonely
knowing I'm out of sight; out of mind
So lonely
when I fail to hear my name
during mail call
I feel so lonely
having to console myself
Everyday I feel so lonely
isolated in a deathrow cell



CONTRIBUTOR DETAILS
Ojore Dhoruba

THE CELL IS MY REFUGE

My concrete cocoon
that causes me to transform
from chaos to consciousness.
I come forth from concrete
and metal a changed man.
My temple, where I achieve
spiritual fulfillment. Here, I
offer my call of silent thoughts
to appeal for strength, discipline
and guidance.

My shrine, where the walls
become an alter. Displaying
photos of my ancestors and
the living faces of those I
worship and bestow praise upon.

My refuge and solitude. That shields
me from the inflated egos and
programed torpedoes, who are armed
prisoners and guards, who wish to do
me harm

CONTRIBUTOR DETAILS
Ojore Dhoruba



CONTRIBUTOR DETAILS

Marcelo Villarroel Sepúlveda
High Security Prison in Santiago de Chile

PRISON. THE BEST PLACE TO WRITE A CRIME NOVEL.

I went to see the chaplain every week in prison. Not because I wanted any spiritual guidance, I've been a devout atheist since I was 13, but simply because he was the only person the prison provided for inmates to talk to. Like a lot of inmates I was suffering from depression, but there were no mental health workers available for therapy, so I had to make do with what they had. The chaplain and I would chat about everything from what book I was reading to what I was going to do when I got out, and having someone that treated me like I was still a person did make a difference. The fact he always had cake in the chapel helped too.

The prison I did most of my time at was a sawmill. I worked in administration, processing the other inmate's pay. I use the term 'pay' loosely. Depending on what they did for work, inmates received between \$1.08 and \$2.20 an hour. At the time I was quite proud to be on \$2.20. To earn some extra cash I took a second official job cleaning my cell block. And I had my side-hustle, drawing portraits from photos. I didn't have to spend money ordering extra food as other inmates paid me with things like cans of tuna or blocks of chocolate for portraits of their kids, girlfriends or pets.

'You looked stressed today Damien', the chaplain said, after I sat down in his office.

'Yeah', I said, 'I'm just a bit overwhelmed at the moment. I'm working all day, then I try and rush in a gym session before we get locked in. Then I have to start cleaning. And I'm backlogged with about six portraits. Plus I'm behind on my novel. I wrote myself into a corner so now I have to go back and rewrite several chapters again.'

'Sounds like you're certainly keeping busy', he said with a smile.

I rested my face into one hand. 'I just feel like I never have enough time in here these days, you know what I mean?'

The chaplain stared at me. He blinked a couple times. Then he spoke. 'Damien, I don't think I've ever heard anyone in prison complain they didn't have enough time before.'

I've always had a dozen things going on at once. Ironically, I finished a degree majoring in psychology one week before I went to jail. While I was studying I was also working full-time in the health industry, and part-time for the army, plus I was running a small business and had weekly volunteering commitments. You'd think prison might have given me a chance to slow down. But I just couldn't help myself.

After finding out I wasn't permitted to study in prison or eligible for rehabilitation, I searched for other ways to occupy my time. Writing a novel was one of them. I'd had the idea for a novel in my head since I was 17, but with everything else I had going on I'd never made the time. If it wasn't for prison, I know it never would have happened.

If you think writing a book is daunting, try writing one by hand. Every time I wanted to go back and change things I had to rewrite entire pages or even chapters. I must have used up about 30 pens. I had to write each chapter twice already as it was. I was conscious of the fact I couldn't exactly back up my hand-written manuscript in the cloud, so I wrote each chapter twice and then posted a copy to my best friend for safe-keeping in case something happened to the copy in my cell. I wasn't so worried about the other inmates doing something to my manuscript. I was worried about the guards.

My novel, *Scarred*, is about a serial killer in Sydney. Prisons don't take kindly to anything that could be construed as promoting violence or any other unwanted behaviour. An acquaintance I made liked to draw comics. In one, the humorous strip ended with an inmate escaping by climbing over a fence with a ladder. When the guards found it, he got put in solitary confinement for several days while they investigated whether he was making plans to escape. And that was the over-reaction to a cartoon drawing. I was in constant fear of what the guards would do if they found out I was writing a book about murdering people.

I kept the pages of my novel buried between those of the journal I was keeping. Thankfully when my cell was searched every couple months the guards never actually read through the growing stack of papers.

It was frustrating not having access to the internet to fact-check anything while I was writing. Luckily, however, I had an endless source of information all around me to help write a crime novel.

One of the guys in my cell block was in for manufacturing firearms. As my main character's weapon of choice is a pistol, his knowledge of ballistics was invaluable. Another one of my characters had a heroin addiction. Not having ever done hard drugs myself, I approached a friend of mine who'd already told me he'd been struggling with a heroin addiction for years. He was able to describe what it felt like when he was desperate for a fix, helping me flesh out another chapter. Part of my book is set in a prison. I can assure you those chapters describe prison life accurately.

My manuscript was the only thing I took from prison when I left. Typing the thing up was the easy part. I spent the next two and a half years searching for a publisher.

I'm currently writing an autobiography. Even though I'm writing this book on my computer it's still taking a lot longer than my novel did, mostly because there's a lot more distractions out here in the real world. My dog doesn't walk himself, and I have video games that need playing. Still, for all the help being in prison gave me for writing I can't say I have any desire to go back and do it again.

Scarred, written by Damien Linnane, is published by Tenth Street Press. It is now available in paperback, as well as on Kindle, Kobo and most other eBook formats.

CONTRIBUTOR DETAILS

Damien Linnane



THE MISSING PASSENGER

In the vast distance of deep space a bio-autonomous starship, based on an old fashioned steamtrain design, snaked its way through the infinite universe. The Star Expresse's carriages had compartments on both levels. The upper levels contained suites more lavish than the lower level's more affordable cabins. The middle carriage lower level had a cocktail lounge and above that there was a casino. The carriages at each end of the Star Express held the restaurants. The passengers were unaware of the immense speed at which they were travelling because of the quantum engine and bio-stabilisers.

Waves lapped against the shore as the hot Nabiru winds drifted humid, salty mist across the cities. Nabiru had thick forests which covered most of the planet. Its cities surface, connected by hovering shuttle lines. The whole planet was ruled by one Emperor, one man a descendant of the Nephilim.

Every twelve years between July and September Nabiru's moons would release gases from their surface. Ignited by the planet's electromagnetic field the gases explode creating a spectacular display of colours. The Star Express arrived a day before this event started and would not depart Nabiru until three months later.

A bizarre male dressed in the uniform of a ticket inspector waddled along the corridors, scanning tickets.

"Tickets please!" he squawked.

Timothee Gillan waddled from one cabin to the next checking passengers and making sure they were comfortable.

"Relax enjoy your journey" Tim would say cheerfully.

Making his way along the upper class corridors until he came to suite three, dash, six hundred and ninety five. He knocked on its door which without warning slightly creaked open.

"Hello! Ticket Inspector." There was no answer.

"Hello! Anyone there?" Again no answer.

Which made Tim inquisitive, inquisitive enough to push the door open the rest of the way. He peered around a stunning suite, a little apprehensive at first, knowing he should not be in the suites without a guest. His eyes widened, horrified to see a pool of red liquid on the floor. He scrambled out from

the gorgeous golden suite and down the corridor, almost laying eggs and dropping feathers as he frantically squawked.

“What has happened? What happened in Suite 3-695?”

He knew it must have been an immense struggle due to the garments scattered throughout the suite.

“Where could the guest be? More importantly, is the guest okay?” he mumbled as he searched along the corridors.

First he checked the cocktail lounge and then the casino before he looked in the restaurants.

“How could someone just vanish?”

He needed to speak with security at once, flustering his way along an extremely long corridor until, finally, he found the security’s carriage. Rushing in, hyperventilating, he tried to explain what he thought had happened to the passenger from one of the suites.

“Mr Albatross, calm down,” said the security guard.

“My name isn’t Albatross, it’s Timothee Gillan,” he snapped back.

“What is actually wrong?” asked Randall Rhino, the senior guard on duty.

“There is a pool of red liquid on the floor of suite 3-695, and besides that I have not found the guest.

“Who booked into that suite because it is typically reserved for royalty” abruptly replied Randall.

“I do not have a clue. I’m just a ticket inspector.”

“Why don’t you search for that suite with your digital book thing O,” suggested Randall, rolling his eyes. These ticket inspectors seemed to be getting dumber and dumber.

“Oh, of course I forgot that was on my wrist,” he said embarrassingly.

Timothee swiped and tapped away on the digital book looking through cabin and suite numbers.

“Oh, here we are. A Missis Neigh Neigh booked that suite.

“Well, where is she?” grumbled Randall.

“I don’t know. That is why I am here. Are you a rhino or a drongo?” without waiting for an answer he continued quickly.

“The digital bank’s information displays Missis Neigh Neigh is the wife of Emperor Ramesses VII.”

That got Randall’s attention. He became anxious, animated and a little jumpy you can not jump high if you are a rhino.

“We need to find the Emperor’s wife right way!” roared Randall.

“I’ve looked everywhere! The book’s display showed that her ticket had been logged into the Star Expresse’s system” Tim mentioned.

“We should inform the Emperor’s Council right way” he added, helpfully.

“No way! Do you have a death wish? We’ll lose our jobs, maybe our heads, if anything has happened to his wife,” snapped Randall Rhino as he ambled out the door.

The two set out to search the Star Expresse again, asking guests and even checking the cabins and suites from top to bottom. They looked under beds, in bathrooms, even in cupboards and closets.

They swiftly went to the cocktail lounge looking through the bars and tables. The casino and restaurants were next. Nobody has seen Missis Neigh Neigh.

“I think we should search Suite 3-695 again,” suggested Randall, now perspiring visibly from all the activity.

They entered Suite 3-695; Tim first, followed by Randall, who gasped at the sight of the pool of red liquid on the floor. They thoroughly searched the suite, avoiding the red pool of sticky, gooey liquid. Tim swung open the closet door and jumped back, startled. There, in a heap of mess on the closet’s floor was Missis Neigh Neigh curled up, softly crying.

“Are you alright Missis,” asked Tim sympathetically.

“I’m so fat and silly. I dropped my bowl of red jelly all over the floor,” flicking her mane back so she could see the tall albatross standing in front of her.

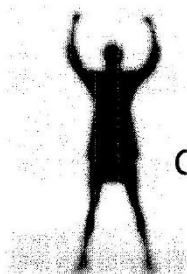
As they closed the suite’s door Timothee Gillon and Randall Rhino chortled relieved that their ordeal was over and that Neigh Neigh was not injured or dead. They became the best of friends.

CONTRIBUTOR DETAILS

Lennox Playwright
NSW, Australia



WORKOUT TIPS



ISOMETRIC EXERCISES (Get stronger without moving)

Cycle through 5 rounds of holding each position for 30 seconds.

1. Plank – (muscle targeted- core, shoulder).
2. Wall sit- (muscles targeted- Glutes, hamstrings, quads).

Lean back on wall with your feet hip width apart. Lower your hips until they are level with your knees. Keep back upright, flat and your head up throughout hold.

3. Dead hang- (muscles targeted- shoulder, back). Hang from a high bar. This will improve your grip and arm strength and the hanging also benefits the spine and shoulder muscles. If you're trying to master pull ups this is a great starting point.
4. L-Sit- (muscles targeted- Glutes, core, abs). Sit upright on the ground with legs extended in front of you and arms by your sides. Lean back slightly and raise your legs from the floor. Squeeze through your abs don't round your spine. Maintain perfect straight alignment in your body.

The cell workout:

- Before starting; do full body warm up at low to moderate intensity for 3 minutes.
- Mountain climbers- time 45 seconds – rest 15 seconds.
- Squat jumps- time 45 seconds – rest 15 seconds.
- Bicycle crunches- time 45 seconds – rest 15 seconds.
- Reverse lunges- time 45 seconds – rest 15 seconds.
- Push ups- time 45 seconds – rest 15 seconds.
- Sit-ups- time 45 seconds – rest 15 seconds.
- Star jumps- time 45 seconds – rest 15 seconds.
- Plank- time 45 seconds – rest 15 seconds.

That's 1 circuit; take 1 minute rest before you start your next one. 5 circuits in total. The aim in this training is to match the intensity and energy in all 5 circuits. Make a mental note of the number of reps you do on each exercise

during your first circuit and use that as a marker for the other circuits. Always try to perform more reps as you advance.

Quick cell workout:

- Before starting; do full body warm up at low to moderate intensity for 3 minutes.
- Squads- time 50 seconds – rest 10 seconds.
- Push ups- time 50 seconds – rest 10 seconds.
- Crunch sit ups with punches- time 50 seconds – rest 10 seconds. (throw 2 punches at the top of each rep).

Repeat this routine 4 times.

Squats exercises: - Normal squat. - Jump squat. - Third world squat. (third world squat; with your feet slightly wider than your shoulders, sink into a deep squat with heels on the ground. Press your elbows into your knees, opening up your legs. Hold position for 60 seconds (do as many as you can).

Squats increase your testosterone levels, they strengthen your hips and glutes and they recruit a huge percentage of your core musculature to stabilise the lift which help build hard core abs.

By Garry Davis #550608#.
South coast.cc

Anyone interested in other training tips, don't
hesitate to ask.

"Hard work never stops. Neither should your goals
and dreams."

DEVIL'S BLUFF

The sibilant hiss of vicious wind all but deafened those driven to the brink that eventide by jingoistic reprobates armed with an ordnance of muskets and polished slugs of lead; cold, blue steel gripped flush 'gainst burning, white flesh, along forsaken trails then crushed to dust by heavy, leathern boots. Fierce shouting rapt with malice and contempt issued forth from twisted, snarling mouths, clamoured to culminate as a cacophonous din as its echoes ricocheted from the coarse surface of the ancient, ashen stone cast underfoot, and was consumed to silence by the static of a boundless expanse of austral sky. The myriad of brandished flambeaux flickered furiously as if in mimicry of a hundred, mocking orbs glaring out from Stygian blackness; glinting their malignant mirth amidst the irksome gloom, and illuminating a vast array of dark, beautiful faces hewn between terror and despair. Stretched, shimmering silhouettes leapt frantically to and fro; responding with rapidity to the fluctuations of the flames' effulgent glow: phantasmagorical visions thrown yonder by huddled figures neath the sterling-silver sliver of a souring sickle-moon. Large palms cradled the frailty of tiny, fragile fingers, as turgid teardrops serpentine 'cross quietly, quivering cheekbones to sinuously loose themselves, then damp driest rock. Prayers departed parched lips, spoken with the timbre of taciturn tongues; whispers in primordial dialects, whilst the wearisome weeping of the youth crushingly chorused in a haunting harmony with the lamentations of those then come of age, those marked mature, and those who then dwelt in their dwindling dotage. The demons that drove them pressed punitively onward, possessed by their pernicious wills and their perfidious souls, ever nearer the sharp precipice of the lonesome bluff's lofty edge. The crimson dirt that lingered in the darkness below seemed to effervesce as though the plasmatic realms of the accursed pit itself assayed passage to escape its confines deep within the earth; rending it asunder to clutch with murderous claws the seemingly sacrificial innocence that the bitter loathing of evil and ignoble creatures had delivered in plethoric droves before it. Into this maddening mirage the first spirit toppled helplessly from atop the jagged peak with an almost inhuman shriek that, with a fell frost freezing my solemn heart and a sombering sickness searing my stomach like sulphur, I still claim audible on each occasion whilst, with utmost reverence, I traverse that mournful mount to utter my respects to those who fell and intone my regrets for those whom they left behind. Cumbrous silence resounded as his ebony soma struck the burnt, desiccated grasses inhabiting the foot of the sun-bleached boulder. So suddenly did the ground begin to shudder and shake that the whole volcanic rise quaked perilously on its august foundations. The land itself seemed to grind and groan with disgust as its then drawn deathly embrace flighted the life of a man bourne from naught but the precious purity innate in the nature of mother nature; forced to perish by insidious, sanguinary spectres to indulge only their ignorance and fear of any race crafted from customs and cultures of all ilks excepting their own. Then, as if of a

single mind cosmically intertwined, and in deprivations of their oppressor's craven chimera to remove them by brute actions and blunt force from the footing to which they desperately grasped, the entirety of the man whose stillness then lay shrouded upon flattened fauna and ichorus earth's kinsman submitted to kismet and akin to the inevitable deluge as a river metamorphoses to become a waterfall upon arrival at a cliff top or chiseled chasm, they cascaded from the summit to become one in unity with their ancestors in the soil and charcoal of a galant nation and gain eternal peace at the bare base of that barren bluff. A pale, pallid countenance greedily gloated from its place on high, utterly devoid of any of the sempiternal senses to ascertain precisely how low it had then been postured in depreciation of the Pyrrhic implications of the grievous atrocity treachery had just transpired, and the monstrous personage, barely veiled by its gruesome and grotesque smirk, upon that exacted moment became cursed, to remain enduringly so, even encompassed by the cords of death: onto this day, and for all days, ad infinitum. A past of putridity, and a future of futility, as he himself, and all who share the bloodlines which flowed in the veins of those whom, through dull starlight, sardonically espied from the zenith the hallowed harvest of strangest fruit dropped to the nadir through their licentious labours, shall shoulder the hex cruelty incarnated in the very instant that ultimate breath was inspired and expired by the members of a noble tribe now lost to the ages, and shall do so until the essence of being is seceded, and corporeality drifts dyingly into everlasting emptiness. The significance bestowed from the earthly forms of those whose lifeblood wetted the roots and bark of eucalyptus 'neath the gentle grace of the verdant, rustling gum-leaves many seasons now melted, will continue undiminished in the memory of myself, or any of whom who in truth, love this: our sprawling island-home, and that steadiest of hands that drew us out from the many waters of our conception. The fate they suffered will never be void of divinity or meaning in so far as their honour is retold and memorandum maintained. To the last they have been gathered together and now likened to angels in the dark of the night skies: living in celebration with their forebears amongst the celestial campfires that reveal themselves to us as the countless stars scattered endlessly out in the wild, blue yonder, beheld against the visage of the heavens. From there they sing, and dance, and laugh, and love, to remind, to guide, to bless, and to ethereally caress us all, from now, 'til then, and for time and tide as yet not come to pass.



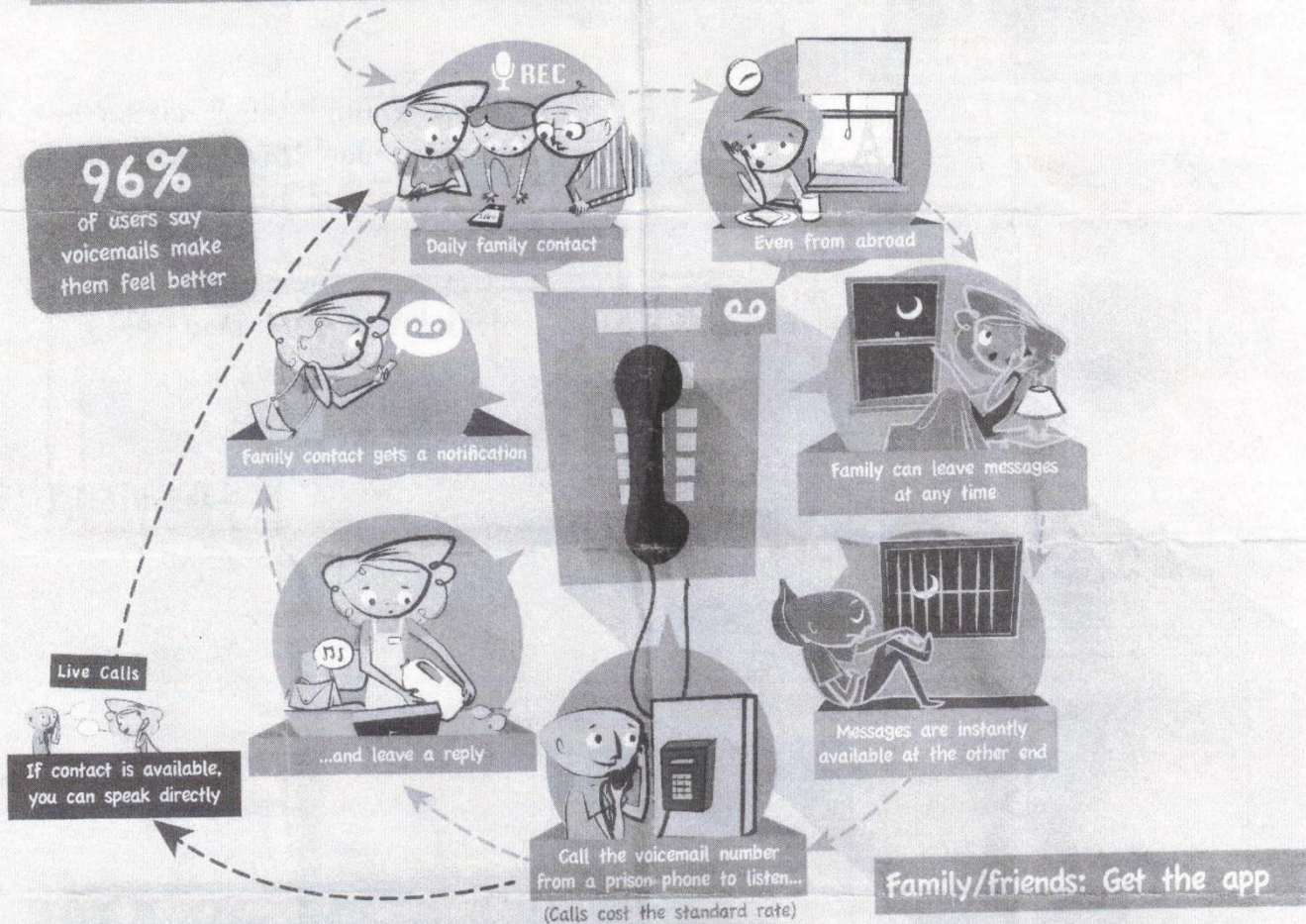
CONTRIBUTOR DETAILS

Lawrence Daniel Vincent Tafra

Prison Voicemail

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The free app lets family re-listen to messages, save favourites, and use the Live Calls feature.



Your voice matters

Questions? Email us on support@prisonvoicemail.com.au, text us on (04) 8884 2142 or call us on (07) 4243 4666

PRISON VOICEMAIL

Important: Action Required

To:

From:

The person named above wants to communicate with you using the Prison Voicemail instant messaging and cheaper calls service.

Enter your MIN and select:

to access.

You only pay the standard rate for calls.

With Prison Voicemail you only ever pay the standard OTS rate, even if your contact is on their mobile.

Please note: Live Calls require your contact to have the Prison Voicemail app and a stable internet connection. It is not for use in emergencies.

Got questions?

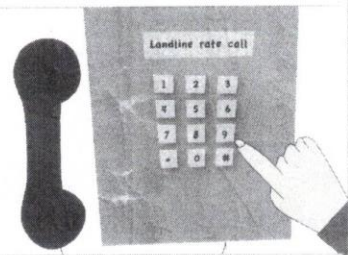
Staff can call us on (07) 4243 4666 or email support@prisonvoicemail.com.au

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Get started

1

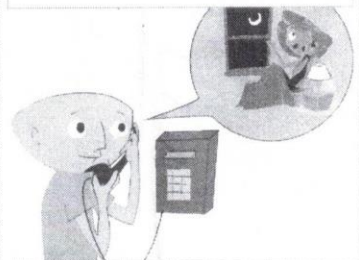
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COUNT TIME: MARIN COUNTY, COUNTS ITS SAN QUENTIN PRISONERS

California law says a prison cell is not a residence.

With the 2020 Census upon us, are you aware some prisoners are being counted in a similar fashion as enslaved Afrikans – from 1776 to 1865 – under the “Three-fifths” clause (Article I, Section 2)? Further proof slavery has not been abolished, but its remnants and legacy remains ingrained in the fabric of the United States (U.S.).

Why is Marin and Solano continuing to count myself and other prisoners as apart of their population? Power and Money. The exact same reasons the plantation owners counted their enslaved Afrikans as Three-fifths of their population.

That “Power” is Political Clout, according to a March 2010 article: “Importing Constituents: Prisoners and Political Clout in California,” by Aleks Kajstura and Peter Wagner. According to the article, Marin and Solano Counties are the only two of the twelve counties that host prison facilities but do not adjust census data for redistricting purposes. Basically they are accused of “prison-based gerrymandering;” giving each vote in their under-populated districts more value, than in over-populated districts. This not only violates Federal Law – 14th Amendment’s equal protection clause; and the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that districts be drawn to be substantially equal in population (White v. Regester). Furthermore, it violates California Law:

“A person does not gain or lose a domicile solely by reason of his presence or absence from a place... while kept in an almshouse, asylum or prison.” (Cal. Elec. Code S 2025 (2010).”

The other issue is “Money”. That comes in the form of Government Funds and benefits. Marin County, is one of the wealthiest counties in California, surely they have no need for more than their fair share? These funds and benefits both counties are siphoning-off could be better used in the “rightful” counties of those prisoners paroling from prisons within Marin and Solano counties. The funds and benefits can be used for Re-entry Programs, Education, Employment, Health Care, Shelter, Public Works, etc. Instead, Marin and Solano are using their “enslaved” (13th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution) population to garner government benefits and funds beyond their need.

How many States are allowing prisoners to be counted in the wrong place? Surely most of you are aware of the Trump regime’s fight to return the “Citizenship Question” to the census questionnaire. However, many of you are oblivious to this practice of counting prisoners for Power

and Money; I can assure you your elected politicians – Mayors, Governors, Assemblymen/women and congressmen/women – are well aware of such Census data practices, yet they never raise it as a campaign issue; Why? Because Kajstura and Wagner, believe it is a threat to representative democracy.

From my stance on maa, a voice from death row.

CONTRIBUTOR DETAILS

Ojore McKinnon

FORM LETTER LETTER WRITING CAMPAIGN FOR #freeojorecampaign

Calif. Governor's Office
C/O Gavin Newsom
State Capital
1303 10th St. Ste. #1173
Sacramento CA 95814
Fax: 916 558 3160
Tel: 916 445 2841

Re: An Innocent Man on Death Row

Dear Governor Newsom,

May these words find you well and still remaining firm in the mind set, "The intentional killing of another person is wrong."

On March 13, 2019, you signed the order to halt all State "Murders" during your tenure as Governor. For this reason I address this letter to you. During your News Conference you stated, Quote: "I can not sign off on executing hundreds and hundreds of human beings, knowing that among them will be innocent human beings."

Crandell Mckinnon (CIDC# P-32800), is one of those "Innocent Human Beings." He has been on California's death row for two decades without State Habeas Corpus Counsel, which is a travesty of Justice on top of the Injustice I believe occurred in his case.

Your belief there are "Innocent Human Beings" on California's death row warrant you act with the same principled belief that inspired your moratorium. I employ you to do the "Right" thing by Crandell Mckinnon, Thank You!

An Advocate and Support of Justice for Ojore.

Sincerely,

SOME OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST MINDS ARE IN PRISON

Prison is a place where you can find scholars of every kind. The system can lock up a person's body but they can't incarcerate our minds. Right here, we have some of the world's greatest minds. We have scientists, mathematicians, and preachers. In fact, many of you have excelled in the most difficult of all politics – prison politics. These politics can get deadly and messy. But people in here network to make things happen on scales great and small. We must continue to apply ourselves and not settle for a label that society has placed upon us.

The mind can accomplish what it will. It is stronger than concrete; razor wire and steel. The mind is an architect that constructs the plans that build the structures that house the institutions that change the world.

Throughout history, it has been right here in these prisons where scholars have used their minds to change the world. For documented evidence of this we have the examples of Nelson Mandela and how his words, from his jail cell shook the world. It has been from these dungeons that some of the greatest words ever written have originated. These works came from the ink of a scholar's pen.

Look at the famous letter that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. wrote from the Birmingham jail cell that changed the course of the Civil Rights Movement that helped change the course of Kennedy's presidency. Angela Davis was interviewed in a California jail, inspiring a generation of Americans who wanted freedom for their communities. Paul wrote some of the New Testament of the Bible from a jail cell.

I declare today that some of the world's greatest minds are in prison. We can do what we put our minds to, and even these walls can't stop us. We can train ourselves to be legal scholars in order to obtain our freedom. We can get laws changed to benefit us. We can change this prison culture. All we have to do is put our minds and energy into it.

Through self-rehabilitation, we can transform ourselves. I am not a model prisoner because prison does not model me. Still, I am determined to be the best that I can be.

We have excellent examples of prisoners who have come before us. Jon Marc Taylor got his doctorate degree while in prison. Just think of the fortitude that it took to get a doctorate degree in a violent chaotic place such as prison. Imagine the hurdles that he had to overcome with the prison administration to get this done. Reflect on the obstacles that petty guards and small-minded inmates put in his way along the course that he was traveling on.

Picture the tens of thousands of dollars he had to pay for such a degree. Ponder a minute on the violence and ignorance that he was surrounded by in the different prisons while he pursued his degree and studied for his lessons with all the noise of these jails. The challenges that he faced would have been insurmountable for some people. Yet in his own right he was a prison scholar. His efforts and accomplishments prove that some of the world's greatest minds are in prison.

We must not allow our talents to go to waste. We have to organize our creative energy with haste. The library is full of hundreds of books that we must start reading. Right there in the library, we can train ourselves to be scholars. We are not meant to be crooks. We are sitting in prison because we were not great criminals. But we are psychologists, accountants, and professionals of all kinds. The world has locked up some of its greatest minds. Once we tap into our own greatness, we can free ourselves from prison.

The smartest people do some of the dumbest things. That's how so many great minds end up in these prison wings. We came into prison as the problem, but now we can be the solution and help to heal the world. We have to succeed against the odds and claim the greatness that each of us possess. It is from the lowest depths that greats of people has risen. Some of the world's greatest minds are in prison.



CONTRIBUTOR DETAILS
Bobby Bostic



Free Bobby Bastic

ADVICE I WOULD GIVE TO MY YOUNGER SELF

As I sit back and meditate on the many mistakes that I have made in life, I contemplate on the advice that I would give to my younger self. Then again, I wonder would he listen? My 14, 15, or 16 year old self thought that he had it all figured out. He rebelled against adults, because in his young mind they didn't know what they were talking about. How could they, since they couldn't see the world through his eyes. Ironically, now that I am older I see things differently.

When we are young we somehow put it in our minds that we will be young forever. How could we ever imagine that we would become those same adults that we rebelled against as we try to give positive advice to our own kids? I never lost touch with my youth; therefore I understand where that rebellion comes from. Yet my thinking has changed.

At 14, 15, and 16 years old I saw the world in the way that I wanted to see it. Back then it was only about what I wanted. That included girls, the latest fashions, car, gangbang and money. I didn't have a clue about the future, nor did I even care. Why? Because I never thought I would live to be 18 years old. All around me, my peers were getting killed, so it was just a matter of time before I would be next.

My mind was so closed back then. What was I thinking? The problem is that I wasn't thinking. Foolishly, without any rational basis I thought I knew it all. I would make dumb mistake after mistake everyday and not really give it a second thought. In my mind, my parents and other nosy adults did not know what they were talking about when they tried to give me positive advice regarding the decisions that I should be making in life. How could they understand me when they had not experienced what I have been through? Besides, this is not the 1970's or 1980's anymore.

Yeah, that little hardheaded fool that I was thought he had it all figured out. So what advice would I give him today? First I would have to put myself in his shoes so I could relate to his thinking. Now I realize that his thinking was distorted. Ground zero would be that he should listen to his mother. That is common sense; but when you are in your teenage rebellion it is not so logical. After all this time I have learned that it was my mother who was there to rescue me every time that I got into trouble. She was the one who cried because I wouldn't listen to her. I would do the very thing she

would warn me not to do. When my rebellion landed me in serious trouble she never gloated over my misfortune. On the contrary she was in pain with me as well as for me. When I rebelled against her advice and landed in trouble she never once said: "I told you so". Instead she was there every time I needed her, unlike my peers.

As a rebellious teenager it was always those same adults who tried to help me when I failed. I would tell my younger self to listen to my mother first of all. She loves you more than anyone else in the world. I would tell my teenage self to "slow down". I would let him know that every decision you make today will affect your quality of life tomorrow. Once these decisions are made you cannot change them; therefore you must give serious thought to what you are doing. The world doesn't owe you anything.

Don't spend all your time playing because this will cause you to have to work harder in the long run. Look at the bigger picture and don't just see what is right in front of you. Education doesn't seem all that important to you right now but it is the foundation stone of everything that you are after. This is the basics of life; you cannot skip over the basics to get into the luxuries of life. When you make mistakes, take timeout to evaluate how and why you made this mistake. Catch it before it becomes too big and irreversible. When someone asked you why you made that mistake, you often say: "I was not thinking". Well younger self, you need to start thinking.

I would again tell my younger self to take responsibility for what you do and stop blaming people for your blunders. I would ask my younger self where do you want to be 5 years from now? What steps are you taking to get there? You have to have a plan, and work that plan. As the old saying goes: "if you fail to plan, then you plan to fail". I know that you do not want to fail in life. You want to be successful. Crime is not the way to do that. First you have to learn what real success is. Right now your definition of success is distorted.

Study the greats in history that came before you and see how they found success from the ground up. Look to positive inspirational mentors. Even if your reality is hard, look to the future to see how it can one day become better. Work towards that. Do not try to escape reality through drugs and alcohol. Find creative ways to deal with your pain, anger and frustration. If you are misunderstood do not feel alienated. Just be who you are and accept yourself for who you are even if others don't. Face reality no matter how difficult it is. Try to change it. You are not helpless to make change in the world. You are not powerless. Do not just see what is wrong with the world and complain about it. See what you can try to do along with others to make the world a better place. Do not be selfish, it is always bigger than just you. Stay grounded and humble. If you do not like the bully, then never

become like that person. Do not make your choices strictly from peer pressure. The advice I would keep on giving to younger self is endless, but basically this sums it up. If you are a young teenager, please listen to me. My life is real. What happened to me at 16 years old is real. Read my story and make better decisions than I did.

CONTRIBUTOR DETAILS

Bobby Bostic



BROKEN PROMISES INSIDE A BROKEN PRISON SYSTEM

A broken prison system is designed to bring sadness and much loneliness to all who pass through the big steel gates, and the tall fences with yards of sharp, razor wire sitting on top stretching for metres around the premises.

Within these walls are many broken promises, are you one of them?

This is a system to degrade you with staff who are corrupt and turn up to work only to pay the bills.. turning the keys on their long chains, locking and unlocking cell doors, day and night... year after year, rechecking the padlocks, making sure they are securely locked tight... not once or twice but three times by different officers.

They perv on prisoners as they shower and as they do nightly muster checks with them self pleasuring themselves, then charging them for performing an indecent act... even though it is classified across the world as a normal/sexual physical act, something one does when they are missing their partner.

Inside many prisons across the globe there are billions of men, women and young teenagers of many races trying to survive in a very harsh environment, just waiting for that next broken promise to hit them in the face.

Black, dark clouds hang over us as our minds remind us of the many crimes we had committed each and every day, it's heartbreaking having to face pain and misery head on as our emotions brake under the pressure over the many days, months and possibly for some even years and years of incarceration.

The prison system makes sure you feel like a nobody away from your families and friends, sisters or brothers, aunts or uncles. They sit at home waiting for your safe return, will it ever come a reality? Especially when you have been sentenced to no chance of getting parole.

High fences and tall towers surround your cells with bright glowing lights shining down from above, cameras scan the premises below. Big Brother is watching your every move... day and night, year after year.

They make sure you don't smile, aren't cheerful or try to escape the large fortress you find yourself in because of whatever reason.

You lie in bed late at night wondering what tomorrow will bring, maybe the same shit you dealt with yesterday and the day before that.

You think about the young lad next door to you, will he come to breakfast in the morning or be petrified to show his face? I heard he is new to the prison system and possibly gay. But, I really don't care if he is or not, he is still a human being who deserves to be whoever he chooses to be without being harassed.

I take people as they are... gay, bi or straight, but, unfortunately there are some who are homophobic... they ask no questions and go straight to smashing their faces in. Then there are the one who take them for granted... annoy and pressure them till they cave in and give them a good time.

I've heard this newcomer weeping at night, maybe I should introduce myself, make him feel welcome. Afterall, I have been surrounded in this fuckin harsh environment for 30 years, and still counting. You may think I'm used to the continued bullshit by now. But no, I'm not... I will never get use to this sort of treatment by a large number of prisoners who I would call mentally insane... no matter what prison you get transferred to, the bullshit will follow you wherever you go.

What I am talking about is having a target placed on your back by other prisoners, my target was being wrongfully accused of being a sheep shagger... something which has been circulating for many years and is still around today.

I would like to direct this to the many bullies who have gone around believing this stupid rumour. I do wholeheartedly deny the rumour... do you understand? Or do I have to spell it out for you.

What if I was to say I have severely suffered physically and mentally because of the actions of those bullies who have intimidated and harassed me for many years. Would you take any notice of what I am saying now? Probably not, once a bully always a bully.

These bullies have seen this situation as being one big joke, it hasn't been all fun and games for me. Being picked on for what ever reason is surely not a very nice feeling.

However, I will say this... "the truth will set you free" and when that day comes I wouldn't expect any of these bullies to apologise for all the pain and misery they put on me.

As far as I am concerned they can all go to fuckin hell and burn, including the prison staff who have told me to deal with it and don't let it bother me.



CONTRIBUTOR DETAILS

Simon Evans

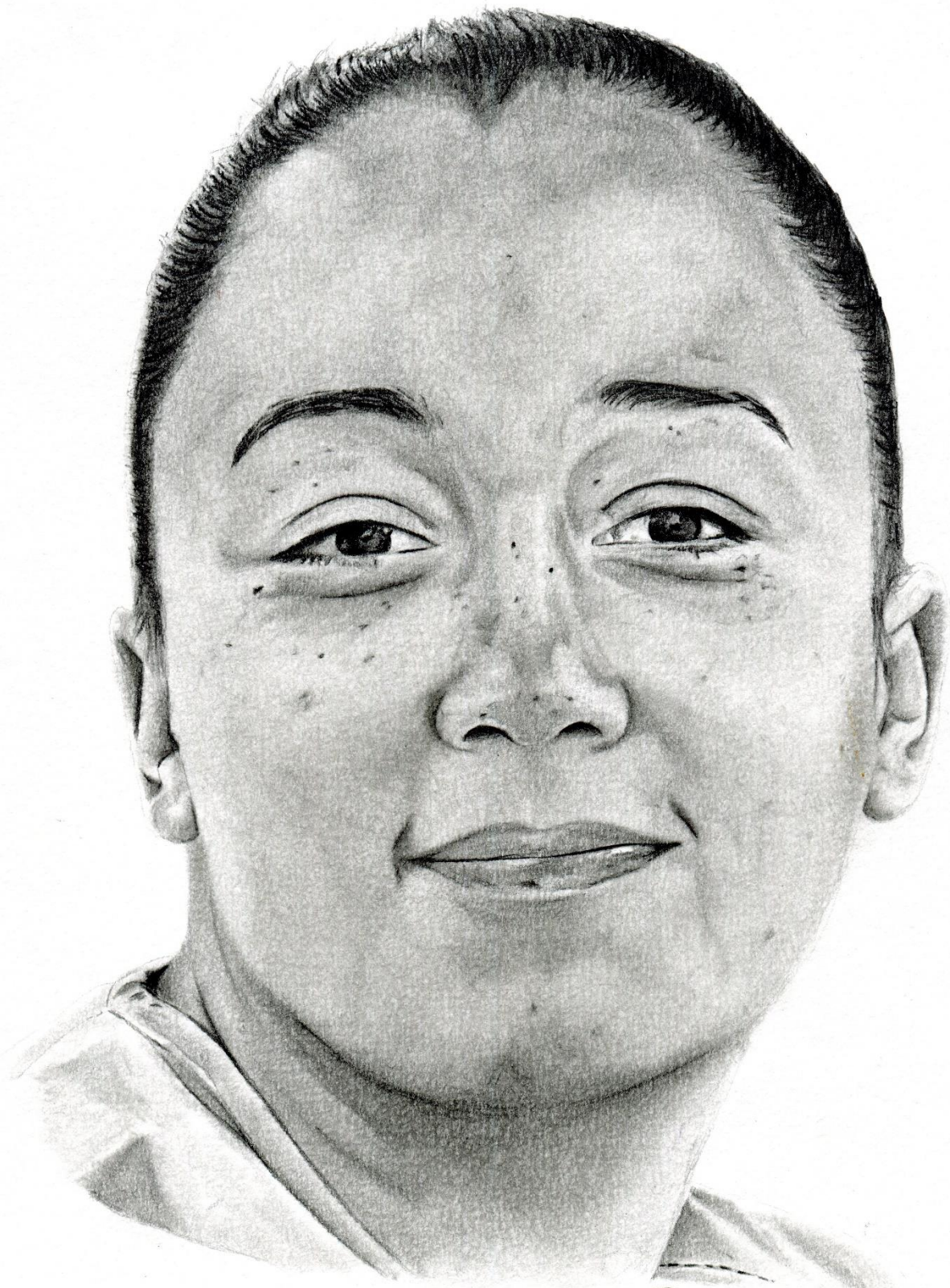
Age: 59 years young

Charge: Sexual assault on a 15 year old boy

Sentenced to: Preventive Detention (started on 24 May 1988)

Hobbies: drawing, nature/wildlife, cricket on tv, watching documentaries about countries/people/hunting and fishing, gardening, photography. Music: I enjoy listening to Rod Stewart, Elvis, Elton John, The Beatles, any easy listening music!

Note: Heading also hand-drawn by Simon



Damen Linnane 2020

GODLY BLACK & WHITE CREATIONS

Jason woke up after being asleep for eternity. He stumbled out of bed shoving his blankets to the floor, then walking to his parents bathroom in a daze, still slightly sleepy. Taking a gaze at his watch it read eleven o'clock. (Time for lunch he thought). Picking his hair in the mirror, making his mohawk faded fro, nicely shaped, he tippy-toed back to his room, not wanting to wake his parent's throwing his clothes on with magic ease. (Time to get something to eat), he thought. Jason was only twelve yrs. of age, a dark brown complexion, and very adorably small frame. He shut the house door behind him very quietly, catching the fresh breezily air of a small city called Lamirada in California. His parent's had just moved to this new area from West L.A., trying to get a better change of scenery, something different. They had only been in Lamirada for two days. Jason noticed in two days, however the people appeared different looking from the usual in South Central. The girls looked like kid barbie's to him, the girls around his age. Finally he made it to Burger King, which only was down the street from his new house with his parent's. Once he stepped in, the six kids and two grown ups just stared at him amazed having a broad smile on their face's. Jasmine and Maria, were twelve yrs. old. Jasmine had red hair, and freckles. Her dad was Irish. Maria had blonde hair and cute, small dimples. "Wow! Maria you see his hair? It looks different, he looks different." Jason caught them staring as he ordered a number two, special. (Man, thank god, god made every one different, they are beautiful), he mumbled staring at them. "Come on Maria, let's see if we can get him to come to our church." The both of the girls strolled up on him unexpectedly, making him turn a little nervously. "Hi, my name is Maria. This is my friend Jasmine, we were wondering if you would like to come to our church?" Maria spoke having a beautiful smile shaking his hand gently. He stared in her eye's in total shock, as she stared in his like no other kid before, having total happiness. Jasmine stared at him shyly and remained quiet. "Yes, definitely," Jason didn't hesitate to respond. "Can I touch your hair?" Jasmine had finally spoken. "Okay, cool," he answered. She patted his afro mowhawk while commenting, "It feels soft and nice, completely different." "So what's your number so you could come to our church tomorrow," Maria finished. He gave Maria his cell number, then heard his order being called, so he grabbed it and left, happy he met some new different girls. Finally making it home, he watched t.v. all day, while telling his parent's some girls wanted to pick him up tomorrow for church. His parent's was happy for him.

He fell asleep exhausted from the day going into a deep long sleep. Dreams flooded him, however strange good dreams of black & white colors of people in general across the world in harmony with each other. He awaken to a clock blaring, as staring at the clock on his nightstand that read 7:00 o'clock. (Man I have to get ready, the barbie's are coming to pick me up). His phone rang once before he answered, "hello" he spoke. "Were on are way, are parent's are coming to pick you up. What's your address?" Maria asked. He gave them his parent's address while hanging up, pressing

end to his smartphone. He brushed his teeth and pick his nice fitted mohawk afro. Finishing grooming himself he peered in his mother room to see her sound asleep, so he tippy toed out the front door to the porch. He sat there waiting to be picked up. Looking at his watch, it said 7:30am. (I wonder what type of church this is, that has all type of different people in it) he thought watching a brand new 2020 Honda Accord pull in the drive way. Jasmine and Maria waved at him smiling as he strolled happily to Jasmine mother's car. Her mother just smiled at him as if he belonged to see her smile. So he hopped in the back seat with Maria. "Hey you ready for the lord today?" the both of the girls spoke, while Jasmine mother drove off. "Of course my barbie." They started giggling hearing his humor. "You kids are something else," Jasmine mother spoke. "What's so funny, ya'll just remind me of barbie's," he said shyly laughing.

Maria finally spoken again, "It's just you call us barbie's we think that's funny. That's a good thing I guess." "By the way, were getting close to church, it's five blocks from here, you should like it," Maria finished. (Man, I wonder what type of people are at this church?) They pulled finally up to the church, the front, (Black & White Creation) it read. Jason saw with his own eye's, he couldn't believe it. He peered from left to right seeing nothing but black & white people. An also Mexican an Asian people, all color's. The beauteous people he has ever seen in his life. Jasmine and Maria, had a smile from left to right. Finally they all got out of Jasmine's mother car. All races crowded around the church laughing and talking, enjoying each others company, "Welcome to "Black & White Creations," they spoke at the same time laughing their butt off. (Wow! Was all Jason could mumble, before entering the most amazed church ever.

CONTRIBUTOR DETAILS

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REFLECTIONS, RUMENATIONS, RUMBLINGS & REGRETS — MY LIFE INSIDE

9 Jan 20

The person who coined the phrase “Hell is other people” very likely went through prison. Prison by itself is manageable. A stricter, perverted and meaner institution than – say – high school camps, to be sure, but one can still survive relatively intact. Provided, of course, one adheres to the rules (including those made up on the spur of the moment), keeps one’s head down, and remains considerate – and cautious – of others. Naturally, prisons are filled to brimming with those who resolutely refuse to consider any of those suggestions as applicable or attractive, or any other sociable recommendations, when it comes to it. Instead – as an example – the TV in the common room here is tuned into a digital radio station featuring pop tunes everyone has already heard ad-nauseum, the volume turned up to maximum. Everyone yells in order to be heard. It’s anti-social, it’s abusive, it’s insane. Even in my cell with the door closed, the noise is intense. If I want to hear the cell’s TV, I have to plug in my own earphones. Some inmates will talk over others in mid-conversation, invade personal space, put their hands all over private property, and numerous other actions which in normal society and social settings would raise the ire of even the most charitable and forgiving. Yet here, it is “normal”. When you’re autistic, Hell is definitely other people. When you’re sensitive about other people touching your stuff; when physical contact goes beyond a firm handshake (a big autistic no-no); when calm and quiet becomes a vanishing prospect, this environment is made Hell. It is not unusual for many autistics to suffer over-stimulation in relatively benign environments. In prison, with so many people crammed together and making noise and smells the way they do, it is hellish. Having a calm, quiet cellmate can make all the difference. Having one who is honest and respectful means not having to fear for property or personal safety. Lead by example when in doubt, and treat others as you would hope to be treated. Retreats like music, meditation, reading or sleep can only really work where noise pollution isn’t a concern. Hell is other people, but it doesn’t have to be all of them. Thank goodness for a good cellie.

14 Apr 20

On the TV, a mental health commentator speaking about how people can better cope with COVID-19-related isolation, recommended including the self-question: “what good can I do today?” It’s a sign of how much I have been affected by my prison experiences that my instant riposte was “it doesn’t matter what good you do – you will only ever be judged on what you have been accused of doing, which has brought you here.” Cynical much? Yet, this place is filled with the results of that very observation. Some here are philosophical, resigned to a perpetual sense of helplessness in the face of an implacable and mercenary legal system, especially those who lack funds to buy their freedom. At this time, with the country – the *world* – in lock-in lockdown, families are keeping themselves in isolation, resisting the urge to leave the house and engage with the outside world. Streets are left empty, and small businesses are either closed or out of business. All this leaves some here wondering what the difference is between inside the walls here and outside. Indeed, every day I get to leave where I live, go to work, walk back at day’s end and get locked in, safe from new intake, strangers, and carriers of goodness knows what. Nobody here is wearing face masks. True, we’re not being patted down by officers when leaving work; instead flicking up shirts, running fingers around waist elastic to show we’re not carrying contraband, but social distancing isn’t being enforced. At let-go in the morning, we’re asked to let officers know if we’re exhibiting flu-like symptoms. Visits have been cancelled, replaced by Skype calls, which have yet to manifest. In Italy, cancelled prison visits led to riots and deaths. Here, everyone just shrugs their shoulders, keeps calm and carries on. There are no fights. Barely an angry word is uttered. We’re all just getting on with it as best we can, looking at isolation on the news, and saying “welcome to our world”. Here’s hoping a vaccine isn’t too far away. Not just for the sake of inmates, but for everyone everywhere.

19 Jul 20

Walking laps of the yard this afternoon, listening to soothing music on my pocket radio and wondering why I have been more down in the dumps than usual today. A few thoughts have occurred to me. First and foremost, the prison environment is about as unnatural as it gets. Beyond a small and sorry patch of grass (more weeds than anything else) and the sky above, there is no connection with nature. No trees (beyond the tops of which are visible above the perimeter wall), no flowers, few birds prepared to fly over, only the rare, occasional insect visitor. It’s metal mesh fences, concrete walls, painted steel cells with stippled vinyl flooring. Other than the grass, the yard is either rubber matting around the exercise equipment, or concrete. The would-be alphas pollute the air with over-loud chatter and their music to exhaust and subjugate others acoustically, even with cell door closed. Something else playing on my mind has been an increasing sense of isolation. It is easier and easier to feel that few – if any – have any interest in the welfare of others. Yes, we all have our own crosses to bear, but many act surprised when asked if they are okay. Unconditional kindness can confuse. I

am regularly approached for advice or to be a shoulder to cry on, but my support is seldom – if ever – acknowledged or reciprocated. This only serves to exacerbate my own sense of loneliness and isolation. Then comes the memory of court the day after my arrest, and the dismissive gesture by the judge in my application for bail. The judge all but declared me guilty there and then with such ferocity, I realised soon after any presumption of innocence was a fiction. Being remanded in custody, and held and treated the same as sentenced inmates, is of itself the simple statement you are presumed guilty, held as a guilty party and will continue to be considered guilty until such time as you can prove otherwise. Meanwhile, a lengthy queue of profiteers benefit from the days that turn to months and then years as human-turned-into-commodity awaits sentencing. One no longer exists as a person, rather one is a something, a number to be organised and sparingly maintained. A prisoner is no longer a human, defined by identity or history, emotions, mental wellbeing or personality; rather measured by what can be got from them. To become a prisoner is to fall prey to those who willingly or wilfully consume others; to lose one's life-time to a psychopathic process of ignorant prejudice and systemic horror few outside these walls would condone if made fully aware of its design and machinations. Prison is the playground of psychopaths, run by sociopaths, a machine lubricated with human lives. This is not about correction (the few psychiatrists or psychologists who dare to tread here are for assessment – never for treatment), this is about punishment and profit. The worst monsters in society are not inside these walls; they are the ones who build these walls.

“Erasing a person or group from the face of the human map is a moral failing of the highest order.”
- Julian Burnside “Watching Out” (2017)

CONTRIBUTOR DETAILS

NSW Inmate on remand since 2018





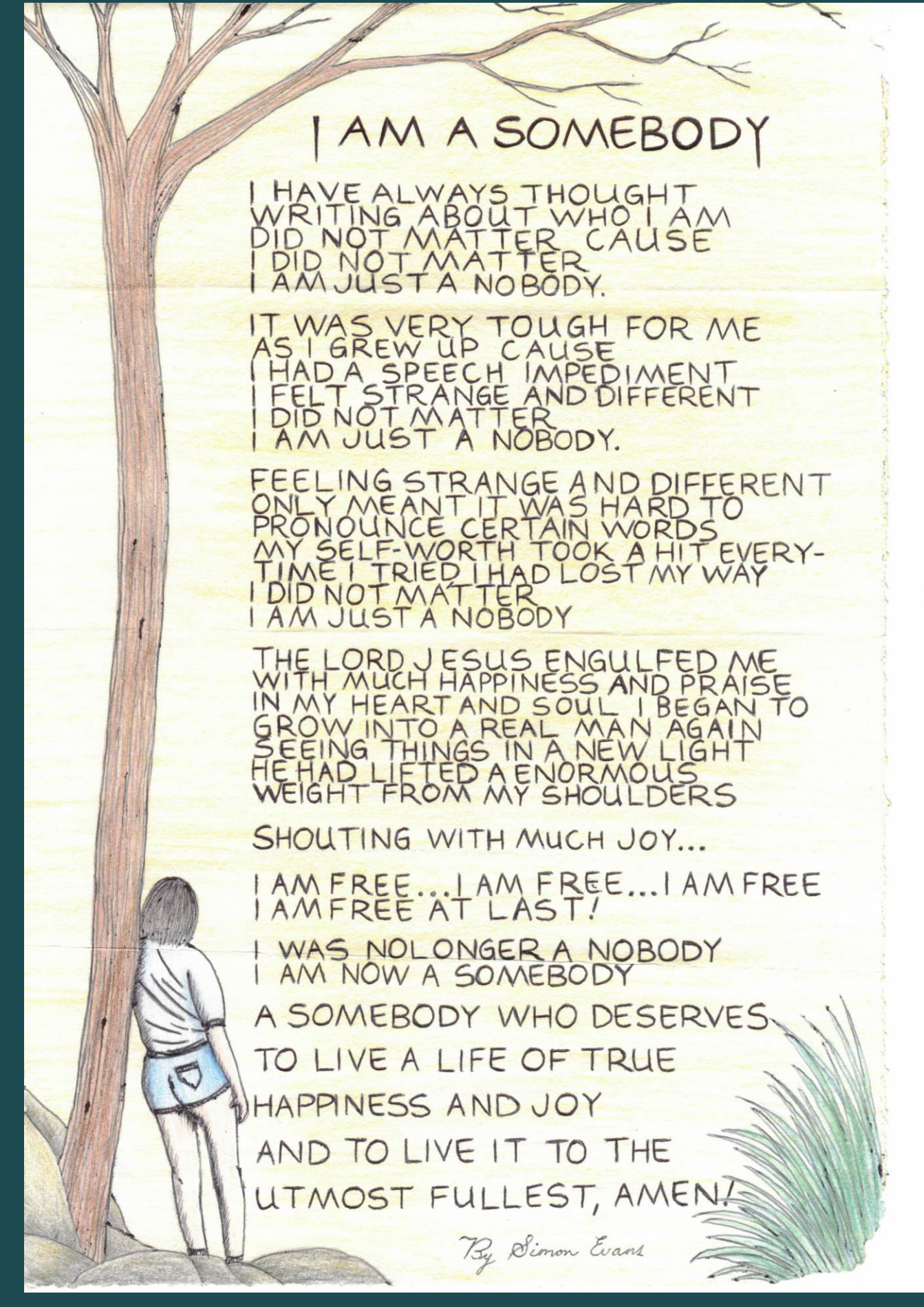
UNIT 29

In a two-man cage of straight rage, trapped in the belly of the beast. Horrific conditions transform man into a beast. Treated as I'm a terrorist in Guantanamo Bay. Confined as I'm doing time in this racist state. Human rights violated, while being treated bad. Waking up every day in a cage will drive you mad. Cold food, cold showers, no guards in the tower. Nod-G got stabbed to death left in the cell for hours... Who do we call on in a time that we need aid? I heard my grandma's voice say "Pray" in the back of my head. I prostrated to Allah and asked for relief. Rats & roaches in my cell make it hard to sleep. Suicidal thoughts swim through my head along with depression. I'm losing weight & getting grey hair from all this stressing. Water polluted worser than it is in Flint, forced to drink it to the only way to get your thirst quenched. Some are wrongfully convicted forced in these conditions. I ask myself am I living or am I just existing? This poem is a open letter as I do my time, to expose the Injustice going on in 29.

CONTRIBUTOR DETAILS

Darrell Craig

Currently incarcerated in Mississippi



I AM A SOMEBODY

I HAVE ALWAYS THOUGHT
WRITING ABOUT WHO I AM
DID NOT MATTER, CAUSE
I DID NOT MATTER,
I AM JUST A NOBODY.

IT WAS VERY TOUGH FOR ME
AS I GREW UP, CAUSE
I HAD A SPEECH IMPEDIMENT,
I FELT STRANGE AND DIFFERENT,
I DID NOT MATTER,
I AM JUST A NOBODY.

FEELING STRANGE AND DIFFERENT
ONLY MEANT IT WAS HARD TO
PRONOUNCE CERTAIN WORDS,
MY SELF-WORTH TOOK A HIT EVERY-
TIME I TRIED, I HAD LOST MY WAY,
I DID NOT MATTER,
I AM JUST A NOBODY.

THE LORD JESUS ENGULFED ME
WITH MUCH HAPPINESS AND PRAISE
IN MY HEART AND SOUL, I BEGAN TO
GROW INTO A REAL MAN AGAIN,
SEEING THINGS IN A NEW LIGHT,
HE HAD LIFTED AN ENORMOUS
WEIGHT FROM MY SHOULDERS.

SHOUTING WITH MUCH JOY...

I AM FREE... I AM FREE... I AM FREE
I AM FREE AT LAST!

I WAS NO LONGER A NOBODY
I AM NOW A SOMEBODY

A SOMEBODY WHO DESERVES
TO LIVE A LIFE OF TRUE
HAPPINESS AND JOY
AND TO LIVE IT TO THE
UTMOST FULLEST, AMEN!

By Simon Evans