

FROM: 10157091

TO:

SUBJECT: #21 - When I Am Free (To My Family)

DATE: 04/01/2012 03:17:19 PM

If you have been directed to this page, it is because you mean enough to me for me to reach out to you in an attempt to establish a connection and to find understanding. Whether or not you respond is up to you.

If you have somehow found this on your own, it is either because I could not locate you, and someone else did, or because you do not fall into the first category, meaning I did not want you to find this page. Take your pick. You probably know where you stand by now.

I know I sound rude. I agree. My reasons will be discussed shortly.

Prison has taught me many things. None of them have been good. Not one. I have learned anger, fear, ignorance, greed and hate. I have seen violence, blood and death. This has without a doubt been the most desolate five years of my life, and it is something I never want to experience again.

Separation, from my family, from life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, has also taught me many things. From this I learned guilt, faith, strength and self-confidence. I learned how to swallow my pride and apply myself to my work. I also learned to be sober and want sobriety. I would have learned the same lesson trapped in a cave for five years.

I have changed. I fear that many of you expect me to come back repaired, like a car with a loose fan belt, like I just came to prison to get a tune up and a wash and now we can pay the mechanic and go home happy.

I'm sorry, but it isn't going to happen that way. The difficult part is not over, it's only becoming different. There are parts of me that are gone forever. There are pieces of your son, grandson, cousin, nephew, brother, lover or friend that are dead, the good parts that may or may not return and the bad parts that I hope never do. I have had to make physical and mental sacrifices in order to make it through this and in turn, you all have been asked to do the same many times over.

Now I have to make sacrifices in order to return. Whether or not you make those sacrifices with me is again up to you.

I don't expect anyone to believe me when I say I've learned my lesson. I've "learned my lesson" before and I've always found a way to justify forgetting it; I don't know if I believe myself either. I do know that I don't want to be the cause of any more pain. I guess we'll all just have to wait and see if I figured it out this time. Words mean nothing without action.

I have established contact with four separate job placement organizations for inmates, one correspondence course on PC repair, and one potential place to live. I have also written letters to my probation officer and received information from the transitional home where I will temporarily be housed. On top of that, I have sources for online resume accounts, student/housing loans and grants, and basic needs such as personal identification, food and clothing. These are my actions. I'm letting you all know that I'm trying to accomplish all that I can. There are just some things that you will have to let me do on my own.

I've thought for awhile and decided that I don't know quite how to end this. I do want to thank those of you that have maintained contact with me during this hard time of my life. For those that haven't, don't come asking me for anything when times are easy again. When I made bad choices, you either were or were not there. It will remain the same when I'm making good choices.