

# - THE BULLET -

It was January 5, 1998, a few months before I would come to prison. It felt like something I have never felt before. I guess I was expecting for it to be like it was in the movies, but it was nothing like that at all. I would hear stories from others of how it feels to get shot, but despite that, it was still a unique feeling that only I could experience and no one else. I heard the shots, but the denial in my mind told me that there were only firecrackers and nothing else. Suddenly, my leg felt different than it usually did. I told myself that something is wrong ~~down~~ <sup>down</sup> there and I better take a look and see what's wrong. Once I took a look down at my left thigh, I saw the blood, and it was so much of it that it scared me to death. Now reality has set all the way in, I've just been shot. I get these weird thoughts and visions in my mind of my mother standing at my grave crying, I see visions of the police and coroner standing over me. Now I need to get to a hospital fast before I bleed to death! My soul starts talking to me: "Well Michael, you've done it this time and now you're about to die. If only you would have listened to everyone, but no, you had get yourself killed." I'm running down the street, holding my leg, in search of some kind of help. People look at me as if I'm crazy. I try to flag a car down and the people inside the car lock their doors. Well, maybe my soul is right, maybe I am going to die. Well, if I'm going to die, I think I need to pray and ask God to please forgive me for all the wrong I've done to others and myself. I hear an ambulance and a cop car somewhere and suddenly I see paramedics cutting my jeans open, I guess so they can stop the bleeding. I'm laying on the ground, looking

up at the night sky. On this night for some reason the sky seems so pretty. I feel them lifting me on a stretcher and next thing you know I realize I am in an ambulance. Once we make it to the hospital, I feel them rolling me through the doors on a stretcher, I hear the doctor yelling out to other people, it sounded as if he was saying something about my blood type. After that I passed out and that's all I remember.

When I woke up the next morning I didn't know what to think. I did know that I had got shot the night before. The doctor came in and explained everything to me. He told me that I had lost a lot of blood and the bullet had hit one of my main arteries. He told me that I am very lucky to be alive.

It took a few months before I could gain my strength to walk ~~at~~ again. The bullet left a nasty scar on my left thigh. This was the only ~~time~~ time in my life where I got shot, and it almost killed me. I can't help to think what would have happened if the ambulance didn't come fast enough, or if I would have bled to death. I can't help but to think about all this. I see stories all the time where people get shot and bleed to death because they can't get to the hospital fast enough. In fact, I had a friend who recently got out of prison a few months ago who I found out had got shot in the stomach and tried to drive himself to the hospital but he didn't make it in time and he passed away. That gives me a lot to be thankful for. For some reason, beyond my understanding, God ~~opened~~ gave me another chance. In 2002, I reconnected with my older sister who I hadn't seen in over 15 years. She told me that during the time we ~~were~~ <sup>were not in</sup> contact, she was praying for me. She didn't know at the time that I had got shot. Eventually I told her and told her that I was okay.

I see so many news reports on television of people being killed in the outside world. It seems as if there's some kind of killing happening everyday around the country and the world. To be honest, sometimes it scares me because I don't want to get out of prison and get shot or killed because I was waiting in line to buy a subway sandwich and someone came in the restaurant and just for no reason, decides to just start shooting people. Maybe I am a bit paranoid, I don't know, but I can't help to think about these things from time to time. No doubt this experience scared me, and it also let me know and realize how precious life really is.