

acvk

Dear Calhoun25,

December 9, 2015

I'd like to start off by apologizing for how long it's taken for me to reply to your response. At the end of May, I was transferred out of the California Men's Colony (CMC) East Facility to the Mule Creek State Prison (MCSP). My first order of business was to send out a notice to the organization running this site, but I just learned that they've been having staffing difficulties, resulting in some pretty extreme delays in processing incoming blog submissions, change of addresses, and of course, any responses posted to our submissions. While things like this can certainly be frustrating, it's nevertheless understandable, given the entirely voluntary nature of those posting our submissions, mailing out the responses, processing address changes, etc. Delay or not, I'm just glad there's someone out there willing to help out.

That being said, in regards to your response, as a prisoner with no access to the Internet, I've no way of knowing whether or not my entries are even being read, let alone what people think about them, so when someone like you takes the time out to post a response, it means the world to me. I think that's because the single most difficult thing to deal with in here isn't the violence or the corruption, it's the overwhelming loneliness, and replies like yours help erase that loneliness, even if only for a moment.

As far as posting the letter to my daughter, when I was growing up, my parents got divorced when I was still in diapers, after which he moved out of state. Not once growing up did I see him, get a letter or even a Christmas card from him. Not once did my mother fail to pass up an opportunity to put him down, and it really messed with my head. When I grew up, I went out to find him, and when I did, he told me all these stories about how he tried to be a part of my life, but how everyone worked so hard to stop him. It sounded good, but the problem with his stories was that they had nothing whatsoever to back them up. He wasn't able to pull up a single document from the court to prove that he'd tried to get custody, visitation privileges, or even permission to call, nor could he show me a single letter or card he'd bought for me as a kid. Those facts bothered me when I was 18, the first time I'd seen him after more than a dozen years, and they bother me now, after not having seen him since then, and I swore then and there that I'd never put any child of mine in the same predicament. I might not be able to be a part of my child's life at this point-in-time, but when that time does finally arrive, I want to be able to show her, to prove to her, that I've always had her in my thoughts and prayers. Posting the letter, as opposed to just keeping it with the rest I've written, was a response to a request I had from a friend I shared it with. He thought it might be good advice for other parents to pass along.

And your story about the man paralyzed from the waist down was right on the money, and reminded me of someone. When I was younger, I met a man who was paralyzed from the neck down, the result of a freak volleyball accident. His family was extremely well off, but rather than using this as an excuse to sit on his back doing nothing, he decided to ignore what he'd lost and focus on what he had left, using it to take care of himself. The last time I seen him, he was some sort of accountant for my uncle, a feat that's grown no less impressive over the years.

Well, time grows short, so I'm going to go ahead and wrap this up for now. With any luck, I'll be able to catch the news and find out the latest insane comment Trump's made before turning in for the night. Before I leave though, I'd like to wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

As always, anyone wishing to respond can do so by one of several ways. You can either leave your response here at the site, or you can e-Mail it to me at the address listed below, where a friend of mine will download, print and mail it to me. Last, but certainly not least, even if it is a bit neglected in this modern day and age, you can always write to me using snail mail at the address listed below.

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