

MAGGIE,

FOR SOME REASON I FEEL THE NEED TO DEFEND MYSELF TOWARDS YOU VERBALLY. I FEEL SOMEWHAT ATTACKED BY YOU. WHEN YOU ACCUSE SOMEONE OF SOMETHING OF WHICH THEY HAVE NO OPPORTUNITY TO DEFEND THEMSELVES, I JUST FEEL SOME TYPE OF WAY ABOUT IT. SO I'LL FEED IN TO YOUR LAST RESPONSE THAT I JUST RECEIVED. I ASSUMED YOU WERE A MAN BECAUSE AT ONE TIME I READ THAT YOU SAID YOUR WIFE WAS SAYING SOMETHING TO YOU. SO NATURALLY I ASSUMED YOU WERE SOMEONE ELSE. MAYBE I READ IT WRONG, BUT I THOUGHT THAT'S WHAT I READ AND I FELT ATTACKED. SO I APOLOGIZE FOR THAT.

I WASN'T DISTURBED AS YOU CALLED ME WHEN I WAS FREE. I WAS AN ASSHOLE KID WITH A CHIP ON MY SHOULDER, AN ATTITUDE PROBLEM & I HAD A TOUGH GUY COMPLEX. I WAS BULLIED IN JUVY, IN SCHOOL, IN LIFE, SO AS A KID I LEARNED HOW TO BE HARD, SHOW NO FEELINGS, NOT ALLOW PEOPLE TO TREAT ME LIKE I WAS GARBAGE. I DON'T EXAGGERATE NOR HAVE BLATANTLY LIED IN A VERY LONG TIME. I WASN'T DISTURBED, I WAS A LOST KID WHO DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO BE A MAN, SO I RELIED ON MY JUSTINE AND HER MOM FOR EVERYTHING.

AS FOR RON, I'M SORRY I KILLED YOUR FRIEND. HE DIDN'T DESERVE TO DIE BUT I HAD NO IDEA HE WAS THE NEIGHBORHOOD PERVERT. I WAS ON PAROLE AND I NEEDED A PLACE TO LIVE OR I WOULD HAVE BEEN SENT BACK TO THE COUNTY JAIL. I WAS ON PAROLE FOR A STRING OF BURGLARIES IN BENSLEM. I WAS HOMELESS IN THE WINTER OF 1996/1997. IT WAS A BRUTALLY COLD TIME AND I WAS SLEEPING OUTSIDE. SO I CHOSE TO TAKE THE EASY WAY OUT, BECAUSE I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO DO IT THE RIGHT WAY, SO I BEGAN COMMITTING CRIMES TO KEEP MYSELF OFF THE STREETS. I LIVED IN THE MOTELS OFF OF ROUTE 1 I THINK IT WAS. I WAS 19 & HOMELESS. THAT'S HOW I STARTED THIS DOWNFALL. BUT THEN I MET JUSTINE & HER FAMILY GAVE ME A HOME. BUT I STILL HAD THAT ATTITUDE PROBLEM, THAT CHIP ON MY SHOULDER & I TRUSTED NO ONE.

I MET ALL THE NEIGHBORS, NOT 1 PERSON TOLD ME RON WAS GAY. HE WAS KIND TO ME, HE WAS A NICE PERSON, I NEVER ACTUALLY KNEW HE WAS GAY UNTIL THE NIGHT I KILLED HIM. PEOPLE TOLD ME THEY THOUGHT HE WAS GAY BUT THAT'S IT. I NEVER HAD REAL CONFIRMATION. I ON THE OTHER HAND AM NOT GAY. SO YOUR WAY OF THINKING IS REALLY OFF BASE. RON WAS NOT IN HIS 60'S, ACCORDING TO MY COURT PAPERS HE WAS IN HIS 50'S. YOU SOUND LIKE THE D.A. WHEN YOU MENTION HIS CANCER. HE HAD A NON FATAL FORM OF SKIN CANCER. RON WAS PRETTY STRONG FOR THE FRAIL OLD MAN YOU DESCRIBE, I WAS ON THE RECEIVING END OF A PUNCH FROM HIM SO I KNOW. WHEN I CAME TO PRISON, I WAS 5'8", 150 POUNDS. RIGHT NOW I FEEL LIKE AN IDIOT FOR FEELING LIKE I NEED TO DEFEND MYSELF TO YOU. I'VE BEEN ATTACKED BY PEOPLE MY WHOLE LIFE, SOME TIMES IN JAIL, SOMETIMES OUT OF JAIL, SOME TIMES IT'S JUSTIFIED, SOME TIMES IT'S NOT. BUT FACT IS, HE PUNCHED ME FIRST THAT NIGHT AND IF THAT WOULDN'T HAVE HAPPENED, HE'D PROBABLY STILL BE ALIVE RIGHT NOW.

AS FOR LOVE, BACK TO THIS AGAIN, I AM NOT GAY. I'M STILL REPULSED BY IT. AND IF YOU SAW ME, YOU PROBABLY SAW JUSTINE. SHE CAME TO STAY WITH ME MOST NIGHTS WHEN I LIVED AT SALEM HARBOR. I FOUND THE LOVE I WAS SEARCHING FOR, SHE HAS BEEN BURIED NOW 14 1/2 YEARS. I'M LOOKING FOR PURPOSE, MEANING, SOMETHING MORE THAN JUST SITTING HERE DOING NOTHING POSITIVE WITH MY LIFE. AFTER CAUSING SO MUCH DESTRUCTION FOR SO MANY YEARS, I FEEL THE NEED TO DO SOMETHING POSITIVE, CONSTRUCTIVE. SO MANY PEOPLE IN HERE ARE FOCUSED ON BEING GAY, GETTING HIGH, BEING IN GANGS, DOING ANYTHING THEY CAN TO CAUSE TROUBLE. I AM TRYING TO TAKE THE LEAD & BE A POSITIVE INFLUENCE ON MY COMMUNITY, ESPECIALLY THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY. DID I COMMIT A HORRIBLE CRIME, YEAH. DO I REGRET IT? FOR SO MANY REASONS YES I DO. BUT THIS CANNOT BE WHAT DEFINES ME FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE. I HAVE ALWAYS STRIVED TO DO BETTER, & I JUST LEARNED THAT STRIVED IS NOT A WORD. IT'S STROVE OR STRIVEN. I DESIRE TO BE BETTER. THE OLDER PEOPLE ARE, THE LESS LIKELY THEY CAN CHANGE ANYTHING. THE AVERAGE 60 YEAR OLD WILL NOT CHANGE MUCH ABOUT THEMSELVES BECAUSE THEY ARE SO SET IN THEIR WAYS. I'M 39, I HAVE PLENTY OF ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT & I HAVE THE TIME TO DO IT. YOU ON THE OTHER HAND, YOU ARE SO INVESTED IN HATING ME, YOU'LL NEVER SEE YOUR OWN FLAWS SO YOU'LL NEVER CHANGE. NOT ALL OF US HAD THE SAME UPBRINGING. SOME OF HAD HARDER LIVES, WHAT IMPRESSES ME MOST IS THE ONES WHO OVERCAME THAT & SUCCEEDED. THATS WHAT I AM WORKING ON NOW. DO YOU HONESTLY BELIEVE THAT A 21 YEAR OLD IS SET FOR LIFE IN THE WAY THEY ACTED? IN PRISON THERE ARE CERTAIN THINGS YOU CANNOT WALK AWAY FROM, BUT I'M PRETTY WELL LIKED BY ALL THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES, THE GANGS DON'T BOTHER ME BECAUSE THEY SEE I AM DEEPLY INVESTED IN THE CHURCH & HELPING EACH OTHER IN HERE. I TRY NOT TO CURSE, I HAVEN'T HAD TO FIGHT IN QUITE A FEW YEARS, I'VE MADE ALOT OF IMPROVEMENT IN BETTERING MYSELF. SOMEONE MY MOM CAN BE PROUD OF. MY DAUGHTER WAS TAUGHT THAT HER PAST WILL NOT DEFINE WHO SHE GROWS UP TO BECOME. MY CRIME WILL NOT DEFINE WHO I AM OR WHO I BECOME.

LIFE IS NOT A TV MOVIE. IN THE MOVIES, WHEN A MAN IS ACCUSED OF A CRIME THAT HE DID NOT DO, HE DOESN'T JUST SIT THERE QUIETLY WHILE HIS LAWYER DOES EVERYTHING. IN REAL LIFE, YOU SEE EMOTIONS, ANGER, FRUSTRATIONS, LASHING OUT. AND THAT WAS ME. 18 YEARS LATER, I AM NOT ONLY THE MAN WHO TOOK A LIFE.

MAYBE ONE DAY YOU'LL REALIZE THAT PEOPLE CAN CHANGE, WE ALL MAKE BAD CHOICES, MISTAKES, AND WE DO NOT HAVE TO ALWAYS BE THAT BAD CHOICE. IF TOOKIE WILLIAMS CAN CHANGE, WHY CAN'T I? YOU ARE VERY JUDGMENTAL, BUT THATS HUMAN NATURE. BUT YOU DON'T KNOW ME. YOU KNOW A BAD MISTAKE I MADE ALMOST 20 YEARS AGO. THE JUVENILE LIFERS ARE BEING GIVEN ANOTHER CHANCE, SO I THEY CAN CHANGE, WHY CAN'T I? WILL YOU ALWAYS JUDGE ME FOR MY WORST MOMENT IN LIFE? WE CAN ALL CHANGE MAGGIE. GOD BLESS, CIAO.