

Letter to Daniel Tutka & Others Interested

Tu écrire un peu (ou plus) français pas? Alors tu vas comprendre cette locution. Dis moi, s'il vous plaît, pour que je vais connaître.

Hopefully I wrote that ↑ grammatically correct!

Anyway, thank you for your encouragement & help.

Oui, I struggle to change the world. As Mark Twain said, in kinder words, "The world appears to be run by idiots or intelligent comedians playing a joke on us." (Personally, I believe that those running the world are idiots and being serious — voilà Donald Trump & crew — or brilliant yet sadistic comedians.)

What choice do we have? (I never saw you as someone who could be a bystander to human tragedy....)

Anyway, thanks for the postcard. Wish you put your return address on it, so I could mail you some drawings for your kids to play with until they crumbled. I do like weird, interesting postcards.

Now that I know your children's names, I will create a short story for them. You should be able to see a story of mine, "Karma," on prisonerexpress.org, posted for the Jan. 2018 Photo Theme Essay — it's for young people & a nice story. (I write horror stories, etc., too.)

* Speaking of stories.... You offered to help me get my autobio published. You can help me do so by going to www.prisonlives.org and funding an account, as they help prisoners get books published. *

At present, I have an autobiographical book of poems/songs & art, which everyone who's seen/read parts of likes. It's 50 pgs, so shouldn't cost a lot to get published, on smashwords.com. Once it's published, I hope it will attract interest & help, so I can publish more of my books, eventually the autobiography.

Lately I've been sidetracked/distracted from my personal efforts, as I've been helping mentally ill prisoners sue for decent treatment. For example, last week the guy next to me cut part of his ear off and apparently ate it — the psychologist (Dr. Stacey Hoem) yelled at him, saying he was "playing" crazy! There are no other prisoners helping others.

You said that you bought a Mark Twain audio book for your kids. You lived by the Mississippi, so you can tell your kids that, while they listen to Tom Sawyer with you — it ought to impress them. I did a lot of fishing and exploring on the Mississippi and its sloughs. You'll need to explain America's history of slavery and treatment of Indians/Native Americans, so they will understand the story better.

Our prison system, in WI and in most states, does not give real chances. Bureaucrats say that they do, but they don't. Most guys never had a chance — it's no coincidence that most of us came from poverty, had abusive, drug addicted, mentally ill parents. These guys are uneducated, but they aren't so stupid that they don't understand how unfair the system has always been to them — many hate the world because it's turned its back on them, then took a dump on them & called them stinky.

For some reason I haven't given up on everybody and I'm still fighting.

By the way, you said you think prison "should not only...punish," which suggests that you think it should punish. Most people think so, but that thought isn't rational, particularly not in the case of people with long sentences. The belief is based on tradition, assumptions, not reason. See, punishment must continuously worsen or people get used to it & it's no longer "punishing" them; in other words, a punitive system must grow more & more inhumane, more calloused, more oppressive, which is what has happened in WI. That punitive mind-set infects

a government, beyond just the part that constitutes the prison system. The whole government gears towards punishment, towards controlling, enslaving the people versus serving and protecting them. Possibly worse, prisoners subject to constant punishment and efforts to degrade them come to hate the system & the voters who permit it to exist — the system hardens criminals versus nurturing empathy or at least sympathy.

Some housewives accept being beaten/abused by the fools who say that they love those wives, but not me. You either gotta love me or hate me — not both.

As disgusting as I find some crimes committed by those around me, I know that punishing anyone (systematic degradation, employed by the prison system) for over 20 years or over 10 years, or over 5 years, or 1 year — it serves no valid purpose, helps no one & hurts many. It needs more explaining, but this conclusion is valid.

To fund locking more people up, Wisconsin took hundreds of millions from its college system, took money from child-care programs that would prevent at least some kids from growing up into criminals. This is one example that suggests stupid people are running the world, and they're serious.

Well, Dan, I'm glad I met you 20 years ago. Glad you chose to contact you, & I wish you & your family the best. You're one out of over 7 billion people who respects me as a human and chooses to be part of a "society" with me. It's just you & Professor Zigmund — you can e-mail him at zigmund@pitt.edu — for now, but, hopefully, growing.

My Best,

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