

I AM NOT AN ANIMAL.

*I am human.
I do feel.
I live.
I deserve.
I have worth.
I am me.
I deserve to be.
I know.
I have talents.
I does not mean, I only!
I can use "I" wisely.
I am an artist.
I am a writer.
I am loved.
I am remembered.*

*I am cold.
I am lonely, I admit.
I am worried.
I don't know what to do.
I don't know what to expect.
I don't know.
I am often overlooked.
I am sometimes forgotten.
I don't like me, often.*

*If I scream; no one will hear.
If I am gone, not many will know.
My mutilated ashes, the prison
will keep, unless claimed.*

*I am not that animal.
I am human. I am me. I am still to see.*



I write this following post as a rant--not knowing what, right now to expect. I am distraught at the moment. I'm just worried about how the next few weeks will go--and then, there's next year!

Good has happened--and bad--this year.

I hope that my final years go easier.

I need something good to happen. My hair just gets grayer and grayer as the days pass me by. So many people try to hurt me in this world: If they'd only take the time to know me, not who I was--who I am.

I know I've bounced around here, and got all over the place. I'm not speaking about any one in particular--I'm just venting. I'm stuck here in this Inferno, and I'm surrounded by junkies and child molesters. I see their behavior, their games, the supportive family of fellow Chesters most of them have, and I see how they play games on women.

I can't do ANYTHING about it.

My wife went on to fall victim to one, and it's all MY FAULT, and I hate myself for it. None of it would have happened if I'd never went to prison. I care very deeply for Jaime, and want to keep her as a friend for life--and I'm not talking pick up the kids every other week, go to the Christmas play cordiality--I'm talking close friends. I want her to have a good life. Get married to a descent man, have a home, and a safe and normal life.

Why? Why care? Why concern myself?

Why should she care what I think?

What gives me the right to be part of her life?

Love.

If you've ever truly loved a person: no matter what, you will be by that person's side. That's one of the ways that I measure love. Look at my situation, for example--anyone that ever actually loved me, would not sit by and let me go through this alone. The fact that Jaime does now communicate with me, tells me she does care, and that we could build a good friendship. I know that when I get out of prison, build my new life, and remarry (because I do want a wife), Jaime will be happy for me. And that's my plan. I don't know what my future holds, I could very well be dead before this post hits the Internet, considering the drama going on here in S.C. prisons. And that, is another reason I'm worried so much about those I love--I feel deep in my being that my years are numbered. I mean, you ever get that feeling, when you just know that you're approaching your last years? Maybe I'm just tired. Jaded.

Or, just sad.

I work ALL DAY--EVERY DAY! I want these projects finished in my life. Even if I never see a penny from my books, I want my kids to have them. I want my art out there in the world. I want proper closure, so that I can die in peace. Even if it's on a cold prison floor.

The fact that Candice reached out to me after so long, really means a lot to me, and it makes me feel like less of a piece of crap--like so many others have tried to make me feel. And she's right--I do deserve better than to constantly be belittled. Everyone does.

My wrinkles, and my gray hairs--are not from wisdom earned, but wisdom that has been forced upon me by years upon years of pain. But,

with the people who care about me, now showing back up in my life, and saying that they are here to stay--that I can tell them anything, and they will always be there for me. That gives me strength! It gives me hope. It gives me self-esteem that I so much needed.

The things I do are NOT self-serving.

For a long time, I've had no value on myself.

I don't feel that I'm god's gift to anything or anyone. I don't feel that I'm special, or "worth it" for anyone. But, I do know that I'm a good person, I have skills and talents, I care about the well being of other people (even strangers), and I'm honest. Too honest, sometimes, because I say things that people don't necessarily want to hear. It's cost me friendships.

I think that communication is the most important thing.

If you are someone I've pissed off, disappointed, or offended in any way--then please, tell me! Don't just ghost me, or hold it in. Talk to me about it, because I assure you, it can be worked out. Either way, I apologize to you now.

Thank you **Candice**, for being there for me ... for coming out of nowhere when I never expected it--and reminding me of who I am. Of what worth. It brings me to tears to think of you. For the past 19 years, I thought I was NOTHING to you, just some guy you'd knew, that you walked away from and never gave a second thought, and it remained a pain in heart that affected me in all of my future relationships. I am happy for you and your family--I truly am--and I hope that they can find it in their hearts to understand why we want to be friends. I do want you in my life, and I value your opinion greatly. Just the little advice that you've given me so far, has changed my entire outlook on life. I hope to hear from you again soon. I have so much more I want to tell you--and the fact that you're willing to let me unburden my pain like that, shows how amazing you are. And, you know, I have no hard feelings or animosity towards you mother either--in fact, I'm glad that all of you are still together, and happy. I'm sure she loves being a grandma :) and being so close to the kids. Life is just, way too short, and moments like that with the kids, they're priceless. I just want your family to know that I pose no danger to you, and that all I need is a friend. A "constant" in my life, as you put it; because that would make these final years of mine a lot less painful.

I know I REALLY Went all over now! But, I want to add: I know you're reading this **Opal**, and you need to leave Jaime (and Candice) alone. Jaime is not a threat to the kids, at all! She is doing great, and her life is on track to do great things. She just needs everyone to support her recovery, and stand by her. (Candice is living her own life, minding her own business, when you drug her into all of this--but, I thank you, because without your meddling, I probably would not have ever heard from her). As for you, maybe we need to talk, and sort out these unresolved issues you seem to have concerning me. Let's try to get you some closure so that you can let go of these grudges. Life is too short. However, in closing, let me congratulate you on the kids. You did a good job--they grew up to be awesome! I'm proud.

They should meet Shylynn and Collin!

Collin has actually asked to meet them, and wants to....

I'm sure Shylynn would like to also.

So, think about reaching out to them, and unite the siblings.

Who knows what could become of them knowing each other? Family is everything, and you, Skyler, and Jaime, should try to get them together. At least once. I'll pay the cost of the whole endeavor if needed. I'm sure you could all meet for dinner somewhere--my treat....

If Skyler is reading this--Merry Christmas. And, I am sorry for all, and any, wrongs I ever done to you. I'm glad to see that you are happy. You deserve to be treated good. The last conversation we had, we parted by wishing each other good luck in wherever our life took us; and, I meant it. I really did. You said yourself, that I'd "snapped" and "changed" in those months of 2006. And, you're right, I did, and I'm sorry--I cry as I even type this--but know that my whole world fell apart that year, and all of the pain of my entire life came bearing down on me all at once. I know it's no excuse for ANY of my behavior. But, Skyler ... some of the things you told Jaime, and others, were not true.

I think enough bad stuff did happen, that you don't need to hype anything up, fabricate, or exaggerate. But, I forgive you, and I guess, I deserved whatever you felt dishing out. I know you wanted to push Jaime away from me, and I can't fault you for that--because it was wrong of me to marry your close friend. I am sorry for that. But, know that she came along when I was in the worst of rebounds, I was hurting, and she took me under her wing. In a lot of ways, she saved me. And, besides, you knew I had an eye for her all along, and as it turned out, she had hers on me too, because when she found out we'd split--there she was at my work: my little dark angel. But, maybe we should have spoke to you first.

Skyler, those days after that second robbery I went through, do you remember the day I was just sitting in the bedroom? I wasn't really talking, and I was just staring off.... You asked if I needed to talk. I said no. But, I lied. I did need to talk. I had broken inside that day in ways I didn't yet understand. That rifle to my head affected me, and then the franchise "owner" getting mad because I opened the safe and let the robbers get the money without a fight--that was horrid. He's the one that REMOVED the safe's time delay! I wasn't going to lie to the two guys with guns to my head about it, not for money, my life and Alicia's (she was on the floor next to me) life was worth more than could ever have been in that damn safe!

I lost EVERYTHING after that.

I'm sorry, I was trying, I really was. But it was so hard.

I wish that I had told you.

I know this is too little too late, and it's no excuse, but I am sorry. It took me about until my 30th birthday for all of that PTSD to ease from me. Before the nightmares lessened. I came out of a mental fog one day--just out of the blue--and realized that here I am, in prison

and alone. Our beautiful daughter Shylynn has grown up, never even knowing me. I don't even know if she knows I exist! Last year, I got papers from DSS in 2017 saying that you were going in front of a judge to possibly lose custody of her, because of allegations of abuse, and I tried to contact DSS back about it--certified the letters and everything, but no one would let me know what was going on. I was worried about Shylynn, and you. I care about you both.

I miss Shylynn so much. Every minute of every day.

It feels like just yesterday that I was holding her.

Now, she's so big. She looks like you with my eyes.

She has my mother's and sister's hair.

I wish you'd let me correspond with her....

At this point, there is no punishment left for me ... I've died a thousand times over inside. What happens to me is of no consequence. I gave up on myself a long time ago. But, right now, it's those that I love that I live for--Shylynn deserves the opportunity to know who I am. She needs to know how much I love her. I'd like to send her some letters, artwork, some school books, whatever she might need. I'll send Christmas presents, birthday presents, cards, anything and everything I can. That is my baby girl, I've loved her since the moment I first saw her, from the moment she came out of you and I gave her that first bath, and brought her to you to introduce you.

I'm glad that I met you Skyler, I'm thankful for the time that we did have--there were not just good, but great moments--and, no, I'm not forgetting the bad--I'm just glad to have known you, and to have had with you such a great kid. I hope that you cherish her. She deserves the world....

You both do.

And, Jennifer, you know you're clear to visit, right? And, don't think --for a minute--that I forgot you on October 4th! There was a huge entry in my "Jen Journal" about it. Believe me.

I hope that you are well, and happy.

Are those blonde hairs gray yet?

I'm being very ... emotional, I know. But, something is going on with me that I don't understand. Something is ... changing. It started when Jaime resurfaced; and then when Candice reached out to me, and said such caring things--it concreted whatever it is ... metamorphosing. That, at my 40th year too!

I feel like a different man, a better man.

I feel, lifted, and capable of so much.

I feel, alive.

Thank you, all of you.

* My wrinkles (and gray hairs)--tell a truth of Time.

M