



Written by bubba



Happy Birthday! Exclamation marks seem so idiotic because I know you're anything but happy to be where you are right now. But I can't do anything about that and neither can you so I'll just tell you that I'm thinking about you and know that it can't be any kind of fun to be where you are. But...make the best of it. For example, perhaps you can stack two ramen noodle cakes on top of each other and pretend it's a double layered birthday cake to yourself. Yeah, yeah...and if you're good enough to win some cigarettes by playing dominoes or ping pong, maybe you can use

them as candles. Just take the light bulb out and light them on the coils when they heat up. Someone in there will know how. Ask that spiritual guy you've been talking to. Hell, he might even know where you can rent a clown for an hour or two. Make you very popular on the inside brother, trust me.

**I'm including a letter I wrote to Avalena on your birthday last year.** It was right before the shit storm hit. In fact, it was before I even knew if I was going to have a son or a daughter too. Interesting to read, I guess for a variety of reasons. Striking for me is what a different place my head is in now. Unsurprisingly, I read the portion about work and it could have been yesterday. Not much has changed. But I was feeling insanely retrospective, wanting my unborn child to know everything there was to know about me, not knowing if I'd ever be able to fit it all into one letter, a hundred letters, a lifetime of stories on the patio, etc.

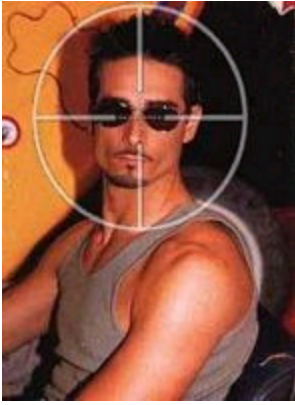
35 years old...yeesh. I remember when we were 13. As an exercise, I just gave myself one minute to remember whatever I could from that period of time. Here's what I came up with:

- a) That all night dance-a-thon @ Pecos
- b) Break dancing in the trailer parks in Federal Heights
- c) Finding out Nikki was born – we were standing by our 'wall' outside of school
- d) How afraid I was of that fucking munchkin Tommy Garcia
- e) Walking up Huron with Susan Calhoun and a friend, by 7-11 and Vito's deli, en route to the vacant apartment below yours
- f) Morning practice in the gym, when we'd have to run sprints, touch the wall, run back
- g) Cory & Anthony Cic, Scott Dukart, Tony and Tina Arellano (what a crush I had on her...jesus)
- h) April Gooden (Whoa. Remember her? You know what I'm thinking.)

Man...that's all I got in a minute. I think I was trying too hard. Try it. What do you remember? Two decades past my friend. Where did it all go? And we're both locked up...heh heh heh...you there, me in Ohio. Do you feel old? I don't at all. These days I try and think of everything as one process and recognize how everything I do (or don't do/haven't done/whatever) shapes and fuels the next steps in my life. It's a very philosophical, 'all things happen for a reason' way of thinking. I guess the difference between me and most is that I don't believe in fate. The 'reason' things happen, as I see it, is related to choices we make...nothing more, nothing less. And there's always something positive to be gained...even from the wrong turns we make. There I go again...'glass is half-full' and all. Fuck it, I don't feel old. Let's see how I do in April, when



it's my turn to taste 35.



I'm glad to hear you've reached a place where you're not constantly worried about your physical safety. From our conversations on the phone I can tell that you've learned the do's and do not's of living on the inside. On that same topic - I'm all about sending you whatever I can to make your time inside useful and help you pass the time, but perhaps we should lay down some boundaries – and believe me – this will be for your own good. I cannot send you any Christina Aguilera lyrics. Popular as it may make you in the yard, walking around and whistling Beautiful, I simply can't make myself do it. In fact, your request makes me want to break into jail and kick your ass. Seriously, toughen up. I'll send you anything by W.A.S.P, Tupac (any gangster rap really) and Godsmack...and I'm sure there are many others. But these are off the table: anything by a boy band, the soundtrack to Grease and Christina Aguilera. I'm sorry to do this to you bro, but it really is in

your best interest. Now, please punish yourself for asking by adding 50 pushups to your morning exercise regiment.

Hey, I liked getting your letter. Keep writing them and keep sending them to me. So you know, I posted it online. We talked about this, yes, but if you have second thoughts let me know and I won't do it. Also, I'll edit for public appropriateness before doing so. But keep it up man...seriously. Churn out as much of that grey matter as you can. Digging through all that is strewn about in your head is the best way to get it orderly and, ultimately, get a healthy perspective. I will retain what you send me so you can have a copy when you get out. It's important that you incorporate that stuff into any journal writing you do and keep them for later reading...that's what I think. I'm very interested in the day-to-day going on's in there because, as I've said, being locked up isn't something I think I could handle. You seem to be doing a great job.



And I'm glad Mike wrote you. Keep me posted on who else does. Tons of people have said they would. Be interesting to see who makes it a priority. For some reason, I can never get mad at Scotty for not writing or visiting. I guess it's because I know his daily regime is so busy. It's like a zoo at his house. I don't know how those two ever have any quiet time. Swear to God, the house is like a clown car, all jam packed with a wife, kids, dogs, stuff, etc. They really need a bigger place. Oh yeah! I have a funny follow-up to **the story I wrote you about me and him, the one in Vegas**. I'm sure Scott is going to love me sharing this, but what the hell...it's related to you and specifically to the last letter I wrote. So the other night I was online and he sends me an instant message, kicking off the following exchange:

**SCOTTY:** what's up dick head?

**ME:** hey, was just talking to ed

**ME:** now even mike has written him a letter

**SCOTTY:** trying to make me feel guilty?

**ME:** do I need to?

**SCOTTY:** Re: that letter on your site about me - It would be nice if you got the story even half right

**ME:** I'm really curious what part you think is wrong

**SCOTTY:** I wasn't at the lobby getting money when you got there.

**ME:** yes you were you lying fuck

**SCOTTY:** I ran from the MGM grand to meet you because I was worried about you being in vegas all alone

**ME:** oh jesus...how quickly we forget...or re-invent. Kind of like when we were in tujuana and I stopped you from paying \$300 for a set of gold painted rosary beads. that not true either now?

**SCOTTY:** plus you forgot the part where i had to hang out in the bar with you all fucking night while you tried to make a move. THEN...after all those hours you told me 'LEAVE NOW' so you could score

**ME:** I didn't forget that. I said we were hanging out. And I'll admit that the night got late and hazy for me...but you wanted to hang out in the bar, lets not act like that wasn't the case. AND...you were just glad you got to do it with me. I think hanging out with me raises your stock.

**SCOTTY:** what about the part where, after you told me to leave and I was by myself, there I am wandering around .....and I see you in the casino with what's her name and you get mad at me!

**ME:** mad at you? for what?

**SCOTTY:** for not leaving you alone

**ME:** well what were you doing following me?

**SCOTTY:** fuck that. There I am wandering vegas by myself because my best friend that i haven't seen in a year or so thought it was more important to screw some stranger than bond with me

**ME:** I think you might be attracted to me. and dude, you're a sexy m@#\$\$@ f@^%#@^ you should be proud of that. But I'm out of your league.

**SCOTTY:** ANYWAY. Good letter to ed.

**ME:** His address is on my other site if you want to write him. You should.

**SCOTTY:** I will

**ME:** It's been interesting...I've taken some heat for putting it up there. I literally had a couple people take issue with me ...'why are you encouraging strangers to write a sex offender...'

**SCOTTY:** DUDE IT IS THE SAME STORY WITH MY WIFE, NOT THAT SHE FEEL (sorry i didn't even realize i had caps on) not that she feels Juan is a bad person – she doesn't. But it's like 'how can you stand up for what he did'? all about us having a daughter.

**SCOTTY:** I tell her look if your best friend (Kathy) did something wrong you would stand beside her.

**ME:** You're a better man than me. I just said so don't write him if you don't want to and, p.s. go fuck yourself.

**ME:** then again I'm not married to any members of my peanut gallery. rhonda supports the effort, knows that support is what's needed to make a bad situation better.

**SCOTTY:** that is just what I do. I give support when support is needed

**ME:** yes, yes you do. just not at 3am in a casino

**SCOTTY:** I may be a lot of fucked up things, but I am loyal and true.

**ME:** that's true. And one of the other things you are is obsessed with me. I think the previous passages show that and you'll be happy to know this will be posted on my site.

**SCOTTY:** SCREW YOU (meant the caps this time)

**ME:** rRRRAR. You're very tough.

Heh heh heh...I decided to post the IM in its entirety and not edit the commentary at the end. The reason is because I think your situation has brought out some interesting dynamics in the relationships of others, me included. Nothing beneficial in editing I think, as I believe the conflict forces essential discussion about values, trust, responsibility, loyalty and I'm sure a whole host of other things. Owning life as-is and being open and honest about the good and the bad is, in my opinion, the only path to spiritual purity. I get that it's not the comfortable path...but it's the right one.

Also, I really considered launching a huge diatribe today about your relationship with Jen. Well, not really about your relationship...and not about Jen either – about you and what is going on in your head. I really believe the fantasy of 'it all' is bigger than the actuality of what you have been thinking about...in relation to her, what she's doing, what happens when you get out, etc. I don't think I will though...save it for another letter, not bog down your birthday. But I do want to say that you need to keep reminding yourself when you start thinking of all the things you plan to do differently when you get out that you can't see Jayden...period. It's not up for debate. It's not a decision that is going to be made in the future. There isn't a timeline that exists other than when he turns 18. It's a done deal. Painful as it is, I think its best that you think about things in the context of reality...and that's reality.

So I think I'll send you some of my journal entries too. No use re-writing what I've been up to when I can just send that stuff you know. It will give you more 'stuff' to read. Take care for now. Happy Birthday again and all that...you can chalk this up as an I.O.U. as in I owe you a celebration when you're out. Deal? ~ b!

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