

No Greater Blessing

by [REDACTED] (CA)

I am grateful that God blessed me by giving me my mom, [REDACTED]. Why? Because at every step of my life, from before I can remember to now, my Mom always taught me how to function well and succeed, with people and in business. When I reflect on my life, I recall how she conducts herself in Business, in life, in interactions with people, and how I emulated that throughout life. My mom came to America with only \$50 in the 1970s and now owns her own real estate business, raised my younger brother and me, and also cooked and cleaned daily for us and my Daddy.

When I was hungry, she fed me food with love. When I was in a tough spot, Mom gave me tougher inspiration with love. Even today, during my incarceration, when I am low, she preaches hope and determination. This has made a positive and enduring difference in my life because, when in situations where most give up, I thrive, keep hope and optimism and, most times, succeed, or at least try my best.

My mom changed how I think about myself because I see hope and success in most situations where there is none. Even when I faced the death penalty, I won life without the possibility of parole. Even after that, I now appeal because the evidentiary science used to convict me, hair microscopy, was deemed junk science 16 years after my conviction.

Ultimately, love does overcome. Many times we don't realize this. Heaven has no greater blessing than a mother's love. I write this as I wait to see my Mom. I am 43 years old and this is my 22nd year locked up. I was 21 in 1996 when handcuffs were first placed on me and I haven't been home since. Each time I hear "Dear Momma" by Tupac and I'm alone, I cry because the song evokes the love pains of hugging on my Momma from a jail, in the prison visiting room. My Mom—my inspiration to never give up.

[REDACTED]

U.S.A.