

Inspired

By Brandon Stains

Have you ever met someone that inspired you, then in a blink of an eye they were gone? Well this short story is about a person I met too late and left too soon. It was 2016, I hit rock bottom and wound up in jail. I was defeated! I was in jail with the impression of not getting out for a very long time. Let's just say my future didn't look bright. After being classified I was put in a cell by myself. A few days later I would get a cellmate. This person would eventually be an inspiration and a good friend. His name was Kyle, he was from California. I thought it was very cool because I've lived my whole life in the east coast and always dreamed of life in the west coast. His nickname was Cali but spelled with a K. He had an aura to him of positivity and determination. Me, I just wanted to stay in my cell, lay in bed, and soak up my misery. He wasn't going to let that happen. Kali was in phenomenal shape and had a beaming light of confidence. He reminded me of the actor Brad Pitt. I think he could have been his doppelganger. I was strung out from drugs, not in good shape at all, though I used to enjoy working out during my sobriety. My confidence was at an all-time low, but he immediately pushed me to work out and better myself. I struggled at first but I couldn't let this guy down. I was dedicated, plus he was relentless.

Kali was a recovering addict himself, so he could always talk me through whatever I was going through. His father would come to the jail to run AA groups (Alcoholics Anonymous), so he was used to learning about sobriety. Kali was a few years older than I was, so pretty much everything I was going through he already been there and done that. Being in jails from California to Pennsylvania, he had a lot of knowledge about the jail life. I was eager to learn. I looked up to him like an older brother. Kali ended up being released from jail in 2017 and was put on probation. When you are on probation you cannot visit an

inmate, but Kali got approval by his probation officer to come visit me. He would come visit every week and check up on me. Friends I've had for years didn't even come visit, but this guy I met in jail would come every week! Kali continued to motivate me while being a free man. He had a very good head on his shoulders, he was going to work, staying in good health, and overcoming addiction.

One day he showed up for a visit on a day my grandmother was there to see me. They ended up talking and split the visit. He told me he completed his probation successfully. I was proud of him. My grandmother even approved of my friend, and that was rare. The next visit I got from my grandmother I found out Kali had overdosed and died three days after I last saw him. A great person that I didn't know very long, that inspired me to be a better person, gone from my life in a blink of an eye. A reminder to always live life to the fullest and be the best you that you possibly can. This is in memory of a friend that I met too late and left too soon.