

Jamel Brown

Form & Fingerprints

~~Prof. J. Vallese~~

March 7, 2016

~~Craft~~  
March 9th

Today is his parole board, today is an old prisoner's parole board. This old prisoner and his family have waited twenty-six years for this very day to arrival. It is this very day that will determine his fate. He prays that this day will be the day he regains his freedom, and once again enjoy the bliss of liberty, but doubt shouts in the blackness of his mind like the bank of a stream that screams. This old prisoner fears that he will be forced to continue living in the very space that he despises, a space that keeps him confined, but allow his thoughts to journey freely like stars that shoot across the universe. This old prisoner has many thoughts, some he shares with others, but most he keeps to himself because they stir up emotions that he tries hard to keep locked away, emotions that cause his bitter and calloused heart to cry out in anguish, an anguish that comes from him watching his mother, sisters, brother, son, nephews, nieces, cousins, and friends age through pictures that are sent to him throughout the years; an anguish that stems from him spending years in solitary confinement, causing solitude to make this old prisoner an outcast amongst society's rejects, a solitude that brings him to the realization that the world he left behind no longer exists, but it is this very day, March 9, 2016, that can put all that suffering behind him. This old prisoner knows that his fate lies in the hands of people he have never met, the same people who he will never meet in person, but will only see and talk with through a video conference.



Though the old prisoner doesn't know the people who dangle freedom in front of his face, they know him. In fact, they know him better than he knows himself. They've been analyzing the old prisoner from the moment he committed murder at age seventeen. No, they were analyzing him many years before that. How long, the old prisoner is unsure of, he guess they must have started in the early eighties, that's when he first entered the juvenile justice system. The parole board ~~knew~~<sup>knows</sup> about all the assaults the old prisoner caught on staff, and fellow prisoners, they ~~knew~~<sup>know</sup> about his gang activity, his attempt to start a riot, his possession and attempt to promote prison contraband razors, and shanks, and drugs. All of these things sit neatly stacked in a pile of paper in front of the small group of people who dangle freedom in the old prisoner's face, the same people who he will never meet face to face.