

Even In Darkness You Can  
Blossom.

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Gladiator. The highly successful movie made me recognize that I could use it as an analogy for prison. How?

Do you recollect the scene where the gladiators were shackled to one another as they were heading up a tunnel, towards a wooden barrier that concealed what could be only imagined as hell itself; you felt that fear as the terrified gladiator urinated on himself — that's what prison was for me as a young man.

I couldn't run, nor hide. I entered that arena and went to battle. Everyday I thought I needed to be this blood thirsty gladiator, because that's the status quo; there's a hierarchy in here; weak get stamped on, and the strong, thrive — and I truly made sure I thrived.



Man has one great trait: Adaptability to any circumstances. Some become masters at it, while the meek need a tutor. Myself, I was taught the fundamentals of prison life. I have a doctorate degree from the School of Hard Knocks.

So I'm a scholar. Great. I can teach you the laws of prison... but anything about rehabilitation, sadly, that took a lot longer.

You truly have to obliterate the mind set that was indoctrinated by jesters that wear clown makeup daily. They're the men — excuse me, offenders (what inmates are called today) that desire the grime that furnish our sensibility that we assumed we lost as the gavel dropped.

They're satisfied by the gravity of doing life in prison... or should I had said, "home." Because they made their bed and sleep soundly with the steel bars and slabs of concrete that encompass their heart; this is the hard knock life. Even so, Tupac said this: "A rose can grow in concrete."

Everything is against you... if you're foolish enough to accept that. Prison has its evils, but in that same breath, you also see its angels that



sprout wings and fly above it all.

The process has its obstacles, but those that are truly determined, can succeed, flourish, thrive, conquer; words of empowerment for men and women that say my worst can transform into my best.

A caged mind is worse than a caged body; the freedom of thought can make the impossible possible...but a mind trapped in gladiator mode...only death by the sword will grant them their escape.