

Dear Jamie

On this day and at this time, I hope and pray that you are in the very best of God's care and health. I wanted to commend you on your stand for Black men and for us in prison. I don't get the magazines or anything. I don't have anyone to aid and assist me; but I've heard of your magazine. Many brothers in here know about Jamie and *Sister 2 Sister* magazine. I wish to share some things with you. I don't know if you will print what I am about to say, or even if you do, I will have no way of knowing it was printed. Right now I have a cellie that gets your magazine, but by the time you get this letter, it'll be no telling who I will have for a cellie. They move us around like chess pieces.

Start Here

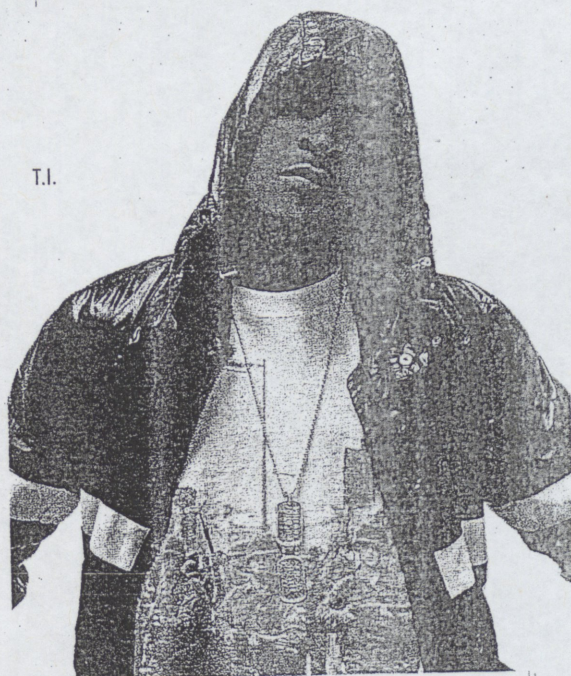
→ My soliloquy will be to those that are doing time and to those that know of those doing time. We are told and taught that real G's do their time. This way of thinking is real messed up. No one likes to be down and out, and no one wants to do bad. This is not to say anyone owes anyone anything, but I think people expect family to be what family is. Allow me to explain: I have seen other nationalities come down here for their families every week, and send mail every night. Then I see brothers down here doing things (hustling) for their families, but don't get a hello or a stamp licked for them. See, it's no doubt that the system alienates and then separates due to absence and time. We are left to think there is no one left but ourselves. That creates a selfish mentality because self is all that matters for the mere fact we are left behind.

Listen, they are hurting them boys. Down in Texas, prison defines itself. When inside, we are despised by all and pitied by none. It's as this one officer told a brother, "If you are Black and young, you are guilty." It's as T.I. said in your article, "It's nothing to look forward to," and that's an important message. Because back in the late '80s and '90s, young brothers looked at doing time as a rite of passage.

You were not a man unless you'd been to prison. And when dudes get out, the respect is a superficial one. Instead of being proud for being down, they should be grateful for getting out and having the opportunity to redefine who they are and to succeed in what they wish to become. But like anything, it will take work because anything that takes nothing to do is worth nothing to have.

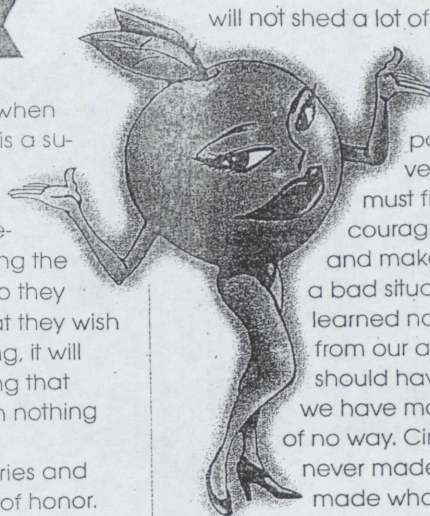
They glorify jailhouse stories and pass them on as a badge of honor. No doubt, it's hard to be who you are

T.I.



in this place every day without losing yourself to the antics and attacks this place puts on a man's soul, mind and heart, if you are fortunate to have one of those after you leave here—if you leave here. Like Maino said in your article, we see no wrong when we are doing it. I can relate to this. When I was in the streets, we used to say, "It's not against the law until you get caught." If you still think like that, it's only because you are still caught up.

Everything was chalked up to survival codes. See, everyone knows the one who doesn't talk it, he does it. He doesn't do it for glory, only for results. I



will not shed a lot of tears and say how wrong I have been done. The past can't be reversed, but we must find the courage to proceed and make the best out of a bad situation. If we learned nothing else from our ancestors, we should have learned that we have made a way out of no way. Circumstances never made us, it only made who we revealed.

You must stand strong today to see tomorrow. That's the reward of a warrior.

No one of bloodline writes me. They broke my plate years ago, thinking I will never get out. What's the use is how they see it. But I have no anger toward them. ... So I pray five times a day. I think even though my family broke my plate and left me for dead inside this gate, I will never let anyone see my face in disgrace.

But, to you who have friends who are locked up, reach out to them. You would be surprised to see a transformation because you allowed them to react and feel human in a cage that contradicts this notion of them being a human being.

Yes I fight my case. But if I die in this place, at least it will be known that I did my part, and that alone is a whole lot. Hurt and pain is made from lots of things. Don't be the reason for it, be the example from it. Peace and blessings,
Mr. G Mays (654840) (P.T.)
Kenedy, TX

Dear Jamie

I really enjoyed the article I read recently on Chilli of ITC for several reasons. I must admit that I'm not a regular *S2S* reader, but since you've made my day with that inspirational cover story I will be a regular. I always personally believed that Chilli—even though respect the ITC group—is the least of the three given her full profile. The good looks aside she is a woman

Photo by Darren Ankenman