

**From the Desk of JEFFERY A. SHOCKLEY-ES4796**

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*I Thrive Inside*

There was a time before residing here inside a penal institution, I lived my life like a bull in a China shop. Where the intricacies and sensibilities of society were foreign to me as my environment dictated how one like me, Black like me is supposed to be.

Causing my own expectations of life to be minimal at best. Excitedly reeling on the precipice of my own addictions and situations a child should never be received in that make it difficult to see beyond anything other than the rage of me upon a society I perceived hated me first in the love they never engraved in me.

I became who I simply was just because.

Forgetting, rather ignoring the sacrifices my ancestors made during the history of slavery and that Civil Rights fight that I would be free; I strived to give back that much hate before that life killed me too.

Spoiled like rancid milk, the child of me running wild hurting those that interceded or tried to provide better for me. Still, even in their own worst conditions lingering on from challenges of moral and mental insensitivities, I freely misbehaved upon them and now question why they've cried for me when I've never even tried for me.

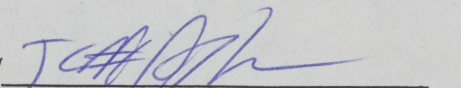
From this time inside where I currently reside serving a life sentence 24 years ago received by that symbolic Black robe who would negatively carelessly not see through my troubled history, it became time to find the good in me for the better of me even if I may never again get free to return to the society that hates me by the statistical past acts of me.

I am sorry.

See, in here I live among more like me than society has free. Survivors of their own individual past who teach me how to be free from the mindset that got me here. That although our figurative and physical shackles and chains of our yesterdays continue lasting into tomorrows we may never see, we strive daily to be mentally free, emotionally reach each other to be better than yesterdays that held each of us in our own unique captivity.

While time can remind me what was because I admit my wrongs and work through the throngs of embellished pains ingrained from childhood strains, I thrive inside.

/S/

  
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