

A SPECIAL EDITION JOURNAL PUBLICATION
FOR THE INCARCERATED STUDENTS OF
IMPERIAL VALLEY COLLEGE

This publication aims to allow Imperial Valley College students to share their work with a larger audience.

A project of the Arts, Letters, and Learning Services faculty and staff, EL CORAZON allows students to present their work and have selected submissions published and displayed in print, on the library website, and in the library.

CATEGORIES PRESENTE

CREATIVE WRITING

DRAWING

ENGLISH/SPANISH POETRY

JOSE AYALA



And I Rise

Welcome to my topsy-turvy
As these words unfurl.
Living bent on destruction, programmed to fail,
How was I to tell?
Captive to my ignorance, I lost my way,
My humanity, my freedom, sad to say.
Marked unredeemable, stripped to a primal state,
How did I get to this awful place?
Glorified, vilified, oh unforgiving land,
Arena of the gods of wrath.
Descent into darkness, survival takes precedence,
Such self-created madness.
Even so, the human spirit cannot be denied,
Nuclear fission is churning deep inside.
Thrust into the fire, the CREATOR and VICTIM do battle,
Hot embers burning, ashes scattered.
Demons defied, Smokey Mirror evanesced obsolete,
Today, I rise renewed, transformed
The CREATOR I was meant to be!



JASON BERG

"A Shared Moment"

It is so quiet you could hear a pin drop. Across from me is a kid just a couple of years older than I was when I first entered these walls, but then again, he was not even born yet back then. We are not the same race, yet we are so much alike; we grew up the same way, and it was not easy. We have both suffered and made others pay the price for it.

Right now, he is sitting with his eyes closed, facing me, not five feet away. He is having a hard time keeping his eyes closed because it's a vulnerability we are not used to. He is being told to think of all the pain he has felt throughout his life, and I can see his pain as it splashes across his face. It hurt me to see it because I know this kid is like me. He can deal with direct pain, but it's hard for him to deal with pain directed at those he cares about. So, when I see the pain sketched on his face, I know his family has suffered. My heart goes out to the kid.

Now, he is being told to think of all the pain he has caused others in this world. His eyes open, refusing to face it at first. Then he finds his courage, he closes his eyes, and he tries. I can see the struggle inside him as it plays across his face. After a while, he silently starts to cry. Before

"The Sea Within Me"

My home is a small town by the sea, and wherever I go, I bring it with me. I'll never forget the day my mother introduced me to God. She took me to the rocks at sunset and told me this is where she gets to see God. The sun had painted a beautiful tapestry of colors across the sky; I could feel the vibration of the waves as they crashed against the rocks we sat on and the spray of the mist as it washed over us. I was humbled like never before in my young little life; I felt so small yet a part of something so big I could barely imagine it.

Anyone who grows up at the beach knows the sea gets into your blood. You must understand the sea is untamed, ferocious, and violent. It is also calm, nurturing, and peaceful. It gives life. Slowly but surely, the sea has a way of seeping into your soul.

In my young adolescent life, I lost my way. I became untamed, ferocious, and violent. At 17 years old, I crashed into the prison system as the waves crashed into the rocks. I have not been home in over 25 years, but I take the sea with me wherever I go. Whether I'm up on the sticks of Pelican Bay, in the mountains of Tehachapi, or out in the desert of Calipatria, I bring the sea with me.

The desert of Calipatria has been good for me. They have seagulls that flock to our yard so we can feed them. When I was a kid, I thought of them as flying rats, but now all I see is their beauty, a living piece of home that comes to visit me, a sign of the divine. So now I try my best to be calm, nurturing, and peaceful.

"Apprentice" (Inspired by: "Mastery" by Robert Gree

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WILLIAM KING BLACKWELL

Opulence Surroundings

The more you surround yourself with people who add value to your life, the better off you will be, but make sure that you are adding value to their lives, too. Surround yourself with people that push you to do better. There is no drama or negativity, just higher goals, dreams, and motivation. Surround yourself with relentless humans who plan in decades but live in moments.

Train Like savages but create like artists. Obsess in work, relax in life. People who know this is finite choose to play infinite games. Find people scaling mountains. Climb together.

Nobody wants to tell you why discipline is so important. Discipline is the strongest form of self-

Since I was a child, art in its many forms has always caught my attention. From the great Masterpieces of the Master to street art pieces, art is in the eye of the beholder. It was only natural that I started experimenting with abstract designs and later moved on to drawing the human body and to what I am doing now, portraits of family and friends.

GILBERT GOMEZ

Chiseling Away Ignorance

This piece of art is symbolic of my life. I am a human being serving a 25-to-life prison term. Prior to coming to prison and well into my term, I had become a person encapsulated in a concrete slate of ignorance. Stemming from a lack of education and learning from poorly educated role models. The result is becoming a highly ignorant, destructive criminal who makes poor decisions. Feeling the consequences of my poor choices, I wanted to do better. Ignorance led to hurting people and to a poor quality of life. After each book I read and each self-help class I attended, I became more confident and began to make smarter choices. In each academic and self-help class, I have started to chisel away the slate of ignorance that clouded my judgment. I have developed chisels and

\Ua a Yfg'cZ' dcg[h]j]hmž VfYU_]b['Uk Um'a m'XYZVWg" H\Ym'gUñ' ÎC bW' mci 'ghcd' gYY_]b['_bck `YX[Y' UbX' hfi h\ž][bcfUbW' gYhg:]b" I'Gcz'=\ Uj Y'XYX]WWhYX'a mgY' Z'hc'']Z' cb[``YUfb]b['Gc'h\Uh' =fYa U]b' gY'Z' -aware and stay free from a mental prison of ignorance.



LAMONT KELLUM JR.

I Still Have Some Life Left

Two men can look out the same window,
One sees a life of openness and opportunity,
The other sees a long dirt road & tall light poles,
Hay barns in the distance,
After so-called electrical fences...
As the sky is so beautiful,
I can only hope that my freedom is getting close,
Smiling as I stare out a vertical rectangular window...
Perspective is everything,
Though growth is constantly changing,

A good kid in a mad city,
Early on, hiding the trauma and abuse,
While that shit slowly devoured my entity...
Over the years, I learned the hard way,
All the tragedies I faced,
Without a full understanding of my destructive choices,
Then I was convicted of a crime they gave,
It was all hearsay, but it was fabricated their way,

GOLDEN BOY

There once was a kid
Full of promise with a real bright shine
He set out from home all on his own
A Golden Boy in his prime
Little changes took place and corrupted his way of life
No longer sober, the cruelty took over
Became a man without regard for life

O Golden Boy, beware
G\Yŋ ZcfYgh[fYYb'k]h\ci h'h\Y'dYUW
G\Y'XcYgbŋ'WfY
&\$'d'i g'mYUfgz'UbX'='gh]''\YfY
Her embrace only leads to death
C'; c'XYb'6cmz'Xcbŋ'j] Y'a m'fY[fYh

I once was told that knowledge is gold
By a man who lived his life right
Too blind to see his lessons for me
Led to a life of crime
6i h'bck 'h\Uh'='gh]'gcVYf'UbX''YUfb]b['hcc_'cj Yf
'='gh]'hfŋ]b['hc'k U'_Ug'\Y'a][\h

O Golden Boy beware
G\Y'gUmgh\ Uh'g\Yŋ' Z]l 'mci
But her green walls only being on despair
&\$'d'i g'mYUfgz'UbX'='gh]''\YfY
Her embrace only leads to death
C'; c'XYb'6cmz'Xcbŋ'j] Y'a m'fY[fYh

If I knew then what I know today
'=gi fY'mk ci 'Xŋ]Y'hfUXYX'h\]g''ZY
So much more I left unexplored
Great adventures and untold delights
But instead I got dreams
That never came to be
Ruined plans run through my mind
All through my mind

O Golden Boy beware
G\Yŋ'Ub'ca]bci g'[fYYb
5bX'Z''cZ'W'i g\YX'XfYUa g'g\Y'Xcbŋ'WfY
&\$'d'i g'mYUfg'UbX'='gh]''\YfY
Her embrace only leads to death
C'; c'XYb'6cmXcbŋ'j] Y'a m'fY[fYh

ISMAEL MEJIA

Your Name?

Have you ever seen your name written out?

A UmVY`]h]gca Yh\]b[`mci `bYj Yf`ZcW gYX`cbžVi h`Uj Y`mci `Yj Yf`fYUX`k \Uh`Wta Yg`UZhYf`mci f`bUa Y3
As a kid, I never saw it written out.

=j]Y`YUfX`]h]mY`YX`ci hžgWYUa YX`ci hž`UbX`gca Yh]a Yg`VYUhici h`

K \Uh`Wta Yg`UZhYf`ci f`bUa Y`]g`k \c`k Y`UfY`UbX`k \Uh`k Yj]Y`XcbY`cf`UW`ta d`]g\YX"

I must have done nothing for many years, for I have never seen it written out.

Once in elementary school, Student of the Month was a surprise to me, and maybe too many were in the room that day.

I-S-M-A-E-L, disturbing the peace, fighting at school,

I-S-M-A-E-L, another fight.

I-S-M-A-E-L, arrested for petty theft.

C bW`]b`>i j Yb]`Y`< U`žg]h]b[`]b`h`Y`D`C`"j]cZ]Wž`=gUk `]h`U[U]b"

I-S-M-A-E-L, never comes home, is on drugs and alcohol,

Spray painted his room, never goes to school, signed Mom.

Ismael...who am I?

Violent, thief, disobedient, disrespectful, criminal, gang member, hurt.

I-S-M-A-E-L, what comes after your name?

Well, I was once in the newspaper...Ismael was arrested for attempted murder, now a prisoner.

Ismael Mejia what comes next?

A number: F45989

I-S-M-A-E-L, drug smuggler, participating in racial riots, battering inmates, attempting to kill another inmate, cell phones, contraband, drug user, victim.

I-S-M-A-E-L is what comes after my name. What about yours?

5g_`mci fgY`ZžĀ`< ck j]a`mbUa Y`k f]hYb3Ī

It is written one way; then, it can be rewritten.

Why else does a pencil have an eraser?

Why create white out?

