

HEAR ME OUT



VOICES FROM THE INSIDE

I am Kevin.
I am from SBC, and a poor and broken family.
I love my mom.
I am not afraid of anything.
I hope for good things.
I want to change the world.

I am

Kevin.

I am Jesus—I am confident, respectful and real.
I am from young hoodlums and San Bernardino.
I love my mom, my hood, and my family.
I am afraid of quitting and lying.
I hope to be able to make it in life.
I want to change the Ghetto.

Who Are We In The Y&C

I am the one and only JB.

I stand out in a crowd because I'm OUTSTANDING.

I love to learn but my patience is an issue.

I'm working on my patience because I know it's still a virtue.

I tend to make friends easily because I'm generous, kind, & understanding.

I want to be successful and less stressful.

I am a loving individual.

So that's ME, JB, da one N only.

*I am Rebecca Eve.
I am friendly, listening, and beautiful.
I am from safety, love, and sunshine.
I love my sister, my brother, and my life.
I am afraid of growing up, the economy,
and making a wrong decision.
I hope for a better world.
I want to change lives for the better.
I am Rebecca Eve.*

I am
Marquinae.

I am loyal, unique, & lovable.
I am from San Bernardino, schools, and animals.
I love my family, money, and food.
I am afraid of critters, heights, and doctors.
I hope for a bright future.
I want to change my ways.

I am **Marquinae.**



When I say "Mexi" you say "Can".
Mexi-can, mexi-can.

I am Art,
Not like the kind of art you can frame,
But the kind that regardless of experience or identity has no shame.
I love my family, friends and the world around me.
Not until I learned my history did I think Mexican was a thing to be.
Born in Fontana and moved to Rancho Cucamonga,
But you best believe I still got my swagga.
I'm only afraid of failure.
Changing the world though, definitely no pressure.
I hope for some change and justice.
Those in power better learn to trust us.

I am **Art**.

I am **Zahira**.

I am fun, confident, and selfish.
I am from the ghetto.
I love food, my bestie, and cars.
I am afraid of violence.
I hope for peace.
I want to change my street.
I am Zahira.

MEN
CHEFS
IMPORTANT
UNIQUE
ENERGETIC
SMART
DIFFERENT
STUDENTS
POETS
SINGERS
WOMEN
YOUNG
WE
ARE

I am **Saman**.

I am the desire to personify love, an optimist, a poet in spirit, & I am relentless.
I am from family streets, hoops all night, and authentic Iranian food.
I am Iranian.
I love watching love, the way it moves and grows. I love the beach at night.
I am afraid of who I am and who I'm becoming.
I hope for random acts of kindness & compassion
because kindness and compassion don't need a reason.
I want to change my mind, the past, and the world with a smile-but let's be real.
I am Saman, & I am my dreams.

I am **Kareem**.

I am respectful, kind, and honest.
I am from Doworthy, but I grew up in LA.
I love my brothers and sisters.
I am afraid to go down 8th on Mt. View because I think I might get shot.
I hope for good things to happen in my life.
I want to change everything.
I wish I could go back in the past and change everything I did wrong.

I am Mashawn
I am smart, confident, and cool
I am from San B.
I love my mom, dad, sister, and brother.
I am afraid of my mom.
I hope to be successful in my life.
I hope to help my family.
I want to change the world.

I am
MASHAWN

I am **Andrea Elena**
call me Dre
I am Half + Half.
Half + Half
I am stuck between the cracks
I am no man's land.
Tamales red chili and las mananitas
I am privilege green eyes and whiteness
mas que nada
yo soy yo.
I am a tumble weed
desert rain storm
Nuevo Mexico, bring the rain back.
I am told I'm worthless
everyday
in bottles down the hatch
their throttles lost to the floor
but I am loved, I am loved, I am loved.
I am one of the lucky ones
sometimes I forget that.

I am Jessica,
Missourian, BBQ lover, a friend.
I am Jessica,
Open, alive, and willing.
I am Jessica,
Afraid of spiders and in love with sunshine.
I am Jessica,
Hopeful for acceptance and forgiveness.
I am Jessica,
Looking to change the evils in the world.
I am Jessica, and that's me.

I am **Leno**

I am young, an Uncle, and strong.
I am from the Inland Empire, violence, and robbery.
I love my nephew, my mom, and my dad.
I am afraid of the world ending and dying young, without kids of my own.
I hope for my nephew to have a better life.
I want to change my family's path and my life on probation.
I am Leno.





Supposed to be

I'm supposed to be the one who doesn't make it out.

I'm supposed to be a screw up.

I hope I graduate from school.

I hope I make it in this world.

I'm supposed to be the one without a dream.

I would show everyone in this world that doubted me I'm gonna make it

I hope I'm a good parent for my daughter.

If I ruled the world I would try to make it better for everyone.

I would show my mama I'ma be successful.

I'm supposed to be the one who doesn't vote

The one who gets money from the government.

If I had super powers I would be made of water.

I'm supposed to be the one that smokes all day.

I grew from a little kid into a man/woman.

If I had super powers I would be invisible.

I'm supposed to be an alcoholic.

I hope I stay a kid at heart forever.

I would show my mom I'm not worthless.

I would show my mom that I love her.

I'm not supposed to know what I know

But I do.

I hope I survive.

Mariah, Jay B, Javon, Donald, Mashawn, Meach, David, Marcel, Quinton

I am Anne.

I am idealistic, compassionate, and a goof.

I am from the land of Lincoln, lakes, and big cities.

I love life, learning and maloco samba.

I am afraid of driving, fire, and the future.

I hope for progress.

I want to change our way of living.

I am *simply Anne*

I am Ricky.

I am observant, honest, and street smart.

I am from JYC, 1st Street, and a good family.

I love my family, my life, and school.

I am afraid of myself.

I hope for success.

I want to change my ways.

I am *Ricky.*

Alex.

I am hopeful, open-minded and passionate.

I am from the land of roses and floats.

I love my dog, my family, and being here.

I am afraid of spiders and the evil inside others.

I hope for compassion and understanding.

I want to change the indifference of people.

I am *Alex*

**WE
ARE**

CHILDHOOD

If there's anything I learned as a boy growing up. It's that life ain't no game, either fall or step it up. I ain't tryin' to act stupid

My childhood was kinda alright... I've been a boxer all my life, I boxed for about eight years and I got out because I got caught up with the homies who did bad stuff. I try to do good though. The reason that I'm here is that I'm trying to get an education.

Roberto

octavio

That's My Story

My childhood is when I was 7 all I did was drink, smoke dope and drink some more. I used to steal bikes, cars, burn stuff. I don't know why but I did it anyway. But if I do it now it will affect my life. By doing bad shit and getting locked and almost going to placement. It is like a family tradition. But I plan to change the family tradition and to change my life because it is a waste of time. But every time I get older I'm doing harder crimes but I don't know why but I don't want my kid to end up like me because I want my kids to have a better life. I don't want my kids to smoke and drink.

WHAT I LEARNED GROWING UP

I learned how to take care of myself I didn't have anyone to show me right from wrong. It was like I raised myself because I was never at my house I was in the streets kicking it with my homies I taught myself how to do things the right way.

KEVIN



Leno

MANY THINGS ABOUT MY CHILDHOOD

There are many things that I have to say about my childhood. For example, role models. There were some good role models for me and bad role models. But I think I took from both good and bad role models. The reason I say that is because I took bad role models to be street wise and took good role models stuff for school and positive outcomes. My bad role model taught me how to fight, bang, and all type of stuff and my good role model taught me how to hold back my anger. Violence don't solve everything and just do good things that make me and my family proud like get an education.

MASHAWN

WHAT HE TAUGHT ME

I learned how to laugh
smile, be free.
I learned how to be a little sister,
not a leader,
but a follower.
I learned how to make mistakes,
and to depend.
But I also learned how to not rely
on some,
I learned that my father was
my friend,
my homie,
but not my role model.
He taught me how to chill,
smoke, and drink.
he taught me anger.
He taught me why I hate drinking
He taught me how to run away
He taught me how to cry.
I never learned to rely on him,
but I learned how to love from him.
I learned how to love music,
how to have fun, to be crazy.
I learned how to follow his spirit,
not his example.
I learned how to
smile.

ANNE

My first rap at nine

When I grow up I want to be a G
respected in the road like a dope MC
Lil Meach knocking off you your ear wax.
Respect I am nine rhyming on hot trax
Game to the max like Kobe in the zone.
I keep my ears ringing when I touch microphones.
I am going to reach my goals and conquer my dreams.
I am young and I learn from grown ups and teens.

meach

CHILDHOOD

I am gonna make sure my kids
have the opposite life that I had.
I'll make sure he ain't around
violence.

My childhood was all violence
I was around drugs,
gangs, guns
I had plenty of guns.

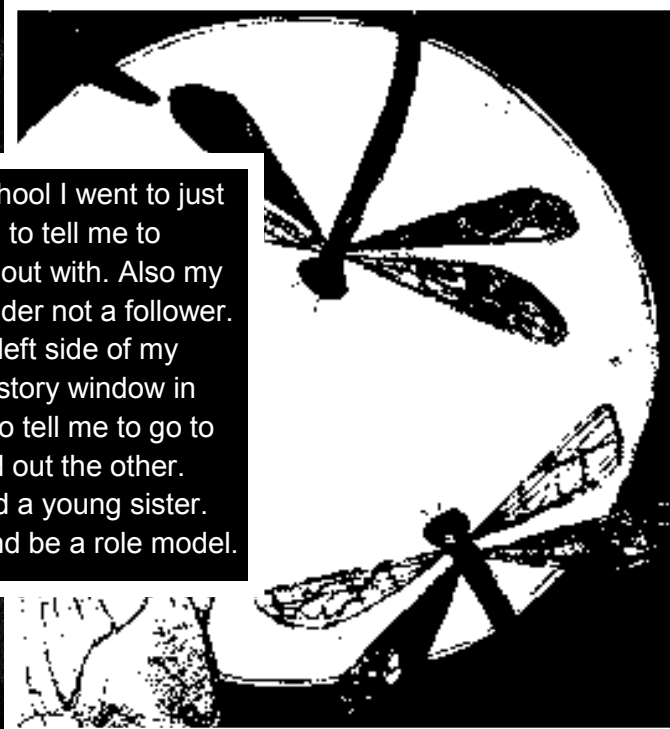
Meach



my childhood

I had got kicked out of every school I went to just to be cool and my parents used to tell me to choose the right crowd to hang out with. Also my mom used to tell me to be a leader not a follower. When I was six I paralyzed the left side of my body from falling out of a three story window in Long Beach. My parents used to tell me to go to class, but it went in one ear and out the other. Now I have a young brother and a young sister. So it's time for me to step up and be a role model.

MORRIS



I often wonder about what life would have looked like.
I wonder if it might have been better or worse
if I'd still be this blessed, or would I be cursed?
I don't know the reasons why but someday I'd like to meet her
Was I too much to handle, or just not a keeper?
Was I too much of a burden? Too heavy to carry?
Was my dad involved? Was the thought of me too scary?
I wonder what she looks like & if we have the same color eyes
I wonder if I'd recognize her or even if she has the time
I wonder if she'd want to meet me or if
I'd bring back too many bad memories
However, if there's one thing please know that I'm thankful
I've been loved & protected & I'm so very grateful.
But I'd like to be able, if you think you are
willing and ready to heal up these scars.

Taylor

growing up

Growing up.
This is what I see on a daily basis. Drugs are some of the things I saw and grew up around people under the influence of drugs. The people I grew up around have broken down cars that took me from place to place. One of the places I went to was the liquor store. Along the way, some of the things I did were violent.

Kevin

Growin' up

Growing up I learned to do what I'm supposed to do. I also learned how to cook for myself when mama wasn't there. When I was growing up I always wanted to be a football player but my mama never signed me up for it. So I quit tryin' and started throwing rocks at people who stair at me dirty. When I was mad that made me feel good. But know I'm all about myself.

-Kareem

Growing Up

Growin up I learned how to be responsible at a young age. Mom was always sick and I had to take care of my brother He's 6 years older than me, but he's schizophrenic. So you could only imagine what I went through at the age of nine. Always wanting my mom to help but she couldn't. So I learned to be independent and tough so no one could run over us But after awhile I felt I couldn't protect us with this flesh So I got something steel, with shells. I felt I could do anything for us. But we both knew inside We needed our motha.

-Jay B

THE RULES

1. WHEN YOUR MOM PASSES OUT DRUNK IN THE KITCHEN DO NOT WAKE HER UP!

- OR IF YOU ARE SMALL BRING HER A JACKET SO SHE DOESN'T KNOW YOU KNOW
- IF YOU ARE OLDER GET YOUR BOYFRIEND TO HELP YOU CARRY HER BODY TO THE BED

2. WHEN YOUR MOM TELLS YOU, YOU ARE WORTHLESS, A WHORE, YOU'RE STUPID OR ACCUSES YOU OF ONLY COMING HOME TO STEAL "HER FAMILY'S MONEY"

- DO NOT FIGHT BACK — IT ONLY GETS WORSE
- DO NOT AGREE — IT ONLY GETS WORSE
- WHEN SHE APOLOGIZES LATER, ACCEPT AND MOVE ON

3. WHEN YOU ARE OLDER:

- DO NOT BRING UP DRUNK DRIVING, FIGHTING OR ANY OTHER BAD MEMORIES BECAUSE SHE DOESN'T REMEMBER AND WILL SAY YOU ARE MAKING IT UP
- THINK ABOUT SNEAKING INTO THE HOTEL DOWN THE STREET, ENCHILADAS AND MILK AND ALL THE LOVE YOU KNOW IS THERE
- FORGIVE HER
- FORGIVE YOURSELF
- BE FREE

-Drea



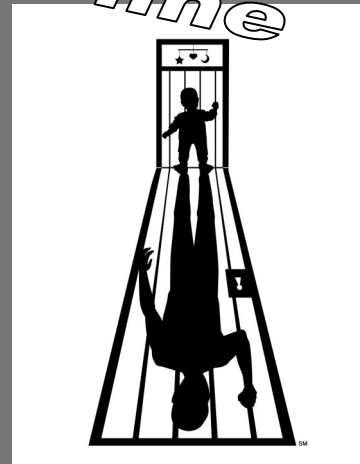
Crooked Path

I am Javon
I started on a straight path
later on down the path
it became crooked
I started getting in trouble
and hangin' with the wrong crowd
I used to be low-key but now my
name is bein' said out loud but
not in a good way
and not a real bad way
I am Javon
My path is crooked.
This all I got to say.

-Javon



Cradle to Prison Pipeline



Finding My Way

I had a bad path
that I was on
Now I'm on the right one
AKA the right road
My cradle was to prison
with a suspended sentence
now I'm on my way
to college and
my classes I'll diminish.

-Jay B

In my neighborhood when you walk down the street you see big houses, cars, and different kind of people. You see people cutting their yards. Other things you see are corner stores, malls, and gas stations. You have people that are in high class, middle class, and lower class. I don't know what kinds of jobs they work but I can tell by the way they act and live. There are no community organizations but you see fights, gangs and drug dealers.

-Mashawn

Finding My Way

Wrong Path

I've seen people's anger push them down a pipeline, especially the people who grew up without both parents. They have so much anger because they wished they had the other half. If life had a good pipeline and a bad pipeline, the Angry people are going to most likely go down the bad one. Therefore, the anger builds up and eventually it draws them to do something bad. Like going to jail is the wrong pipeline to go down. PRISON=WRONG PATH/PIPELINE



-Marquinae

**Can't You Hear
Me Shouting?**

The ability to believe
a reason to leave
angry parents and drugs up
their sleeves
There's no way out
Can't you hear me shouting?
Screaming so loudly
I need you to help me
we can't do it on our own.



-TAYLOR

I love my neighborhood where I was born

and raised and still growing. I kind of remember I was a little kid ride a bike up and down had no problems with no one. But I had found out as a kid it was not easy. I can still remember the first bad thing that happened to me. I was in 5th grade walking home my house was only the 2nd block down. As I was walking home from school all of a sudden I was getting jumped by a black group of people because I was brown. After that I opened my eye. In 6th grade I started smoking weed. Around my neighborhood there is still black and brown fights. I barely started to find out home was where the homies are. I still remember what I thought what friends. The pass me a blunt not telling me what I was in it. After that now someone I call a friend ruin my life by passing me weed with crack. I love it so much sold all my stuff then even started smoke crack straight.

STEVE

Neighborhoods and Pipelines

Mechan and Mashawn

I'm on the path to success
At least that's what I think

OCTAVIO

America is messed up
No health insurance
The worst education
No money to live comfortably

I guess I'm on the jail pipeline. I got there through all my past mistakes and encounters with the law. I can tell you that this path is not a good one.

A N D Y

Drea

The sink is over flown
'nough money in this melting pot
to keep the brew boilin
but the drains stopped up
kids drownin in the pipeline
games cradle to grave
chemically infecting young minds.
Render me to poverty,
drugs, hate and anger
when the systems dysfunctional
the man don't have his shit together.

We Want Freedom

**Is America
a Just State?**

-Kareem

No because everything they doing is messed up, and because the police is racist. 100 people get arrested everyday for doin' stupid stuff. A lot of people die everyday. Soon there will be no more troops because they keep sending more out to die. America is not doing nothing but making everything worse. If they keep locking up people they won't have no more troops because most of the people in jail wanted to be in the army.

**We Need
Real Change -Art**

Stereotypes of a worthless,
lazy Mexican
Damn, the whole world
makes us feel like Mexican's
Leaky roofs dripping
with the kids distain
Drugs, violence and teachers
saying you won't make it brings pain
Ain't no money to pay
to support our babies
Politicians on your back
stealing money like we're no bodies
Why aren't we giving to our kids
those who need some love
Saying we focus on education
our government doesn't do anything
when push comes to shove
Where do we draw the line
when we blame parents
when they used to be kids
When are the opportunities
gonna come up for those
who aren't privileged
We've gotta give our kids health care
instead of saving lives by bids
Those who control health need to
gain money to feel comforted
Give our kids some money
Some knowledge
Some hope
Some real change

Things From My Neighborhood

Pregnant Teens
Bad Kids
Bums
Parks
Trees
Cars
Wild Dogs
Liquor Stores
Crackheads
Schools

MARQUINAE

If these things didn't happen to me
then I wouldn't be **who I am now.**

It really didn't affect me

I just look at it as those are the things in my life.

I seen a lot and didn't want to end up like that.

My Neighborhood

Skateboarding,
Different Races,
Exercise,
Parties, BBQ's
Different people and places.

JAVON



WHERE WE GREW UP

DREAM HOUSE

When I was growing up we moved around a lot, never really knowing the people around us. But for the first 10 years of my life we lived in a beautiful house. The house, home to my childhood memories, is like a dream to me now. 10 years of my life spent in this dream, a beautiful house, and a staircase I used to surf down on couch cushions. This neighborhood is where I learned to ride a bike. Where we knew all the neighbors, but secretly thought they were crazy. There were the two ladies across the street, that to this day...

I still think stole my cat.

Then there's the old couple up the street that kept everything they ever owned!! Then the couple we never saw, but used to break into their backyard to play in the goldfish pond. There's the women down the street that gave us cookies, the girls we used to T-P houses with, the guys who made a hillbilly Jacuzzi in the back of their truck, the old Armenian men that gave us hummus and pita bread, and the family with two swans I used to visit every day after school. Move after move this this all started to fade, and now it's like a dream.

ALEX

PARTY TOWN

Well, there is a lot of people on probation-parole.

There is always parties where people Noz-drink and do more stuff

There will be fights all the time.

People call the police for everything sometimes.

It gets addicting to go to parties every weekend

because you drink maybe smoke

and have fun with your friends and you just feel good.

MICHELLE

No Need For Locked Doors Here

I walk outside my front door and see sunlight and flowers;
it's hardly ever cloudy here. Walk to my car, wave hello to my neighbors Dick and Jane,
Yes... their names are really Dick and Jane.

Put the keys in the ignition, plug in my iPod and drive off.

On my way to my best friend's house,
probably going to lunch and to hang out with the boys.

I grow impatient with the silver Ford Flex in front of me with an,

"I am a Proud Parent of MY Honor Student"

& the little stick figure family stickers on the clean rear
window. I see the old man who always takes his dog for a walk in his wife's electric
wheel chair. He waves as I speed by. There's a cop, sitting off Baseline waiting for
some action with a "please give me anything..." look on his face.

He's looking for a speeder or even a kid on a bike
without a helmet to give a stern lecture to.

I'm safe in my little red car...

No need for locked doors here.

REBECCA

THIS IS MY NEIGHBORHOOD

Every Day as a Child

Skateboarding

Basketball

Two big alleys

Diversity

Elementary school

Liquor stores

Gang

Families

Bikes

Taco shop

Apartments

Barbeques

Loud music

Parties

Piñatas

No sidewalks

I would see this **EVERY DAY** as a child.

Friendly people

Struggles

Goals

Guidance

JANET

Home in the A.M

**I wake up to the smell of sizzling bacon,
Go downstairs to a warm breakfast made by mom.**

I tell my dog to go get the newspaper,

And as she sets it at my feet,

I stand on my front porch & say...

**"Good Morning" to a mother and her child as she strolls
down the street, with her dog on a leash.**

Next, a man on a bicycle, peddling his feet.

Sue is watering her lawn,

I say hello and let out a yawn,

for I am still half asleep.

There's a father and son

**Posting ads on the trunks of trees that
covers the blue sky of the houses in between.**

Their dog ran away just the other day

And they want to know if I've seen her.

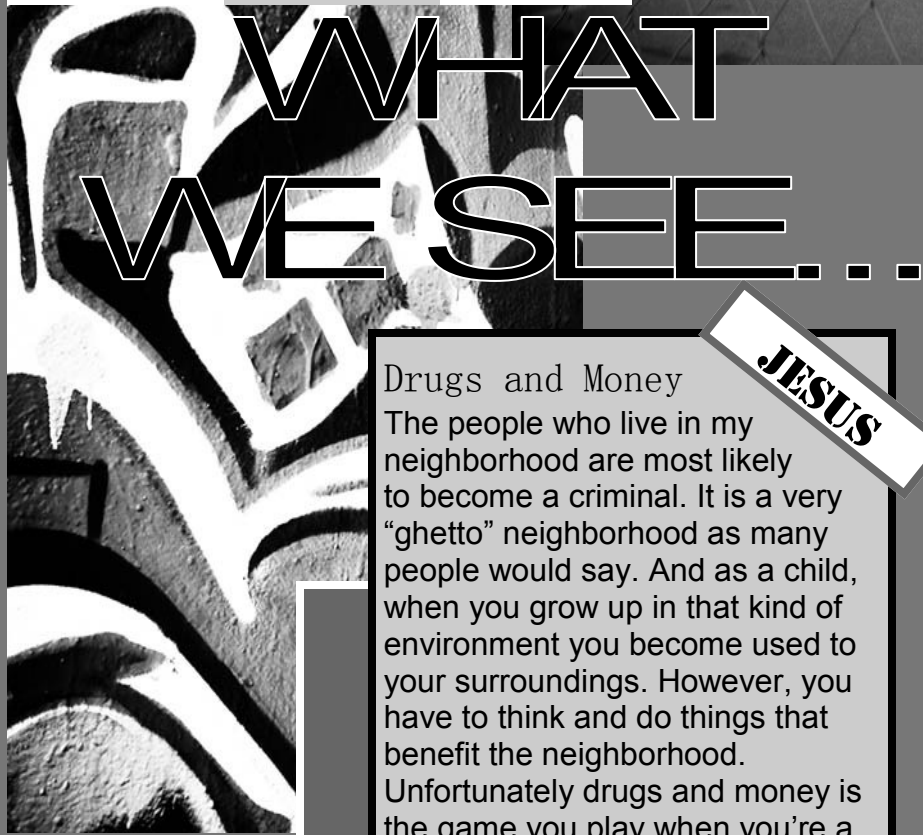
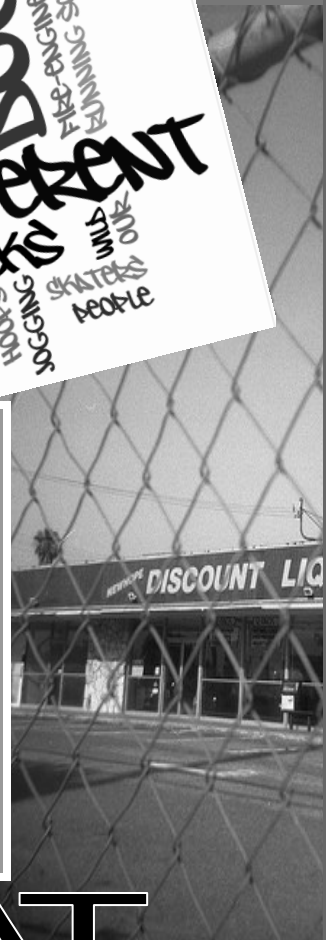
TAYLOR



Playing With Guns

In my hood there are bums walking
There are parties rocking
There are police raiding houses
All kinds of crazy noises
Kids playing with guns
When we see the police we all start to run
My neighborhood isn't fun
You get caught slippin'... you're done.

KEVIN



WHAT WE SEE...

JESUS

Drugs and Money
The people who live in my neighborhood are most likely to become a criminal. It is a very "ghetto" neighborhood as many people would say. And as a child, when you grow up in that kind of environment you become used to your surroundings. However, you have to think and do things that benefit the neighborhood. Unfortunately drugs and money is the game you play when you're a criminal.

It Made Me

I love...
-Blue liquor store where he used to give us free stuff because him and my mom were tight
-Nail shops and burrito trucks on every corner
-Candy painted Buick Regals sittin' on 24 inch rims with 4 fifteens or 6 twelve's in the trunk so you can hear the music from way down the street
-Chilling on the block with my friends in the summer having water fights in the street

I hate...
-The blue liquor store is no more because the police took him to jail because he was crazy.
-Abandoned torn down houses
-No grass or trees
-Police stopping, harassing you for no reason
-Sirens
-Gun shots and screeching cars
-Bums on every corner doing any and everything for money
-Loose pit bulls, chasing kids and biting people
-Parks where children no longer play and drug dealers and gang bangers reside and do their business
-Low budget schools

It's taught me...
-To preserve, know my surroundings, stay on my toes, sex, guns, family, friendship, love, faith, loyalty

What would I change?
Everything I hate,
I want peace, a peace of mind.
But could I really live without this?
It all made me who I am.
IDK who I would be without it.

MECHAN

MY NEIGHBORHOOD



My neighborhood is calm,
My neighborhood is peaceful,
I learned many things growing up,
I learned how to fight,
I learned how to duck,
I learned how to dance,
I learned how to skate,
I learned how to dress,
Never learned to hate,
Not planning to,
I'm going to be me,
you just be you,
That's what my neighborhood
taught me,
For them to them and me to be me.

MASHAWN

Bus stop looks different, people mad different races,
like tagging taxes cool. Begin just young and older people
now they looks like yuppies, working class jobs and
professional (brain surgeon, business people) and artists.
Very diverse, subway station, coffee and bike shops.
Barbershop small, businesses and no church. In my
neighborhood there was a lot of security school and
parents, police made kids act out, drug dealing.
Cold and loud.

Where ..We.. Grew Up

Drinking bottles.
Faded.
Nice houses- people inside them
not so much.
Shooting dice.
Selling weed.
Grouped up.
No role models.
Kids selling candy
(Mexican lady driving truck)
Black people.
Christian churches.
Parks- crackin' and jerkin'.
My own role model was a
positive influence. I liked
everything about it. He gang
banged, but had a job and took
care of our family.
He's dead now.

What I learned in my neighborhood is how to survive. For example, staying away from ones that are trying to harm, the ones that act fake. Another one is coming in the house before dark because that's when the neighborhood gets it cracking. I learned how to have conversations with the people in the neighborhood.

ANONYMOUS

ART

Ignorance, apathy, and naivety,
Just want to hear those words,
Lets get free!
Everyone walking around with a conservative mind,
To the real issues that affect us, they're just blind,
During the election of Barack Obama,
Racism hit me in the face like blunt forced trauma,
Compared to a cockroach,
Even my teachers hated what I believed,
Got to stand up against the flow,
All this hatred seems like a bad reality show,
Always felt like I wanted to leave,
Man, can't you all just let me breathe.



M E C H A N



My neighborhood taught me what to do when you see the police. You didn't hear or see anything. Keep your mouth shut and disperse. Keep your circle small because there no one you can trust. Your own family might cross you. "A dirty world that we live in" Boosie would say. Watch your back for your enemies even if they aren't coming your way. How to roll a blunt, what's the best chaser with a drink, how to hit a house lock, how to steal a car, how to make and sell drugs, where to stash them when the police came, how to dance, fight and drive, how to love, to be loyal and get respect, to stay on my toes, to preserve, to be persistent, to be a student, a daughter, a sister, friend, niece, granddaughter, and the most important thing of all is how to be me.

Groups of kids in street corners, nice cars, old white people, family around, citizen patrol that doesn't do anything, it is still safe, and lots of churches, nice buildings, residential areas. Positive for the kids because they are really proactive, away supervised. They get weak don't go through nothing no strength. Not grateful.
ANONYMOUS

neighborhoods

Getting faded on the corner
Drinking out of bottles
Shooting dice, selling weed, Mich says where are all the role models?
Yes, we got the nice houses, but the people in them aren't so nice.

Anonymous



What I see in my neighborhood is people walking to work. Also I would like to see people going to the library. *-anonymous*

Jay B

My place I live in is full of kids,
Drug addicts, crack heads, heroin,
and full of pigs.
It makes me sick but born again,
I'm washed in pain and arguments
All of it was a struggle
But that's past tense so it's out of my puzzle.
I open up my mind so that opens up the time
To get out of this place that I call mine,
A.K.A.: my home, the streets that I roam
That's in my past so that's left alone.
Now that I'm grown on grown up things
I think of college, think of this human being
And my meaning
Of the human being
In the neighborhood that I am leaving.
No hard feelings and no remorse
I'm just trying to get my life back on course.
And of course
I'm not going to quit
I'm not going to stop
Until I hit that #1 spot
And I'm not like a pot
With a Celsius of 392 volts.

The Streets

I school you in the ABC
the 123 the street smart.
You a girl growing
from the concrete
and the street fights.
Homies getting shot when
they go into the hood.
So they always strapped
with the burner
when they can and
when they should.
Getting violated by the
PO's everyday.
They tryna live a good life
with they family
if they could.
But it's hard cuz
the people in they neigh-
borhood

Mariah AKA Tazz



I learned to imagine when I played with the kids across the street in the old man's rose garden and pretended we were in a treacherous forest.

I learned to say hello from the old man who walked his big golden retriever and tipped his hat at my brother and I as they strolled by.

I learned to watch my surroundings from watching "unsolved mysteries" with my cousins in the summers and preparing for a "bad guy" to come get us.

I learned patience when all the 16 year olds got new cars and my parents gave me their old beat up 1990' M30.

I learned how to dream big from getting support from everyone I knew.

And I learned love from my parents who let me learn to imagine, say hello, watch my surroundings, and dream big in my own way.

Rebecca

MARQUINAE

From somewhere something
is always going on
Mom taught me right but I still did wrong
Now I wish I could go back and change it
No matter what I'm still going
to go out and make it
The stuff I did hurt everyone close to me
But I always tried my best can't you see
Its time to make a change
and handle my business
When I grow up to be something
mom wont have to stress.
I apologize for growing a hot mess
But maybe it was because
my so called friends
Moving from place to place
isn't an excuse no more
You just protected me from
all the drama in store
Neighborhoods weren't that bad
it was stuff that was supposed to happen.

My Neighborhood

Jesus: I don't even want to talk about my neighborhood.

Drea: My neighborhood had 20 kids to play with, soccer in the street, road hog son bikes.

Jesus: We didn't play sports.

Drea: Kids owned the streets.

Jesus: It gets kind of boring rolling in the car so we go looking for fun- girls, money, whatever.

Drea: We snuck into the hotel pool at night.

Jesus: It's all about respect. We have fun but the things that it gets you to. That's the problem.

Drea: We got in trouble, but good trouble, no parents, no worries, no rules.

Jesus: Money- people want it and do anything for it. But for real. You just want love.

Drea: You just want love.

Jesus/Drea: **You just want love.**

By: Jesus and Drea

ADULTS SHOULD BE...

Understanding

Be there for their kids

Listen

Respect their kids

Be mature

Set their kids up for success

Have knowledge

Be leaders

Put their kids first

Adults should know better

But sometimes

kids are more responsible
than adults

I would not want to go back to Pomona because I got my street skills from there. That made me who I am today, because of the fighting, the drugs, and getting shot at everyday. I would want my kids to have everything that I never had. And they shouldn't have street skills.

Maurice

Our places

We come from different places
Our Neighborhoods have
Bikes and basketball hoops
Middle aged white folks jogging
And folks hanging on the corner
Houses and apartments
Fire engines and coyotes
Grass and nothing but cars
People walking dogs and
wild packs of dogs running loose
Skaters
Guns
Gates
And soccer mom cars

YJC and U of R

My Neighborhood is Ghetto

My neighborhood is ghetto
I see broken cars,
no grass in the yard
Toys and trucks tossed
all over the yard.
I see bums and homeless
people all up the street
with no clothes, no house
and nothing to eat.
Gang violence and drugs
dealt all around.
Not a smile in place, only
nothing but frowns.

KEVIN

What it means to be a MAN

What it means to be a man? That's the question!

To me being a man means having a lot of responsibilities and being able to handle them through tough circumstances.

From my experiences with my father I learned *tough times always come* and you have to hold your head high.

Another thing is being ready for business, no matter what type it could be, in the streets or in the office.

One more thing in my opinion is how you present yourself. I like to present myself clean. This includes hygiene, clothes, or with a positive energy. These are a few qualities men should have.



What it means to be a **Marquez**

MAN

A man has to be hard.
Stand up for yourself. Stand your ground.

I grew up in the streets, that's how I learned.
Hanging out with true OGs who have been in the penitentiary. Got brothers in the cemetery six feet underground.

I wouldn't call them my role models

because I don't want to be like them.

I don't know if I'll make it to 18.
To make it I'd have to be an honest citizen, stay straight, no drugs no violence.

The people I hang around with, there's always peer pressure. You go straight but there's always someone on the corner, some enemy that knows me.

They won't let me go because I'm trying to stay straight. They'd mess me up.

To be a new kind of man I'd have to move away, but how do you move somewhere new where you've got no family?

To be a man you have to be strong and don't do anything wrong.
Be responsible.
Do the impossible.
To be a man you have to be trustworthy.
Don't do people dirty,
listen to your conscience.
You can't listen to the nonsense.
You should listen to me.
Because this is how a man should be.

KEVIN

JUAN



Mashawn

How to be a man, just sit back understand.

So back at life, make some new plans. Watch your kids grow up. Teach to be a man. Teach to be successful. School them on some good plan.

I know they can be hardheaded, but you still got to love them and still got to be there for them.



What does it mean to be a man?

I think it means something different than most.

Gotta treat your fellow people with respect. Beating women and killing one another. Would you slap her if that was your mother?

We've gotta heal each other, stop killin our brothers. You've gotta take care of that lady when you both make a baby. Seems like a brother forgot the meaning of responsibility.

You never know what you've got until you realize your capability. Sexual violence is a woman's reality. Men have to see to stop it, its our responsibility. Be real to your brothers.

Be real to your sisters. We've gotta end the violence and the hatred. We just gotta start lovin' one another and respect your fellow brother.



ART

I'm a Bastard.

Forget a father he never was in my life. I thought my motha was supposed to be his wife, **his life**. Livin' the lime-life when he turned it into lemon.

Now I'm dealin' with an empty space in my heart. And it can't be replaced. That part I filled it with ice. Now its better and nice. It feels just right if that's the definition of a man.

Well a man is someone who don't understand. Comprendemi my friend **I'm feeling dead within**. But that's exactly what he fails to understand.



J.B

Grandpa

Hello grandpa. I just wanted to write you a few letters to let you know how much I miss you. I know it has been like eight years that I haven't seen you. Probably you already forgot about me but I haven't. And I wish you were over here with me and my mom and all of us. I wish you were here so you could play baseball with me like we used to in Mexico. I wish you could have been here those eight years that you weren't here. If you would have been here, I think I would have been a better person because I learned from you how to be a man by treating girls with respect.

Surely I will be the greatest dad to my daughter that is on the way. I will take responsibility for my actions and be a hard worker and a lovely husband to my wife and kids.

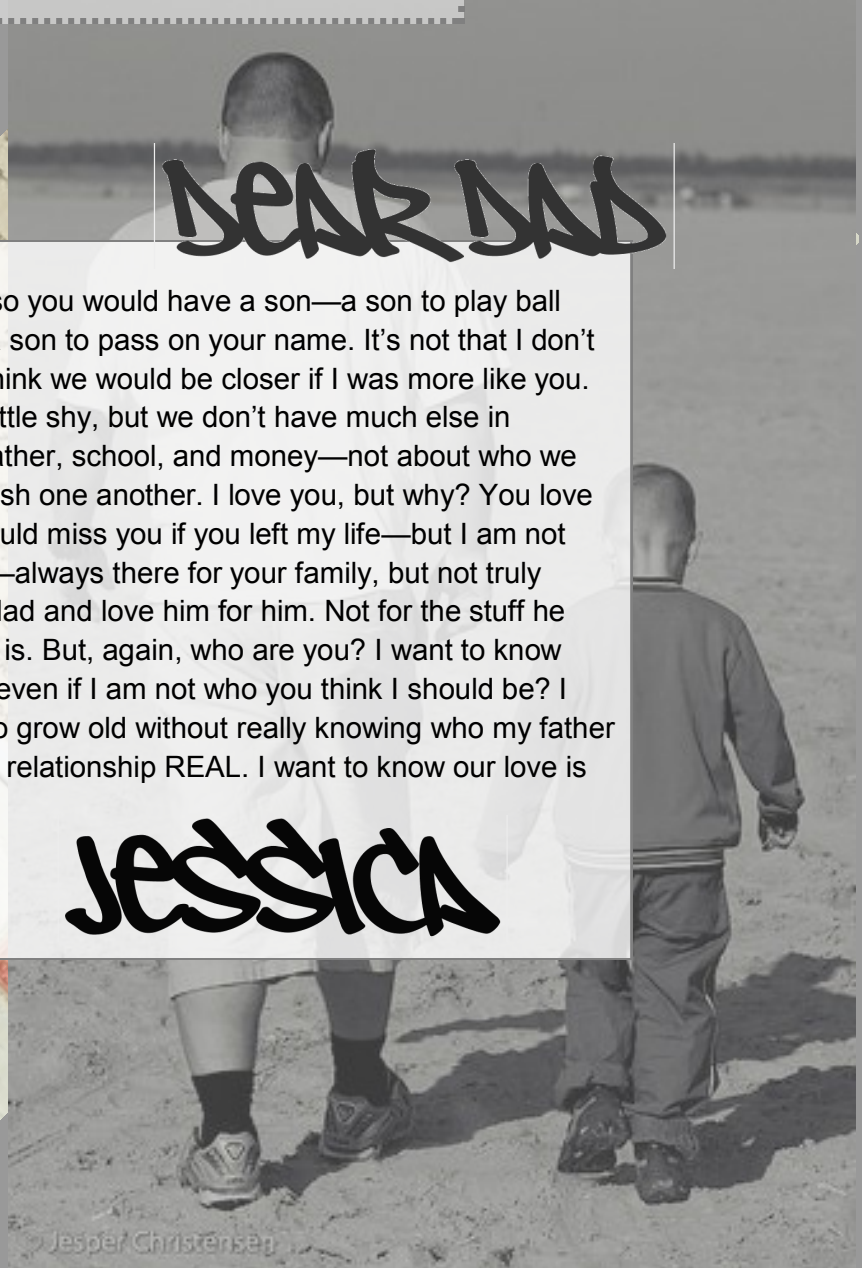
Carlos



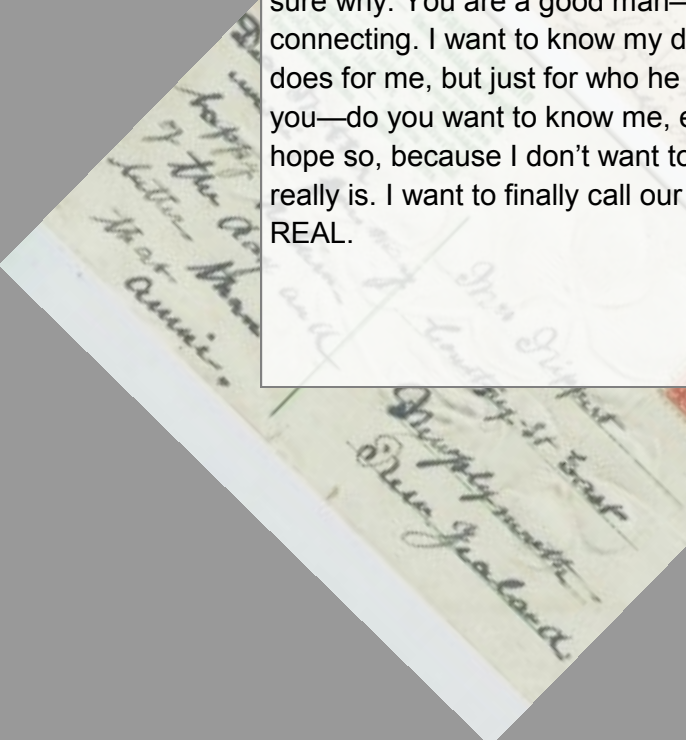
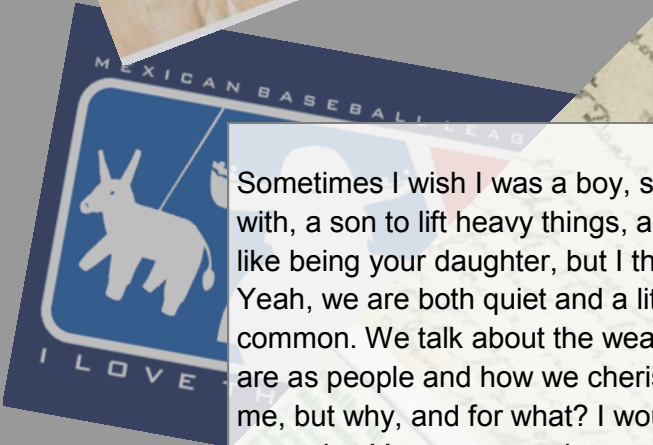
DEAR DAD

Sometimes I wish I was a boy, so you would have a son—a son to play ball with, a son to lift heavy things, a son to pass on your name. It's not that I don't like being your daughter, but I think we would be closer if I was more like you. Yeah, we are both quiet and a little shy, but we don't have much else in common. We talk about the weather, school, and money—not about who we are as people and how we cherish one another. I love you, but why? You love me, but why, and for what? I would miss you if you left my life—but I am not sure why. You are a good man—always there for your family, but not truly connecting. I want to know my dad and love him for him. Not for the stuff he does for me, but just for who he is. But, again, who are you? I want to know you—do you want to know me, even if I am not who you think I should be? I hope so, because I don't want to grow old without really knowing who my father really is. I want to finally call our relationship REAL. I want to know our love is REAL.

JESSICA



Jesper Christensen



I taught myself everything I know except my anger. My dad taught me that.

Responsibility, how to act, how to ride a bike: these are things I taught myself.

My dad gets angry easily and hits everybody and yells. Sometimes I go to sleep to forget about my anger. My dad taught me how to be **ANGRY**. I hope my dad teaches me how to drive a car and how to get a job.

MOISES

My dad taught me to stay away from the boys who had no future cuz a

MAN needs to provide

Stay away from the ones who cuss in front of their mom cuz they were never taught respect. Stay away from the ones who cry in public cuz they won't be able to hold it together. Stay away from the boys who sag their pants real low cuz they won't be able to get a decent job. Stay away from the boys who don't have a dad at home cuz no one taught them to be a real man.



What it means to be a man has been defined to me in different ways: I learned from my dad and today I learn from different men I meet. Responsibility, being a good husband, hard worker, helping others. My dad has cried, I have seen it only once. Men I encounter in relationships are different. They lack respect and act tough with a girl. Some men attempt to look good but in reality people just need to act like themselves. Growing up men always were supposed to be strong and tough but it is troubling when girls in their neighborhood are to do the same to survive. Sensitive, caring and crying describes a woman. Yet the same applies to men. Being a man is stereotyped in society

but in reality
should be able to act their own way
and cry if they want to

JANET



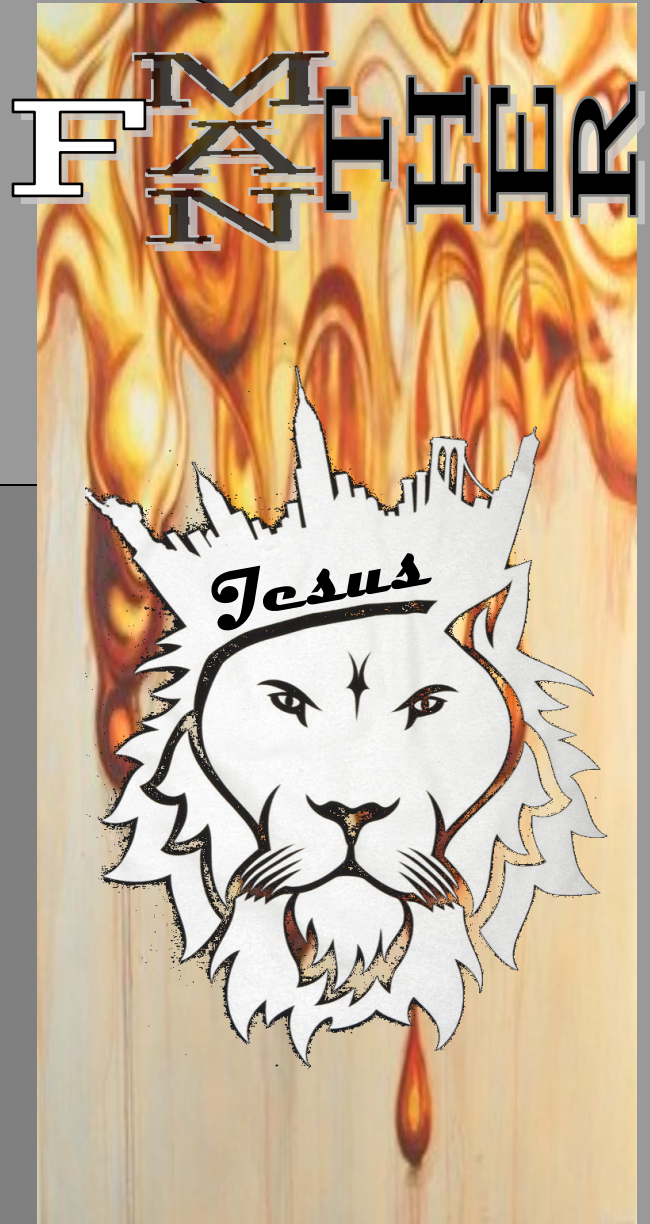
Dad, you were never strong enough. *Lost in your own world.* Work in the morning. Poker in the evening. Cards shuffling online. **Blue.** Blue screen. Before you, you before me. I got into college today dad. *I'm not going to be a doctor.*

Conscience.

What I think it means to be a man is to be responsible, take care of your *responsibilities*, put food on the table, take care of the family, and responsibility for your actions.

King of the Jungle

We want to be tough
The best like the lions
Lions want everything to themselves
They want to command everybody.
When one lion meets another lion,
They fight.
Want to take over.
They die just to be the king.
Men, they want to be the king.
They teach you, give you lessons when
you're small
Tell you to keep your head up
Be tough, roar just like them.
But if you're already messing up in middle
school
You're going to do worse in high school.
Because you want attention
Lions and men, they want to take over.



The Parent I Never Had

One day I'll be the dad my dad wasn't. I'm going to be there. I'm going to teach my child how to play sports. I'm going to stay with my kids' mother because I don't want my child to go back and forth between two families with different sisters, brothers, step mothers and step fathers. I just want my child to have two parents. I want my child to have a father as a role model not as a person that comes around every once in a while. Because when your father isn't around to discipline a child's life would come to an end. So that's my plan, to be in my child's life as a _____ as a _____

man



father

Dear Dad,

We were so close. I was your little girl, *your shadow*, the only child you ever had. Then you up and disappeared, visits from you sometimes but mostly nothing. You went from giving me everything I ever wanted to giving me nothing at all. I was young *I didn't understand what was going on*. No more shoes every week and McDonalds after school. And still till this day all mama can say is daddy fell off for a while. But I want to know why? Where did you go? How can you force me to live without you? How can you leave me to have my mom and her boyfriends to be my father figure? What happened, *I deserve to know*? You came into my life at the age of 16 and you left me at 10. What the hell is that about? I never knew how much your absence affected me. I wish you would've taught me the right guys to pick, *maybe my heart wouldn't have been hurt so much*. I never had a male to look up to, to be there to protect me. *I love you for what you did* do I just wish that you never stopped because some graduations, birthday and holidays weren't enough for a child growing up.



So many things I didn't know about you. So many things I learned after you're gone. So many things I want to ask you about. I feel at a loss, only coming to age when I could really know you. I'm 21 and conversations about drugs and alcohol are not taboo anymore. And you telling me about your life experiences aren't censored anymore. You aren't trying to set an example anymore because I'm already the motivated, compassionate, intelligent woman you raised me to be. **I feel like time was stolen.** I feel like a part of me is missing because I didn't get to know you till after you were gone.

That day people sat around a table telling stories of times they spent with you. **I sat there amazed at how different and full of life and adventure you were.** You had a whole lifetime before I was born, already being 50, that image and father figure you gifted me with was a reflection of the wisdom you had gained. And as I was surrounded by craziness with mom and sister, **you were my rock.** We were one in the same, you were my island after the ship sank. You taught me how to love how to push through my doubts to believe in people how to always be there for someone to show compassion to set great examples

The most important lesson I learned from you though, is that I have control over my emotions and that staying mad at someone only hurts and poisons your soul.

**be happy
and
Let it go**

What a Man should be: Respectful.
Responsible. Strong. Have a future.
Be there for his kids. Protect his family.
Hard worker. Smart. Open-minded.
Caring. Leader. Pride. Understanding.
Willing to sacrifice his life for his family.
Giving back to his community.

Isaac

Alex

Dear Dad-

There was always something I wanted to tell you. It was always thank you. Thank you for coming in to my life before it was too late. Thank you for all the advice you gave me, how if I talk back one day someone isn't going to like it. You always told me if I kept it up, the stuff that you said was going to happen happened. Thank you for teaching me the things you taught me. You taught me how to cook and be a good parent when I get older. Now you're always there for me. Sorry for all the time I was mean to you. When I would get a D you would try to punish me. But you was never around. You would try to get me to live with you. But I would never stay at your house for more than a week and had my times when I said mean things. You're the only person I can talk to. The only one who cares. Mom was somewhat always there but kind of doesn't care, would say "Yeah yeah yeah." You listen when no one else is. You feel what I feel inside. You're the closest person to me yet I never got the chance or had the strength to tell you, but my main point is thank you, not just for one thing but for everything. I LOVE YOU.

Always,

Marquinae

School Time

When I see myself at Redlands, it makes me feel like this is where I'm going to be at in a couple of years. One of the things that makes me feel good is the nice buildings, the green grass, and a lot of people with higher education. It feels different from high school because of the good food and more sports. They have fewer rules than a normal high school.

At my school, I feel like I'm being watched all day. When I first get in the school I go through metal detectors, then we got to go in the class with the teachers that are always on our bumper, always worrying where we sit at and when we getting up, always picking on people. It feels like they are always looking for a reason to get us locked up for stupid reasons.

BY **TYROY**

YJC

It's got a lot of rules, P.O.'s, fences.
It makes me feel like an animal.
Cameras watching you.
It makes me feel suspicious.
My teacher gives me good opportunities...

-MEACH

Hoodlum

On Campus Suspension
OCS that place is wack
It hot as hell and I'm already Black
Got them crazy people drinkin' yak
in the back
They don't even talk to you
They just watch us.
OCS is like 98 degrees
The cameras are always watching
you.
They don't even talk to you,
It makes me feel like a hoodlum.

-MEACH

School is ghetto.
Teachers don't care
Except my teacher...
She takes us places,
Gives us opportunities to
succeed,
Makes us less frustrated
-unknown

POs, walls, fences, "Zero tolerance policy"...it makes me feel like a dog, a caged animal

No Chance

School is like...

Ghetto, lots of Mexicans, diversity, class was cool...

kids rowdy...consequences similar to prisons,
ugly hallways, flickering lights, cameras are on...

Walk into my high school,

and I see the stoners munchin' under the shade,

Across from the cholos posted on the back wall kickin' it.

The cameras are on and I know the chumps are watching me

The air smells alive but the rooms are cramped.

The lazy teacher is babbling in the front while we talk about
anything to not have to listen.

She looks at me like I have no chance,

And smirks as she puts me on the spot.

She doesn't give a shit about my
education—so why should I?

A
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a
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d

R
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b
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c
c
a

Finding My Way

Uncaring Teachers didn't care who did what?

Didn't teach, just talked

Multiple teachers, with multiple personalities

It was different from every human being

I was just a speck in their lives.

I come in class, sit down in and get straight to the math.

The teacher would write the agenda on the board.

I barely knew how to do it, and today we are getting more.

#1 Do page 92 quadratic equations

#2 Show the formulas in every equation

#3 It's due by tomorrow

Now I gotta see if I'ma be passing,

Or if once again failing,

It's no telling, and my teachers just staring
straight at the ceiling.

Eyes wandering off into space

when her students over here feeling

like a disgrace to their own race.

Because we are feeling ignorant,

when really its our teacher that doesn't have time to spend.

Jay B

School is like a rope,
It ties you down.
School is like a vacuum,
It sucks everything out of you.
School is like a steep hill,
It's a long way down....
But school can be a better place,
with a teacher who is
caring and willing to help
School with Ms. Crawford
is like eating a Donut,
You keep wanting another bite.
She gives us the key,
one that can open the door to success.

Isaac

"GATED!"
"GATED!"

SCHOOL IS LIKE...

My school is like a prison.
Fences, security guards,
always getting patted down.
No clubs, or sports,
But always approached with a frown.
Being next to a jail is intimidating,
no programs or teachers motivating
Always being stereo-typed and uglier rooms,
One wrong move and I'm given a broom.
People think that I'm only a criminal
and that my integrity is minimal,
People think I won't achieve,
but all I can do is believe.

Kevin and Alex

IF WE COULD CHANGE THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Juvenile hall would be more homey with couches on the units
We would get more personal space, like single showers,
doors on every toilet so we can have privacy.

In our cells, we could have books, a phone,
pencils, paper, and soap.

We should have bigger windows so we can see outside.

We should have regular beds and pillows, warmer blankets.

We should give 'em more food,
I'm always hungry.

Everyone would wear their own clothes
have brand new drawers so they don't have to feel dirty
Let them know how the good shit feels
so they can get to go to college or find a trade.

PCOs and POs should treat us with respect

Sometimes it's like they forgot I'm a human.

Staff should go easy on the hand cuffs

Probation officers carrying guns is too much.

They should give us positive reinforcement and

More discipline so the kids can change.

But the strict rules only get you more angry and
make us bang our doors, disrupt and rebel.

We could have more visitors, from family and friends.

We should be able to earn home passes and field trips

We should get to go outside more and have more activities.

And they should make more classes like mechanics, wood shop,
electronics and cooking so we can get better jobs.

Probation should create more programs like ROP
teach kids a trade and help them find jobs.

YJC and Redlands students

Final Words

Hear Me Out: Voices from Within

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With the Support of:

San Bernardino County School District
San Bernardino County Probation Department,
University of Redlands' Office of Community Service Learning
and the Race and Ethnic Studies Program.

Special Thanks to:

Ms Tyrese Crawford, Beth Henry and Regina Cresswell at YJC
And to our partners Susanne Pastuchek and Jane Guttman.