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WORDS UNCAGED
(POEM)

Positive Transition

For a long time I didn't know my sentence
Thought I had 25 to life, couldn't distinguish the difference
Between life without and life with parole
"You will never see the streets again" is what I was told
Sent off to prison feeling like I lost everything
And my support group soon felt like a one-man team
Friends faded, some family, my girl left me for another
The pain deepened within this broken hearted brother
Seemed like all at once my causative factors hit me
I recognized the feeling but didn't understand the history
Abandonment, lack of love, verbal abuse
Internal triggers of feeling devalued, all derived from my youth
Housed on a 180 where growth was far from everyone's mind
Rehabilitation's foreign and plenty had accepted their time
Where agony took victory and mindsets were affected
And the behavior of this population reflected
Apathy dominated, and yes my heart hardened
My humanity became lost and my perception darkened
Paranoia consumed my brain and trust became obsolete
Emotionally numb, couldn't cry, left my growth incomplete
This sad way of living carried on for years
The cycle became broken shortly after housed here
On this P.P.F. yard, where my darkness transformed to light
Here, I discovered the true meaning of having insight
I learned how to incorporate tools to keep my emotions in check
Along with the origin of my character defects
I discovered change is possible and it's okay to be a little nervous
Rehabilitation starts within and spills out onto the surface
Learned how to reject the false label, dig deep and find the truth
Gratefully educated through "Men For Honor's, Helping Youth"
I developed a new mindset and restored my humanity
By the grace of God been blessed with physical health and my sanity
They say a man isn't suppose to cry; that's a lie
Since changed, I've let an abundance of tears run down my eyes
It feels good to feel whole and know I have a soul
And put to rest learned behavior, regardless what I was told
I went from studying moves on the yard for my survival
To studying work from school for my finals
Was told education is key, so constantly I build my mental

And refuse to let incarceration conceal my potential
Remaining mindful of my future to keep my present on track
To be reminded how far I came, is the only time I look back

Terry Bell