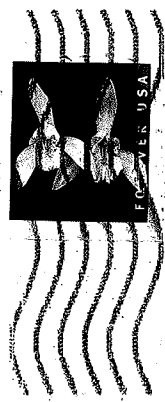


Marcus Blevins
J/87415 // 1-NB-70
SQSP

San Quentin, CA 94964



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Prison University Project
Post Office 492
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5/4/2020

San Quentin State Prison

Marcus Blevins

J87415 // 1-N-70U

Dear Ms. Lewen,

Thank you for the care package and words of encouragement. Your consistency is both disarming and comforting. I should've known that you'd have something up your sleeve to let us know we're not alone. And I'm blown away by how you keep the blessings coming.

I never saw such a dazzling display of generosity toward prisoners. In my aggregated 40-year stint behind bars, there have been few who truly care for us the way you guys do. Most people working in prison feel duty bound to remind us of who and where we are lest we forget or lose sight of our pejorative status. In their eyes, we will always be beneath them no matter what we do to improve ourselves. Over the years this creeping narrative gradually took root until I started believing it myself.

From the first day I set foot in the classroom for the Patten College orientation, when I was self-absorbed in the garb of that 40-year message, I gradually made the shift from villain to student, from student to person, to someone who contributes and can make a difference, to a man whose self-worth urges them to stand with soul erect. This college program is one of the most powerful forces I've ever encountered in my lifetime. Sometimes it seems too good to be true: but then you have always been here to confirm and reinforce the truth of redemption time and again. You're the gardener who lovingly tends the garden: we're the flowers that rise and bloom on stem-filled promise.

The Gardener

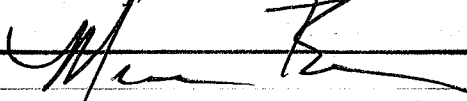
Who knew that you knew
That we who never knew
Would come to know
What you have always known;

That when seeds are planted
Hope and love
And inspiration
And Springs of eternal
Blooms are sown;

Life begins anew
For the young
And the old,

Where the wise and foolish,
Take rake
And hoe
To hand
To mutually tend
Her Beloved Garden

Sincerely,



Marcus Blevins

J87415 // 1-N-70U

*P.S. Please feel free
to utilize this letter
for whatever purpose
you see fit.*