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STOP



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Hi Grandma [REDACTED]

Thanks for writing! I save all my mail and re-read them from time to time. I consider them my treasures and will be sure to add yours to my collection! You are too kind! I was blushing through your first page and enjoyed reading how you cared for Grandpa [REDACTED] and how you met [REDACTED]. I often wondered why people lived up North, especially during the winter season. I always figured you liked the cold for some reason. 😊 I have a few memories of Grandma [REDACTED] but I remember spending more time with you + Grandpa [REDACTED]. I recall when you and some of your girls visited us in the keys. I was infatuated with one of your daughters, though I don't recall her name. All your kids were "cool", as I recall. Looking back on things, I wonder if I would have been any good at acting. It's funny how you mentioned Clark Gable, thanks for the compliment! When [REDACTED] and I first started dating, I had lost some weight and my face was a bit leaner. We would walk through a mall or the park together and she would chuckle at the women doing double-takes at us. I would tease her and tell her she is so attractive, she even turns the heads of women! Truth is, they were probably just noticing two people very much in love, though she would tease me back by saying I was so handsome. Aww Shucks! Speaking of the keys, I should mention that we kept track of where the lobster traps were using latitude/longitude coordinates. That was before GPS, using ground based stations called

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LORAN. There was a LORAN coordinates system, but the device I used converted that to lat/long for me. It was easier to use, as it was more right-angles. I would steer the boat by compass and be given my current position. Then I would know to head East and a little North or whatever to arrive at the 1st buoy in a line of traps. We always laid our traps on a certain compass heading, so once you found 1, you could easily locate the rest. I kept a map at home and used stick pins and yarn to give me a "big picture" visual as well. I'm telling you this so you know that I was using a log book and electronic navigation equipment instead of just my brain. Though there were plenty of fishermen who did it that way, I had other things to clutter up my mind with! You also mentioned the motorcycle I had in the keys. As I'm sure you know, I had a serious accident with my then girlfriend [redacted] on the back. I was hurt pretty badly - tore my ACL on my right knee. [redacted] shattered her thigh bone and had to have a rod inserted so she could heal. Those were dark times, but we healed up and used the insurance money to buy lumber to build lobster traps, and later - when we got the settlement years later from Mom + Dad's underinsured motorist coverage - used that to go to school for computer programming. I have to tell you - I was awful at first! I had never really used a computer before and the class was full of people that already knew how to program them!

I made friends with most of the class and with some hard work and extra tutelage from my classmates - things began to make sense and I was able to keep up with the class. We started out with a class of 50 students and graduated 15. I was happy to be counted amongst the 15 who graduated! It was especially sweet for me, as a prerequisite for the school was a high school diploma. I had dropped out my junior year, so had to go sit for a GED test. funny story: I stopped by a high school to inquire about taking the GED test and was told that I couldn't just take the test, that I'd have to attend classes in order to prepare for it. I didn't have the time or patience for that - computer programming classes were starting in a week! The lady relented, saying I could take a "practice test" to see where I was at academically. I took the test and it was all multiple choice - fill in the bubble. She fed the answer sheet into a machine to grade it and then said "Oh, you can come in tomorrow to take the test." Yay! I think I had been out of school for like 6 yrs by then. Was very happy that I had retained something! I sent Grandpa [redacted] a copy of my GED - he had been against me dropping out of high school. I guess I'm telling you all of this to let you know that things always seem to work out. [redacted] knows all of these stories and tells me I could fall into a pile of shit and step out smelling like a rose. If she only knew about all of the hard work that I put

in. It only looks easy! Back in 04 or '05 when Dad had his quadruple bypass surgery. I realized this mortality. I still wasn't able to face my own yet... At the time, he had a motorcycle and would meet up with friends and ride. I bought one so I could join him. I wanted to spend more time with him and figured I'd enjoy sharing his hobbies. He was flying the Champ now, and encouraged me to learn as well. We would fly together over to Okeechobee for breakfast and meet up with his pilot buddies. After 9 months of training, I took my written and oral exams, then the check-out flight and became a newly-minted private pilot! Whew! hard work, but very worth it! I mentioned that I hadn't faced my own mortality yet. [REDACTED] was asking me, as recently as October "When are you going to lose weight and start exercising?" and I would tell her "After my 2nd heart attack!" I figured by then I would realize that I'm not going to live forever and start taking my health seriously. 😊 [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I realized, very quickly, that I love life too much to let it be taken away from me! I've lost some weight sitting here in jail and am exercising daily now too! I wrote up a statement on what happened that night

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has it and is going to transcribe it into an electronic document. I'll ask Mom to forward you a copy of it. There is so much mis-information and outright lies being reported in the media. I don't know what you've read or heard, but I wanted to assure you that I'm not the monster they're portraying me to be!

Everyone who knows me knows that is not the kind of person I am - and I'm sure you feel the same.

I'm really not prejudiced against race, but I have no use for certain cultures. This gangster-Rae, ghetto talking thug "culture" that certain segments of society flock to is intolerable. They espouse violence and disrespect towards women. The black community here in Jacksonville is in an uproar against me - the 3 other thugs that were in the car are telling stories to cover up their true "colors".

I'm not worried about the trial. I have the truth and the law on my side.

Right now I'm focused on my heart hearing - listening - praying - that they will grant me a bond so that I can return home and wait the 12-18 months before trial in peace. Please send positive thoughts and prayers my way. There's lots of negativity being (wrongly) directed towards me right now, so I can use all the positive energy I can get!

Love,

Mike