The Stars Not the Bars

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A man has an ephiphany about God while in jail

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Shirley Davis

Man sitting on the floor with head down. There is a Bible on the floor beside him. Suddenly raises head yells sarcastically

Life's hard? Get over it?

Points to wall

What's that supposed to mean? Hang the man who wrote that on a my cell wall! Who did he think he was? Buddha? And that minister who was just here, Iâ m locked up on my third strike facing hard time and all he can say is â Look at that window son (points up) and see the stars not the bars!â

Stands up looks up at window as tone changes to defeated tone

Of course there are bars, big, ugly, gray bars

Begins to weep quietly. Stops crying and looks up heavenward and yells

Are you up there God?!

It's Jacob! Do you hear me?!

Normal Tone

God I donâ t know what to do. Iâ ve lost my wife, my kids, my self-respect, Iâ ve lost everything to the bottle! I hurt God, are you listening?

Pulls out of his pocket a picture of family and looks at it longingly

My boys, my precious little girl. I hurt you so bad tonight. Those memories of me will haunt you the rest of your lives. You'd be better off with me dead.

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Places picture back in pocket and looks about for something to hang himself with

What can I use to put me and my family out of our misery

Looks down and sees Bible. Picks it up angrily Speaks to Bible

That minister must have left you here. Mom used to say you are the soul of God.

Shakes fist heavenward

You've never done or given one thing to me! Nothing but put me behind bars! (points to window) My mom used to tell me incredible stories about men that lived thousands of years ago and about you God!

Defiantly looks heavenward

They were just stories!

Lowers fist and speaks quietly

Poor Mom. She tried so hard to protect me from Dad but he was so big and she was so small and fragile. I remember the night you let him beat her so badly she died in my arms.

Speaks angrily

My old man went to hell six months later and I became a foster kid. I lived place to place. Damaged goods you know.

Sighs loudly then yells

I'm just like him! I beat Beverly tonight right in front of my kids! I deserve to die or at least serve hard time!

Looks down at Bible angrily speaks to Bible

Okay God. Letâ s see if youâ re real and if you care for me like that minister and mom said. Show me who I am to you. A great big punching bag or something else.

Opens Bible at random with eyes closed and points at a verse

Psalms 103:14 As a father has compassion on his children so the Lord has compassion on those who hold Him in awe, for He knows how we are made, He knows that we are only dust.

Silent for a moment then in a sarcastic tone

Yeah thatâ s what I am alright, a pile of dirt! Compassion from my father? Yeah my old man was real compassionate the whole time he was beating me and my mother.

Looks heavenward with contempt on his face. Normal tone

Iâ ve always heard youâ re supposed to be a loving God and all that trash, what do you have in mind for jail bait like me?

Again opens Bible and randomly picks a verse reads aloud

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

Silence for a moment than sits on floor staring at the wall

A hope for me? I'm nothing but a drunk and wife beater just like my old man.

Pulls out picture of family

I love my kids so much I'd die for them.

Looks heavenward in awe

Maybe that's what you meant by compassion like a father . I love my children and so do you. If you love your children half as much as I do...(trails off)

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Looks straight ahead and reads John 3:16 from wall

Look at that! (points at wall). For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.

Contemplates for a moment at what he just read

You gave your son for me to have eternal life? It must have hurt you to see him die like he did, and for what? A worthless piece of scum like me?

Falls to knees looks up to the ceiling with a somber look on his face and prays

Jesus, itâ s Jacob again. Iâ ve done a lot of things Iâ m not proud of and Iâ m prepared to suffer the consequences for those actions. I believe Lord. Come into my heart just the way Mom said you would. I want to begin to live. I have a long road of recovery ahead of me but with your help I will become a better Dad and husband. Help me to find the plan you have for me. Thank you for listening to a drunk. Amen

Looks up at window

Oh my! Look at all the stars!

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