

Dear Nathan L. Henry,

After I read your book, *Good Behavior*, my view of life and consequences for my actions were completely transformed.

I believe the message you tried to put out there struck me right in the heart. Jail isn't the best place, and I'd rather not repeat the fatal mistake that landed you there. The vivid and filthy descriptions of jail and the life there was a wake-up call to how much of a bad environment it is. When your first experience with one of your jail inmates was introduced I thought, "Wow, maybe Nathaniel won't be alone for his time here." But, when I realized how much of a bad influence your friend had on you and how he was trying to make you a part of his gang, having inmates was also a bad idea. I never knew how many undesirable qualities there were in jail – the people, punishments, and even the cell. I never thought jail was like this until this book.

I'm a fourteen-year-old boy who has a lot going for him, but for some reason I just can't stop making the wrong decisions. Before I read your book, I was in this program called "Breakthrough Cambridge." I was already two years into the program and had one more year until I reached the highest point in the program, called "palante." But, this year was different from the others. There were a lot of new teachers and I just didn't know how to adapt. I was totally out of place. I was getting in more trouble than usual and I was confused. I took it out on teachers and students, and it resulted in my release from the program. I was very sad; it was a big part of me for a while and now it was all gone because of my actions and poor decisions. Sometimes, I think to myself, "Why am I like this?"

Then I finished *Good Behavior*.

I realized that education isn't a joke anymore. Jail isn't where you want to spend the rest of your life. When society affects you in the wrong way, you end up in the wrong place. The way I live my life is a lot more different than it was before. I am aware of my actions and whom it will affect. I don't want to disappoint my family, just like you didn't. One thing is for sure, I do NOT want to end up where you did. I don't even want to get to the point where you enter the jail facility and you have to answer a "million pointless questions." Although, that was just the beginning of your stay in jail; it still taught me a valuable lesson. From reading this memoir, I have learned many new things: appreciate what you have because you never know when it will be ALL GONE. Secondly, make wise decisions. These decisions can determine if you end up at Harvard University majoring in business or in Cook County Jail, living the life of a prisoner.

Every page was more skillfully written from the last. One page talks about how you and your friend went to go hang out with these girls and the next page you would write with a complete serious tone. You would write about why you came into jail and the night you committed your crime. This grabbed my attention because I would laugh at one page, and I would feel empathy on the next page. Believe it or not, I was regretting finishing the book because I knew that all the funny, scary experiences inside and out of jail would be gone. You related to me so much because I would probably have been through the same things you had, and that really gave me a good feeling because I knew someone went through some of the same things I have. I never would have thought that an author of his first book would be able to affect my life in such a way.

Overall, your book *Good Behavior* taught me a very valuable lesson that I will never forget. When I am in class now, I don't like to sit next to people that I know will distract me in the wrong way. Now, I think about whom I sit next to and if it will be taking away from my learning. That's something I'm not willing to do. I take more things seriously because I know where it will bring me in the long run.

I have a couple of questions and hopefully you can answer them:

1. How would you sum up your time in jail?
2. How did your family react?
3. Did your wife read the book?

Some books touch my heart, and some books just keep me thinking, and your book did both. Thank you, Mr. Henry, for your valuable lessons that will hopefully keep me in the right track.

Your reader,

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