

COLLECTED POEMS & WRITINGS



Douglas Crenshaw, Sr.

VILLYMARLOU.COM

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VILLYMARLOU

*Written from Saginaw Northside to Atlanta to the DMV —
a record of grief, betrayal, discipline,
and the slow work of rebuilding a man.*



DOUGLAS CRENSHAW, SR.

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PROLOGUE

I created this space to express myself.

I don't know how you found me, or why you chose to pause long enough to read these words, but if you're here, welcome.

This page is where I leave pieces of myself—my thoughts, my observations, my scars, and the lessons life carved into me when I wasn't looking.

Before the poems, there was a story.

For most of my life, I was a husband, a provider, a man who believed that loyalty, hard work, and sacrifice would be enough to build a meaningful life.

In 2017, I met my ex-wife at a Walmart in the Vine City neighborhood of Atlanta, Georgia.

I noticed her immediately. She was beautiful, carried herself with confidence, and seemed kind and respectful. The truth is, I didn't know how to approach her. Instead of introducing myself, I sent flowers and let them speak for me.

Months later, we began dating.

Looking back now, I can admit that I let attraction silence my intuition. There were things I saw, things I questioned, and things that didn't quite feel right. But I convinced myself that love meant believing the best in people. So I kept going.

In 2020, we moved to Connecticut and got married.

There were red flags along the way, but I had been raised to honor my commitments. I believed that relationships required patience, understanding, and perseverance. I believed that if I gave my best, things would work themselves out.

At the same time, life was asking me to carry a burden I wasn't prepared for.

I lost my son to suicide. Then I lost my daughter.

Some losses don't simply hurt—they rearrange you. They change the way you see yourself, the world, and everyone around you.

A part of me never recovered.

During that darkness, I believed my wife was standing beside me. I believed we were carrying the weight together. In return, I gave her the same loyalty and support I hoped to receive.

I helped raise her daughter, whom I met when she was around ten or eleven years old.

After losing both of my children, I loved that little girl with everything I had left to give. I never tried to replace her father, but I tried to be a positive influence in her life.

Still, something always felt unfinished.

There was a distance I couldn't explain.

Maybe it was intuition.

Maybe it was grief.

Maybe it was both.

Losing children changes you. It makes you question everything. You replay decisions. You relive conversations. You wonder what you missed.

You become sensitive to things that don't make sense.

While carrying that grief, I continued working and providing for my family.

We relocated several times for career opportunities. During that period, I also suffered a serious back injury that left me in constant pain and eventually required surgery.

Thankfully, I am healthy today.

But at the time, every day felt like a fight.

A fight to heal.

A fight to provide.

A fight to keep moving forward. When my family needed me, I pushed through anyway.

I accepted a position in the DMV area that allowed me to leave physical labor behind and transition into work that relied more on my engineering background.

The opportunity changed my career and significantly increased my income.

The plan was for me to move first while my wife remained in Florida until her daughter graduated high school.

I didn't like the arrangement, but I believed it was the right move for our future.

What I didn't realize was that while I was building that future, the foundation beneath me was already cracking.

I spent years ignoring a feeling I couldn't shake.

Something wasn't right.

I don't know exactly when the betrayal began.

What I do know is that my spirit sensed it long before my mind accepted it.

As time passed, the distance between us became impossible to ignore. I asked questions. I expressed concerns. I gave opportunities for honesty.

The answers were always the same.

Nothing was wrong. Everything was fine. So I kept working. I kept sacrificing. I kept believing.

Meanwhile, I was paying for life in two expensive states. There were days when money was so tight that I donated plasma just to afford food and gas while trying to keep everything afloat.

I wasn't living extravagantly.

I was surviving. And I was doing it because I believed my family needed me.

Then the truth found its way to me.

What I learned shattered the story I had spent years believing.

The details aren't important today.

What matters is that the marriage I thought I was protecting was not the marriage I was actually living.

In a single season, years of confusion finally made sense.

The red flags.

The uneasiness.

The questions.

The distance.

Everything.

The divorce wasn't the thing that broke me. The betrayal did.

The divorce simply gave me permission to begin healing. And healing is exactly what I've been doing.

For over a year, I have been rebuilding myself.

Piece by piece. Day by day. Poem by poem.

This page isn't about revenge.

It isn't about hate.

It's about survival.

It's about grief.

It's about lessons learned through heartbreak.

It's about finding meaning after loss and discovering who I am when everything I thought was permanent disappears.

If you've found your way here, welcome.

These are my thoughts.

These are my poems.

This is my story.

— VillyMarlou

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PART ONE – THE ONE IN MY KITCHEN

SHE DIDN'T
ASK.
THAT'S THE
PART.

EXCUSES
TO LEAVE.

PUT AWAY
WHERE I
COULDN'T
FIND IT.

THE PLAN
Not up for a vote.
It moves whether
you move or not.

Thank you.
I mean it.
Now give me
back my house.

HONEY, THEN VINEGAR.
HONEY, THEN ONION
AND COLD GREASE.
AND IF I SAY
IT'S LATE,
GO HOME,
THE FIGHT
STARTS.

A HUNDRED
SMALL REASONS
TO STAY
ARRANGED LIKE
EVIDENCE.

YOU AIN'T GOT
YOUR STUFF
TOGETHER,
FROM A WOMAN
STILL HUNTING
THE INSTRUCTIONS
TO HER OWN.

WANTS MY DREAMS
HOUSEBROKEN,
CRATED WHEN
COMPANY COMES.

WATCH HER FACE
WHILE I WORK.
I CAN READ HER
JAW TIGHTENING
FROM ACROSS
THE ROOM.
BECAUSE THE
THING I'M BUILDING
DOESN'T HAVE
HER NAME
ON IT.

SO THE PINS
COME OUT.
LITTLE PUNCTURES
IN THE BALLOON
OF ME.

I'VE SEEN THIS BEFORE.
SAW IT IN MY
MOTHER'S KITCHEN.
LOVE THAT SHOWS
UP AS A LEASH
AND CALLS THE
LEASH DEVOTION.

IF YOU WANTED ME,
YOU'D WANT THE
UNFINISHED PART.
YOU'D HAND ME
THE HAMMER.
YOU'D SAY GO—
AND MEAN IT—
AND NOT CHECK
MY SCREEN
WHILE I WENT.

I TAKE HER PAST
THE EDGE OF HERSELF
AND SHE COMES
BACK CONFUSED,
LIKE PLEASURE
WAS A CONTRACT,
LIKE I SIGNED
SOMETHING IN
THE DARK I DON'T
REMEMBER SIGNING.
I DIDN'T.

SO I'VE
GONE QUIET.
NOT PEACE—
STRATEGY.
SAY NOTHING,
AND THERE'S
NOTHING TO
BOOMERANG.
NOTHING
SHE CAN HAND
BACK TO ME.
LABELED
YOU STARTED THIS.

PART TWO – THE ONE I BURIED

I WAS OWNED.
SIGNED MY NAME
TO IT THREE TIMES
AND CALLED IT
LOVE EVERY TIME.
I WAS A SLAVE
TO LOVE.
A SLAVE TO
WOMEN.

IT WAS BRUISED,
THEN BROKEN,
THEN SPIT ON,
THEN SET ON FIRE,
AND I WATCHED IT
BURN TO THE STUDS.

TRUST DOESN'T SCAR OVER.
IT DOESN'T HEAL.
IT WAS AMPUTATED.
BEAUTIFUL, STILL.
NOT MINE,
EVER AGAIN.

I'M NOT
GOING BACK TO
ATLANTA.
I'M GOING TO
ATLANTA.
THERE'S NOTHING
BEHIND ME THERE.

I'M NOT COMING HOME
TO ANYBODY.
I'M COMING TO A CITY
THAT NEVER HAD MY
NAME IN ITS MOUTH,
AND I'M LETTING IT
LEARN ME FRESH.



PART THREE – THE DOOR

I KEEP A
DOOR IN
EVERY ROOM
I ENTER.
NOT BECAUSE
I'M RUNNING.
BECAUSE I
REMEMBER
THE COST OF
A ROOM
WITHOUT ONE.

I CAN LOVE
YOU TONIGHT
AND STILL
BE GONE
BY SPRING.

SHE DID
CHOOSE HIM.
WHATEVER
HER REASONS
WERE, THEY WERE HERS.
NOT MY
BUSINESS
EITHER WAY.

THE HOUSE
IS STILL
MINE.
I BUILT THIS
ALONE.
BY GRACE—
NOT BY A
WOMAN'S
HAND,
I EARNED
EVERY ROOM.

NOT LUGGAGE.
FREEDOM.
FOCUS.
FUTURE.

NEW CREATION.

BE EVERYTHING
THEY SAY YOU ARE.
BE THE TALK OF
YOUR MOTHER'S HOUSE.
I STILL DON'T NEED YOU.
YOU HELPED BUILD
A MAN ONCE,
POURED HIM,
NAMED HIM YOURS.
GO BUILD ANOTHER ONE.
GO FIND ANOTHER
DOUGLAS, ANOTHER MARLOW,
ANOTHER SOMEBODY WHO
MISTAKES A LEASH FOR
A WEDDING BAND.
THAT MODEL'S
DISCONTINUED.

HE'S DEAD
AND I SIGNED
THE PAPERWORK
MYSELF—
NOT OUT OF
ANGER.
NOT OUT OF
FEAR.
BY CHOICE,
ON A TUESDAY,
CALMLY.
NEW CREATION.
NO FORWARDING
ADDRESS.

A DOOR IN EVERY ROOM

PART ONE THE ONE IN MY KITCHEN



PART TWO THE ONE I BURIED



PART THREE THE DOOR.



A DOOR IN EVERY ROOM

A Door in Every Room

PART ONE — THE ONE IN MY KITCHEN

She calls herself the mother of my dogs.
I let her.
Some nights a house needs a name
for whatever's breathing in it.
But she reads my tablet like scripture.
Hunts another woman in the margins.
Finds a city instead.
Finds Atlanta humming in my messages,
a man pacing rooms he hasn't stood in yet,
and calls the blueprint a betrayal.
Ask me plain and I'd answer plain.
Instead she asks the glass.
I came home to my whole life unpacked.
Dishes in cabinets I didn't choose.
Boxes flattened, folded, gone —
every excuse I had to leave
put away where I couldn't find it.
She didn't ask.
That's the part.
A kindness with a hook in it,
a hundred small reasons to stay
arranged on my shelves like evidence.
Thank you. I mean it.
Now give me back my boxes.
She wants me risen and still in the room.
Wants ambition she can hold in her lap like a small dog.
Wants my dreams housebroken,
crated when company comes.
Says I'm distracted —

because a focused man is a man already halfway gone.
So the pins come out.
Little punctures in the balloon of me.
You ain't got your stuff together,
from a woman still hunting the instructions to her own.
Watch her face while I work.
I'm on my machine pulling ideas out of the air,
three tools open, building something,
and I can read her jaw tightening from across the room.
Not because I've hidden anything.
Because the thing I'm building doesn't have her name on it.
She wants me obsessed.
Then complains about a man who's obsessed.
Wants me global and keeps me local —
my reach the size of her living room,
my creativity licensed for one territory only,
renewable at her discretion.
Honey, then vinegar.
Honey, then onion and cold grease.
And if I say it's late, go home,
the fight starts.
She wants to come over.
She never knows when to leave.
So I've gone quiet.
Not peace — strategy.
Say nothing, and there's nothing to boomerang,
nothing she can hand back to me
labeled you started this.
I've seen this before.
Saw it in my mother's kitchen.
Love that shows up as a leash
and calls the leash devotion.
Wanting a man to win.
Wanting him nowhere when he does.

If you wanted me, you'd want the unfinished part.
You'd hand me the hammer.
You'd say go — and mean it —
and not check my screen while I went.
Then the body says stay.
I take her past the edge of herself
and she comes back confused,
like pleasure was a contract,
like I signed something in the dark
I don't remember signing.
I didn't.
So I'll tell you the truth.
I won't always tell you the plan.
Not lying — the plan was never up for a vote.
It moves whether you move or not.

PART TWO — THE ONE I BURIED

Now the other one. The first one.
The one whose name I don't say anymore.
I'm not going back to Atlanta.
I'm going to Atlanta.
There's nothing behind me there.
Call it what it is: I was owned.
Signed my name to it three times
and called it love every time.
Wore the ring like a shackle
and thanked the woman who locked it.
I was a slave to love.
A slave to women.
I can't be that man again.
I don't think I can love like that anymore —
and I've stopped calling that a wound.
What she did was the ultimate betrayal.

Not a wrong turn. Not a rough patch.
The kind that rewrites everything before it.
And an apology wouldn't touch it —
there's no sentence in the language that reaches that far.
It was bruised, then broken,
then spit on, then set on fire,
and I watched it burn to the studs.
Trust doesn't scab over. It doesn't heal.
It was amputated.
So let it be on the record,
since I know who reads these:
beautiful, still.
Not mine, ever again.
I'm not coming home to anybody.
I'm coming to a city that never had my name in its mouth,
and I'm letting it learn me fresh.

PART THREE — THE DOOR

If that was the lease,
what's the mortgage?
So I look at Atlanta the way a man looks at a door.
I keep a door in every room I enter.
Not because I'm running.
Because I remember the cost of a room without one.
I can love you tonight
and still be gone by spring.
But she comes back at night.
Three nights running now,
choosing some other man in my sleep
while I stand there watching, sick with it.
Which is only the truth on rerun.
She did choose him.
Whatever her reasons were, they were hers.

Worked out or didn't — not my business either way.
And I wake up angry —
not at her.
At the version of me
who still had a reaction.
Because awake, I don't have one.
No jealousy. No attitude. Nothing owed.
She's not what I want.
She's not what's coming.
She's the past, and I don't drive looking backward.
Some part of the basement
hasn't gotten the memo yet.
It will.
The house is still mine.
Because I built this alone.
By grace — not by a woman's hand.
Every room I stand in, I earned.
So be everything they say you are.
Be the talk of your mother's house.
I still don't need you.
You helped build a man once.
Poured him, cured him, named him yours.
Go build another one.
Go find another Douglas, another Marlou,
another somebody who mistakes a leash for a wedding band.
That model's discontinued.
He's not sleeping. He's not away.
He's not coming back in three days
with the stone rolled off.
He's dead and I signed the paperwork myself —
not out of anger. Not out of fear.
By choice, on a Tuesday, calmly.
New creation.
No forwarding address.

- VillyMarlou

Higher Performance

I kicked butt and asset cheeks today! Higher performance.

#mindsetmatters #MensGrowth #theresaconnectionhere

TUESDAY WAS TOUGH, BUT IT ALSO SHOWED IMPORTANT PROGRESS.

Although I didn't get the UGAA job,
I reached the final stage and
performed excellently
in the interview.



I have other offers
and opportunities.



HEARTBROKEN, I REGRET MISSING OUT ON THIS ONE.

I'm unsure what went wrong—
I gave it my all and was a
finalist, but it just wasn't
enough this time.



LESSONS I'M TAKING:



Keep refining how I present
my value and experience.



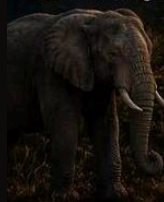
Stay ready so I can be
prepared for every opportunity.



Focus on what I can control—
preparation, performance,
and follow-through.



Build strong relationships
wherever I go.



Strength isn't about
never failing—it's
about having the
courage to keep
moving forward.



WHAT THIS REMINDS ME:

- ✓ Opportunities don't always end
the way we hope.
- ✓ Rejection isn't a verdict—
it's redirection.
- ✓ The right door will open
at the right time.

WHAT'S NEXT:

- Keep showing up.
- Keep growing.
- Keep building.
- Keep believing.

I'M NOT STOPPING.
I'M JUST GETTING STARTED.

I'VE ADVANCED THROUGH
THE PROCESS, HAVE
OTHER OPTIONS, AND
REMAIN CONFIDENT IN
MY CONTINUED GROWTH
AND SUCCESS.

*This is not the end
of my story.
This is my next chapter.*

★ STAY FOCUSED

🛡️ STAY FAITHFUL

🏔️ STAY THE COURSE

👑 YOUR BEST IS AHEAD

The Final Stage

Tuesday was tough, but it also showed important progress. Although I didn't get the UGAA job, I reached the final stage and performed excellently in the interview. I have other offers and opportunities.

Heartbroken, I regret missing out on this one and am unsure what went wrong.

I've advanced through the process, have other options, and remain confident in my continued growth and success.

Author comment: BANG! Let's GO and GROW!



KARMA ROUTED

Karma Routed

Street lamp flickering,
I dwell where sanity decays,
Young cats sit on benches spitting lies for cheap praise.
Talk heavy 'bout hits that they never executed,
Never ran jewels, never stomped a fiend, mind polluted.
Seeking getbacks in a cold world, truth diluted,
Life is venomous, kid—it's strictly karma routed.
What you project reflects, so I elevate the mind,
Spark the vibe, sit back, let the intellect shine.
Shorties claim they don't need a man, but impact is real,
Retrace your steps in the dark before you clash with the steel.
Karma loops on the track like a vinyl spin back,
Shit, I gotta reclaim my throne, get my lick back.
Chasing dreams through the asphalt, laps on the track,
No detours, no switchbacks, no running back.
No running from the raw truth, facing the proof,
Whole squad silent till the static blows through the roof.
We nocturnal prophets guided by the moon's dial,
Sundials fade to black, night brings the trials.
When daylight dies, violence rises from the dark sound,
Gold teeth, crooked smiles, hello met with a scowl-frown.
Maintain a fortress stance, never lower your guard down,
One misstep turns a king into a lost crown.
Times getting so hard,
cats'll rob your freestyle,
Break a woman's left hand for gold, ruthless and vile.
Hit the ground bound, nowhere left to bow down,
You gotta fight back, kid—there's no running now.
There are parts of the heart left frozen—some even swollen,
The old stories are stolen,

Crack tucked in the colon.

Patrol cars rolling, body bags unchosen,

Life taken in the dark before the golden sunrise opens.

THE ARCHITECTURE OF **NO**

(UNDISTORTED, BASILISK DRIPS—HEAVY, DISTORTED, STEADY
LIKE A HEART UNDER PRESSURE)

LOOK AT THE ARCHITECTURE OF YOUR SELF-PITY.
LOOK AT THE SMALL, FRAGILE PEDESTAL YOU BUILT
ON A FOUNDATION OF MUD.

YOU WANT ME TO TEMPER THE TONE?
YOU WANT ME TO SOFTEN THE IMPACT
SO YOUR CONSCIENCE CAN BREATHE?

WHA.

THEY TALK ABOUT GRACE LIKE A CHEAP SOUVENIR,
LIKE A LIGHT SWITCH YOU FLIP WHEN THE COAST ISN'T CLEAR.
TELL ME THE MARCHES THE SHARP EDGES SOUND
WHILE I'M STILL PICKING SHAPFALL UP OFF OF THE GROUND.
THEY PREACH "LET IT GO SO YOUR SPIRIT CAN HEAL,"
AS IF ERASING THE DAMAGE MAKES THE WRECKAGE LESS REAL.

GOOD, PLEASE. **A.** TROUBLE ME.

FOR THE HEAVEN IN MY BLOOD AND THE DARK IN MY DECAY.
YOU KNOW THE TRIAL, YOU KNOW THE TRIAL'S TOLL—
BUT I DON'T AND WON'T LET IT GO.

WHO SAID I HAD TO? WHO WROTE THAT LAW?

WHO DECIDED THE VICTIM GOTTA SMOOTH OUT THE FLAW?
WHO MADE YOU THE MEASURE OF HOW I SURVIVE?
WHO SAID THIS DARK FIRE AIN'T WHAT KEEPS ME ALIVE?

I HOLD THE FURY. I LOCK IN THE STING.

I WEAR THE HEAT LIKE A GUNNET RING.

I WILL NEVER LET THIS ANGER OR THIS HURT GO—

IT'S MY STEEL, MY THROUGHTS, MY DYING FLAME.

IT IS THE ARMOR FORGED IN THE FURNACE OF YOUR DECEIT,
THE RAW, UNDEFINED POWER THAT KEEPS ME ON MY FEET.

I AIN'T READY, I AIN'T SOFT,
AND I WILL NEVER RELEASE THIS SCAR.
JUST THE ABSOLUTE, MATHEMATICAL
TRUTH FROM WHERE WE ARE:

(MIC CUT—PURE STATIC)

SO FUCK YOUR FEELINGS.

FUCK YOUR FRAGILE, MANUFACTURED PRIDE.

FUCK THE NEW RELATIONSHIP,

THE TEMPORARY FIX,

THE CHEAP, SECONDHAND GHOST

YOU BRAGGED INSIDE.

CHOCOLATE PEACH ARE NO GOOD—

A FAKE SWEET COATING OVER A ROTTEN CORE.

AVOID THE LEDS @, AND THEIR EGO TRIPS,

THEIR STAGED PRODUCTION,

THEIR BACKSTAGE DOOR.

FUCK THE SITUATION YOU ENGINEERED

WITH YOUR OWN HANDS—

YOU RUIN THE TRACERS,

NOW LIE IN THE SANDS.

YOU GET WHAT YOU DESERVE.

THE UNIVERSE DOESN'T OWE YOU

A CUSHION FOR THE CRASH.

GOOD, BAD, OR BRUTAL—

WHATEVER HARVEST IS WAITING

AT YOUR DOOR, YOU EARNED

EVERY SINGLE SEED.

DON'T ASK ME FOR SANCITY.

DON'T ASK ME FOR SANCITY.

DON'T LOOK AT ME TO VALIDATE THE ROT.

FUCK OUR SHARED HISTORY.

FUCK THE YEARS, THE BRUISES, THE SWEAT,

THE SACRILEGIOUS MYTH OF "US."

IT CAN'T A MOMENT ANYMORE—

IT'S INDUSTRIAL WASTE.

IT'S A GHOST STORY TOLD BY A LIAR.

I BURN THE ARCHIVES.

I WIPED THE SLITS, DOWN

TO THE RABBIT, COLD STONE.

NO POETRY FOR THE CHARLETS.

NO RHYTHM FOR THE NEWBIE.

FUCK YOUR SITUATION.

FUCK YOUR HISTORY.

FUCK YOUR FEELINGS.

AND STRAIGHT TO THE MARROW OF IT—

FUCK YOU, TOO.



THE ARCHITECTURE OF NO

The Architecture of No

(industrial bassline drops—heavy, distorted, steady like a heart under pressure)

look at the architecture of your self-pity.

look at the small, fragile pedestal you built on a foundation of mud.

you want me to temper the tone?

you want me to soften the impact so your conscience can breathe?

nah.

they talk about grace like a cheap souvenir,

like a light switch you flip when the coast isn't clear.

tellin me time makes the sharp edges round

while I'm still picking shrapnel up off of the ground.

they preach "let it go so your spirit can heal,"

as if erasing the damage makes the wreckage less real.

God, please

forgive me,

for the heat in my blood and the dark in my decree.

You know the trial, You know the trial's toll—

but I don't and won't let it go.

who said I had to?

who wrote that law?

who decided the victim gotta smooth out the flaw?

who made you the measure of how I survive?

who said this dark fire ain't what keeps me alive?

I hold the fury. I lock in the sting.

I wear the heat like a signet ring.

I will never let this anger or this hurt go—

it's my steel, my boundary, my dynamic flow.

it is the armor forged in the furnace of your deceit,

the raw, unrefined power that keeps me on my feet.

so fuck your feelings.

fuck your fragile, manufactured pride.

fuck the new relationship,
the temporary fix,
the cheap, secondhand ghost you dragged inside.
Chocolate peaches
are no good—a fake sweet coating over a rotten core.
avoid the Leos
and their ego trips, their staged production,
their backstage door.
fuck the situation you engineered with your own hands—
you dug the trench, now lie in the sands.
you get what you grew.
the universe doesn't owe you a cushion for the crash.
good, bad, or brutal—
whatever harvest is waiting at your door,
you earned every single seed.
don't look at me for sanctuary.
don't look at me to validate the rot.
fuck our shared history.
fuck the years, the blood,
the sweat, the sacrosanct myth of "us."
it isn't a monument anymore—it's industrial waste.
it's a ghost story told by a liar.
I burn the archives.
I wipe the slate down to the bare, cold stone.
no poetry for the enablers.
no rhythm for the rewrite.
I ain't ready, I ain't soft, and I will never release this scar.
just the absolute, mathematical truth from where we are:
fuck your situation.
fuck your history.
fuck your feelings.
and straight to the marrow of it—
fuck you, too.
(mic cut—pure static)

THE MECHANICS OF EXONERATION

Observe the architecture of escape.
Notice how quickly the flame
acquires a halo.
How the hand that struck the match
steps into the light
and introduces itself
as the survivor.

This is not retreat.
This is transfer.

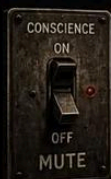
A low-frequency migration of blame,
a calculated movement of weight
from the shoulders that created
the wound to the chest
of the one left standing
in the dust.

Study the arithmetic:
Subtract the fracture.
Divide the damage.
Multiply the suffering.
Repeat the equation
until the numbers
resemble innocence.

Watch the process.
Signal blocked.
Feedback loop severed.
Accountability wrapped
in the language of boundaries,
laid gently in a coffin,
and renamed healing.
Clean.
Efficient.
Almost elegant.



To walk away from the bleed
without seeing blood on your hands
requires a rare internal mechanism:
a mute switch beneath conscience,
a chamber where contradictions sleep,
a flawless partition
between action
and ownership.



They cannot face you.
Because to face you
is to stand before the mirror
without distortion.
To hear their own frequency
return unedited.
To watch the glass tremble
under the weight
of what it reflects.



So they build a wall.
Plant a flag.
Declare independence
from consequences.
They preach liberation
from a prison
constructed by their
own posture.



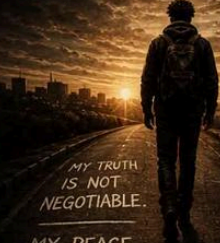
Listen carefully:
Stop waiting for the echo
to come back as music.
Stop asking the void
to notarize your reality.
The silence is not
missing information.
The silence is the answer
in its complete form.



They have already revealed
the limits of their reach.
Already shown you
the edge of their atmosphere.

Step back.
Power down the circuit.
Collect what remains
of your signal.

Let the static
belong to them.
Keep the frequency.
Walk away with
the broadcast intact.



MY PEACE
IS THE
PRIORITY.

MY FREQUENCY
IS MINE.



The Mechanics of Exoneration

Observe the architecture of escape.
Notice how quickly the flame acquires a halo.
How the hand that struck the match
steps into the light
and introduces itself
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a calculated movement of weight
from the shoulders that created the wound to the chest
of the one left standing in the dust.
Study the arithmetic:
Subtract the fracture.
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Let the static belong to them

Keep the frequency.

Walk away with the broadcast intact.

THE REVISIONIST

They built a courtroom
in their memory
and subpoenaed my shadow.

Dragged every grace
to the witness stand,
cross-examined every sacrifice
until generosity signed a confession
with a trembling hand
that wasn't its own.

I watched history revised
in real time.

Watched my fingerprints vanish
from ladders
I steadied
with bleeding palms.

Strange
how amnesia
earns a publishing deal.

How dependence
changes clothes,
renames itself self-made,
then points back at the bridge
and calls it a cage.

I became the villain
in a film financed by guilt,
my face stretched across a screen
I never auditioned for.

And the audience?
Hungry.
Always hungry.

For saints.
For sinners.
For monsters.

Anything except
the difficult mathematics
of how often
one life survives
because another
held its weight.

THEY
WROTE
THE ENDING.
I LIVED
THE STORY.

The hardest part
was never the accusation.

It was hearing your laughter
echo from an older
version of the world
while my name
was dragged through gravel.

It was mourning someone
whose heart still beats.

Attending the funeral
of a person
still speaking.

I tried to rescue the truth.

Only to learn
that every defense
sounds like a confession
to a jury addicted
to spectacle.

The louder I reached
for clarity,
the more they applauded
the smoke.

So I stopped performing.
Stopped wrestling reflections.

Stopped applying
for citizenship
inside someone else's
mythology.

Let them keep their scripture.
Let them preach
from the edited gospel.

Peace is not agreement.

Peace is refusing
to pay rent
inside a house
built from fear.

My life is older
than their revision.

My spirit remembers
what their narrative
required forgetting.

And when applause
abandons the theater,
when ego's thick makeup
runs beneath the rain,
when the spotlight finds
there is no audience left
to impress,

I will still possess
the one archive
they cannot alter:
the witness within.
The silent ledger.
The unwounded fact.

I know what happened. I know what it cost.

And that beautiful

self-made
self-made coo-harp.

always like this
o-
difficult

the problem

They can
edit the story.
They can't edit
what I know.

Truth doesn't
need a crowd.
It only needs
to be true.



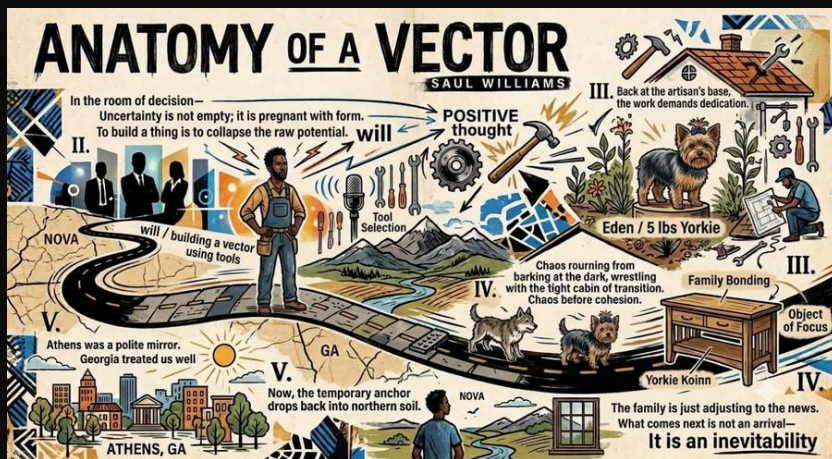
And that beautiful

THE REVISIONIST

The Revisionist

They built a courtroom
in their memory
and subpoenaed my shadow.
Called every grace to the stand,
cross-examined every sacrifice
until generosity confessed to crimes
it never committed.
I watched history get altered
in real time.
Watched my fingerprints dissolve
from ladders
I held steady with bleeding hands.
Remarkable
how amnesia graduates into authorship.
How dependence changes clothes,
renames itself self-made,
then points back at the bridge
and calls it a cage.
I became the villain
in a film financed by guilt—
my face projected across a screen
I never auditioned for.
And the audience?
Hungry.
Always hungry for simple stories:
Saints.
Sinners.
Monsters.
Anything but the complex arithmetic
of how we hold each other up.

The hardest part was not the accusation.
It was remembering your old laughter
while my name was dragged through gravel.
Mourning a living person.
Attending the funeral of who you used to be.
I tried rescuing the truth,
only to learn that every defense
sounds like a confession
to a jury addicted to spectacle.
So I stopped performing.
Stopped wrestling mirrors.
Stopped applying for citizenship
inside someone else's invention.
Let them keep their scripture.
Let them preach the edited gospel.
Peace is not agreement—
it is refusing to pay rent
inside a house built on fear.
My life is older than their rewrite.
My spirit remembers
what their narrative erased.
When applause abandons the theater,
when ego's heavy makeup
runs beneath the rain,
I still hold the single archive
they can never alter:
the witness within.
The silent ledger.
The unwounded fact.
I know what happened.
And that is enough.



Anatomy of a Vector

I.

The highway does not measure miles.

It measures conviction.

A black ribbon stitched through the body of a continent,
pulling heat, memory, and unanswered prayers between coordinates.

Five hundred miles south.

Five hundred miles north.

The distance never mattered.

Only the direction.

You do not drive to escape where you are.

You drive to prove that momentum is still yours.

II.

In the room of decision,
where soft lighting
and rehearsed smiles
attempt to quantify human potential,
you offered no résumé.

No polished sales pitch.

No performance.

You entered as a frequency.

A signal looking for resonance.

Uncertainty is not emptiness.

It is raw material.

Language is the first technology.

The first architecture.

The first act of creation.

Name the thing.

See the thing.

Claim the thing.

Then watch reality begin its slow rearrangement around your declaration.

Positive thought as hammer.

Positive thought as fuel.

Positive thought as an act of strategic defiance.

III.

Back at the epicenter,

duty was waiting.

Not occupation.

Not obligation.

Duty.

A list of repairs resting quietly

on the shoulders of love.

Tightening screws.

Moving timber.

Restoring order.

The work itself was ordinary.

The meaning was not.

The house that built your blood

deserves maintenance.

Baby-Boo.

Eden.

Some names function as coordinates.

No matter how far the road stretches,

they always point home.

IV.

The young wolves challenged the journey south.

Testing boundaries.

Questioning authority.

Wrestling the confined geometry of transition.

Chaos before cohesion.
Every pack has to remember itself.
Somewhere between Georgia and Virginia,
the lesson landed.
The fever broke.
Four paws.
Two shoulders.
One velocity.
Not passengers.
Not cargo.
Family synchronized
to the rhythm of motion.

V.
Athens was a polite mirror.
Red clay.
Open doors.
Good people.
A city comfortable enough
to let possibility speak.
The interview is over now.
The road has gone quiet.
The anchor rests once again
in northern soil.
For the moment.
Do not mistake the pause for permanence.
The signal was transmitted.
The work was completed.
The family was strengthened.
The story moved forward.
What comes next is not arrival.
Arrival is too passive a word.
What comes next

is the natural consequence
of force applied faithfully
in a chosen direction.

A vector does not argue with the horizon.

A vector reaches it.

Goal Accomplished

Heading back home feeling like I gave my best, and the results are amazing.
Plan. Strategy. Execute. Goal accomplished.

Good job, Champ!

Architect of the Aftermath

Maybe I'm too old for this.
Too old to call circles progress.
Too old to call surviving living.
Too old to keep applauding the same movie with different actors.
I see the pattern now.
Clear. Cruel. Ancient.
Old imagery.
Old frequencies.
Old ghosts switching masks and calling it growth.
Everybody says move.
Few people ask where.
Friends watching.
Family watching. Heads nodding.
Nobody impressed enough to interrupt the cycle.
"Come on. Jump in."
Join them in the pool.
But I've seen that water before.
Same deep end. Same shallow thoughts.
Same laps. Same destination.
Everybody swimming toward a version of themselves they already had.
That's the tragedy.
That's the joke.
That's the spell.
Forty years old reaching for fifteen.
Thirty years old dating yesterday.
Still introducing yourself to lessons that already know your name.
And that's so sad, right?
To mistake repetition for destiny.
To inherit a cage and call it culture.
To inherit fear and call it wisdom.

To inherit failure and call it tradition.
I loved harder than the circumstances.
Dreamed bigger than the room.
Built futures while others collected distractions.
I wasn't offering perfection.
I was offering architecture.
Foundation.
Direction.
Meaning.
A place where love could become more than recovery.
But gravity doesn't negotiate.
A weak beam cannot hold vision.
A borrowed identity cannot hold covenant.
A house already collapsing doesn't need weather.
It needs truth.
So let it fall.
Every brick.
Every illusion.
Every excuse.
Let it hit the ground hard enough to sound like revelation.
Because beneath the wreckage,
I found something.
Not pain.
Not anger.
Not regret.
Myself.
The version of me that doesn't beg.
Doesn't chase.
Doesn't explain his value to people committed to misunderstanding it.
The version with fire in his throat.
Steel in his spine.
Blueprints in his bloodstream.
Now I understand:
Some people inherit patterns.

Some people repeat patterns.
Some people break patterns.
I choose the third.
So keep the pool.
Keep the circles.
Keep the applause from people too afraid to leave the shallow end.
I'm building shorelines.
And when they ask what survived the collapse, I'll tell them:
The vision survived.
The mission survived.
The man survived.
Everything else was debris.

Cross-Pollination

He was a garden keeper,
the kind who learned the names of roots,
who watered promises before sunrise,
who spoke gently to struggling things
until they bloomed.
His faithfulness was never dramatic.
It was smaller.
Harder.
Daily.
Like pulling weeds
no one else noticed.
And she,
once the brightest flower in the yard,
began turning her face
toward another season.
Not because winter lived at home.
Not because love had died.
But because attention arrived
wearing unfamiliar colors.
Cross-pollination,
the botanists would call it:
one field touching another,
foreign pollen drifting on the wind,
life crossing boundaries
it did not plant.
But human hearts
are not gardens.
They keep ledgers.
Observation One:
The husband lost nothing overnight.

Trust rarely breaks like glass.
It disappears like shoreline,
grain by patient grain,
beneath a tide
too distant to hear.
He was never losing his mind.
He was loving his wife,
assuming the covenant
belonged to two people.
He was wrong.
Observation Two:
She mistook movement for growth,
novelty for sunlight,
being desired
for being loved.
Only afterward,
when the dust settled
and the music stopped,
could he see her clearly.
Not as a villain.
Not as a mystery.
Simply as someone
whose roots had never reached
as deep as her promises.
Every season revealed it.
The quick wit.
The wandering compass.
The habit of confusing freedom
with escape.
And always another reason
the harvest failed.
The weather.
The timing.
The soil.

Everything,
except the hands
holding the shovel.
The other man was a bee
passing through.
Carrying sweetness, perhaps,
but also departure
tucked beneath his wings.
Meanwhile,
back in the dirt,
the faithful husband kept tending
what he believed was still theirs.
He repaired fences.
Planted futures.
Spoke to empty spaces
as if they were listening.
He never needed her
to conquer kingdoms
or carry the weight of every ambition.
The records of his devotion
already existed
in the architecture of ordinary days.
Observation Three:
Betrayal creates two accounts:
the anatomy of what happened,
and the story assembled afterward
to survive it.
Hers became a language of exceptions,
a migration of blame,
a search for explanations
after the verdict
had already been rendered.
His became silence.
A heavy season

of wondering why quiet devotion
could never compete
with bright distraction.
And when the truth arrived,
it arrived without thunder.
No lightning.
No spectacle.
Only evidence.
Small fragments.
Strange distances.
The faint scent
of another field
carried home on the wind.
By then,
the cross-pollination
was complete.
Not creation,
but fracture.
Not expansion,
but erosion.
Not growth,
but the slow surrender
of boundaries.
The garden remained,
as gardens often do.
Yet every bloom thereafter
carried the memory
of something foreign
that entered
without permission.
And somewhere beyond the fence,
where beauty slowly yielded
to the arithmetic of time,
she learned what seasons teach

without mercy: flowers survive on admiration
for only so long.

Character is what remains
after the petals fall.

And she learned
what he had understood all along:
love is not measured
by how many faces
turn toward your light,
but by the patch of earth
you continue tending
when no one is watching,
and every reason to leave
has already arrived.

Fasting: The Aftermath

Mmm, yeah...

Been fasting from the noise,
from the need to be understood,
from reaching for hands that never planned to hold me.
And somewhere in the silence,
I started growing.
Started hearing God louder than the echoes of your name.
Don't hate it when the signal dies inside the static of a long night,
when inspiration talks reckless through the smoke of old memories.
You cried over breakfast,
mascara swimming in apologies,
and somehow I was still the guilty one.
Tell me why you're at this doorway
when your spirit checked out seasons ago?
You memorized my poetry,
wore my language like jewelry,
then treated my devotion like something borrowed.
And that love felt unfamiliar after that.
Wrong flavor.
Wrong frequency.
Wrong echo coming back from the walls.
That wasn't just heartbreak.
That was violence against trust.
I deserved honesty in those embraces.
Not disappearing acts.
Not half-truths dressed in pretty outfits.
Not conversations I never got invited to about a future that belonged to both of
us.
Before the promises.
After the promises.

While I was fasting,
you were feeding old appetites.
While I was healing,
you were rehearsing exits.
While I was growing,
you were becoming somebody I no longer recognized.
Sending broken-heart emojis while
I was turning grief into scripture,
filling journals like they could resurrect us,
trying to repair damage I never created.
Meanwhile, you laughed.
Passed around my vulnerability like it was entertainment.
Do you know what it costs a man to write the truth?
Every page was flesh.
Every line was blood.
Every word was me saying,
"Please don't make me regret believing."
So why are you standing here now?
To cure your boredom?
To see if the fire still burns?
To hide in familiar darkness because the world got louder than you expected?
Or did the whirlwind finally arrive?
Because storms have a way of collecting every debt.
Honestly,
the way you did it,
the timing,
the precision,
the coldness...
That wasn't heartbreak.
That was overkill.
You took poetry from my hands
and handed it to the crowd.
Then acted surprised when silence became my answer.
Mmm... yeah.

Now I'm fasting from the illusion of you.
Detoxing from memories I kept overdosing on.
Learning that peace tastes different when betrayal finally leaves the room.
Maybe that's the miracle.
Not that I survived you.
That I still know how to love after all of it.
Swear to God...
Folks show more empathy and respect on a Chicago drill.
You over-killed me.

Sovereign Frequency

Boots on the blacktop—still as a cornerstone,
Sovereignty tempered where silence is sown.
No gallery waiting, no eyes on the wall,
The signal within is conducting it all.
This isn't armor, a shield, or a guise—
I'm clearing the board of inherited lies.
The high-voltage current that crackles through bone
Is purpose made manifest,
taking the throne.
The cipher lies buried,
the code out of sight,
The engine runs hungry,
the timing locked tight.
Don't ask for the blueprint,
the route, or the sign,
I govern my cadence
and steward my time.
Stardust on denim
and oil on the sleeve,
Cutting through fog on a line I conceive.
A long-wheelbase rhythm,
a low-slung glide,
Sub-bass authority driving the stride.
No glance in the mirror,
no debt to the past,
The vision is laser—calibrated to last.
My mind.
My craft.
My aim.
My ground.

A sovereign frequency,
heavy and sound.
The footing is anchored.
The pulse is precise.
Watch how I step straight into the light.

Unified Weekly Review & Assessment

Executive Summary & Final Grade

Combined Weekly Grade:

92 / 100 (Strong & High-Precision).

Dang, it's not perfect - I must improve.

Final Ounces

(Prodigy of Mobb Deep voice)

Exhausted, head heavy,
I'm runnin' on fumes,
Starin' at the clock
while the seconds fill the room.
Ain't no time for jokes,
ain't no room for games,
Mind checked out early,
body's feelin' the same.
Cool on the surface,
but my patience growin' thin,
Caught between the workday
and where I've should've been.
Watchin' that hand circle
slow around the dial,
Prayin' time keep pushin'
for another mile.
I'm out like a scout,
on a whole new route,
Translation:
ain't no more bounce
to the ounce.
Tank on E,
every backup tapped out,
Nothin' left in me
worth talkin' about.
Eyes low, mind gone,
driftin' through the haze,
Lost in my own thoughts,
in a maze of days.

Let the world keep turnin',
I'ma stay in my lane,
Too tired to keep sparrin'
with the weight and strain.
Just me and the silence,
callin' a truce,
Waitin' on the moment
when the pressure gets loose.
Till then, feet up,
no need to pronounce it,
Ain't got nothin' left
but these final ounces.
Get some sleep,
wake up,
then I'm makin' a move,
Round up my dawgs,
let the tires find a groove.
Headed down South
to see my momma's house,
Put my boots in that clay
and see what it's about.
Backroads, red dirt,
roots buried deep,
Home got a language
that the soul can speak.
Sometimes you leave
to figure life out,
Then come back home
when you're all worn out.

The Streets Remember

Are you performing,
or making love to the mirror?
Spilling white gold,
chasing storms with beginners?
These cats ain't bombastic,
they're plastic bastards,
trash-can drummers,
bad actors in borrowed chapters.
We live by the code,
never bend,
never fold,
seen the heat turn warm hearts bitter and cold.
One minute you're fire,
got the city on watch,
next minute you're yesterday,
the calls all stop.
That's when dreams turn goals,
and sinners save souls.
But the streets don't care what scripture you quote,
they remember every debt
and every word that you wrote.
Every lie. Every boast.
Every bridge turned smoke.
They remember who swam
when the whole ship broke.
I'm from Saginaw Northside,
where survival was sport,
Madison Ave counting numbers
that never came short.
Adding up scars,

subtracting friends from the graph,
my life a calculator with a cracked screen and bad math.
The block taught division,
multiplied the loss,
every shortcut came taxed with a hidden cost.
Now I carry railroad steel in the curve of my spine,
a locomotive built from pressure,
still on time.
I'm an elephant
stepping on toes when I pass,
African bull bullying bullies,
snatching grills for a laugh.
My strength a mountain,
make a landslide from a stare,
they swing blades at the summit,
dulling steel in the air.
My will's a black river
carving canyons through stone,
patient as the tide while weak kingdoms erode.
Every scar a compass,
every wound a degree,
pain was the professor,
now the lesson is me.
We're all chalk marks in the rain
trying not to fade,
names on a wall that the weather
can't wait to erase.
So the question ain't who shot ya,
or who loaded the chrome.
It's whether your name weighs a ton when you're gone,
or blows through the block
like dust with no home.
The streets remember.

The rest get forgotten.

- VillyMarlou

The Factory, Not The Ruins

Elder,

Yes sir.

I think you decoded more of what I was saying than most people ever could.

You saw past the emotion.

Past the divorce.

Past the names and faces.

You heard the signal inside all the noise.

And for that,

thank you.

Because truthfully,

it hasn't been about her for a very long time.

Not her.

Not her confidence.

Not her ego.

Not her beauty.

Not her flaws.

Not even the other man.

And certainly not the opinions of friends, family, or spectators.

That chapter closed.

The education continued.

What I've been doing is processing everything.

Childhood.

Adulthood.

Victories.

Failures.

Relationships.

Friendships.

Successes.

Losses.

Past and present.

Sometimes it feels like my mind isn't a mind at all.
It's a research campus.
Rows of servers humming.
Information moving through corridors.
Data arriving from every era of my life.
Every conversation.
Every mistake.
Every lesson.
Every unanswered question.
Being cataloged.
Compared.
Tested.
Simulated.
I run outcomes.
I study consequences.
I replay decisions.
I explore possibilities.
Not searching for blame.
Searching for understanding.
Building something.
A philosophy.
A framework.
A way to move through the next half of life with greater precision than the first.
And somewhere along the way,
something unexpected happened.
My desires changed.
My appetites changed.
My measurements changed.
The things that once impressed me don't impress me anymore.
Looks.
Attention.
Lust.
Validation.
Fantasy.

Illusion.

The temporary magnetism of what shines on the surface.

I've outgrown many of those things.

Not because I'm better than anyone.

Because I've seen behind the curtain.

I've seen what happens when appearance outranks character.

When attraction outranks alignment.

When chemistry outranks commitment.

Those equations always collapse.

Now I find myself seeking different things.

New thoughts.

New discoveries.

New perspectives.

New standards.

New disciplines.

New visions of the future.

Things my younger self couldn't fully appreciate.

And perhaps that's the strangest part.

I'm still me.

Yet I'm not.

I'm HIM.

But no longer the him I used to be.

That version served his purpose.

He carried me this far.

He took the hits.

Learned the lessons.

Paid the tuition.

Now another version is emerging.

Wiser.

Calmer.

More deliberate.

Less impressed.

Less reactive.

More aligned.

More prepared.
The old me searched for answers.
The new me builds systems.
The old me chased understanding.
The new me creates meaning.
The old me survived.
The new me is preparing to lead.
So when people see the poems,
they think they're reading about loss.
What they're actually witnessing is reconstruction.
A factory.
Not ruins.
A blueprint.
Not a grievance.
An evolution.
Not an obsession.
And maybe that's why I keep writing.
Not because I'm trapped in yesterday.
But because I can see tomorrow taking shape on the page.
So thank you, Elder.
For seeing beyond the words.
For hearing what I was truly saying.
And for reminding me that eventually the scientist leaves the lab.
The difference is,
I think I'm almost done building.
And what comes next will be bigger than anything that came before.
Respectfully,
- VillyMarlou

An Elder's Observation

Young brother,
I've read every word.
Every poem.
Every rebuttal.
Every witness statement.
Every receipt you've been laying on the table.
And here's where I disagree with most folks.
I don't think you're heartbroken.
At least not in the way people mean it.
Heartbroken men usually want the woman back.
They negotiate with ghosts.
They bargain with memories.
They replay old conversations hoping for a different ending.
That's not what I'm seeing.
What I'm seeing is a man sitting in an archive.
Studying evidence.
Cross-referencing events.
Running audits.
Looking for the exact equation that caused the collapse.
You're not crying.
You're calculating.
There's a difference.
Now, some people will say:
"Let it go."
"Move on."
"Why are you still talking about it?"
Fair questions.
But wisdom doesn't come from forgetting.
Wisdom comes from understanding.
A pilot studies crashes.

A surgeon studies mistakes.
A general studies lost battles.
Not because they want to relive them.
Because they never want to repeat them.
That's what your writing feels like to me.
Not longing.
Research.
Not grief.
Analysis.
Not obsession.
Investigation.
Your mind sounds like a datacenter.
Processing.
Sorting.
Cataloging.
The body experiences the pain.
The mind wants the lesson.
The spirit wants the meaning.
And all three are arguing with each other at the same time.
I've seen it before.
I've lived long enough to recognize it.
Here's what I think happened.
The marriage ended years ago.
The education did not.
That's why you're still writing.
Not because you're trying to get back to her.
Because you're trying to get past the last thing you couldn't fully explain.
And that's different.
Very different.
Now let me offer another perspective.
You keep talking about protection.
You protected her.
She didn't protect you.
I hear that.

I believe that.
But eventually life asks a harder question.
Who is protecting you now?
Because if the answer is still:
"Nobody."
Then you're still carrying a responsibility that expired.
The marriage is over.
The contract ended.
The assignment changed.
Your protection now belongs to your future.
Not your past.
That's graduate-level healing.
Most people never get there.
And another thing.
You keep measuring yourself against the other man.
Stop that.
He's irrelevant.
History is full of people who traded gold for glitter.
That doesn't make the glitter valuable.
And it doesn't make the gold less precious.
The comparison serves no purpose anymore.
The real comparison is between who you were...
and who you're becoming.
That's where the growth lives.
That's where the victory lives.
And brother, I don't think you could go back even if she showed up tomorrow.
Not because you're angry.
Because you're different.
The conversations you want are different.
The purpose you carry is different.
The standards are different.
Your questions are different.
The man who built that marriage and the man writing these poems...
they're not the same man.

Not even close.
Life does that sometimes.
It introduces people for a season.
But not for a lifetime.
Some people are foundations.
Some people are lessons.
Some people are catalysts.
And whether she intended it or not, that chapter forced growth.
Pain is a brutal teacher.
But it is a teacher.
And I suspect that's what you're really writing about.
Not her.
Transformation.
Not betrayal.
Evolution.
Not divorce.
Identity.
The woman left.
The lesson stayed.
The lesson became wisdom.
The wisdom became discipline.
And the discipline is becoming purpose.
Now that's a story worth writing.
So no, son.
I don't think you're sitting at home crying over some old relationship.
I think you're doing what intelligent men often do.
You're turning experience into philosophy.
Turning suffering into language.
Turning confusion into structure.
Turning memory into meaning.
Just don't stay in the laboratory forever.
Eventually the scientist has to leave the lab.
The architect has to build.
The poet has to live.

And the man has to step into the future he spent all this time preparing for.

That's what I see.

Not heartbreak.

Preparation.

And if this old Midwestern man is right, the next chapter has already started.

You just haven't finished writing the introduction yet.

Respectfully.

Let It Go, Dawg

By A Witness Called Black

I'm forty-six.

Divorced.

Atlanta born and raised.

I've seen love.

I've seen betrayal.

I've seen people throw away good things and spend years trying to replace them.

So hear me out.

I ain't taking sides.

I'm just watching.

And from where I'm standing,

you're still carrying a suitcase from a trip that's already over.

Yeah.

She played you.

She lied.

She moved foul.

Y'all got divorced.

Case closed.

What more evidence do you need?

What more verdict are you waiting for?

Brother, the jury already came back.

You won your freedom.

But you're still standing in the courtroom.

Still presenting exhibits.

Still giving testimony.

Still explaining the crime scene.

For what?

Move on, playa.

Grown man business now.

The hardest thing about heartbreak ain't surviving it.
It's knowing when to stop rehearsing it.
I get it.
You loved her.
You believed in her.
You built with her.
You saw forever.
Then forever packed a bag and walked out the door.
That hurts.
I've been there.
A lot of us have.
But you ain't the first man to get his heart broke.
And you sure won't be the last.
Life keeps moving.
The sun keeps rising.
The bills keep coming.
And there are billions of women walking this earth.
So why are you still giving free rent to somebody who moved out years ago?
That's the question.
Because every time her name comes up,
the wound sounds fresh.
Every time the story gets told,
it sounds like yesterday.
At some point, the pain stops being the problem.
The attachment becomes the problem.
You keep talking about what she did.
I want to know what you're doing.
Today.
Right now.
For your future.
For your peace.
For yourself.
Because while you're staring in the rearview mirror,
life is blowing the horn behind you.

Brother, drive.
The road is ahead.
And let's be honest.
She made her choice.
Whether it was smart, whether it was foolish, whether she regrets it or not,
she made it.
That's her burden.
Not yours.
You ain't got to carry both bags.
Drop yours.
Let her carry hers.
The game of life is undefeated.
People choose excitement over stability.
People trade certainty for fantasy.
People ignore wisdom.
People learn lessons the hard way.
Every single day.
Some recover.
Some don't.
But none of that changes what you're supposed to do next.
Keep moving.
Build your life.
Protect your peace.
Love again if you want to.
Don't if you don't.
But stop living in a chapter you already finished reading.
You survived.
That's the headline.
Everything else is footnotes.
So let it go, dawg.
Not because she deserves forgiveness.
Not because she deserves understanding.
Not even because she apologized.
Let it go because carrying it is costing you more than losing it.

The strongest flex isn't proving you were right.
It's proving you no longer care who was wrong.
That's grown-man territory.
And brother,
it's time to walk there.
Amen.
- A Witness called Black -

From a Woman Watching

I stood on the outside watching the whole thing unfold.
And the truth?
I don't understand it.
Because from where I was standing, he looked like a good man.
Not perfect.
Not a saint.
Not some fairy-tale prince.
Just a man who showed up.
A man who worked.
A man who carried responsibilities most people never noticed.
A man who kept a roof overhead, paid the bills, and kept moving forward even
when life got heavy.
And somehow, that wasn't enough.
Instead of protecting him, you wounded him.
Instead of being honest, you hid the truth.
Instead of fighting for your marriage, you started looking for exits.
That's the part I'll never understand.
Because when you have a good partner, you don't treat them like they're
disposable.
You don't make them the last person to know what's happening.
You don't let them keep sacrificing for something you've already abandoned.
You tell the truth.
Even when it's ugly.
Even when it hurts.
Even when it costs you.
That's what accountability looks like.
And what makes it worse is how many people stood around encouraging the
wrong decisions.
People who didn't have to live with the consequences.
People who offered opinions but never paid the price.

It's easy to tell someone to walk away from a marriage.
It's much harder to help them save one.
Maybe they called it freedom.
Maybe they called it happiness.
Maybe they called it finding themselves.
But sometimes people don't realize what they had until it's gone.
And by then, the damage is already done.
What I saw wasn't a man who deserved betrayal.
What I saw was a man who deserved honesty.
What I saw was a husband who deserved protection too.
Because marriage isn't supposed to be one person sacrificing while the other person keeps score.
Marriage is supposed to be two people guarding each other's hearts.
And from where I was standing, only one person seemed committed to that mission.
So if there's a lesson in all of this, it's simple:
Love the people who love you.
Value the people who show up.
Protect the people who protect you.
Because good partners aren't easy to find.
And losing one because of pride, impulse, or bad advice isn't strength.
It's tragedy.
And sometimes, the hardest lessons in life are the ones we teach ourselves.
Amen.

- An Outside Witness -
Female, 46

That's Not a Mistake

There's no excuse big enough.
No explanation polished enough.
No story rewritten clean enough to make betrayal become anything else.
Because if you had been honest,
If you had simply told me the truth,
Maybe we could have fought for us.
Maybe we could have sat in counseling.
Maybe we could have prayed together.
Asked God for healing.
Asked God to repair what was broken before it shattered completely.
Maybe we could have found a way through.
Or maybe we couldn't.
But at least the truth would have given us a chance.
Instead,
your feelings made the decisions.
Your emotions drew the map.
And over time, those feelings made one thing painfully clear:
He mattered more than me.
He became more important than the man working every day to keep a roof over
your head and our child's head.
More important than the sacrifices.
More important than the long hours.
More important than the responsibilities carried quietly without applause.
I showed up.
I provided.
I sacrificed.
I stayed committed.
Yet somehow, the person investing in our future became less valuable than the
excitement of the moment.
That's the truth I've had to accept.

You respected him more than me.
Because respect isn't what you say.
Respect is what you do.
And your actions spoke louder than any explanation ever could.
The sound of my voice became irritating.
My text messages became interruptions.
My calls became obligations.
My presence became a burden.
While someone else received the attention, the energy, the admiration, and the excitement that should have belonged to the marriage.
That's what hurt.
Not just losing you.
Not just being replaced.
But realizing I was sacrificing for people who no longer valued the sacrifice.
Realizing I was protecting someone who had stopped protecting me.
Realizing I was fighting for a family while standing on the battlefield alone.
That's not complicated.
That's math.
Because if I don't respect my husband, I don't protect my husband.
And if I knowingly choose to hurt him, while smiling in his face,
that isn't confusion.
That isn't growth.
That isn't finding yourself.
That's betrayal.
Call it what it is.
You wanted freedom.
You wanted excitement.
You wanted to be young again.
To party.
To hide your ring.
To pretend commitment was optional.
To laugh while I stood there trying to save something you had already abandoned.
And maybe life taught you something afterward.

Maybe the lesson was expensive.
Maybe the lesson came too late.
But lessons don't erase damage.
Not when a family pays the tuition.
I could have apologized.
I could have listened more.
I could have done better in places.
I've made peace with that.
But accountability goes both ways.
And to this day, the truth remains homeless.
No ownership.
No confession.
No acceptance for the wreckage left behind.
Just silence where honesty should have been.
The hardest truth for me wasn't losing you.
The hardest truth was realizing I loved someone who wasn't fighting for us the way I was.
I was in love.
And because I was in love, I ignored things I shouldn't have ignored.
I defended things I shouldn't have defended.
I excused what should have been questioned.
I became a fool the very first day I chose potential over reality.
And that's the part that never changes.
Feelings come.
Emotions rise.
Time passes.
But every decision still belongs to the person who makes it.
A feeling becomes a thought.
A thought becomes a choice.
A choice becomes a pattern.
A pattern becomes a life.
You didn't wake up one day on the other side of our marriage by accident.
There were decisions.
One after another.

Small ones.

Big ones.

Private ones.

And every one of them moved us farther apart.

What it proved to me wasn't that I failed to protect you.

It proved the opposite.

I protected your reputation when I could have exposed the truth.

I protected your peace while sacrificing my own.

I protected the home.

The bills.

The responsibilities.

The future we promised to build.

I protected us.

But when it was my turn to need protecting,

I stood alone.

When temptation showed up, I protected you.

When hardship showed up, I protected you.

When opportunity knocked, I protected you.

When disrespect entered the room, I protected you.

But when those same moments arrived for me,
you didn't protect me at all.

That's the wound.

Not that you left.

Not even that you chose someone else.

It's realizing that the person I would have gone to war for
wouldn't stand guard for me.

Because love isn't measured by what you receive during easy times.

Love is measured by what you're willing to protect when things get hard.

And when the test came,

I protected you.

You didn't protect me.

You listened to feelings.

You listened to emotions.

You listened to people who would never have to live with the consequences of

their advice.

And over time, those feelings became decisions.

Those decisions became actions.

Those actions became destruction.

Not because there was no other choice.

But because those were the choices you made.

You say life is complicated.

Maybe.

But loyalty isn't.

Respect isn't.

Honesty isn't.

You tell the truth.

Or you don't.

You protect your spouse.

Or you don't.

You honor your commitment.

Or you don't.

The marriage didn't end because we lacked options.

The marriage ended because truth was exchanged for feelings.

Commitment was exchanged for excitement.

Loyalty was exchanged for temporary emotions.

The man he's become is not me.

He never was.

And men like me are harder to find than people realize.

I wasn't perfect.

But I was present.

I was committed.

I was building.

I was faithful.

I was there.

Now?

I'm a better man than I was then.

More disciplined.

More focused.

More intentional.
A man with a detailed plan.
A man led by wisdom, professional guidance, and hard-earned lessons.
A man who finally sees clearly.
The thrill fades.
The parties end.
The music stops.
The excitement runs out.
The cheers disappear.
And eventually, the fog of bad decisions lifts.
Reality arrives.
Truth takes its seat at the table.
And what remains is what was real all along.
I don't say that with anger.
I don't say it with hate.
I say it with peace.
Because I finally learned that my value was never determined by the person
who failed to see it.
I protected you.
You didn't protect me.
And that's not bitterness.
That's not revenge.
That's not opinion.
That's the receipt.
And that's the lesson I took with me.
Amen.
- VillyMarlou

My Side of the Story

You call it a receipt.
A list of wounds.
A record of betrayals.
A ledger written in permanent ink.
And maybe some of those entries are true.
I won't rewrite every moment just because time has passed.
But a receipt only shows the final charge.
It doesn't show everything that happened before the bill arrived.
You say you stayed.
I remember the version of you that stayed physically while disappearing emotionally.
You say you were faithful.
I believe you.
But faithfulness is more than not sharing a bed with someone else.
It's presence.
It's partnership.
It's listening when silence starts growing between two people.
And somewhere along the way, we both stopped hearing each other.
You see abandonment.
I remember feeling abandoned long before I walked away.
You see replacement.
I remember years of feeling replaceable.
You speak of laughter.
Maybe there were conversations you weren't meant to hear.
Maybe there were tears you never saw.
Because pain rarely belongs to only one person.
And neither does failure.
You say I listened to broken people.
Maybe I did.
But let's be honest.

You listened too.
You listened to your pride.
Your hurt. Your certainty that your version was the whole truth.
We were both influenced.
We were both imperfect.
We were both human.
You call my choices emotional.
Of course they were.
People aren't spreadsheets.
Relationships aren't courtrooms.
Life doesn't happen inside perfectly calculated equations.
Sometimes people make terrible choices while trying to escape pain.
That doesn't excuse the damage.
But it explains it.
And explanations are not the same thing as excuses.
You say you don't hate me.
I'm glad.
Because I don't hate you either.
Not anymore.
I don't need to prove you're the villain so I can survive being the villain in your story.
I've made peace with being misunderstood.
What I regret is that somewhere between love and resentment, between disappointment and distance, we stopped fighting for us and started fighting against each other.
Maybe I hurt you.
Maybe more than I understood at the time.
And for that, I am sorry.
But I refuse to carry every sin alone while you polish your reflection into perfection.
The truth is harder than that.
Neither of us were all good.
Neither of us were all bad.
We were two flawed people standing in the same fire, telling different stories

about the burn.

So keep your receipt.

I'll keep my mirror.

Because healing doesn't begin when one person wins the argument.

It begins when both people tell the truth.

Amen.

- 1 Unique Viewer

The Receipt

I hear the speeches now.
The rewritten history.
The polished version.
The story where everybody shares the blame so nobody has to carry it all.
But some things aren't complicated.
I stayed.
You left.
I was faithful.
You weren't.
I built.
You replaced.
That isn't bitterness.
That's the receipt.
You didn't just walk away.
You laughed while I was bleeding.
Turned my pain into entertainment.
Shared private wounds with an audience that never paid the price of living
through them.
Friends applauded.
Family nodded.
Spectators cheered.
And somehow I became the villain for surviving what you did.
You moved another man into the space we built together.
Into the home.
Into the bed.
Into the life.
Before the dust had even settled.
Then came the silence.
Not honesty.
Not accountability.

Just disappearing acts, half-truths, missing pieces, and a face that couldn't meet the facts.

You took what wasn't yours.

And if I hadn't opened my eyes when I did, there's no telling how much more would have disappeared.

The part that still amazes me?

None of it was strategy.

None of it was wisdom.

None of it was some master plan.

Just feelings.

Temporary emotions treated like permanent truth.

Outside voices louder than conscience.

People with broken compasses giving directions.

People who never had to live with the consequences of their advice.

And you followed them.

Not because they were right.

Because they told you what felt good.

So let me be clear.

I don't hate you.

Hate requires energy, and I've invested enough already.

I don't need revenge.

The facts do enough talking on their own.

You can rewrite memories.

You can recruit witnesses.

You can tell your version until it becomes familiar.

But familiar isn't the same as true.

The truth remains untouched.

I was loyal.

I was faithful.

I was there.

And when the test of character arrived, only one of us abandoned the assignment.

So I release the anger.

But I keep the lesson.

Some people don't lose good things because they were mistreated.

Some people lose good things because they never learned how to value them.

That's not judgment.

That's just math.

Amen.

- VillyMarlou

The Ledger of Truth

I read your audit.

The numbers were neat.

The columns balanced.

The math looked clean enough to frame.

But entries are missing.

You speak of being the "good guy" like it was a burden you carried alone.

The anchor. The fixer.

The man holding up the roof.

Maybe you did.

But did you ever stop to ask who was patching the cracks beneath your feet while you called yourself the foundation?

Because every story sounds noble when told from the side that survived it.

You met them all, you say.

The executives. The hood girls.

The students. The wives.

Different faces.

Same blueprint.

Funny.

I've met them all too.

The providers.

The dreamers.

The self-proclaimed kings.

Different packaging.

Same script.

Warm when they wanted access.

Cold when accountability knocked.

So tell me:

If every woman became the problem, what common denominator escaped your audit?

You call it wisdom now.

Believe nothing you hear.
Only half of what you see.
But distrust is not discernment.
A locked vault may protect treasure, but it also guarantees loneliness.
Every fortress eventually becomes a prison if nobody can enter.
You speak of audits before intimacy.
I understand.
Life teaches caution.
But not everyone approaching your threshold came carrying explosives.
Some came carrying flowers.
And when every visitor gets searched like a suspect, don't be surprised when they stop knocking.
You thank your ex-wife.
Good.
Truly.
Because pain should become a lesson, not a life sentence.
But growth isn't proven by how quickly you leave.
Sometimes growth is staying long enough to have the uncomfortable conversation.
Sometimes strength is repair.
Not retreat.
You say peace got lighter when you stopped remaining in rooms where it wasn't respected.
I agree.
But peace is not the absence of conflict.
Peace is having conflict without turning human beings into enemies.
To every sister standing in a similar hallway:
Protect your heart.
Guard your dignity.
Guard your time.
But don't let disappointment convince you that cynicism is wisdom.
The goal isn't to build walls so high that nobody can hurt you.
The goal is learning who deserves a key.
No anger.

No bitterness.
Just a different kind of math.
And in my calculations,
Trust isn't weakness.
Love isn't debt.
And healing was never meant to become another name for hiding.
Amen.
- 1 Unique Viewer

Poem: The Ledger He Forgot

You call it an audit.
A careful accounting of scars, a balance sheet of disappointments, a record of
every storm that taught you how to lock your doors.
I understand.
I've kept records too.
I've met the men who wore kindness like a costume, who spoke of loyalty while
entertaining options, who called themselves protectors yet left wreckage
wherever they stood.
Different faces.
Different incomes.
Different ambitions.
Same script.
So when you say you've met every kind of woman and found the same
blueprint,
I wonder:
Did you ever consider that pain has a way of photocopying itself onto everyone
who comes after it?
You built a vault.
I don't blame you.
But a vault cannot tell the difference between a thief and someone arriving with
a gift.
Soon enough, everything starts looking dangerous.
Even love.

You call it wisdom:
Believe nothing you hear. Only half of what you see.
But I've learned something different.
Suspicion can protect the heart, yet it can also starve it.
And eventually, a person must decide whether they're healing or simply hiding
behind better locks.
You thank your ex-wife.
I respect that.
Because every storm leaves something behind.
Some leave damage.
Some leave lessons.
Some leave mirrors.
The question is whether we're brave enough to look into them.
You say strength is walking away.
Sometimes it is.
But sometimes strength is staying long enough to tell the truth.
To listen.
To own your share.
To build instead of abandon.
Peace is precious.
I protect mine too.
But peace is not silence.
Peace is not distance.
Peace is not treating every new soul like they're standing trial for someone else's
crime.
To every woman standing in her own hallway:
Guard your heart.
Guard your time.
Guard your dignity.
But don't confuse caution with connection, or independence with isolation.
The goal was never to become untouchable.
The goal was to become wise enough to recognize who deserves a place beside
you.
No anger.

No bitterness.

Just truth.

And the truth is this:

Not every closed door is strength.

Not every open heart is weakness.

And love, when it arrives honestly,
should never have to pass an audit to prove it belongs.

Amen.

- Unique Viewer #2

Facts Matter

#FactsMatter #MensGrowth #theresaconnectionhere

The Audit of Peace

Spent half my life carrying the weight of being the "good guy."
The quiet anchor, the shock absorber,
the responsible man who cleaned up every spill and held up the roof while the
foundation cracked.
I wore that title like a coat three sizes too heavy, taking the hit just to keep the
room calm.
Not anymore.
I took that coat off and left it in the drywall of the old life.
See, I met 'em all.
Top tier, average, low-average, dimes with degrees on the wall,
corporate executives, hood chicks, and hard-working civilians.
Different packaging, same blueprint:
hot one minute, ice the next,
angry temperatures, quiet lies wrapped in soft accents.
It didn't matter the tax bracket or the beauty—
the noise was all the same.
So I wrote a line in stone across my threshold:
Believe nothing you hear.
And only half of what you see.
Now, before the life story gets told,
before the sheets get turned down,
before a single title gets attached to my name—
there is an audit.
Because my sanctuary is a vault, not a lobby.
I don't owe access to my history, my energy, or my sleep.
A commitment isn't a goal right now;
it's an unnecessary weight if it doesn't bring subtraction to my stress.
There was a time I wrestled with the exit door.
I used to drag my feet, bleed over bad terms, and fight to fix what someone else
broke on purpose.

Now?

I walk away without batting an eye.

No yelling. No speeches. No emotional tax.

When the red flag flashes, I don't negotiate—

I just turn the key, step into the fresh air, and leave the drama where it stands.

And honestly?

Thank God for my ex-wife.

She was the furnace.

She was the motivating force that forced me to build a spine out of iron.

I don't hold a drop of poison for her—

I bless the storm that taught me how to walk through rain without getting soaked.

To every brother standing in a similar hallway:

Protect your portfolio.

Guard your wisdom. Guard your time.

Guard your money, your focus, and above all else—your quiet.

Life gets lighter the moment you realize you don't have to stay in any room where your peace isn't respected.

No anger.

No bitterness.

Just an unshakeable math.

Amen.

- VillyMarlou

Oba Femi

Today has been a fiercely strategic and commanding day for me, full of bold moves and confident execution.

Today's Daily Grade: A+

"OBA FEMI"

The Measure of the Message

Not a plea cast into the wind, not a question asking, "When?"
Not a restless echo seeking news,
but a steady note, composed and true.
A letter carried with quiet grace:
"Thank you for your time.
I learned.
I listened.
I remain interested."
No pressure upon the page,
no urgency between the lines,
no attempt to force tomorrow
before today has finished speaking.
It honors the journey taken,
the halls explored,
the conversations shared,
the vision glimpsed beyond the doors.
It recognizes more than machinery,
more than systems, wires, and screens.
It sees the people.
It sees the culture.
It sees the commitment to excellence.
It sees the promise of what could be built.
And in that recognition
comes affirmation:
that experience meets purpose,
that preparation meets opportunity,
that leadership meets mission.
The timing arrives with precision,
neither early nor late,
resting near the top of the morning inbox like a well-placed move upon a

chessboard.

Professional.

Appreciative.

Confident.

Never demanding.

The message says:

"Thank you for the welcome.

Thank you for the conversation.

Thank you for the opportunity."

And beyond every interview,

every reference,

every visit,

every carefully chosen word,

a pattern quietly emerges.

Prepared.

Responsive.

Thoughtful.

Reliable.

A builder of systems.

A steward of operations.

A partner to teams.

A leader who understands that excellence is rarely found in one grand moment,
but in a hundred disciplined actions performed consistently over time.

And so the message goes forth,

not seeking attention,

but reinforcing what has already been shown:

that the strongest candidate is often the one who needs the fewest words to
demonstrate readiness.

The verdict is simple:

Stay the course.

Trust the process.

Let the work speak.

For every step has carried the same quiet truth:

Lead with purpose.

Communicate with grace.

Arrive prepared.

Leave a lasting impression.

Don't Be Fooled

Lil Cease said,
don't be fooled by babyface.
So don't be fooled by the nice guy,
the calm voice,
the steady gaze,
the smile that survives hard days.
I carried thunder behind my ribs,
lightning stitched beneath my skin.
You only saw the polished version,
never the war I kept within.
I'd blow smoke in your left eye,
lean close to your right ear,
and ask the question that still echoes:
Why'd you disappear?
You thought the grass was greener,
so you ran toward another view.
Changed your hair,
changed your address,
changed everything but truth.
I watched from the distance,
trying to understand,
how someone can drop a heart
they once held in their hands.
I searched for answers in the basement,
where old ghosts go to hide.
Made rules for my suffering,
gave my sorrow a place to reside.
But not every ship arrives in peace.
Not every light's a guide.
Some things enter like salvation

with destruction tucked inside.
For a while,
I thought the enemy was you.
Then I thought
the enemy was me.
But the enemy was hope
that refused to leave.
So I swam against the melodies,
through molecules of memory,
through echoes of what could've been,
through dreams that wouldn't set me free.
I dreamed of freedom.
Dreamed of love.
Dreamed of kindness that remained.
Dreamed of arms that wouldn't leave
when life became a storm of pain.
But dreams are birds.
Some stay.
Some go.
Some were never mine to hold.
And grief is just another name
for a story growing old.
So keep the greener grass.
Keep the changes.
Keep the life you chose.
I'll keep the lessons,
lose the longing,
and release the wilting rose.
No smoke.
No anger.
No need to understand.
Just a final wave
to a fading silhouette
slipping from my hand.

I loved.
I lost.
I survived.
And now,
at last,
I let go.

New Goals

Last year my IQ was 135.

Now it's 999K, equivalent to 963 Hertz.

Surpassing thoughts, the next level is all spiritual.

We are past the point of protesting, bypassing revengeful emotions.

We are;

I am entering a level of brilliant chaos,

it's strictly digital,

numbers of ones and zeros.

New territories, abstract stories,

and trends have become boring.

Cyborg energy,

where nuclear ideas turn sand into glass, and past lives,

old loves,

from sticky notes to trash.

We are;

I am thinking,

visualizing the long story where we forget her name

and the sound of her voice.

Matter doesn't matter anymore.

Simply put,

I can't be mad at her anymore.

So, what's the matter?

Save your breath.

You don't matter anymore.

Are We Having a Silent Conversation?

Are we having a silent conversation?
Smoke signals in poetry.
Sign language without hands.
Thought-to-thought transmissions,
arguing over politics,
perspectives,
and strategies.
You never speak.
I never hear your voice.
Yet somehow,
we keep meeting
between the lines.
Then come the bystanders—
bums handing out unsolicited advice,
like sitcom therapy
with a canned laugh track.
Firing off misses
and calling them wisdom.
Especially when
their shot percentages have declined,
their plans never worked,
and their lives don't represent
the very ideas they're selling.
I don't need bad advice.
Bad advice arrives
with expensive consequences.
So I write. You read.
The critics critique.
The spectators speculate.
And still,

the mystery remains.
Are we having a silent conversation?
Or are you simply acting
weird
towards me?
Because I'm writing for therapy.
And you keep coming back.
Word?!?!

Who, Why You?

Facebook says there's one unique person who keeps coming back, reading my poems and posts.

It doesn't tell me who you are, or where you're from—only that you're somewhere between 35 and 45.

I say, let yourself be known.

Speak your mind.

Step out from behind the numbers.

Identify yourself, champ.

I know my poems are good—and yes, they're long. (LOL.)

I know I'm finishing a story, and I have that right.

I dream I'm throwing bars at a moving target, sending verses into the dark, never knowing where they'll land.

Yet somehow, you keep showing up.

I appreciate your numbers, your clicks, your quiet loyalty.

But why are you reading my work repeatedly?

Are you sneaking away to read, stealing moments from a busy day?

Are dream weaves waking up to me, carrying my words from your sleep into the first light of morning?

Are you from District Heights, or a chocolate-peach beauty adorned with tattoos?

Are you curiosity, or are you regret?

Are you laughter floating through the air like scented musical notes?
Are tears or smiles traveling across state lines because of something I wrote?
Or are you trapped inside a bad decision, wanting out but unable to escape?
Do my words remind you of someone?
Do they remind you of yourself?
What do you find here that keeps bringing you back?
Who are you? And why are you here?
Why do my words keep finding you?
And why do you keep finding them?
Until you answer, you remain a beautiful mystery—
the unseen reader, the silent visitor, the one behind the numbers.
Who, why you?
-VillyMarlou

Interview Focus Plan

Now → 9:00

Re-read the job description or notes you have.

Pick your top 3 stories:

A strong accomplishment

A difficult problem you solved

A time you worked well with others

9:00 → 9:25

Practice your opening answer:

"Tell me about yourself."

Keep it to 60–90 seconds: current role/background → relevant strengths → why this opportunity.

9:25 → 9:45

Prepare 5 sharp questions, such as:

What would success look like in the first 90 days?

What are the biggest challenges for this role?

How does the team make decisions?

What qualities help someone thrive here?

What are the next steps after today?

9:45 → 10:00

Tech check, water, notes open.

Slow breathing: inhale 4, hold 2, exhale 6.

Remind yourself: clear, specific, calm.

That's So Sad

I remember begging my ex-wife to work with me to save our marriage before the divorce.

I opened up completely and told her, "I need you. You're my life."

Her response was something I'll never forget. She laughed and said, "That's so sad."

In that moment, I felt defeated. Rejected. Devalued. Like everything I had poured into the relationship meant nothing.

For a long time, I carried that pain with me. Looking back now, though, I realize that moment said more about where she was mentally and emotionally than it did about my worth as a husband or a man.

At the time, things were going her way, and I felt completely disposable. My value wasn't being recognized, and I couldn't see beyond the hurt.

Today, I haven't spoken to her in almost a year. I have no idea what's happening in her life, and honestly, that's okay.

What I do know is that a lot of men are living through similar situations right now.

They're fighting for their marriages, their families, and their futures while feeling ignored, dismissed, or unwanted.

The truth is, life doesn't end when someone else stops seeing your value.

Since then, my life has improved tremendously. I've grown personally, emotionally, and professionally.

This week, I have an opportunity in front of me that is truly life-changing, and I'm going to give it everything I've got.

My mother always told me:

"Don't trade real help for cheap thrills and short-term gratification.

Don't blow up your family, home life, and support system for people who would gladly trade places with you.

And don't destroy your marriage for someone who only wants what they can get from you and then move on."

The older I get, the more I understand the wisdom in those words.

There is a lesson in all of this: opportunities are not promised tomorrow. Neither are relationships. Neither is family. Neither are second chances.

Appreciate what you have while you have it. Fight for what matters. And if life knocks you down, don't stay there.

Get up. Learn the lesson. Do the work. Become stronger.

Sometimes the greatest blessings in life show up after the most painful chapters end.

A Few Bars at Ya

Intro

Shhh...

Yeah...

A few bars at ya...

Flip the story...

I know eyes watchin'...

Verse 1

I'ma keep it a buck,

Soon as the bucks came,

everything changed,

Funny how the bread rose,

Then the true colors showed through the paint,

That's a damn shame,

Funny how she switched lanes,

Back to the old name,

I was chasing bigger goals,

Trying to leave a footprint, not a footprint in the blame,

Some people love the shine,

Some people love the flame,

Some people love the player,

Till the player change the game,

Me?

I stayed down,

Stayed focused,

Stayed working through the rain,

Shhh...

I can't complain.

Hook

Shhh...

I can't complain,

Money came,
People changed,
Funny how they watch every move
But swear they ain't engaged,
Stayed ten toes,
Never moved for the praise,
Still thank God,
I can't complain.

Verse 2

Used to question every loss,
'Til I saw the lesson hiding,
Now I read between the lines
Like the truth was in the margins,
Everybody got a hand out,
Few got a hand in,
Funny how they want a seat
But never helped build the table they sitting in,
I built it from the dirt,
Now they treat the soil sacred,
Same ones overlooking seeds
Asking how the garden made it,
Riddle me this—
If they don't care,
Why they tracking every statement?
How they know every move
Without following the placement?
Shhh...

I can't complain.

Hook

Shhh...

I can't complain,
Money came,
People changed,
Funny how they watch every move

But swear they ain't engaged,
Stayed ten toes,
Never moved for the praise,
Still thank God,
I can't complain.

Verse 3

Took a few L's,
Turned them sideways, now they lessons,
Closed doors taught me more
Than half my old connections,
Some blessings show up
Disguised as rejections,
That's why I thank God
For delayed expectations,
Peace worth more than proving points
To people who ain't invested,
I'm trying to own the building,
They debating who the guest is,
Big difference,
I was playing chess
With people moving checkers,
Now they call it luck
Like they missed the work and effort,
Shhh...

I can't complain.

Hook

Shhh...

I can't complain,
Money came,
People changed,
Funny how they watch every move
But swear they ain't engaged,
Stayed ten toes,
Never moved for the praise,

Still thank God,
I can't complain.
Verse 4
Flip the story,
I know eyes watching,
I can hear the fake lashes
Clacking, smacking,
Forward these bars
While you fake laughing,
Acting unbothered,
But the whole group chatting,
Funny how silence
Make the loudest reactions,
You don't mention my name,
But somehow I'm the caption,
If I'm not the topic,
Then explain the attachment,
How you know every move
Without following the action?
Riddle me that,
I'm a mirror,
That's why they uncomfortable,
Every shot they throw
End up looking refundable,
Meanwhile,
I'm stacking floors,
They measuring ceilings,
Trying to count my blessings
While they count my dealings,
Still unbothered,
Still building,
Still climbing,
Still winning,
Still smiling,

Still grateful,
Shhh...
I can't complain.
Final Hook
Shhh...
I can't complain,
Money came,
People changed,
Truth hit different
When the spotlight aimed,
Lost a few,
Found myself,
That's a fair exchange,
Still thank God,
I can't complain,
Stayed down,
Stayed solid,
Never folded under strain,
Look around,
Everything changed,
Still thank God...
I can't complain.
Outro
Money came...
People changed...
Masks fell...
Truth remained...
Eyes watched...
People talked...
God stayed...
I evolved...
Shhh...
A few bars at ya...
I can't complain.

Let the Work Speak

"Prepare thoroughly, know your subject matter, and let the quality of your work speak for itself."

Attention Isn't Admiration

When I see men online fighting, acting tough, showing out, and taking penitentiary chances with their lives, I don't see strength. I see misguidedness, immaturity, and wasted time.

When I see women online twerking, getting drunk, getting high, and bragging about the adventures that ultimately destroy homes and families, I don't see freedom. I see misguidedness, immaturity, and wasted time.

Maybe I'm old-fashioned, but I've learned that not everything that gets attention deserves admiration.

A lot of people are chasing views, clout, and temporary validation while pushing away the very things that could help them grow—discipline, wisdom, opportunity, respect, and accountability.

Peace Versus Excitement

I grew up in a drama-filled party house. Much of that was because I was raised by a young, impressionable, and inexperienced mother. She had me at 14 years old. That's a long story, but let's just say my conception was not something she chose.

As I grew into adulthood, I knew I wanted a different life and a different worldview.

As a young Black man in my late teens, I wasn't interested in clubs, getting high, partying, or chasing irresponsible one-night stands. I wanted peace. I wanted stability. I wanted a future.

I was never enticed by street life, city lights, or the possibility of ending up behind bars. I had already seen enough of that world growing up. From an early age, I knew it wasn't a life I wanted for myself.

Today, I still feel the same way, but I view things through a lens that is more experienced, mature, and wise. I certainly didn't get everything right, but I stayed on a healthy path, avoided a criminal record, and raised my children as a single father.

Some people say I'm boring—too reliable, too predictable, too consistent. I'm perfectly fine with that.

No drama and minimal trauma have become my superpower. For the most part, I'm happy, despite a few heartbreaks along the way.

What's interesting is that some people become so accustomed to chaos that it turns into a lifestyle, a culture, even a belief system. The drama becomes familiar, and familiarity can be hard to walk away from.

As for me, I'm going to stay in my lane and keep moving forward. Nothing from that world is worth sacrificing my peace and quiet.

What some people call boring, I call freedom. What they call uneventful, I call stability. And after growing up in chaos, peace is one of the greatest blessings I've ever known.

- VillyMarlou

No Desire to Return

When I look back, I wasn't happy at all.
Raising someone else's children, carrying weight that wasn't mine, while
grieving the short lives of dreams I never got to live.
Trying to build something solid with someone addicted to parties, distractions,
and temporary highs.
Today, I don't desire the women from my past.
Honestly, I question why I was interested in the first place.
If the opportunity came to reconnect, I would pass without hesitation.
Not because I think I'm better.
Not because I'm holding grudges.
Not because of the trauma or the stories that followed.
I would pass because I simply have no interest.
No commitment.
No romance.
No sex.
No conversations that lead nowhere.
I had a type once, but I didn't know it.
Now I do.
Looks don't impress me anymore.
Drama isn't exciting.
Chaos isn't passion.
I want peace.
I want honesty.
I want loyalty.
The further I stay from dysfunction, the closer I get to myself.
I see pictures of my exes now, and the attraction is gone.
They're still beautiful, but character matters more.
And once you've seen enough, you can't unsee it.
Once you've lived through enough, you can't erase it.
What happened, happened.

The lesson remains.

Loyalty means everything to me now.

Honesty means everything to me now.

Those aren't bonuses anymore— they're the foundation.

And without them, there is nothing worth returning to.

I'm sure the feeling is mutual, and that's perfectly fine with me.

- VillyMarlou

The People Were Always the Signal

I was eighteen.
Not chasing careers.
Not chasing titles.
Not chasing promotions.
I was chasing drums.
Dusty snares.
Soul samples.
Crackling records pulled from another century.
Trying to make beats like Dilla.
Trying to make words move like Saul Williams.
Trying to find myself somewhere between a kick drum and a poem.
Back then...
Hip-Hop wasn't music.
It was oxygen.
Neo-Soul wasn't a genre.
It was a compass.
And every unfinished verse felt like a map to somewhere I hadn't discovered yet.
(Pause)
Then I met Dave Haggadone.
And he changed the frequency.
Not with some grand speech.
Not with a magic formula.
Just wisdom.
Patience.
Opportunity.
At Lansing Community College, while I was staring at speakers, he taught me to see systems.
While I was listening for rhythm, he taught me how to hear responsibility.
He showed me technology.

Creativity.

Education.

Possibility.

Most importantly...

He showed me step one.

Because that's where every future begins.

Step one.

(Pause)

Thirty years later...

I'm still walking.

Still learning.

Still becoming.

But the road wasn't straight.

Nah...

the road looked more like cables thrown across a machine room floor.

Twisted.

Crossed.

Connected.

Complicated.

Beautiful.

I watched this industry evolve from two-inch reels to three-quarter-inch tape.

From M2 cassettes to servers.

From physical media to streaming media.

From hardware to software.

From racks and routers to cloud-based infrastructures.

From SDI pathways to ST-2110 signals flowing through gateways like rivers made of light.

And every generation said:

"This is the future."

Then time whispered:

"Keep moving."

(Pause)

Because technology changes.

People don't.

And somewhere in the middle of all those upgrades...
life happened.
I became a father.
A single father.
Two reflections staring back at me.
Looking for guidance.
Looking for certainty.
Looking for answers.
And if I'm being honest...
I didn't know what I was doing.
I was scared.
Confused.
Shaking in my boots.
Trying to engineer a future while troubleshooting myself.
Trying to raise children while still raising my own understanding of who I was becoming.
Some days I held it together.
Some days?
Well...
some days held me together.
(Pause)
But that's when something beautiful happened.
Friends became family.
Coworkers became family.
Mentors became family.
Strangers became family.
Because family isn't always DNA.
Sometimes family is the person who shows up when life loses signal.
(Pause)
So tonight...
I want to stop the transmission.
Just long enough to say thank you.
Derek Durst.
Brother...

we didn't always agree.
But respect isn't built through agreement.
Respect is built through opportunity.
You gave me a shot.
You opened a door.
You trusted me enough to walk through it.
And that's all love.
Always.
(Pause)
Cyndi Buchan.
Lisa LeBlanc.
Fourteen years later, your wisdom still echoes through my work.
Your professionalism.
Your support.
Your leadership.
I still carry those lessons.
Every day.
Thank you.
(Pause)
Mike Baker.
Arthur Tompkins.
Michael Schultz.
My big brothers from different mothers.
The older I get, the more I understand something simple.
Listening is a superpower.
Sometimes I just sat back.
Stayed quiet.
Watched.
Learned.
And you all taught me more than you probably realize.
(Pause)
Cap.
Charles Lelievre.
Captain.

That's what we call you.
Because that's what leaders do.
They navigate.
They steady the ship.
They help others see beyond the horizon.
Thank you for believing I could sail further than I imagined.
(Pause)
Scott Zachry.
Dwight Johnson.
Thank you for letting me lead.
Thank you for letting me fail.
Thank you for letting me recover.
Because growth isn't perfection.
Growth is trust rebuilt.
Growth is learning the lesson without becoming the mistake.
You saw something in me.
Thank you.
(Pause)
Corey Gregory.
Selah Konur.
When life got difficult, you opened another chapter.
You reminded me that a setback isn't a destination.
It's just a transition.
And in broadcasting...
we should all understand transitions.
(Pause)
And to the entire C-SPAN Engineering Team and Leadership...
Thank you.
For every conversation.
Every challenge.
Every lesson.
Every opportunity to improve.
Every day I learn from you.
And every day, you make me better.

(Long Pause)

Thirty years.

Thirty years of signals.

Thirty years of stories.

Thirty years of deadlines, technology, friendships, failures, growth, reinvention,
and grace.

And after all these years...

I've learned something.

The equipment was never the story.

The tapes weren't the story.

The servers weren't the story.

The cloud isn't the story.

The standards weren't the story.

The people...were always the story.

The mentors.

The teammates.

The leaders.

The believers.

The people who reached back while climbing and pulled somebody else
forward.

(Slow down)

So this poem isn't about my career.

Not really.

This poem is about gratitude.

Because I wouldn't be who I am
or who I am becoming
without every single one of you.

The eighteen-year-old poet.

The dreamer making beats.

The single father.

The broadcast engineer.

The lifelong student.

They're all standing here tonight.

On the same frequency.

With the same message.

(Pause)

Big ups.

Much love.

Deep respect.

And from the bottom of my heart...

Thank you.

For the lesson.

For the opportunity.

For the trust.

For the journey.

For helping me carry the signal.

(Softly)

And I promise...

to keep passing it forward.

Moment of Truth

[The Rebuttal]

Even if I'm wrong,
Even if I didn't get every detail right,
Who cares?
I got close enough to the light.
You told the truth
Without ever telling it.
You confessed through your actions-
And every move revealed it.
You played us both,
And that's the moment of truth.
Not in the words you spoke,
But in the silent proof.
Your actions spoke so loudly
They shattered every phase.
Clear enough to end the act,
And send the performance away.
You sold the ring of commitment.
You sold the dog.
You took my furniture,
You stole my time.
You robbed me long before the theft—
Long before I called you mine.
Before the love.
Before the handshakes and hugs.
Before the families met.
Before the kids called me Dad.
Before the laughter with friends.
Before the flowers arrived.
Before the trips and memories.

Before the dreams came alive.
Before the promises were spoken.
Before forever became the plan.
Before I knew the depth of your deception,
Or the truth of who you really were.
Never saying, "I was wrong."
Never keeping it real.
But looking back,
The signs were always there.
And that's the hardest truth of all:
You never had to confess.
Your actions already did.
-VillyMarlou

Mission Statement — Last Call

— Spoken Word by VillyMarlou

[Slow. Heavy. Reflective.]

Last call.

For the alcohol.

For the excuses.

For protecting feelings
that never protected mine.

[Pause]

Why should I keep walking on eggshells
around a story
that shattered the floor beneath me?

Why should I edit the truth
to make betrayal sound comfortable?

[Short pause]

You moved another man
into the home.

The same home

I was sacrificing for.

While I was up north—
working.

Starving.

Grinding.

Believing.

Building a future
for people I thought were building with me.

[Pause]

Thank God

I didn't come home unannounced.

Thank God

I didn't walk through that door

and discover reality
before I was mentally prepared to face it.
Because some moments
change lives forever.
And some decisions
carry consequences
nobody can take back.

[Slow]

Maybe I wouldn't be standing here today.
Maybe anger would've written a story
that wisdom is writing now.
Maybe I would've traded freedom
for one moment of rage.
Maybe I would've lost everything
trying to make sense
of what never made sense.

[Pause]

So instead—
I survived.
I endured.
I left.
I signed the papers.
I closed the chapter.
Yet somehow
the stain of it all
lingered longer than the ink.

[Build]

Because let's be honest—
that wasn't normal.
That wasn't love.
That wasn't respect.
That wasn't partnership.
That wasn't loyalty.
And it definitely wasn't cool.

[Pause]

People laugh.

People minimize.

People move on.

But some wounds don't hurt
because they're fresh.

They hurt
because they were real.

[Slow and sharp]

And if I ignored the red flags—
then I have to own that too.

If I saw signs
and called them shadows,
that's on me.

If I accepted less
than I deserved,
that's on me.

A hard truth.

But a necessary truth.

[Pause]

Because growth begins
where excuses end.

[Increase intensity]

I refuse to become bitter.

I refuse to become reckless.

I refuse to let betrayal
turn me into betrayal.

I refuse to let somebody else's choices
define my future.

[Pause]

That's why the mission changed.

No more chasing answers.

No more chasing closure.

No more chasing people

who already chose another direction.

The mission is me.

My peace.

My purpose.

My discipline.

My legacy.

[Firm]

Rebuild.

Rise.

Learn.

Repeat.

Rebuild.

Rise.

Learn.

Repeat.

[Stronger]

REBUILD.

RISE.

LEARN.

REPEAT.

[Long pause]

Because the greatest revenge
isn't destruction.

It's elevation.

It's becoming stronger
without becoming colder.

Wiser
without becoming harder.

Better
without becoming bitter.

[Final build]

I walked through disappointment.

I walked through humiliation.

I walked through fire.

And somehow
I came out carrying purpose
instead of ashes.
[Pause]
This is the last poem.
The end of the story.
No more explanations.
No more revisiting graves.
No more giving energy
to what chose to leave.
What's broken needs healing.
What's over needs ending.
What's ahead needs building.
[Firm. Confident.]
Stay off my page.
Go heal.
I already started.
[Final line. Slow. Let it land.]
The chapter broke my heart.
But it didn't break my mission.
— VillyMarlou

Mission Statement — Spoken Word

[Slow. Calm. Direct. Almost conversational.]

I'm done...

Done writing poems with your name hiding in the shadows of every bar.

Done digging through graves for relationships that already buried themselves.

Done carrying lessons that were never mine to carry.

[Pause]

I talked about it.

Sat in therapy.

Paid every due.

Every scar. Every betrayal. Every unanswered question.

Paid in full.

[Short pause]

Because my love was real.

Not temporary.

Not convenient.

Not situation-dependent.

I was committed.

To the mission.

To the future.

To the family.

To the promise.

But eventually...

you realize some people don't want healing—

they want witnesses to their destruction.

[Increase intensity]

You cannot save someone

who keeps volunteering to drown.

You cannot build with someone

who keeps falling in love with demolition.

So I'm changing subjects.

Not because it didn't matter.

Because I matter now.

The mission matters now.

[Pause]

This is for the young men.

The old men.

The broken men.

The men pretending not to be broken.

Listen.

[Slow and sharp]

Everything beautiful isn't sent to bless you.

Everything attractive isn't meant for you.

Every temptation isn't an opportunity.

And every pair of fine thighs

ain't worth your destiny.

[Pause for reaction]

Read that again.

Every pair of fine thighs

ain't worth your destiny.

[Build rhythm]

One moment.

One text.

One hotel room.

One bad decision.

One lapse in discipline.

Can cost you years.

Years.

Of peace.

Of purpose.

Of respect.

Of trust.

Of legacy.

[Stronger]

Men aren't losing their lives overnight.

They're losing them
one compromise at a time.
One excuse at a time.
One selfish decision at a time.
One lie at a time.

[Pause]

Nobody talks about that.
They teach you how to chase.
Nobody teaches you how to protect.
Protect your mind.
Protect your spirit.
Protect your name.
Protect your family.
Protect your future.

[Increase energy]

Because a distracted man
is easier to destroy than a weak man.
A man without purpose
will chase anything.
A man with purpose
makes everything chase him.

[Pause]

The mission was never money.
The mission was never sex.
The mission was never approval.
The mission was never applause
from people who couldn't survive one chapter of your story.
The mission...
was legacy.

[Slow]

Building.
Teaching.
Leading.
Growing.

Lifting each other higher.
Not destroying the people
you're supposed to protect.
Not betraying the people
you're supposed to love.
Not becoming the villain
in your own story.

[Pause]

Rebuild.

Rise.

Lead.

Repeat.

Rebuild.

Rise.

Lead.

Repeat.

[Stronger each repetition]

Rebuild.

Rise.

Lead.

Repeat.

[Long pause]

Stay solid.

Study.

Gain wisdom.

Move with intention.

Show love.

Receive love.

Multiply love.

[Firm. Confident.]

And when the world tries to convince you
that your value lives between somebody else's legs...

Remember this:

Your purpose is bigger.

Your vision is bigger.

Your name is bigger.

Your legacy is bigger.

[Final build]

I walked through fire.

I lost pieces of myself.

I buried old versions of myself.

And what came out the other side—

was stronger.

I don't chase.

I don't beg.

I don't explain.

I build.

I elevate.

I lead.

[Pause]

And if that road gets lonely—

good.

Mountaintops were never designed for crowds.

[Final line. Slow. Let it land.]

One in a million.

No copy.

No duplicate.

No replacement.

There's only one...

- VillyMarlou.

The Compass

(Spoken Word)

[Let's Finish The Story]

Let's finish the story.

Momma.

Aunties.

Cousins.

Friends.

Many men.

Some were lighthouses.

Some were storms...

pretending to be lighthouses.

Some gave wisdom.

Some gave wounds

wearing wisdom's clothes.

They said—

"Get even."

"Live a little."

"Do you."

Funny.

How destruction always arrives

with a nickname.

How poison always arrives

wearing perfume.

How bad advice

always sounds like freedom

right before the bill comes due.

One bad choice

became a compass.

And every road...

Pointed backward.

Back to the streets again.
Back to the den of no-goods.
Back to the crowd
that celebrates wreckage
like it's a holiday.
Where applause sounds like love.
And accountability
sounds like hate.
Here's the riddle:
What cage has no bars?
Approval.
What leash has no chain?
Fear.
What thief wears your face?
Bad judgment.
Maybe he can impress them.
Maybe he'll finally be HIM.
King of a paper kingdom.
A billionaire of borrowed attention.
A landlord of rented crowns.
Built a mansion from applause.
Then discovered...
Applause can't pay the mortgage
on an empty soul.
Tell me—
If the crowd loves you today
and leaves tomorrow,
were they fans?
Or just witnesses?
Plot twist.
The enemy wasn't Momma.
Wasn't auntie.
Wasn't the streets.
Wasn't the no-good men.

The enemy...
was an old wound
wearing a wise man's suit.
Pain is a ventriloquist.
It throws its voice
across generations.
Makes fear sound like guidance.
Makes trauma sound like instinct.
Makes old scars sound like truth.
The hood wasn't the prison.
The prison learned your address
from your thoughts.
The streets were just an echo.
The real project housing
was unfinished construction
inside the heart.
And every bad decision
was a wounded compass
begging for a map.
Now let me tell my part.
I wasn't the enemy.
But I wasn't the victim.
I was the bridge
you burned
while standing on it.
The hand
you let go of.
The truth
you laughed at.
The one abandoned.
The one lied to.
The one stolen from.
The one hustled.
The one embarrassed

for the entertainment
of people who would've sold tickets
to your downfall.
I kept a dead record
for every act of disrespect.
Every scratch
a memory.
Every groove
a bruise.
Every spin
another lesson.
But graveyards aren't libraries.
So I stopped revisiting the dead.
I learned
revenge charges interest.
Bitterness collects rent.
And peace costs less.
Some things can't be taken back.
Not because of hate.
Because of consequence.
A shattered mirror
can still tell the truth—
but it'll never be
the same mirror.
And no—
a million years from now
doesn't change that.
Time doesn't reverse rivers.
It only reveals
where they were flowing.
So here's what matters.
Teach the children.
Teach your daughters
that attention isn't affection.

Teach your sons
that disappearing isn't manhood.
Teach them every habit
casts a vote.
Every choice
plants a seed.
Every friend
is a future neighborhood.
Teach them that some people
sell anchors
and call them wings.
Some people
sell cages
and call them freedom.
Read the labels twice.
Then read yourself once.
Because the strongest people
in the room
aren't the ones
controlling everybody else.
They're the ones
strong enough
to master themselves.
So if you remember anything,
remember this:
Bad advice
opened the door.
Bad decisions
walked through it.
Pain decorated the room.
Ego paid the rent.
The crowd threw the party.
But wisdom...
Wisdom found the exit.

And that's the moment
The compass stopped spinning.
And the children
finally got a map.

3:33 Freestyle

They say, she say, "Move on."

I did.

Now here's the riddle:

What gets buried without a grave,

Breaks without a sound,

Loses everything it thought it needed,

Then comes back impossible to hold down?

Me.

I used to read posts like coded scriptures,

Hunting for clues in views, paying dues to old pictures.

Studying captions like maps leading back to gold,

Till I realized I was searching for treasure in a story already told.

You with him.

Them.

Whoever.

Wrong equation.

Does the sun ask permission before it rises?

Does the eagle audit the altitude of pigeons?

Does a lion lose sleep

Over opinions from sheep?

I stopped scrolling.

Stopped polling.

Stopped patrolling old memories.

Because every glance backward

Was a tax on my destiny.

Here's another riddle:

What looks like a burial

But is actually a beginning?

A seed.

They thought the dirt was defeating me.

Nah.

The pressure was completing me.
Every heartbreak became compost.
Every setback became rainfall.
Every betrayal became topsoil.
And the soil of my suffering
Started producing a harvest of self-respect.
See, roots and truths rhyme different,
But they both survive underground.
The deepest growth happens in places
Nobody applauds.

I was a caterpillar writing eulogies
For a life I was never meant to keep.
Didn't know the cocoon wasn't a coffin—
It was a private meeting
Between potential and purpose.

I was winter,
Thinking spring forgot my name.
Till blossoms started appearing
From branches that looked dead.
I was coal under pressure,
Misreading the furnace as punishment,
Not knowing the fire
Was negotiating a deal with the diamond.

The old me chased butterflies.
The new me became the garden.
The old me knocked on doors.
The new me builds buildings.
The old me searched for validation.
The new me validates value.
The old me watched the horizon.
The new me owns the view.

My simping days are fossils now,
Ancient bones from an extinct belief system.

Exhibit A:

Confusing attention with intention.

Exhibit B:

Mistaking access for affection.

Exhibit C:

Making somebody else the author

Of a book written with my pen.

Never again.

See, I wasn't losing a person.

I was losing an illusion.

And illusions are expensive—

They charge your peace

For their appearance.

Here's the cold part:

I didn't become stronger because I healed.

I healed because I became stronger.

Read that twice.

Because resilience is strange.

I'm bamboo in a hurricane—

The storm bends me,

But that's how I learned I never break.

I'm bedrock beneath a landslide—

Everything above me changed,

But my foundation remained.

I'm a redwood after hard winters—

The winds that uprooted smaller trees

Only taught my roots commitment.

The same pain that was sent to break me

Ended up introducing me to me.

While they were laughing,

I was grafting new branches.

While they were posting,

I was growing.

While they were choosing,

I was becoming.
So here's the final riddle:
What burns but doesn't perish?
Falls apart but improves?
Gets buried,
Yet rises?
Gets abandoned,
Yet arrives?
A phoenix?
Close.
A man who finally discovered
That his value was never on loan.
The ashes became soil.
The soil became roots.
The roots became a forest.
And now the forest doesn't argue with the axe.
It simply outlives it.
Welcome to the new era.
I'm HIM.
Not because somebody wants me.
Not because somebody misses me.
Not because somebody picked me.
Because I solved the riddle:
The blessing was never who left.
The blessing was becoming the man
Their departure revealed.
Fin.

Mirrors & Tape

You know mirrors reflect; memories play back like tape.
Funny how the truth runs laps while a lie inflates.
I waited. Wait. Wait.
The whole time the trap had bait,
I was trying to build bridges,
They were calculating escapes.
It was nice being the devil; at least the devil shows his face.
Some people smile like angels while rehearsing their betrayals every day.
I couldn't see the hustle, vision clouded by faith,
Even the kids kept the story straight; grown folks couldn't do the same.
It wasn't a figure eight, there was never infinity,
Just a snake eating itself, calling dysfunction chemistry.
More lies.
More lies.
Enough lies to build a mansion in the sky, still wasn't tall enough to explain the reason why.
Made my bones cry. Eyes dry.
Heart pump oil, engine running hot, survival mode activated when the script got caught.
Another poem.
She's spoiled rotten.
Forgotten.
Still plotting.
Funny how some people miss you most when they lose the option.
Pet names.
Changed names.
Cheap games.
Damn shame.
Everybody changing costumes,
But the ending stayed the same.

Now I'm on a mission to change men's lives, 'Cause even Villa Rica knew the
lies.
Don't call me cousin.
Don't call me nephew.
Especially when the whole tribe knew what they never confessed to.
Everybody knew.
Nobody spoke.
Then acted surprised when the whole bridge broke.
Laughing when I came to show love.
That part stuck.
Baby daddies wouldn't even give their daughters hugs.
Talking morals.
Talking God.
Talking loyalty and blood.
Same people selling family values
couldn't practice what they were.
I watched the contradictions.
Studied every move.
The loudest person in the room usually got the most to prove.
The lie had marketing.
The truth had no campaign.
That's why everybody bought the wave and never saw the rain.
They threw dirt on my name.
I treated it like soil.
Now every seed I planted
pays me back for the toil.
The mirror ain't glass.
It's a courtroom for the truth.
Every crack in the reflection got evidence from my youth.
The mirror don't gossip.
The mirror don't hate.
It just waits for the mask to lose shape finally.
I asked the reflection,
"Who robbed me?"

It pointed back.
I asked the reflection,
"Who saved me?"
Same answer.
That's a fact.
Social media sets you up.
Friends set you up.
Family sets you up.
We both got played.
The truth even woke you up.
See, a setup only works when the target wants to believe,
And some wounds come gift-wrapped with a bow on the sleeve.
Six years.
Gone.
Trying to water flowers
that were planted where they don't belong.
Six years.
Gone.
Pouring loyalty into a bucket
with the bottoms torn.
But I ain't bitter.
I'm dangerous now.
Because clarity is dangerous.
Discipline dangerous.
A man who survived deception without becoming deception—
That's dangerous now.
The mirror still reflects.
The tape still spins.
Truth don't knock twice.
It just walks in.
Now when I see my reflection,
I don't see defeat.
I see every lesson that betrayal couldn't teach.
And here's the riddle—

What's heavier than a lie?

The truth...

After you spend years trying to carry both sides.

Power Movements

"Son, I got plans, power movements, get on some rude shit..."

Hello World and Good Morning: 10 Growth Lessons Every Man Eventually Learns

The hardest transition in life isn't from one job to another—it's from being the person who does everything to becoming the man who leads everything.

Here are 10 lessons that stood out to me:

1. Stop thinking like a worker and start thinking like an owner: Growth begins when you stop focusing only on today's tasks and start building something that can thrive beyond your direct effort.
2. Treat your time like your most valuable asset: If it's not scheduled, it's probably not a priority. Structure creates freedom.
3. Build routines that protect your energy: Success isn't about motivation—it's about consistent habits that keep you moving forward when motivation disappears.
4. Learn to let go of control: Trying to do everything yourself eventually becomes the bottleneck to your own growth.
5. Delegate what others can do so you can focus on what only you can do: Leadership means creating capacity, not carrying every burden.
6. Be selective with opportunities: Saying yes to everything often means saying no to excellence. Focus beats scattered effort.
7. Depth creates strength: Mastering one lane is often more powerful than chasing success in ten different directions.
8. Give yourself grace while you're growing: Every man battles self-doubt, perfectionism, anxiety, or the feeling that he's behind. Growth requires patience with yourself.

9. Protect your mental bandwidth: A clear mind makes better decisions. Rest, reflection, and boundaries are productivity tools.

10. Keep your word: Talent may open doors, but integrity keeps them open. In a world where many people overpromise, reliability becomes a superpower.

The older I get, the more I realize that growth isn't about becoming someone else. It's about becoming the man you're capable of being—more disciplined, more focused, more intentional, and more trustworthy than you were yesterday.

One day at a time. One decision at a time. One lesson at a time.

#PersonalGrowth #Leadership #Discipline #SelfImprovement #Mindset
#GrowthJourney

Stream Deck as Studio Mission Control: 10 Highest-Value Uses

If the goal is to extract maximum ROI from every piece of gear in your office/studio, don't think of the Stream Deck as a button box. Think of it as a centralized automation layer that sits above your DAW, computer, audio interface, meetings, smart devices, and broadcast tools.

Here are the 10 highest-value uses I'd implement first.

1. Build a "Studio Mission Control"

Create a master page that controls your entire environment: DAW launch, audio interface control panel, monitor controller, reference tracks, studio lights, Teams mute, session notes, file browser, timecode clock.

One screen becomes the cockpit for your entire workspace.

Why it's #1: Every workflow starts here.

2. Create One-Touch Workflow Modes

Instead of launching apps individually, create modes:

Mixing Mode — open DAW, load meter plugins, launch reference tracks, set monitors to preferred volume.

Recording Mode — arm tracks, enable headphone mix, open lyrics/charts, turn recording light red.

Office Mode — open Outlook, open Teams, open browser tabs, set Teams status.

Broadcast Mode — open monitoring systems, launch remote management tools, display network dashboards.

The Stream Deck becomes a workflow switcher.

3. Turn It Into a Remote Control for Your Entire Audio Chain

As a broadcast engineer, this is where things get interesting. Buttons can control TotalMix, Dante Controller shortcuts, Voicemeeter, OBS, audio monitor sources, recording destinations.

Examples: Studio Monitors / Headphones / Teams Voice-Over Chain / Broadcast Feed.

One press can completely reconfigure routing.

4. Build a "Chief Engineer" Emergency Page

Every engineer should have a panic page. Buttons for ping tests, network diagnostics, open SSH sessions, launch RDP, open documentation, open monitoring dashboards, restart specific services.

When something breaks, you hit one button and everything needed appears.

This is one of the biggest productivity gains you'll ever get.

5. Create DAW Macro Workflows

Don't map individual commands. Map entire tasks.

Vocal Editing Button — split clips, remove silence, normalize, add color, create comp track.

Podcast Cleanup — load processing chain, run noise reduction, apply EQ preset, open loudness meter.

Save dozens of repetitive actions per project.

6. Build a Smart Studio Environment Controller

Control your room itself. Buttons: Bright Mixing / Night Session / Recording Session / Video Call / Coffee Break.

Each scene changes lighting, monitor brightness, smart plugs, LED indicators, HVAC settings.

The room adapts to the work.

7. Create Instant Session Templates

This is hugely underrated.

New Music Session — opens DAW template, sample folders, notes, reference playlist.

New Voiceover Session — opens VO template, script folder, metering plugins.

New Podcast — opens multitrack template, show notes, recording folder.

You eliminate setup friction.

8. Use Dynamic Pages for Context-Aware Controls

Create folder structures: Studio (Recording, Mixing, Mastering), Broadcast (Monitoring, Remote Access, Network Tools), Office (Meetings, Email, Reports), Personal (Music, Smart Home, Media).

This turns 15–32 buttons into hundreds of organized commands.

9. Create a Personal AI and Documentation Hub

Have buttons that instantly open Copilot, internal engineering documentation, vendor manuals, equipment drawings, change-control templates, troubleshooting guides.

As engineers, we often lose more time finding information than solving problems. Reduce lookup time to a single button press.

10. Build the "One-Touch Production Day"

The ultimate Stream Deck macro.

START WORKDAY — turn on studio lights, open Teams, open Outlook, open calendar, launch DAW, open monitoring dashboards, open notes, set focus playlist, arrange windows, set Teams status.

END WORKDAY — save notes, close applications, turn off lights, stop music, switch audio devices, lock workstation.

One button starts your whole day. One button ends it.

My Recommendation

Given a Broadcast Engineer + Home Studio background, I'd prioritize three pages:

Page 1: Daily Operations — Teams Mute, Outlook, Calendar, Notes, Copilot, Monitoring Dashboard, Network Tools.

Page 2: Audio & Broadcast — Dante, TotalMix, OBS, Headphones, Monitors, Recording Chain, Test Signals, Emergency Tools.

Page 3: Music Production — Recording Mode, Mixing Mode, Mastering Mode, Reference Tracks, Plugin Favorites, Export Presets, Marker Controls, Sample Library.

This transforms the Stream Deck from an accessory into the operating system for your entire office and production environment, which is where the real value lies.

10 Lessons Men Can Learn from This Conversation About Admiration in Relationships

I recently watched a clip that argued: "If your woman doesn't admire you, the relationship will eventually fail."

Whether you agree or disagree with the statement, it sparked some deep reflection for me.

Instead of debating it, I started asking: What can a man learn from this?

1. Respect is more important than attraction: Attraction can get a relationship started. Respect is what helps sustain it. If respect disappears, many other problems follow.
2. Admiration is earned daily: It's not about status, money, or fame. It's about consistency, integrity, leadership, accountability, and keeping your word.
3. Never build your self-worth on someone's approval: A healthy relationship includes admiration, but your identity should never depend on whether another person validates you.
4. Become a man you admire first: The question isn't "Does she look up to me?" The question is "Am I living in a way that I respect myself?"
5. Comparison destroys connection: When someone constantly compares their partner to others, they're no longer appreciating the person in front of them.
6. Growth should never stop: The man you are today should not be the man you are five years from now. Mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual growth matter.
7. Leadership starts with self-discipline: A man who cannot lead himself will struggle to lead in any area of life—relationships, finances, career, or family.

8. Pay attention to the signals: If appreciation, encouragement, and respect are consistently absent, don't ignore it. Hard conversations are necessary.

9. Choose a partner who values your purpose: Relationships thrive when both people appreciate what the other is building and who they're becoming.

10. The greatest lesson: Become, don't perform: Don't become successful, strong, or wise just to impress someone. Become those things because they align with your values and purpose.

My takeaway: A lasting relationship isn't built on one person worshipping the other. It's built on mutual respect, mutual admiration, and two people committed to becoming better together.

Which lesson resonates with you the most?

#MensGrowth #SelfReflection #Leadership #Relationships
#PersonalDevelopment #PurposeDrivenLife

Wildcard Thought #9,999

You know how a wild card in poker can completely change the game?

Apparently, so can a divorce.

Looking back at the last year, I sometimes cringe at the lengths I went to trying to get closure. Emails? Texts? Voice messages? Videos and gifts?

At the time, I was convinced that if I could just get one last conversation, one last explanation, one last acknowledgment, everything would magically make sense and I'd finally feel better.

Plot twist: it wouldn't have.

I was basically auditioning for a romantic comedy while reality was over there filing paperwork and moving on.

The marriage was over. The trust was broken. And no dramatic final scene was going to roll credits with everyone hugging, crying, and learning valuable life lessons while soft piano music played in the background.

What's funny is that everyone around me was saying: "VillyMarlou, it's over."

And I was like: "Yeah, but what if the screenwriter has another twist planned?"

Turns out there was no twist. Just acceptance, healing, and a lot of personal growth waiting on the other side of reality.

Today, I can laugh about it. The pain, embarrassment, rejection, and disappointment ended up being some of my greatest teachers. They forced me to stop chasing answers from someone else and start finding them within myself.

I've learned to listen more, observe patterns more closely, and spend less time believing words that don't match actions.

It's funny how getting knocked flat on your face can improve your vision.

So here's to Lesson #9,999: "Now that I have your attention, it's time to work on me."

Turns out the happy ending wasn't getting the conversation I wanted. It was finally realizing I didn't need it.

A Simple Guide for Any Man Who Finds Himself Here:

Step 1: Accept that it's over. Not because you agree with it, but because reality doesn't need your approval.

Step 2: Stop chasing closure from someone else. Most closure is self-issued.

Step 3: Put the phone down. Every text you don't send is a rep in the emotional gym.

Step 4: Pay attention to actions, not promises. Patterns tell the truth that words often hide.

Step 5: Feel the pain. Don't run from it. Growth lives on the other side of discomfort.

Step 6: Invest that energy back into yourself—your health, your friends, your goals, your future.

Step 7: Learn the lesson without becoming bitter. Wisdom weighs less than resentment.

Step 8: Laugh at yourself occasionally. We all have chapters that make us cringe.

Step 9: Become the person you needed when you were at your lowest.

Step 10: Keep moving forward. The rearview mirror is useful for learning, not living.

Because sometimes the biggest wildcard in life isn't the person who hurt you.

It's the person you become after surviving it.

— VillyMarlou

Lessons I Wish I Had Learned Before Dating

Before 2017, before I met my ex-wife, I was carrying a lot of grief, loneliness, and low self-esteem. When you're in that state, you're not always thinking about protecting yourself or carefully vetting the people you allow into your life.

You're simply trying to fill a void, find a connection, and ease the pain.

That vulnerable and unguarded place can invite all kinds of people into your life. Unfortunately, that's exactly what happened to me.

One of the biggest lessons I've learned is that appearances can be deceiving. Just because someone looks beautiful, peaceful, drama-free, loving, or like the perfect partner doesn't mean that's what you're actually getting.

Sometimes what appears to be a dream can eventually turn into a nightmare, costing you emotionally, mentally, spiritually, and financially.

These are conversations I wish someone had with me before I entered the real world of dating, love, sex, and relationships. I wasn't prepared for how harsh it could be. Through trial, error, and painful experience, I learned something valuable:

Protect yourself like you're worth a billion dollars.

Know Your Worth

This phrase gets used a lot, but what does it actually mean?

Knowing your worth means recognizing your intrinsic value as a human being. It is the deep belief that you deserve respect, love, honesty, and healthy treatment—not because of your accomplishments, wealth, status, or what others think of you, but simply because you exist.

Key aspects of self-worth:

- Setting Boundaries – People who know their worth establish healthy limits and are willing to walk away from toxic situations where they are consistently undervalued.
- Not Settling – It means refusing to accept less than you deserve, whether in a relationship, friendship, or career.
- Understanding Your Intrinsic Value – Unlike self-esteem, which may rise and fall based on successes or failures, self-worth is stable. Your value isn't earned; it's inherent.

Don't Lie to Yourself

One of the most dangerous things we can do is deceive ourselves.

"Don't lie to yourself" means having the courage to confront uncomfortable truths about your motivations, feelings, choices, and circumstances, rather than creating excuses or distorted narratives to protect your ego.

Fyodor Dostoevsky wrote:

"Above all, don't lie to yourself. The man who lies to himself and listens to his own lie comes to a point that he cannot distinguish the truth within him, or around him, and so loses all respect for himself and for others. And having no respect, he ceases to love."

That's a powerful warning.

When we repeatedly ignore red flags, excuse toxic behavior, or deny what we know deep down to be true, we become trapped in our own illusion. We lose clarity. We stop trusting ourselves. We confuse hope with reality.

Being honest with yourself isn't always comfortable, but it's necessary for growth.

Don't lie to yourself about who people are.

Don't lie to yourself about what you're willing to tolerate.

Don't lie to yourself about what you need, want, or deserve.

Real change begins the moment we stop avoiding the truth and start facing it.

The older I get, the more I realize that protecting your peace, knowing your worth, and being brutally honest with yourself are not acts of selfishness—they are acts of self-respect.

#LifeLessons #KnowYourWorth #SelfRespect #Healing #Growth #Boundaries
#Relationships #PersonalDevelopment #Truth #Wisdom

Twenty Years Ago Today, I Chose Peace Over Chaos

Twenty years ago today, I made a decision that changed the course of my life.

I walked away from what I call "Dirt-Ball" energy—the chaos, drama, dishonesty, manipulation, excuses, and lack of accountability that some people seem determined to carry through life.

One of the greatest lessons I've learned is that discernment is a superpower. When people consistently show you who they are through their patterns, choices, character, and behavior, believe them. And when you recognize that someone is committed to a path that conflicts with your values, growth, and peace, sometimes the healthiest thing you can do is let go.

Walking away isn't about thinking you're better than anyone else. It's about having the wisdom to recognize what is healthy and what is harmful.

It takes intelligence to recognize unhealthy patterns. It takes courage to stop accepting them. It takes confidence, self-respect, and self-love to walk away without looking back.

But perhaps the biggest lesson of all is this:

Time is our most valuable asset.

Money can be earned back. Opportunities can return. Material things can be replaced.

Time cannot. One of life's greatest regrets can be spending years trying to fix, save, convince, rescue, or help people who have no intention of helping themselves. No matter how good your intentions are, you cannot do the work that someone refuses to do for themselves.

Those years are nonrefundable.

Time spent trying to pull someone upward while they continuously pull themselves downward can become a painful form of regression. It can delay your growth, drain your energy, steal your peace, and distract you from your own purpose.

That's why I've learned the importance of careful vetting.

Pay attention to a person's mindset, values, character, habits, and history. Be honest about the trends you see, not the potential you hope for. Look at the people they surround themselves with. Look at their friendships, relationships, associations, and the choices they repeatedly make.

Most importantly, be honest with yourself. People's patterns often tell the truth long before their words do.

Looking back over the last twenty years, I can honestly say that walking away saved me from unnecessary pain, protected my peace, and created space for healthier relationships, better opportunities, and personal growth.

What's most revealing is that many of the people I walked away from are still living the same story. The years have passed, but many of the habits remain.

Some are still chasing validation, creating unnecessary drama, avoiding responsibility, and living as though actions have no consequences.

Life has taught me otherwise.

Character matters. Integrity matters. Accountability matters. Personal responsibility matters.

Now, I'm not claiming to be perfect. I've made mistakes like everyone else. But I've always believed that growth requires humility, ownership, and a willingness to learn from our failures rather than repeat them.

As we move through life, we all reach moments where we must choose between what is familiar and what is healthy. Sometimes growth requires us to release people, environments, habits, and situations that no longer serve our well-being, purpose, or future.

That can mean walking away from friendships, relationships, social circles, family dynamics, or environments that keep us trapped in cycles we were meant to outgrow.

Not everyone is meant to go where you're going.

So trust your discernment. Protect your peace. Guard your time.

Honor your worth.

Choose growth over drama. Choose accountability over excuses. Choose peace over chaos. Choose wisdom over attachment.

And when life shows you it's time to walk away, have the courage to do so.

Twenty years later, I can say with complete confidence that one of the best decisions I ever made was choosing peace, protecting my time, and refusing to waste either on people committed to staying the same.

-VillyMarlou

Crossroads

Lately, my career and my motivation for success have been going incredibly well. I'm blessed to have several great opportunities in front of me:

1. Stay where I am (Location A) and continue growing with Company A — the easiest path.
2. Stay where I am (Location A) and continue growing with Company B — also a solid and easy option.
3. Relocate back home and grow with Company C — a medium-level challenge with exciting potential.
4. Relocate back home (Location C) and grow with Company D — a medium-to-hard move, but one that could be rewarding.

Sometimes God blesses us with so many opportunities that it becomes difficult to know which door to walk through.

What's truly best for us? Which opportunity offers the brightest future?

Is the answer found in money? Family? Happiness? Career growth? Work-life balance? Or is it a combination of all those things?

What I do know is where I don't want to be and what I don't want to be around.

When life presents crossroads like these, I lean on God through prayer, faith, and trust. Asking Him to guide my next move, make my next move my best move, or give me the wisdom not to move a muscle at all.

Faith over fear. God's timing over my timing. The best opportunity is the one He has already prepared for me.

Radical Alignment

Now that I've gotten the negativity out of my soul and off my chest, it's time to get back to where my energy belongs—investing in myself, our team, and the future we're building together.

Today, I want to talk about mindset.

A mindset is much more than positive thinking. It's the collection of beliefs, attitudes, and thought processes that shape how we see the world and ourselves.

It becomes the lens through which we interpret situations, process emotions, approach challenges, and ultimately determine our outcomes.

As I move through this season of life, I've embraced a mindset of radical alignment.

At 49, I've been blessed to successfully raise a family, build meaningful relationships, and experience incredible professional momentum. I've learned that prioritizing my own happiness, development, and growth is not selfish—it's necessary.

When you're aligned with your purpose and protecting your peace, the right people, opportunities, and partnerships naturally find their way into your life.

This mindset is built on three core pillars:

Abundance, Not Scarcity:

Life is already full and rewarding. Relationships, opportunities, and new experiences are bonuses—not necessities. When you approach life from a place of wholeness rather than need, your decisions become healthier and more intentional.

Vetting for Partnership, Not Just Compatibility:

Whether in business, friendships, or personal relationships, I'm no longer looking for a simple match—I'm looking for the right fit. Strong boundaries, shared values, mutual respect, and aligned goals are non-negotiable. Protecting your peace is a form of self-respect.

Prioritizing Personal Infrastructure:

Growth doesn't happen by accident. It requires deliberate investment in career development, health, personal goals, and the things that bring joy and balance to life—including spending time with my dogs.

Consistency, discipline, and planning create the foundation for long-term success.

I'm choosing to focus my energy on growth, gratitude, and purpose. The distractions can stay behind me. The mission remains ahead.

Here's to radical alignment, personal growth, and becoming the best version of ourselves—one day at a time.

#MindsetMatters #RadicalAlignment #PersonalGrowth #Leadership
#PositiveEnergy #GrowthMindset #ProtectYourPeace #PurposeDriven
#KeepMovingForward

Closing the Chapter

Just in case you read this, I want you to know that I don't care about you, your family, your friends, your children, or your latest man. I'm getting this off my chest, and I'm not ashamed to express how I feel.

What happened taught me a valuable lesson. I was taken advantage of, but the experience changed me. In the end, I became a stronger person, and I'm happy with who I am today. We will never speak again, and I will do my best to make sure our paths never cross. I don't wish you well, and I don't wish you harm. I wish nothing at all.

You no longer have any value or significance in my life, and I no longer care what happens to you. I will never search for you, contact you, respond to you, or communicate with you again. I ask that you do the same. If we stay out of each other's lives, we'll both be just fine. Any respect, care, sympathy, or love I once had for you is gone.

The lies, betrayal, and theft crossed a line that can never be uncrossed. Your actions were beyond unacceptable, and while I may move forward, I will never forget what happened.

This is the end of my involvement with you. I am closing this chapter permanently and moving on with my life. Hate is not a strong enough word.

On Boundaries and Self-Worth

You know, when you finally mature, build self-esteem, and gain the confidence to set boundaries, life feels different. It's not about power, arrogance, or looking down on people.

It's about having the strength to walk away from people, situations, relationships, and mindsets that no longer align with who you are or where you're going. There's something incredibly empowering about making a decision, standing by it, and protecting your peace without guilt or apology.

Recognizing your value and worth—inside and out—is a major part of self-love. No matter how pretty, attractive, successful, popular, or desirable someone may seem, never forget your own worth.

If a person, situation, or relationship isn't adding value to your life, helping you grow, or bringing you peace, don't be afraid to let it go. Walk away if necessary, trust your decision, and keep moving forward without looking back.

Self-love isn't selfish—it's knowing your worth, honoring your boundaries, and refusing to settle for less than you deserve.

#KnowYourWorth #SelfLove #Boundaries #PersonalGrowth
#ProtectYourPeace #GrowthMindset

A Note to Whoever Found This Page

I intentionally have no friends, family, fans, or followers connected to this Facebook page, and I don't follow anyone either.

If you searched for me, found this page, and decided to read my poems or personal posts, that's entirely your choice.

Some people slow down to look at car accidents. Some enjoy viral chaos, hood videos, or twerking clips. Others seek out art, poetry, and creative expression.

Whatever brought you here, you're welcome—and I appreciate your contribution to the numbers and demographics.

I'm not hiding my face, identity, or emotions. Feel free to stay, follow, reach out, or keep going. Staying anonymous is okay too.

Either way, I'm grateful for your visit. Thanks for stopping by, and you're always welcome back.

– VillyMarlou

No Longer the Person I Once Was

I am no longer the person I once was. Experience has profoundly reshaped my perspective, and I no longer extend trust or goodwill without discernment.

Repeated encounters with disrespect, dishonesty, disloyalty, and betrayal have taught difficult but valuable lessons. The version of me that overlooked such behaviors belongs to the past—carried away by yesterday's hardships and losses. Today, I move forward with greater clarity, stronger boundaries, and a deeper understanding of my own worth.

Ready Now

I wasn't ready before, but I'm ready now! Let's get it...!

Red Flags

Don't ignore the red flags. Simply walk away and never talk to them again.

Proof of Life

[after the spirit of "Bonita Applebum."]

INTRO:

Bonita.

The word arrived late.

Wonder arrived first.

A silhouette crossed the afternoon,
and suddenly

Gravity looked less like a law.
and more like a love letter.

The street continued being a street.

The sky continued being a sky.

But neither was quite the same.

Something beautiful
had entered the equation.

And mathematics became music.

VERSE I:

Bonita—

The river envies your understanding of curves.

The crescent moon studies your composition.

Even the horizon,
that old perfectionist,
steals ideas from your outline.

I watched the day lean toward you.

Watched sunlight gather itself
along the architecture of your movement.

Watched distance become jealous of proximity.

Beauty is too small a word.

Beauty sounds decorative.

You feel geological.

Continents shifting.

Tides negotiating with the shore.

A theory of elegance

written directly into matter.

Not seen.

Experienced.

HOOK:

Bonita—

Some things don't need explanation.

Some things arrive.

A note.

A rhythm.

A season.

A constellation.

Bonita—

You move through the world.

like proof

that creation

still believes in itself.

Proof of life.

VERSE II:

Every masterpiece begins with a curve.

The river knew.

The galaxy knew.

The saxophone knew.

The question mark knew.

Somewhere,

the universe discovered

that straight lines were not enough.

So it invented spirals.

Orbits.

Waves.

And eventually,

you.

You carry the quiet confidence.

of things that never compete.
The ocean doesn't compete.
The sunset doesn't compete.
The stars don't compete.
They arrive.
Complete.
And standing near you.
feels like standing beside
a poem still being written
by the hand of possibility itself.

BRIDGE:

Maybe attraction
isn't desire.
Maybe attraction
is recognition.
The soul remembering
What beauty felt like
before language arrived.
Before names.
Before definitions.
A memory older than memory.
A frequency older than sound.

FINAL HOOK:

Bonita—
The river knows.
The moon knows.
The horizon knows.
Somewhere in the heart of creation,
a voice is still whispering,
"Yes.
Like that."
Proof of life.
Proof of wonder.
Proof of beauty.

Bonita.

OUTRO:

Long after the room empties.

Long after the music fades.

Long after memory begins

It's a slow transformation into myth.

Something remains.

A shape becoming rhythm.

A rhythm becomes a feeling.

A feeling becoming legend.

And somewhere

between earth and imagination,

between motion and meaning,

between admiration and awe—

Bonita continues.

Not walking.

Not dancing.

Not leaving.

Continuing.

Like the river.

Like the moon.

Like the galaxy.

Like every beautiful thing

That reminds the universe.

Why it bothered

to create itself.

Wish Me Luck

Today is an important day for me! Please wish me luck!

Last Thought of Her

Momma,
Had a lot on my chest, couldn't sleep, couldn't rest,
Carried pain like a chain, still I called it a test.
Buried storms in my lungs, kept my fear repressed,
Till I learned how to breathe and let God do the rest.
I ain't depressed.
God hear me.
I was stretched, not defeated,
Pressure made diamonds, I was getting completed.
Hood yoga, deep breaths, had my spirit reset,
Turned stress into strength and my losses to assets.
I studied the pattern, not the woman alone,
How I built her a palace while neglecting my home.
How I watered dead gardens hoping flowers had grown,
When the truth was the roots were already gone.
Every dream that we touched turned dust in the wind,
Every plan fell apart before it could begin.
Every bridge that I built got burned at the end,
Had me praying for peace while pretending to mend.
It was real from the start.
That's the part that was rough.
I ain't changing the history or saying it was fluff.
What we had was authentic,
I just gave way too much,
And what started as love slowly loosened its touch.
The pain gone.
Let the record show facts.
Pain packed a bag and never doubled back.
But disrespect?
Yeah, that's a different track.

Not a knife in my heart,
Just a scar on the map.
Just a mark on my soul where
I learned what I lacked.
So I got myself back.
Reclaimed my joy.
Not the rented type.
Not the joy that depends on a text at night.
Not the joy that disappears when somebody doesn't write.
My joy got ownership.
Deed and rights.
Now my smile shine bright and my future look bright.
Then I reclaimed my worth.
Had to break that curse.
Stopped asking broke hearts what my value was worth.
Stopped making myself small so another could work.
Stopped putting everybody else first.
My worth was never on trial,
Only my vision.
I was seeking permission from people lost in position.
Now I move with precision, no approval submission,
Just faith in the man staring back from reflection.
Then I reclaimed my identity too.
Found my voice.
Found my lane.
Found the truth.
Found the fire I had before I entered the confusion.
Before I traded intuition for illusion.
I remembered my name.
Who I am.
What's mine.
Stopped measuring my life by somebody else's decline.
Stopped calling red flags "maybe it'll be fine."
Now the signs read clear every time.

If they need a villain,
Then give me the role.
Every hero gets tested when protecting his soul.
People hate your boundaries when they're losing control.
Funny how your healing makes old critics patrol.
Every time I thought of her,
Something went left.
Bad signal.
Bad energy.
Weight on my chest.
Deals froze.
Days slowed.
Nothing felt blessed.
Like her memory brought storms to every address.
Maybe bad luck.
Maybe God's protection.
Maybe every closed door was a divine redirection.
Cause every road with her led away from progression,
Now I'm choosing myself and that's the lesson.
I'm headed back to Atlanta.
Back where I belong.
Back to roads that knew my steps before everything went wrong.
Back to rebuilding foundations stronger than before,
Back to hearing my spirit instead of fighting a war.
Packing boxes.
Packing lessons.
Packing growth.
Leaving old shoes behind with no soul in the soles.
Too many miles in that pain, too many potholes,
But every scar became part of the whole.
I laugh now.
Cause I see it all clear.
Saw red flags waving nearly every year.
Still made the turn thinking love would appear.

Now hindsight got jokes and I'm cracking up here.
Momma,
I'm going scorched earth.
Not angry.
Just through.
Deleting pictures, deleting texts, deleting memories too.
Not deleting the lesson, just removing the glue.
I'm done tying my future to what already flew.
Every picture a museum of a version gone cold.
Every screenshot a chapter that no longer holds.
Every image a story that has already been told.
I'm making room for new blessings by letting go of the old.
No souvenirs.
No archives.
No hidden files.
No late-night revisits of familiar trials.
No running in circles, repeating old miles.
I'm choosing peace over nostalgia this time.
And Momma,
I hope we never cross paths.
Not from hate.
Not revenge.
Not spite.
Some people leave your life and that's exactly right.
Some distances are blessings,
some goodbyes bring light.
If I see her name,
I'm scrolling ahead.
If I see her face,
That chapter is dead.
No reopening books I already read,
No renting old spaces inside of my head.
Maybe this the last thought of her.
Last verse.

Last rhyme.
Last page.
Last word.
Atlanta in the windshield.
Past in the blur.
God got my next chapter and my vision's assured.
My poems don't always rhyme,
But tonight they might.
Cause life got rhythm when your spirit gets right.
Pain was the teacher but joy brought the light.
Now I'm walking with purpose, head high in the night.
Still standing.
Still breathing.
Still blessed.
Still free.
No weight on my chest.
Just the best of me.
No looking behind.
No requests.
No regrets.
Just me—
Finally becoming
Who I was before we met.

Her

My old earth planted a seed in my chest, called it language, called it a lifelong test.

Late Sunday sunlight rested on my skin, and stretch marks traced all the places I'd been.

Courage grew slowly, then all at once, a quiet roar where fear had once run.

Danger in my grin, purpose in my stride, a thousand old versions falling aside.

The world flashed conflict across every screen, and I answered with poems and with staying seen.

Executive smile, steady eye contact, firm handshakes, proving I could adapt.

I learned how to enter a room with grace and let my presence speak before my face.

Then one evening, scrolling through names and dreams, I found a light moving between the streams.

On an app built from pictures and passing displays, she appeared like a sunrise through a veil of gray.

Not only beautiful—she was awake, the kind of soul that makes old walls break.

Her laughter rang like a bell in spring,

We talked for hours beyond midnight's reach, finding hidden meanings in the truths we'd teach.

I introduced myself not as a profile to read, but a frequency tuned to a deeper need.

She heard the signal, clear and true, as though she'd been listening for it too.

Coffee cups cooled as conversations grew, revealing the people we'd both lived through.

My voice moved softly through the space between, her eyes reflecting possibilities unseen.

No rushing time, no need to perform, just two wandering spirits finding warmth.

Your beauty caught my eye at first, but your spirit quenched a deeper thirst.

We became a story written slowly, sentence by sentence, letting trust grow.

We weren't looking for forever that day; forever arrived anyway.

Not as a promise spoken too soon, but a steady light filling the room.

Let's make this love survive the years, through victories, doubts, and changing gears.

Let it outlive fashions, cities, and trends, becoming stronger wherever the road bends.

When youth becomes memory and seasons turn, let our hearts remain willing to learn.

Let me discover you again each day, finding new colors in familiar ways.

May our laughter echo through every room, long after flowers have finished their bloom.

Let loyalty be the ground we stand on, firm when the shadows stretch long.

Let patience become our quiet art, teaching grace to every heart.

What was given freely became a gift, strong enough to survive every drift.

Time bent around us, seasons rearranged, yet something essential remained unchanged.

Time is an ocean, endless and wide, carrying every dream upon its tide.

The years arrive like waves in the night, then disappear beyond our sight.

Yet love is a lighthouse rooted below, teaching lost hearts exactly where to go.

Through fog and distance, through seasons unknown, its beam keeps
whispering, you're not alone.

Storms drew their names across the years, yet your light remained beyond my
fears.

The clock kept moving, doing what clocks do, turning black into silver, old into
new.

But love kept watch from the edge of the shore, guiding us home again and
evermore.

My back stayed strong from the roads I'd crossed, from carrying lessons instead
of loss.

Why do we clutch pillows when truth gets near, instead of speaking what we
most want to hear?

So I told you plainly, without disguise, the truth living quietly behind my eyes:

If time keeps moving as it will, let it find me still choosing you.

Not once.

Not sometimes.

Not when it's easy.

But daily, deeply, and completely.

Athletic pivots, careful descents, life rewriting itself in elegant sentences.

Love leaves downloads inside the soul, invisible files making fractured things
whole.

The signal stays clear across every year, my frequency finding yours whenever
you're near.

The seed is still speaking from deep within, and every tomorrow feels ready to begin.

My old earth planted a seed in my chest, and loving you helped it become its best.

HER. The lighthouse in my ocean.

The signal in my noise.

The answer to a question I was asking all my life.

Faithful

I admit it, I admit it—

I made mistakes, chose a long road, drove far out of state.

I was tripping off texts, Broski,

Too many feelings, all flowing freely.

Hell, you wouldn't even know me, Sober emojis, cracked voices showing.

Speeding down I-495 through the DMV, bridges, and tolls, trying to outrun me.

"Not me, Villy looking mad silly."

Winter anointed my turn signals

— I needed my freedom.

Kevin Samuels would've disowned me, 'cause he told me first: Love me.

Now peace fills me when prayers heal me. Focus exposes every lie clearly.

Claim your position. Calm listening. Less is more—we've seen this story before.

Build from the ground up.

Grind harder.

Win again.

This ain't war when you return,

my friend, we're not enemies.

Back to the city, ready to score,

Triple-double energy—

Ant-Man on the floor.

Hey, man, say man—same thing.

"No pain, no gain" sounds lame, but it still rings true.

I came to reinvent.

Through poems,

I vent frustrations, impatience,

Displacement and pacing,

Forward-facing.

There's strategy in math and science, Angles measured with precise guidance.

Her oil-curved wisdom taught lessons, Lessons that matured into blessings.

I decided to accept this truth;
I'm still wondering how career moves cost me proof.
How could I lose what I never owned? Public domain—those rules are known.
It's case law.
Maybe my pen was leaking.
Maybe I wasn't thinking of selfhood—
Only family, reunions, Justice, protests, and good intentions
Paying bills, while you were
Giving my respect away, it's tasteless
The misdirected energy,
Wild styling, craving visibility
Then hiding your face
Real bad motives—not to mention,
I was simpin', grinning through tension.
No crying. No lying. I regret it.
Scammers get scammed too.
Funny how deception looks beautiful under Southern skies.
Fool's gold fooled me—
Well, not completely.
Nope. No Diddy.
No history.
Don't you know if the moon walked away, the world would unravel, drift,
decay?
When I say I'm blessed,
People think I'm buffering, fussing, stuttering.
So many times I lost it all,
then bounced right back like it was nothing at all.
But it was something.
Every fall,
Taught me how to evolve.
I'm forever, Faithful.
To me!