Alberto Valerio

Section D439

Professor Schmerler

03/04/19

To The Prisoner Goes The Spoils

 In the Autobiography excerpt from Malcolm X lectures readers on how much he grew in his 7-year imprisonment. He managed to learn every single word in the dictionary as well as read books he never could before. After his time in jail Malcolm X became one of the greatest most powerful leaders of black America during the 1960s. In addition he became the leading spokesman during the civil rights movement. Ultimately during his confinement there was no other interest other than learning new words and reading books. His time in jail gave him time to open himself up to curiosity, which lead to his knowledge gained along with his success achieved. Malcolm X physical confinement did not mentally confine him. Confinement can be both mentally and physically but in my perspective confinement is more physical that mental. For example, as stated by Malcolm X “You couldn’t have gotten me out of books with a wedge…months passed with me even thinking about being imprisoned. In fact, up to then, I never had been so truly free in my life.” I can relate to Malcolm X where I find myself doing things I never thought of doing before when isolated from everyone and everything, such as writing letters to far away friends.

 The summer of last year I tried to teach myself how to drive a motorcycle. I asked myself could a motorcycle really be that hard to drive? Can a small vehicle like a motorcycle be that hard to conduct? It was until I drove it myself that I found out the answer to that question. I also learned to not judge a vehicle by its size if not the skills required to operate it. On a sunny day in my parent’s native country the Dominican Republic I found myself alone in my household with nothing to do except stare at a motorcycle. I thought to myself how hard could it be to drive it. It would be nice for me to take it for a spin and enjoy the cool air hitting my face. I grabbed the keys of the motorcycle and nervously stated to drive the motorcycle. As soon as I started to drive it I felt as if I was driving motorcycles for years since I have prior experience riding bicycles and started to feel confident. As I was driving very smoothly while enjoying the cool air hitting my face I encountered a truck that almost severely injured me or maybe even ended my life. My lack of experience and practice hindered me as I came across the tuck and cause me an accident. I jumped out of the motorcycle and luckily the most I did to myself was bruise and scratch myself, which evidently left me with a scar on my elbow. I got back on the motorcycle scared to drive it back home but fortunately I wasn’t that far away from where I live and I managed to drive it back home while bleeding from my shoulders, elbow, hip, and knees. I was really preoccupied of how my parents would react but they were just glad I didn’t injure myself that bad or died. In the next couple of weeks I was in a lot of pain from the bruises and don’t even get me started on the showers. We all know how that feels. Unfortunately my self learning and teaching didn’t turn out to be as successful as Malcolm X’s self learning. Malcolm X learned many different words from the dictionary before reading books but I did not learn much before driving the motorcycle.

 Something I find difficult to do that other people find easy and make it look very easy to do is driving a motorcycle. I tried to challenge myself and it resulted poorly as I already mentioned before. I have seen people drive motorcycles effortlessly but I have come to know that there is much more involved with driving motorcycles. There are many factors that one needs to know when conducting a motorcycle. It can also be detrimental since there is less protection than driving a car. Malcolm X found reading and writing letters trying to express his thoughts and feelings into words to be extremely perplex but that didn’t stop him from self educating himself and learning how to put words together in a way they make sense and teaching himself how to express himself as well as increase his reading comprehension. He evidently challenged himself to do what he considered hard but easy for other people and ultimately resulted into a successful life outside of prison.