

Jesus at the Juvie Hall

by [Laura Van Prooyen](#) in the [May 18, 2004](#) issue

Jesus pulls up a chair to tell me about his day. Today at breakfast, when the doors were unlocked, he and the others came out of their rooms,

and to his surprise, there were muffins! *Everyone here is crazy about muffins. They mean nothing on the outside, but in here* (he looks at the floor and trails off). Jesus tugs at the little braids in the nape of his neck. *I go to court tomorrow. They say I'll be sentenced and moved on Friday.* He drums the metal table, balances his feet on their heels. With a sign, *I heard you can get Snickers over there, at least.* Just then, he remembers and pulls a glow-in-the-dark rosary out of his shirt. Jesus says he is learning how to pray, albeit with help from the Virgin prayer card from the priest. At night he draws the blanket over his head and cups the rosary, as if brightness itself offers protection. There is comfort, he says, in knowing his grandmother blessed each bead, and when he slides them through his petitioning hands, it's as if he's lacing his fingers into hers. There, in the sanctioned darkness he whispers, *Glory be.*