

THE TRAVAILS OF CHARLIE SHEEN

Porn actress Capri Anderson described her experience as unexpected and frightening as she recalled hiding in a closet for safety in a New York hotel room as America's funnyman, Charlie Sheen, turned madman during a cocaine-induced rage.

Widely publicized photographs of the demolished hotel room added another element to Anderson's story. Sheen went off, again. I'm not talking about when he shot his then girlfriend, Kelly Preston, in the arm --- during another Dr. Jeckyl and Dr. Hyde episode. Nor am I talking about the time his father, Martin Sheen, apparently in sheer desperation, turned him in for a probation violation after another alleged drug-induced rage in 1999.

Of course his most recent incident, for which he successfully negotiated with the Colorado courts to submit to probation and a very brief stint of drug rehab for assaulting his wife comes to the forefront of memory. In that case he reportedly threatened his wife's life with a knife and roughed her up a bit; felonies in any other story.

No, this was an entirely different case. The light that set the fuse in the New York hotel room was a simple misunderstanding, Sheen would later say. What happened *this time* was that he thought Anderson had stolen his high-end Patek P. watch. That's why he went off. You understand, don't you? Obviously the police understood. They cleared Sheen within hours. No charges of vandalism like you or I would have suffered. No charges of being under the influence like you and I would have been charged. Not even charges of threats against another person.

Oh, did I mention he was naked during this incident and subsequent arrest? Well, it wasn't really an arrest, perhaps I should describe it more as an intervention. For Sheen, and for Anderson, but you'll just have to connect different meanings for each.

Actually, there are tens of thousands of California prisoners --- stuck ---- right now, in a totally unforgiving penal system, who committed a lot less than Sheen and are doing life; some under Three Strikes, others with sentences so long they might as well be life sentences.

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By comparison, violence by any other name is unpardonable in California, and many other states around the country for that matter. And violence against women is totally unpardonable; and without excuse I might add. Yet we have three cases where this man, no-so-funnyman Sheen, committed violent acts against women. There is a clear pattern here. With gun enhancements (extra charges), California's terrorist threats law, where in the Golden State, threatening someone's life is considered such a threat, and Sheen's use of a knife to commit violence against his wife would surely have earned him a three-strike sentence, if it were anyone else.

Under California's Three-Strike law, Sheen's 1995 misdemeanor for soliciting a prostitute in Heidi Fleiss' underground call girl ring would be enough to trigger the mandatory twenty-five years to life sanction. But for Sheen, a very forgiving public, and an even friendlier media, merely made fun of the fact that Sheen was dumb enough to leave a paper trail by paying with a check to fulfill his prurient needs.

Sheen is just another in a long list of popular celebrities whose crimes are whitewashed, while our lesser known, but average, everyday-fallible souls are poisoned eternally by prejudice of station and prison bars. With all the chances Sheen is getting I hope he doesn't end up killing himself --- or someone else for that matter. We're rooting for you big guy, even those of us who never had a chance.

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Sources:

KABC-7, *Eyewitness News*, October 27, 2010

ABC, *Good Morning America*, October 27, 2010 (Brook Mueller)

ABC, *Good Morning America*, November 22, 2010 (Anderson says Sheen choked her)

Dorothy Lucey, *Good Day LA*, KTTV Fox 11 News, October 27, 2010

KTTV Fox 11, *The Wendy Williams Show*, October 27, 2010

TMZ, November 23, 2010 (Sheen Texted Anderson offering \$20,000 in compensation)

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Ralph Coleman v. Arnold Schwarzenegger, No. CIV S-90-0520 LKK JMF P; *Marciano Plata v. Arnold Schwarzenegger*, No. COL-1351 THE (United States Distric Courts for the Eastern District of California and the Northern District of California, composed of three judges: Thelton B. Henderson, Lawrence K. Karlton and Stephen Reinhardt; August 8, 2009