

The Mysterious Book

I never read an entire book until I came to prison. Or, well, jail actually, when I was going through the trial and sentencing process. I had ~~only~~ been in jail for about a week, in a cell by myself in ~~lockdown~~.

That first week I basically just slept. On my fifth or sixth day, (I'm not really sure which), I woke up to find

a book on the floor in the middle of the room. It was a Louis L'amoure story, a western. I hated westerns. I remember as a kid my dad was always watching them, and ~~thinking to myself how old and boring they were~~. So I completely ignored the book on the floor, rolled over, and went back to sleep.

The next day I woke up and couldn't go back to sleep, so I picked up the book and read the back cover.

Sounds pretty lame, I thought to myself, but I started reading anyway. That first day I was only able to read ten pages in eight hours, and was kind of disgusted. "I only read ten stinkin pages"? So that

evening I swore to myself that the next day I would read at least fifteen pages, in the same amount of time. All in all, it took me about six days to finish that one-hundred and twenty page book. It started as a challenge to myself to read faster, then it was to pass the time or learn. To this day I still have no idea where that book came from. I had a chance to ask the guys in the other cells if any of them had slipped the book under my door, but none of them knew where it came from. Since that day nine years ago, I've read over eight-hundred and fifty books including the Webster's Dictionary, the entire Encyclopedia Britannica, every book on the Harvard University Master's In Literature's "required" and "suggested" reading lists, and the entire works of about seventy or so authors. I ~~love books now~~. I'm actually

currently writing a few short stories and a full length novel, and was recently informed ~~that I am going to be published~~. That one mysterious book appeared seemingly from nowhere, ~~but~~ lead me on the path

that I'm still on today.

in an Arizona journal

solitary confinement?

I thought they were thinking to myself

*why? *1*

*why? *2*

now love books

that an essay I wrote is

and

*1. ~~because that was all I did those first five days.~~

*2. There isn't much to do in solitary other than sleep, pace back and forth,
or ~~try to work out~~ in the 4 by 8 cell.
do push ups