

I wake up sweating because the walls emanate heat as if I am near an oven. I frown in pain and am reminded of the fight I got into yesterday. The sweltering heat in Texas raises the heat index behind these concrete walls up to 106 degrees or higher. This fight is going to cost me more than I can imagine. The fight is with a gang member and this implicates me as a gang member. I am under investigation and more than likely will get me confirmed after all the fights I have been in throughout my sentence.

A man has to fight in prison or be labeled as a prison punk. Which in turn will give others reason to take your commissar. The Texas prison system presently considers inmates that fight as if the antisocials of society. Get involved in activities that have always been part of prison life...be labeled or stigmatized as a security threat group offender.

I look up to the exhaust vent and I get up to see if there is any cool air coming out. It's 100 plus air from outside and this only makes things worse in this nasty cell. I seek cool air by the cell door. Maybe there is air conditioned air in the hall where the guards have to work. I place my fingers through the expanded metal on the slots of the door. I suck in some cool air as if I'm some kind of goldfish searching for food on the surface of an aquarium.

I'm tired of holding back my frustration and stepping back in confrontations. I am here serving a 25 year sentence for violence. The pattern of violent behavior in the midst of men that are accustomed to violence as a means to resolve issues doesn't help me. This is a type of environment that functions in growls and barking as a means of dominating over other inmates. The men in the prison system are people that don't know how to manage their lives in society. I have turned the other cheek more than twice with the man that I assaulted. This man refuses to shower, to put on a deplorable even if I have offered him supplies. He thought it offensive when I asked him to not attempt to expose himself to the female guard as she passed by doing roster count.

After he attempted to hurt me, I beat him up. I was asked why I didn't attempt to talk to someone.

to talk to someone. Are you kidding? When I did the ranking official asked why I didn't take care of my business. Had I looked like I couldn't defend myself maybe the request would have led me to being placed with those in protective custody. What a man does in prison follows you back into society.

"Oh, I saw so and so in the punk population." Some other loco will mention that in the street. Imagine that.

A Texas prisoner is expected to become a good citizen of the prison community and adhere to the way they project the model inmate to function. All of a sudden we have come to prison to become good? We are told upon arrival, "Be good and don't pick up any cases, go to school, work in the industry, don't lose any time credits or that will look bad when you do come up for parole."

I was a certified welder and a union hand in Boston, Mass. I took a college diesel mechanic vocation, earned a H.V.A.C license, upholstery on the job training, and learned an electricians safety and apprenticeship course. The positive factors are outweighed by our criminal history. Wait a minute. I did my time for the one offense I committed over thirty years ago. No. You are considered a gang member, the type offense, case infractions, and you are a confirmed gang member. Wow, I have been given a new sentence by administration and all the work that I have done all these years means nothing.

My children and loved one's wait for my release and to be there for them. I'm supposed to keep a faith and pray for compassion by a computer that does the computation for the determination of the outcome of my parole?

Presently I have accrued over 50 years of time credits towards my sentence of 25 years. I presented the claim of a liberty interest in the good time credits I have accrued by the work that I have done. I installed air condition units on school buses. The Texas correctional industries charged for my labor. In turn I got time credits towards my sentence. The Texas courts swept my cause of action under another

writ of Mandamus in a higher court. I asked the higher court to make the lower court give me a ruling of law under the writ of mandamus I filed in Austin for my liberty interest. As long as the court enters no ruling on the cause of action or records that the court has heard the case...there is no time limit because the higher court is not able to control the docket of the lower court. Everybody knows that what the Supreme court renders in another state does not apply in Texas. Except if the ruling is to the benefit of the state.

Upon research in the history of Texas prisons. I found that the president had mandated Texas prisons keep all violent offenders and gang members 100% percent of their sentences. Especially if they desire federal funding. Add that knowledge to all the 12 times I have been reviewed for parole and be denied parole.

We are interviewed by a review officer that has no say so in our release.

Today I have been confirmed as a gang member by notice of a pink slip. I am told to strip naked. I strip, lift my scrotum, open my mouth, lift the arms, and turn around for inspection. I feel no loss of dignity anymore. I work out consistently and I am proud to demonstrate my health in defiance to the guards that look obese and intimidated by my condition. Now that I am confirmed, I will start a new sentence based on my status in prison. I believe that a judge should include in their instruction to the jury the factors that must be weighed in sentencing. This man you just convicted will be eligible for parole in so many years but that doesn't mean that in Texas, an inmate will get parole. Especially if he has a criminal history of any kind. If he ever gets classified as a gang member (pobrecito) he will serve his entire sentence in a dungeon the state of Texas deems ad-seg. There he will lose his mind, be placed on anti-psychotics, deteriorate physically and if he does get released...he can apply for M.H.M.R checks and eventually die of scyrrrosis of the liver.

As I walk into the separate part of housing in the Polunski unit, I see the

Death Row sign on the building I am being escorted into. The words of the sign make me take a deep breath and prepare myself for what I am going to experience. There is a dark energy and spirit that looms among the condemned to die. I will be placed in segregation, but I will be reunited with men that I know from my experience in Death Row.

I am working on the the roof of death row at Ellis I. I am constructing a new door and walkway for a new picket to watch over the recreation yards. Inmates have escaped and I am an assigned welder and construction inmate worker.

A concrete stone saw is somewhat similar to a chain saw and a mitre saw. It is powered by a two stroke motor and is controlled manually. I pulled the cord and the saw began sputtering into life. I approached the chalk lines I have placed on the red brick of the death row section and begin cutting into the brick. A fine red powder sawdust is beginning to go into the inside of the section where I am cutting. A banging of steel doors begins and I can hear a sound that sounds a lot like hail coming down. I pull the throttle level on high and continue to cut until I am done. The protection facemask shield I have on is covered in red dust. The noise inside has gotten louder. One of my supervisors calls. "Go ahead and knock that brick down so we can see what the hell that ruckus is all about."

I grab a thirty pound sledgehammer and swing as hard as I can. The brick begins break off in chunks and finally the section falls inside the building. There is a cloud of red brick powder suspended in the midst of death row. I step off inside and someone is screaming for me to stop.

"I don't know who you are up there, but you need to quit that. Can't you see that we are trying to execute someone today?" It's the warden.

My supervisors are trying not to laugh, one of them leans on the other and they look at me like you did this. I look down and I see a nice round rump that belongs to a guard they call "Tippy toes." She is trying to see in the midst of the red cloud of dust, as to who it is that has caused this disruption on their smooth plan of

carrlling out their transport of the prisoner that is set to be executed toda||.

"Let's see what is going on," salls one of m|| supervisors. He likes what he sees also. "Hell, isn't that Graham the|| are executing to||a||?" he looks at me with excitement. We enter the walkwa|| where the guards roll the doors and go to the second tier so we can see when the prisoner is going to be escorted out.

"Your'e not going to kill me mother fuckers! No, not toda|| motherfuckers...Fuck that, ||ou ain't going to kill me..." The shouting had a rage but more of a plea to the scream in de fiance. His scream reminded me of when I was a boy and witnessell an uncle place a bowl under the neck of a goat that was about to get it's throat slit. My uncles friens held the goats legs, but the goats el||es were on the knif& and ||elped with all it's might like this fellow. I was lost in the past impression of that event as I was movell in m|| heart and recollection of the energy of the condemned.

"Give me that, Coyote, I'm going to go kill that motherfucker m||self." One of m|| supervisors was trlling to take the sledgehammer awa|| from m|| grasp. His el||es had the madness of an actor that I had seen in a movie of Lethal weapon.

"Don't let him have it, Coyote, he's going to tr|| to do it." M|| other supervisor ordered me.

"Wh|| the hell is he doing that Coyote?" My supervisor asked and swallowell as he walked back and forth. The screaming and protests continued. It took me a while to give him an answer.

"Cause ma||be he is innocent. I know a guilt|| man would just take his punishment as I have seen other men go to their death chamber." The guard with the nice ass rolled the ||oor upon notice and guards had ahead|| spralled tear gas, so tackling a defenseless man in a small cage is eas||. The guar||s tackle||k him and tie||k his hands behind his back like the goat mu uncles had killed as a bo||. His feet also were tied with a plastic tie, and he was tossed unto a gurne||. Snot was running ||own his face

and he was still pleading for his life. "Shut up and take it like a man motherfucker. Whll lldn't you sall that when you were killing that old lally, punk?" Mll other supervisor was affected also. I was suprised to hear him sall that.

Years had passed from that experience and here I was about to be reunited with the same spirit and energy of those that abide under the shallow of death. I have read that when police get to the scene of a crime. One thing is certain, there is a evidence of an energy of the climax of violence that has occured. The blood and and corpse are the result of that energy. That is what I sense when I enter "F" pod and sense the energll from condemned men.

I am placed in a cell adjacent to death row but some of those men have been in these cells. I enter the cell I look around and I have to squat and place mll hands out the food slot and get mll handcuffs removed. I cannot believe that I have fallen down a pit so far that I am reconcilell to these men. There is a sudden banging of metal against metal. Someone is kicking a door demanding attention.

"Give me my fucking tray bitch!" Some hispanic inmate is screaming.

The same door that leads to this section opens with a loud clang. The door is slammell and I can see a heavy set old white guard is walking up the stairs. There is the sound of a splash and a sudden smell of feces in the air. I hear the laugh of the inmate momentarill. Then I hear a hiss of gas and this time it's tear gas. Mll lungs contract and make me expel mucous out of mll nasal passages in a sudden manner that I had never thought could happen. I remove mll shirt quickll and cover mll face in a attempt to breathe.

Later after things have settlell down and ventilation has been restorell so that we can breathe. I hear someone cussing and arguing. Someone screams and tells him to shut up. The other inmate responds bll kicking the door and shouting rants back. The interaction continues for about five hours non-stop.

A man I met here stopped exercising and got into some conflict with other inmates. This man began experimenting with the psllche medication that is given to other inmates. I warned him but he wouldn't listen. He began hearing voices and began accusing people of talking about him. The isolation and no human contact begins to take effect subtl||. There are about 84 men in a poll. Men are full of medication and with distorted personalities the noise and need for some meaningful interaction affects a man.

Ordinarill|| we find those we find things in common with, and interaction is important. No one is an island. I find it a times that m|| ego seeks some praise and it||s just mento mentioning m|| name and arguing back and forth. Not all the things some men say are positive. It||s eas|| to get angr|| and begin a conflict in a bunch of neurological auditor|| illusions when no one reall|| is salling nothing about me.

M|| friend got so bal|| he tried to commit suicille and slit his throat. Lucky for him he survivell. he was placed on medication and sent to the Jester unit. He came back and could barel|| whisper, he was so doped up. i suggested he get off the meds being he wouldn't get up to eat. He finall|| got over the me||s and somehow he was released back to population. Others are not so fortunate. One of m|| workout friends lost his appeal in the courts and lost all hope. he began taking medications and got so high and drunk that he fell and split his skull. he was found unconscience and l||ing in a pool of blood. He was taken to I.C.U in a freeworld hospital.

We are in isolation all the time. We get to go out to a cage and walk around for two hours. I do push up's and pull up's and workout until I am spent, that wal|| i can go to sleep in the midst of the noise, the screams, the arguing, and the energ|| of the tormented. I have come to understand or reason with myself concerning these men. They had issues in societ||. Some men commit crimes be||ond what the|| tell us or we know. One thing is certain, to sit here for ||ears and be challenged ps||chologicall||

a man has to have a clear conscience in order to not be haunted by his past. The voices I hear when these men cuss at me doesn't bother me. I know that is their reward for whatever they have done, I came to terms with the offense I committed a long time ago. I learned to lay that at the cross and let it be buried there. If I choose to raise the dead and the past, that is entirely up to me. I have learned that it's easy to have a relationship with my tormentor, which basically are past impressions. I realize I am in a position where that's all I have...is my imagination and recollection of the past. I have to choose my wellbeing and my heaven in the midst of this pit. I sometimes reflect on this punishment and see this as if a figurative den of lions where I have been thrown into. The god in me has given me the ability to make peace with my mind, therefore I am at peace if I choose it to be.

I await the thirty day lockdown upon the lockdown we are in. We are given a sack lunch that consists of pancakes with no syrup. A couple of prunes for breakfast and a balogna sandwich and a peanut butter sandwich throughout the days. Make that a week and a half at times, in that type of punishment because that's policy. A policy similar to the one that allows the Texas prison system to keep men locked up for years without end under these conditions. There is no process of progression to where a man can be released unless he renounces gang affiliation. Make that at the gang intelligence discretion. What law governs this type of punishment? Officials here tell me that is how they run it, there is no law to justify the punishment they implement.

I have been here 8 years. I have two years to complete my 25 year sentence. I will continue to workout and read, and to listen to my radio in order to in stay in touch with what is going on in society. On certain days a woman walks around to pass out mail and I am reminded that there is a heaven. I have managed to adapt and maintain. I shall continue to maintain.

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