

Drama

It was Friday afternoon. I was working through my paperwork and computer entries when I heard the steel door crash. An inmate ran into the activity room below my office. A young Black man, with blue jeans so big he had to hold them up while he walked. He fumbled with a large full garbage bag, which I found out later, was everything he owned. The young inmate anxiously looked out the thin window in the room, then rushed to my second floor office door.

I called the control officer and asked what the inmate was doing in my area. The control officer said the inmate was "PC'ing up." PC'ing up means he's asking for protective custody, a label normally assigned to sex offenders, snitches, and gang drop outs. The inmate is talking to me. His words come out like bullets from a poorly pointed machine gun. They are not understandable. He said he was an ex-member of the Thug Crips and wasn't about banging anymore; he wanted to worship God instead.

He tells me his name is Parker, and that Greg Jones, a lifer with a low back number was out to get him. I still don't hear him right and type in the alleged perpetrator's name incorrectly. Did you say Greg Evans?

I told the apparently fearful inmate to sit down. Parker said he was an ex-member of the Thug Crips, and that Jones was a shotcaller. This was the second time this week I'd had a Black inmate say he was being threatened by Thugs. The inmate peaked out the narrow slit window that overlooked the yard.

When inmates from the unit came back from chow, Parker crouched down in my office and I locked the door. The control officer said he'd called the security squad. While we waited for the officers to pick him up we talked about life. He said he was the only gang member in his

family, and that he had a good “baby mama” to take care of his young son. He said he thought a big problem was the rivalry between Northtown and Westside.

He still says he wants to PC up, so I do a computer entry, fill out the necessary paperwork to separate Parker from Jones, make the appropriate calls. It’s hard to know how much of what he said was true. But the show certainly was great *drama*. Prisneyland was a crazy yard, and anything, it seemed, did happen here.