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Journals in April

Frederick Mason #55487-056

USP Tucson PO Box 24550

Tucson, AZ 85734

I wanted to share with you another entry from April, 2015. I shared one before that was shorter, sometimes I write a lot, sometimes just a little. I hope to be able to open the windows to understanding what an inmate goes through.

Remember though, we all do our time differently, so what I experience may not be what others experience. But some understanding is better than none. As I usually do with my entries, I will "pause" at times to try to fill in the gaps, and kinda color in the journal. Ok, let's begin...

April 8th, 2015: 7:05am as "Reeling In The Years" by Steely Dan ends and "I Can't Help Myself" by... who? Four Tops?

It's Thursday morning as I begin the day, writing by the flickering LED light. It's not because of batteries; it's the switch. Dizzy says the switch for the light is terrible and quite faulty. I'll need to replace the switch.

(PAUSE: I have a small LED night light, which I bought off a guy for \$10.00. It sells for \$12.00 from canteen, so I got a deal on it. Yet, the light switch is cheap, and starts

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to mess up. Dizzy is one of those "fix it guys", or "McGuyver", that can fix things that are broken. If not for guys like him, we'd be paying over and over for cheap products the prison sells us, KNOWING they wouldn't buy it themselves. Ugh, oh well, let's continue...)

Amazing, BOP sells inmates garbage at full price...oh, "Shout" by Tears for Fears is on! A 70's, 60's and 80's song, in some kinda order. Anyway, it's sad that they sell us garbage at 30% markup; who's the REAL criminals?

Yesterday was kinda tough; I fought depression, because it seemed that everybody went to canteen except me. And I was concerned for Abe, and shot a letter (e-mail) to the Department of Justice. It seemed that after I did that, I was drained...spiritually, emotionally and even physically. Yesterday was just... slow.

It didn't help that I had little paper to type, and "G" has STILL yet to give me the rest of that motion. It's really getting to be annoying.

(PAUSE: Depression is quite common in prison, I mean, we're ALL depressed for being there. Yet each person has to find a way to deal with it, or break under the stress. In the time I've been here, there's been about 3 suicides...and 2 of them by OFFICERS!

I was very concerned for my friend, Abe, and I was

also broke at the time. But I was also trying to finish some typing projects for some people, and needed paper. Many inmates here at USP Tucson are working hard on their cases, to try to get back to court. Folks, you have no idea how many people found out AFTER they got here that their Public Defenders did the least amount of work to save them. Most Public Defenders don't tell inmates their options, and when they get 99 years, and end up in prison, they find out that they still had LEGAL options, never told to them. So they spend countless hours in the library, looking up case laws to get back in court to possibly regain freedom, or at least lessen the sentence. I could write a ton just off that issue alone, but let's continue...)

I switched to 106FM to hear "Tootsie Roll", an R&B song from what, 1997? I think Kwan was a baby when that song came on. I remember John playing with him to that song; Kwan was smiling while he was being rocked "to the left, to the left" and "dip baby dip". 7:14am now, I switch to hear on 1400 KTUC, "On Broadway", but I forgot who did it. I remember George Benson's version, but this one isn't it.

I need to get my stuff ready for library work, and see what I can type. I'm supposed to get more paper today; John sent it by someone, but I didn't go to the library yesterday morning, so maybe I'll get it today.

(PAUSE: Don't get confused with the Johns; the first one is a friend from home, the other is a guy here in the

prison, a kind old man that loved writing western books.)

I need it... I need stamps. So, what am I typing today? Robert has been... for lack of a better word, nagging Lavant about his project. Robert has a good idea, a valid one, but he misses that just because you champion a cause doesn't mean everybody's gonna rush behind you...who does this song, "Just In Time"? Sounds like...ugh..I...not Mel Torme... gosh, I see his face! Not Dean Martin, certainly not Frank Sinatra. He has the same name of a guy that played in the NBA, and now is a coach...oh, I hate it when I can't get this bit of trivia!

(PAUSE: I mentioned "Robert", he is a guy that has a very legitimate argument about people who have been charged with sex crimes, and have a horrible life to live after they've done time. Most folks think of these crimes as the worst case scenarios, but there are a LOT of grey areas that many such people fall into, but the courts make no differences, which is unfair. He argues that if a person has served his debt to society, why then is he so restricted from the things a citizen ought to enjoy? This folks, is a very sensitive subject, one the courts really need to look at, because it affects thousands of people, and their families. That however, is another story... let's continue...)

Oh well, the song is over...what's this, oh, "Walk On By", I know this one, Dionne Warwick. Oh well, I was reading Zephaniah 3: 17-20; God says He'll deal with those who afflict

us. So little of the world out there understand the abuse prisons put us through. Many of these officers are just as wicked in heart as the worst of us.

Isaiah 59:8-9 are right on the money; there is no justice here, because there is no God in their hearts. Anyway, the ministry I like comes on at 7:30... it's 7:28... the guy did the song "I Left My Heart in San Francisco"... gosh, who did it?? I just can't get it now... It will hit me later...

(PAUSE: The guy's name is Tony Bennett, hope I spelled his name right. Anyway, sometimes it is very frustrating when you see how prisons seem to persecute inmates for little reason other than rules that are shady at best. Most get away with it, because the society in general has no understanding of what we go through, and society has been conditioned that we, as inmates have no validity in any argument regarding fair treatment. But living through it, I see that not every inmate is a monster, many are people who made mistakes, and would love to make up for them. Society has to give us a chance, something prisons shun against.

At any rate, that's just a sample of what I go through here. Lots have changed from that date, and I'm sure things will continue to change...it always does here in prison...for good or bad. In either case, I have to trust in God to get through it. Until next time...

JM