

In the year 2005, I was in the tenth year of a thirty year sentence, mid way through appealing what was, what is and will always be a wrongful conviction, when I experienced one of the most notable, surprising, soul shaking, unexpected things I ever had.

A dis-ease in the mind manifested as a disease in the body, and on October 11th, 2005, at 5:30 am, I awoke to what felt like a W.W.W.F kick in the chest!
"May be a book had fallen off the shelf and landed on me"; That was the immediate thought at the forefront of my mind as my partially opened eyes scanned the cell for a visual explanation. There was none. As I stood up, dizziness accompanied the awareness of this pain that stretched across the span of my chest shooting from left to right and right to left. Nausea gave way to vomiting, and my rational mind started thinking: "what did I eat"? "Is this food poisoning"?
I then realized I was having trouble breathing! I grabbed a wooden hair brush and started banging against the iron bars of the cell door.

In route to making his final round of his 3rd watch shift, the six foot six, 270 pound Neanderthal guard, responded to the banging, asking out loud: "WHO IS IT"?
I replied: "cell 69".

On the unit, amongst the prisoners, this officer was known as "The Creeper". He was dubbed the creeper because it was hard to believe how someone of his height, weight and athletically out of shape stature could be so light on his feet so as to not make a sound as he walked up and down the metallic grate steps and pass the cells while making his hourly rounds.

There was a familiar silence in the early morning atmosphere, with the exception for the humming of the motor of the wall mounted fans.

This time, I heard the uncommonly heavy stomping of the creeper's steps get louder and louder the closer he got.
Shinning his flashlight into the cell, he saw me laying on the floor, right hand clutching the left side of my chest, he asked: "Julien, what's the matter"?

In pain, and breathless, I barely answered: "My chest."
The glow of the flashlight disappeared and so did the creeper. I could hear his heavy hoofs clogging down the steps. About two minutes passed and I then heard the loud announcement over the PA system as the silence of the early morning was broken: "CODE 53 - 2 RIGHT.....CODE 53 - 2 RIGHT".

Code 53 being the call for medical emergency, and 2 Right being the location of the emergency.
Almost ten minutes had passed before I would hear the brass key turning the locked cell door open.

One nurse, four officers and one shift supervisor, Sgt. Washington, a one eye, undercover homosexual, with a disrespectful disposition to any man, subordinate officer, or prisoner, who was, undoubtedly physically stronger and heterosexual.

"You wanna lift weights and then cry about chest pain - my shift is over, I'm going home, if you wanna go to the infirmary I suggest you get up and walk down the steps, there's a wheelchair at the bottom, come on, lets go!"

Step by step, breathless and in pain, I held on to the banister slowly making my way down the first few steps.

"Don't make me kick you down the steps - hurry up ! I don't have time for this shit"; is what the Sgt. closet queen barked.

At that moment, I remember thinking: "If but not for the fact that I was in severe pain and distress, I would make this coward eat the whole flight of steps! Whip his ass so bad, make him shit on himself!

Arriving in the infirmary, the nurse annoyingly asked in her thick African accent: "What is wrong with you"? I answered: "I don't know - my chest hurt - I threw up"; Before I could finish, she interrupted, saying: "here, drink this, you probably ate something bad"; as she dumped a medicine cup full of malox into my mouth.

"Put him in cell 8"; the Sgt. ordered one of his officers; pushing the wheel chair up to the cell. I apparently was taking too long to get up out of the wheelchair, because the next thing I felt was my face and body hitting the cold dirty floor. Like a pile of dirt in a wheelbarrow being tipped up, over and out; so I was, dumped out of the wheelchair! I heard the huge door slam as I rolled onto my side. Taking short breaths, I remember whispering to myself: "stay calm - stay calm - don't move - don't move."

I would later make it a part of my testimony that, it wasn't I, telling my self to "stay calm & don't move"; but rather, it was the whispered instructions of The Creator! God! Earth's Rightful Ruler! Jah! Allah! Jehova! Don't know what you call that force, but you know what I'm talking about.

I closed my eyes for what I thought was two minutes. I later learned I had been slipping in and out of consciousness for over three hours! I awoke to the sight and sound of an Indian accent standing over me asking:

"Mr. Julien, 'wvuhat' is the problem"? It was the doctor.

I patted my chest lightly, barely saying: "my chest hurt".

The doctor then said to the infirmary porters who were prisoners: "pick him up and bring him over to the clinic".

Entering trauma room ç1, I was lifted out of the wheelchair and onto a gurney. I could see hear and feel the clicking of clamps and wires hitting against eachother as two over paid poorly trained and unqualified nurses fiddle with wires and quizzed eachother, asking:

"where does this one go?
what color do you have?
let me have this one?
stick the stickies on his chest?
does this one go on his right or left leg"?????

Out of the corner of my eye, I caught a glimpse of nurse White. She was about 5'5", dark skinned, pearly white smile , heavy set, friendly, professional and in more ways than one; To one and all, she was loving and motherly. "Hey Julien, what's wrong with you so early in the morning"? She asked.

Barely audible, I answered: "Help me".....

Looking at my face, she could clearly see that something was wrong with me. Noticing the other two confused idiots wasting time, unable to untangle the wires and match colors; she took control of the situation; Ordering them out of the way, she barked: "Move! let me do it"! Very quickly, she stuck the leads (what the other two bungling idiots called stickies) onto my chest, matched colors, numbers, clamps, and began entering information into the EKG machine.

Within seconds, I could hear the paper rolling out and being torn from the machine like a receipt out of a cash register. After handing it to the doctor, the scene in trauma room ç1 turned spontaneously chaotic! Doctor and nurses were running in and out of the room, oxygen tube was being placed in my nostril, and I could hear the Velcro strap of a blood pressure cuff being peeled open and placed around one arm, while another nurse held the other arm warning: "youre gonna feel a big stick" she said, as the needle entered my skin.

Signaling the doctor, she announced: "IV. is in"!

More chaos, as I noticed paramedics who obviously had been called, entering trauma room ç1. One of the EMT's asked:

"Where does it hurt"?

I patted my chest.

"Open your mouth, this is nitroglycerin, its gonna relieve the pain, lift up your tongue"; he said, as a short mist, like a breath freshener was sprayed under my tongue.

"Let's get another line in the other arm". "Youre gonna feel a little pinch Sir."

I didn't move as I felt another needle prick my skin.

"Come on - Come on, we gotta go", another EMT said.

"Custody is here", a nurse alerted; as doctor, nurses, and EMT's stepped to the side and out of the room, making way for the two guards and a new shift supervisor, as my pant, boots, socks, legs, waistband and the stretcher was searched, before hand cuffs, a chain around my waist and leg irons were wound, clicked, fastened and locked in place, on and around me, before I was wheeled through the corridors to the prison's garage, where there was a waiting ambulance. The two paramedics, and two armed

guards squeezed in on either side in the back of the ambulance. I laid in the center; cold, confused, wondering if I was dreaming. I realized I wasn't dreaming when I heard one of the EMT's say to the guard: "I need you to take those restraints off, if he goes into cardiac arrest, we need to shock him, I can't do that with that chain around his body and those hand cuffs".

The guard, shaking his head, adamantly said: "I can't do that, he's a prisoner, its a security issue".

The EMT, dumbfoundedly responded. "What"?

The guard repeated himself, refusing to unshackle and uncuff me. The EMT shook his head in disbelief, as he shouted to the driver: "Tom, step on it, they won't take the restraints off, if he crashes, I cant use the D-Fib!"

With that, I could feel the sped of the ambulance increase, as with the sound of the siren.

Arriving at St. Francis Hospital, now in the ER, surrounded by doctors and nurses, I watched and listened as they shared a barrage of information about me, and the situation, as they intravenously administered medications, while asking me questions: "on a scale of 1-10, what number is the pain?

how old are you?

do you have any medical problems?

what time did you start feeling the pain?

did you vomit?

do you use any illegal drugs?

do you have a living will?

are you allergic to anything?

After answering every single question truthfully and to the best of my ability; I then asked one:

"Doc, what is wrong with me"?!?!?!"

He calmly responded: "Youre having a heartattack and we're trying to stop it, we're gonna help you, youre gonna be going into the Cath-Lab right now".

He turned to the Sgt. and said: "ok, youre gonna have to take off those cuffs and chains now, all of them". It almost sounded as if the doctor was now giving orders to the boss-hog Sgt. Correction Officer. The Sgt. complies and removed the cuffs shackles and chain. No sooner than he was finished, a nurse with a pair of scissors quickly cut off the only clothing I had on; pants and underwear.

At that moment, I became overwhelmed, and tears streamed down the side of my face and onto my ears. I was only 30 years old, alone, surrounded by strangers, in a hospital on my way to surgery, still confused as to what was happening to my body, how and why.

Aside from smoking marijuana, I had never used any other illegal drugs, no cocaine, heroin, pills, Nothing! Other than the celebratory toasting at a gathering, even my drinking was limited to a few Heinekens while at a party, once or twice a month.

Never been ill! Other than the common cold or flu, I only had the chicken pox once, and that didn't happen till I was seventeen; And even that, barely afflicted me! A few pox at the bottom of my feet, a slight fever and three days later it was over.

Here I was, 30 years of age, 5'9", 205 lbs. of muscle, 17" arms, squatting 455 lbs., bench pressing 405 lbs., curling 100 lb. dumbbells, push-ups, pull-ups, basketball, hand ball; never broke a bone; All four grandparents lived into the ripe old ages of late 80's into late 90's, none died of heart related ailments.

"How am I having a heartattack at age 30 !?!? WHY?!?
What is wrong with me?!? God, help me, don't let me die, not here, not like this!"

With the flood of all those thoughts, I faded into sleep, and woke up in the Cardiac Care Unit where I remained for 12 days.

It was explained to me that I had 100% blockage in my right coronary artery. An Angioplasty procedure was done, via my right femoral artery and two stents were implanted in my heart. I'd lost track of all the medications that were being given to me. I was told that I suffered the heartattack resulting from a combination of stress and high cholesterol, which was a total of, 226.

I was ultimately discharged and sent back to the prison. For the next three and a half years that followed, I would experience a host of complications having to do with side effects from medications; The most severe being a case of rhabdomyoiosis, which almost could have been fatal, when the medical department staff forgot to schedule me for labs, to have my blood and liver enzymes checked. Had that been done, it would have revealed early on, that my CPK level was elevated beyond normal and that it was being caused by the Statin drugs, (Mevacor and Crestor) which was prescribed to treat my high cholesterol.

The sub standard nutrition in the prison, and the unavailability of anything nutritionally better on the commissary, made it very difficult to maintain a proper diet. Nonetheless, I tried. I also exercised and took the medications as prescribed.

In 2009, April 8th; I staggered back in from the yard and collapsed in front of the clinic! An EKG was done, and like the first time; Here came the paramedics in their ambulance to transport me to St. Francis hospital. I suffered a second heartattack that was caused by, a (garden hose) like kink in one of the stents; And so, it was back in the Cath Lab for another catheterization and angioplasty procedure to fix the problem. More medications and six days in the Cardiac Care Unit before being returned to the prison.

Another round of minor, yet constant conflicts with the incompetent medical department; (once C.M.S.) Correctional

Medical Services, a privatized cooperation; To the new contract take over by (UMDNJ), University of Medical and Dentistry of New Jersey; with the same over paid, under trained, and unqualified Doctors, Nurse Practitioners, and Nurses, who spend much of their time fraternizing, drinking coffee, eating snacks and doing every thing else other than what they needed to be and should have been doing.

Unfortunately, the medical department itself; like many of the other departments within the Department of Corrections; being but a branch in the Criminal Justice System; Is nothing more than a 'Tax-Payer bilking scam' that the Politicians and Legislators turn a blind eye and deaf ear to! "The System"! Legal criminals overseeing illegal convicted criminals! The fleecing of New Jersey; From former Governors Christine Todd Whitman to Jim McGreevy , John Corzine, and now, the fat, lying, lisps pronouncing - sauce sipping bully Chris Christie.

July 18th, 2012, 3:30 am; jolted out of sleep from what felt like a sledge hammer punch in my chest! Burning sensation, tightness, and shortness of breath. I summoned for help! I knew what this was! Fifteen minutes later, I was wheeled into the infirmary. Because it was now in the computer that I am Chronic Care with cardiac problems, this nurse paid much more professional attention to the situation. The Paramedics were called again! Heartattack #3, age 37. A blood clot stuck in one of the stents. Same routine and procedure as with the first and second.

In less than ten years, I have suffered and survived more heartattacks than the average 80 year old senior citizen. I haven't had the cold or the flu in over ten years; but I've had a heartattack once every three years.

I am still afraid of mice, but not at all afraid of death. I've been in prison since the age of 19, wrongfully convicted, trying praying, appealing, hoping, searching, learning, growing, slowly dying having been diagnosed with heart disease.

There is a quote that says:

"No matter the posture of the body,
the soul is always on its knees."

Here I AM.