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The Spectacle

I remember being arrested in Minnesota. I was a lithe young woman, waist-length, dark brown hair, beautiful and ever so stupid. An officer coming on duty was trying to flirt with me. Little did he know I was pregnant and had just been arrested for shooting my boyfriend. On his way out, he made a snide comment, that he had been talking to a murderer.

I was fingerprinted, stripped down, processed with a photo and number board. I was a walking zombie, it was all surreal. What had I done? Who should I call? Would anyone accept the call?

There was a beautiful young blond woman in the holding tank with me. She was sobbing, heaving really. I was momentarily cried out. I gravitated toward her because we may have been about the same age, under 20 years old.

I introduced myself, her name was Janet. She was from an affluent part of the area, Edina. She had been using drugs. I told her to get a grip on herself. I mean, I imagined that she may have prostituted herself or something, to get the drugs. Eventually I told her, "you can't be here for anything worse than my charge; I'm here for murder." Janet started bawling again, perhaps worse than before. Janet was in for bestiality. Janet was staying in Edina with her dope dealer and he had videotaped her having sex with dogs. The entire police force had probably seen the videos, were talking about the videos and some were giving her a rough time. The inmates weren't any better, with their jibes and barking. Janet was the first woman I met with bestiality charges but far from the last.

When I was a kid, and I went to the circus, I'd spend my allowance on tickets. I had to pay a ticket to see the bearded lady, the wolf boy, and all types of peculiar human phenomenon. It was expected that you would stare at the exhibits to get your money's worth. Although sometimes they set the rail so far away, one still questioned whether it was real. Here it is 50 years later and the circuses are closing down. Someone asked, "How do you feel about the circuses closing down?" A bit sad and really quite old, that's how some Siamese twins earned a living. I guess everyone receives general assistance now.

Interestingly, the handicapped, like blacks, women and every other imaginable minority, have fought to be considered *equal*. In many ways, they are foolish to fight to be equal, when they could have *special* education and considerations. Well, you couldn't begin to imagine the circus that has been incarcerated at the women's prisons in the United States. The circuses have travelled to our penal institutions.

During the 14 years I spent in the California penal system I saw both a Caucasian and Black midget, there were also woman/dog sex charges but during my 10 years in the Oklahoma Department of Corrections, the state had taken the cake with woman/horse sex charges. There are tons of pregnant women, and aged women with walkers, wheelchairs and oxygen tanks in tow.

There are people starving all over the world and of course prison food has never been anything to brag about. Still it is no reason to become Anorexic or Bulimic, but there have been a couple forced feeding tube situations in Oklahoma, too. The excess food gets fed to the hogs, and the farmer says it has killed a few of the hogs but that has to do with plastic spoons being overlooked in the slop.

I promise, there are oddities and anecdotes; that prove truth is stranger than fiction.

There is a blind woman that is so horny she accuses every caretaker of inappropriate sexual behavior with her. There have been countless deaf women. The institution doesn't give them any type of special identification, like a vest or anything. So there have been piles of incidents, where officers have yelled at the deaf, "What are you deaf?" and had to be told that they are. The deaf inevitably miss meals at first, because they don't hear the announcements.

There was a lady that had partial hands, attached directly to her shoulders. She said, she could put in a tampon with her foot. She certainly could toss a clip board on the floor and sign in without assistance. Watching her eat with her foot, while perhaps rude, was mesmerizing. Institutional policy prohibits rolling up your sleeves. A Correctional Officer followed her from behind yelling about her sleeves being rolled up. She turned around and said "Are you talking to me?", the Officer stomped off, previously unaware of her condition.

There is one woman with Parkinson's, one with Huntington's, several with Multiple Sclerosis and some with Lupus. One of which was taken to SHU for assaulting an Officer, merely because they couldn't stay still while being questioned. We have countless mentally ill that incarcerated. One of which assaulted a staff because they wouldn't give her another hamburger then the next week was masturbating during count time.

There are several women with only one limb. A few people have prosthetics, but most don't. I guess if you come in with one, you can keep it. If you didn't, then the Department of Corrections is not going to pay for a prosthetic. I take that back, there was an offender with diabetes that had a sore on her foot, which became gangrenous. The Department ignore her so long her foot was amputated, then up to her knee and she suppose to get a free prosthetic.

The Department of Corrections has a new Federal Law that has been implemented PREA (Prison Rape Elimination Act). If it has even helped one guy from being forcibly raped; it is a worthwhile cause. However, in the women's prison, forcible rape is not really a problem. The women tend to get sexually involved with officers for hand-outs and it is considered rape because prisoners are not able to give consent. Women get into relationships with other women and become so psychotic, they call PREA, with the mentality that if I can't have them, no one will. There was a woman than called PREA on a woman, then staff, then jumped over a top tier when she rejected by the guy. A woman was in love with another woman, when the woman left her, she stabbed her own privates and called rape or PREA on her ex-lover.

There was an incident, a male officer called for female back up. A group of staff descended upon a shower and demanded that the offender come out. The offender stated she wasn't dressed and was hurrying. A female officer whipped open the shower curtain. The male staff thought there were two offenders in the shower. What really happened was that the offender had her prosthetic leg off and if was facing her. *Busting lovers in the shower together* trumped the offender's privacy. All the offenders laughed robustly. The last laugh would've been if the offender would've followed up with a grievance. Unfortunately, female offenders are the most self-pitying, least cohesive, demographic on the planet. Female offenders hate everyone, mainly themselves while carrying the guilt of abandoning their children. It's difficult to be charitable to anyone else when they can't stand themselves.

I find it ironic that PETA is helping to inadvertently shut down circuses, while prisons are thriving and walls are still being discussed to keep people out of the country. There are women here with mustaches and beards, I'm quite hairy myself. Funny to think all those years ago, I used to spend my allowance to see the oddities I'm forced to live with now, for free. — End