

My last time in prison, I was up at a little transfer facility in Bonham Texas. It's a dormitory style unit, (MINIMUM SECURITY) which means we're not locked up in our own individual cells. Well, not unless we do something stupid and get in trouble.

Ever since the infamous TEXAS 7 escaped a few years ago, security conducts more frequent count times so they make sure nobody goes missing. My job was a dorm janitor during graveyard shift (11-7). I liked it because of the peace and quiet. I could read my books, write my letters, get a little exercise, and pretty much stay out of the way.

A lot of our guards are older folks who have already retired from one job. The state has good insurance and an excellent pension plan for them. It's relatively easy work, and it's not like they put them in harm's way with a bunch of dangerous killers.

One of my favorite guards comes through a little after midnight. He's white as a sheet and sweating like a whore at church. I asked him, "you alright buddy? you don't look too good." He told me he was fixin' to go on break and get something to eat. His sugar was low. Well, he don't even make it back to the pod door before he drops his clipboard and slides down the wall as his knees buckle.

He's shaking a little bit, so I run to my locker and grab a Dr. pepper and a snickers. We manage to get about half a can in him without spilling too much. I tear open the snickers and he can barely chew it. He can't really focus his eyes or speak yet. So I grab the radio and hit the button and say, "OFFICER DOWN! - D-WING!"

This is one of them real live conundrum situations you always hear about. But I ain't about to just sit there and watch the guy flop, and not try to help. I don't care WHAT THE RULES SAY!

In less than a minute, doors pop and about a dozen other guards come running in. "GET THE FUCK AWAY FROM HIM! GET ON THE GOD DAMNED GROUND!" I'm trying to explain to them that I'M the one that called FOR HIM! They ain't trying to hear it. They drag me out in the sally port and start beating the shit out of me. I'm already in cuffs and I know the only reason they ain't gassed me yet is because we're in a confined area and they'd have to breathe it in too!

I'd already taken several kicks in the ribs, and been punched in the back of my head. My back had been stomped real good too. Lucky for me a sergeant stops them before they go too far. "GET THE FUCK OUT OF HERE!" he screams at them. They leave and he takes the cuffs off, helping me to my feet. I look up just in time to see them wheel the old guard out. He smiles and mouths the words THANK YOU!

"You okay?" he asks. "HELL NO I AIN'T OKAY!" But I'm sort of hurting and laughing at the same time. "How's old SCHOOL?" Sarge says, "Oh... he'll be okay - but we're all fixin' to be in a world-o-shit!" I sort of shake my head and tell him, "look, I never touched the radio - and your guards never touched me. How about that?" All he could say was, "I owe you. BIG TIME."

There's an old Chinese proverb about saving a man's life and never being forgiven for it. Well, I reckon I was forgiven, because it was pretty easy to get cigarettes after that.

submitted by Brian Fuller

