

WYNNE'S

WORLD

A slamming steele door wakes me up at 2:30 AM, pulled from another dream of another world of freedom. I lay there semi-conscious until 3:00 AM. Get dressed, pull my boots on, stand up and collect my I.D., scratch my head, then urinate. The day has begun.

Overhead, at roughly 3:15, steele doors start clanking closed, it's three row out for chow. My door will open in a few minutes.

I pull my mask on as the door slides open. I pull my door closed and walk down the run, then down the stairs. We that are going to eat, line-up and wait, and wait, and wait, till the hall boss opens the door, out for chow. As I approach the door the hall boss puts up her hand, to again wait, so we wait some more, until finally the door is opened again and I'm out of there.

I walk the lone hall passed A-wing; passed pill window; passed laundry, and around the corner to A chow hall. The doors are closed, keep walking passed A chow hall, around more corners and onto B hall and B chow hall. Mmm! Three cold pancakes, a miniture milk-carton shaped box, $\frac{1}{4}$ full of cereal, a scoop of syrup, and a splash of apple sauce.

No milk this morning for our six spoon-full of cereal, but there are other choices, lets see, dry; water; cool-ade; what-ever is on hand, or, of course, black coffee. I will tell you Bran Flakes in black coffee, is, well lets say, interesting, so to speak.

The chow hall boss is yelling to hurry up and I say, the Rule

Book said I have twenty minutes to eat, he laughs and tells me times up, so I go. I guess my twenty minute clock started back on the block leaving my cell, or perhaps standing on the run, doing that all important waiting. I chug the last dregs of my coffee on my way to drop off the tray, exit, and return back to the block.

Back on the block, up the stairs, and back into my kennel. Fifteen minutes later, its out for industry. I grab my shower-shoes and go back down stairs to stand on the run for 45-minutes. We used to sit in the dayroom until each industry is called out, but the block and picket bosses got lazy and did not put up the non-workers, they just piled everyone in the dayroom so they don't have to go up-n-down the stairs. A Corona violation.

The warden came in early and saw this cluster mess and told his officers to rectify the problem so now all the workers have to stand on the run with the block boss, which, in and of itself, is a security violation. Instead of the workers locked in the dayroom and everyone else put back into their cells. Great intelligence here, place has been in operation 60-80 years and they still have not figured it out.

They post dayroom schedules in the dayroom, yet none of the block officers have a clue as to what time, or which row is scheduled to go. They pick and choose as they wish, and now, back to standing on the run.

As I'm standing there waiting they call out various industries in assigned order. Sticker; Sign; Mattress; Mechanical; Education; Computer Recovery; and lastly, Tag, which is my destination.

We fall-out into the hall in order to be rostered out of the building and walk six or seven hundred yards to the Tag Plant. It's 5:15 AM.

Once in the Tag Plant I change into my cover-alls, go to my work station, turn on the 65 ton press and air, turn on the feed control, turn on applicator and metal straightener, put a shot of instant coffee in my tumbler and hit the hot water pot. Alright. Now, with all that done, my world is ready to start.

I air up my spindle on my waste paper roller and on my laminate applicator roller, push start for green light on applicator, pull start on press, get light on feed, push button on feed, get light to go, push start on press, then both control handles and let'er rip.

Chunka, chunka, chunka. 80 plates per minute. Go back to applicator and make sure laminate and metal are lined up and not drifting. Then watch everything as a roll consists of a thousand sets of plates. I will chop through that in a little over 20-minutes, each roll weighs roughly 85 pounds.

In a normal day I run ten cans, that is ten-thousand sets of license plates. Each spool of aluminum is roughly two-thousand pounds and I get five cans out of it, so each spool is over one-mile long. So I chop through a couple of miles of aluminum each day.

If I cut ten-thousand sets of license plates a day, do the math, at \$75.00 per set from a county, that's three-quarter of a million dollars a day off just one machine. We have four machines and mine is the slowest one. Do we get paid for this? A little

cool-ade, some coffee grounds and toilet paper, good deal. Slave labor is alive and well in Texas. But I don't mind, it gets me out of my kennel, I have always worked.

Okay. Quitting time, time to go into the warehouse and get naked, strip search, get dressed and stand around and wait another half hour before walking back up the hill to the building and showers. Once at the building, get in order again to be rostered back into the building, get naked for another search and a trip through a metal detector, to make sure you don't have a cellphone, or speaker stuck up your nether region, (i.e., derriere) I can't imagine anyone putting a knife there. Okay. Now that that's all clear on to the showers.

Now it gets crazy. What do you mean no socks? What do you mean no boxers? What do you mean no shirts? Why are we drying off with pants, where are the towels? It is always something for the Tag Plant workers as they're among the last of the industries to turn in, but, by God all the non-workers, television watchers, who shower before us, get their clean clothes every day. On top of all that, one day the water is ice-cold, the next you could cook a lobster and a couple blue crabs, and or its perfect, no one can figure this out either, pot-luck showers?

So now that business is done with, go stand in the cage and wait some more, wait for all the Tag Plant workers to finish showering and are ready to go, but before we go, yes you've guessed it, we wait some more, then some more, until the boss on the radio calls the shower boss and tells him to send us up.

We go upstairs into the hall only to have the C-hall boss

tell us to hold up at the gate. The C-hall boss then lets the non-workers, t.v. watchers out for chow while we stand there and wait, and wait, and wait some more. Then the major starts wiggling out because we are all jammed up and not spaced six-feet apart, (Covid standards), finally we move on, only now we are six-feet apart.

Anything served in the chow hall which consists of chicken is full of bones, skin, cartilage, except of course the chicken patty. I think they do this so people won't eat it and they'll have more to slop to the pigs, but then again we never get any bacon around here. Any how, after chow its back to the block. I go upstairs to my kennel and wait some more. Finally, my kennel door slids open and I say: "Lucy I'm Home"! It is now between 1:30 and 2:00 PM.

I try to read some or listen to the radio, but usually my eyes tell me, do what you want but we're closing for a nap, and I say fine. Then after about an hour or so I'm up again, time to listen to the radio or read a book or, like this, write a little something. With any luck around 4:30 or so I might get some mail, or probably not. Ya never know.

I never go to evening chow here. I'm fortunate to have some junk food upon my shelf. Never could do three meals a day without getting heavy. So then everyone comes back from evening chow, and while standing on the run, they attempt to catch up on all they've missed with their hommies. One row yelling to three row, three row yelling to two row, two row yelling to, well you get the picture. It's like a barn yard, or a large coop full of

cackling hens. Once they're all back in their cells it gets a little quieter. I try to read until 7 or 8 PM, then I lay my head down and try to find my way back to that other world only to be rudely reawakened at 11:30 PM for a roster count and to verify that I am still breathing. I can only assume that counting a dead inmate hasn't worked out for them in the past.

Now to try for that other world again, like I did yesterday; last week; last year; and repeat. Sleep, wait; eat, wait; work, wait; shower, wait, start over, wait.