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I had been blowing harder than Leontyne Price at Carnegie Hall - Singing my pen's high-pitched arias until they quaked Pendleton's deadening silence with fear and trembling.

My epic American Prison Writing Archive debut had begun to elicit empathy among officers at the Indiana State Reformatory, so I.D.O.C.

Commissioner Robert E. Carter Jr. had the benevolent organization's website blocked; Employee computers could no longer access my work. A remnant of officers came to me in secret; some confessed; others begged my pardon. I pitied them - many members of custody staff were not very well-educated, nor very intelligent, yet their families had to be supported; bills paid. For the first time since my imprisonment, I saw officers for who they really were; Imperfect human

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beings; We were all equals.

The rawhide whip of a literary overseer was not required to drive me to labor for countless hours in the unforgiving fields of promotion. My endless toiling in them had yielded only a few succulent morsels, but they were more scrumptious than caviar; Rachel's from Ms. Magazine was the most satisfying. I had always embraced, demonstrated, and proclaimed hardwork to the world, and it was recompensing me bit by bit. It no longer mattered to me that my academic capacity excited envy in the hearts of prisoners and I.D.O.C. Staff who I came into contact with; I was proud to be a dweeb, a geek, and a nerd. Being acknowledged, appreciated, and accepted by my peers as their equal, even though I had been disenfranchised

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by crime gave me my human dignity back; I  
was somebody; I was significant; I existed.

The time had arrived for my vociferously  
fat ass to sing, but this voluptuous diva  
determined never to bow; The show had  
to go on. I resolved to become the APWA's  
legendary headliner, even though it was too  
damn broke to cater to the least of my  
demands. The APWA had given me my  
start - There was no question as to where  
my loyalty remained; Its Editors. We were  
either going to succeed or fail together, Period.