

December 5, 2011

Hello World!

"I can't wait to get back to a cell," is the cry of the institutionalized inmate. I'll explain.

California's overcrowded prisons has required the housing of inmates in classrooms, hallways, and for me, even though I am a lifer, I've been living on a triple bunk in a converted gymnasium. That is until last Thursday. A federal court order has required a population reduction. The low-level inmates are magically disappearing, freeing cell space. Many inmates housed in non-traditional settings are cheering their move back to a cell. Not me.

Prison is about wasted time. I refuse to waste my life waiting for an officer to open the outside, and then the inside building doors, then wait for my cell to be opened. Then wait in a line for a shower and then wait for the next scheduled unlock, in 1½ hours to get back into a 6'x10' room where I have to time share the only writing table.

Living in the gym, though it is noisy, it is cavernous with an openness where I can stretch. There is only one door to unlock and there is rarely a wait for one of the 12 showers for the 160 inmates. When my 5-minute shower is completed, I can walk directly to my bunk, pick up my writing implements and sit at one of the ten 4-seat tables. It ain't heaven and the Public Broadcasting Station always loses out to Jerry Springer, but I can make it efficient.

Crying, "Yippee!" to be returned to a cell, well, in my non-psychological opinion, that's plum crazy.

However, I have no choice in the matter. I am now housed in building 14, cell 104-U. My new cellie is affectionately called "The Fat Jew." I call him a friend as I have known him for years. Smart, a rare bird in prison. Generous - even rarer, and our conversations do not center around the newest transgender with boobs walking the yard.

I am blessed. I will survive the change. I will adapt, but I will never become use to living in a cell.

I want to stretch.

Thanks for checking in on me.

Cordially,



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P.S. I received a surprise visit from Simplelady61. Her hugs were cups of cool water in a parched desert. God bless you Simplelady61, and thank you.

Novel: A Thundering Wind (Amazon.com)