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FROM: 10157091

TO:

SUBJECT: #9 - Oh. I Just Push The Carts.

DATE: 12/08/2011 09:07:41 AM

There's an electronics recycling plant on this compound; I've been working there for the last seventeen months. It doesn't pay a whole hell of a lot, only five dollars a day, but that's enough to have a little bit every month, plus save some for my release.

A few months ago, we had some of the regional inspection team arrive, one of the many complex steps in the power control dance I deal with daily. I was walking around a corner when I passed a member of the inspection team being led around by a factory manager.

The factory manager gestured towards me and stated: "Oh. He just pushes carts."

This is technically my job. Electronics come in, they're torn down, the components are put in carts and I push the carts. It's a pretty heavy oversimplification, but true enough nonetheless.

But it struck a nerve with me. It made me feel minimized. In that moment I felt like I'd just been characterized and stereotyped both as a criminal and as a man. This was the level of respect I commanded from my bosses.

It stopped me in my tracks for all of three seconds. One to comprehend what he said, one to get mad at it, and one to promise myself that every time I saw his face I would remember his words and use that emotion to prove I was a better man than him.

This isn't the old me. The old me would've gotten discouraged and found a way to quit. But somewhere between the day I was born and the day I finally figured it out something began to take root, some microscopic seed that found fuel in unfairness and learned how to grow.

And now every time I see him I'm a little bit stronger.

Thank you, sir.