

January 2, 2012

Hello World!

Man in the pit! Holy crap! Holy Spirit!

I work as the clerk in Prison Industry Authority laundry. We process approximately 15,000 pounds of clothes and linen each week. The run off from the five 400 pound capacity washers; 120 degree water, caustic break, detergent, bleach, and sour flows into an 8' square, 20' deep sump it. Covering the pit is a steel safety plate. An Hispanic inmate worker walked across the plate but due to age, rust, and wear, the plate failed.

The inmate plunged 12' into the chemical soup and went into shock. In prison there is always tension, mistrust, and hate among the races. This animosity leads to mistreatment, abuse, and senseless violence. However, during this emergency, race was not the issue. The rescue and well-being of another human was all the mixed crew of inmates concerned themselves with.

A black inmate ran to notify the free staff supervisor.

An Hispanic from another neighborhood (gang) hung from the pit's edge attempting to reach the stunned man.

A white inmate dropped in a ladder for the man to grab hold. However, in his shock, he could only cling to a small pipe sticking out of the smooth concrete wall.

Two other inmates held the legs of the Hispanic and white, lowering them far enough into the pit to reach the fallen man. With strength built on years of pushups and pull-ups, the inmates pulled the stricken and now unconscious man from the pit.

Eight minutes later, medical staff arrived to whisk him to the hospital.

Can we call these rescuers heroes? Can a convicted felon ever rise to that lofty status? Not in the eyes of prison staff - they will always be scum, but the angels rejoiced and God was glorified in those critical moments when character was tested and His child was in mortal danger.

I may have been on the far side of the factory when the emergency occurred, and though I had no part in the rescue, I am proud to be part of that mixed bunch. They are a testament to what lies within - good and caring citizens. The question is: How can the system extend honorable acts from a few moments to a lifetime? Answer: It can't. Just like the safety cover, the system fails. Only God can change and perpetuate a man's heart.

Happy New Year to all and to the man who is convalescing.  
Thanks for checking in on me.

Cordially,



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Novel: A Thundering Wind (Amazon.com)