

THE NEW KID ON THE BLOCK

xqiv

SINCE MY FIRST DAY IN JAIL ONLY CONSISTED OF BEING LOCKED UP IN A ONE MAN CELL WITH NOTHING MORE THAN A THICK BLANKET, TOILET, SINK AND A 6" X 6" WINDOW IN THE DOOR, SLEEP WAS ABOUT THE ONLY THING I HAD AN INTEREST IN DOING. MY PREVIOUS DAY HAD BEEN A VERY STRESSFUL ONE INDEED & MY MIND WAS STILL IN A SPIN.

THE NEXT MORNING I'M CUFFED UP & ESCORTED TO MORE PERMANENT LIVING ARRANGEMENTS. MY NEW SURROUNDINGS CONSIST OF A 30' X 50' DAY ROOM WITH TABLES & SEATS FIXED TO THE FLOOR. A PHONE & T.V. ARE ON THE FRONT WALL, A SHOWER ON EACH SIDE WALL AND FOUR 6 MAN CELLS ALONG THE REAR. I'M AMONGST A WHOLE DIFFERENT BREED OF INDIVIDUALS THAT OUT ON THE STREETS I NEVER HAD A REASON TO ASSOCIATE WITH. SO I FIGURE THE BEST THING TO DO IS TO JUST SIT BACK, WATCH, ANALYZE AND LEARN.

AFTER A COUPLE OF HOURS OF GETTING ADJUSTED, I REALIZE EVERYBODY SEEMS TO BE PRETTY LAYED BACK & NOBODY HAS GIVEN ME A HARD TIME.... (LET ME REPHRASE THAT) NOBODY HAS GOTTEN ON MY CASE ABOUT ANYTHING. UNFORTUNATELY, DUE TO THE CALLING OF MOTHER NATURE, ALL OF THAT IS ABOUT TO CHANGE. I REALLY HATE TO BE AN INCONVENIENCE, BUT WHEN YOU GOTTA GO, YOU GOTTA GO. MY ONLY PROBLEM IS THAT THIS IS MY FIRST DAY IN HERE AND SO FAR EVERYBODY IN THE CELL HAS JUST TAKEN PISSES. SO WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU HAVE TO GO #2? AFTER RECEIVING THE ANSWER TO MY

QUESTION, THE OTHER GUYS IN THE CELL STROLE OUT TO THE DAY ROOM TO WATCH SOME T.V. I TIE A SHEET ACROSS THE BARS FOR A LITTLE PRIVACY AND ONCE I'M ON THE TOILET RETURN THE MESSAGE MOTHER NATURE HAD LEFT. I'M ENJOYING THE PEACE & TRANQUILITY THAT ONLY A MOVEMENT LIKE THIS CAN BRING ABOUT, WHEN MY ECSTASY IS SUDDENLY INTERRUPTED BY A GUY YELLING, "FLUSH IT!" NOT UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT TO THIS 1% REQUEST 99% DEMAND OF A PHRASE, I SIMPLY YELL BACK, "BUT I'M NOT DONE YET." I IMMEDIATELY HEAR AGAIN, BUT THIS TIME IN GROUP FORM, "FLUSH IT!" THEN IT DAWNS ON ME WHAT THE ACTUAL REASON IS FOR THEIR REQUEST. BUT THE GYMNASTIC CONFIGURATION I WOULD HAVE TO PERFORM TO PUSH THAT BUTTON OVER THE SINK ON THE WALL 2 FEET BEHIND MY HEAD, WHILE SITTING WITH MY PANTS AROUND MY ANKLES, SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE TO ACCOMPLISH. SO I YELL BACK, "BUT I CAN'T REACH THE BUTTON!" APPARENTLY EVEN MY NEW EXCUSE IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH FOR THESE NOSTRILE HAIR CURLING MANIACKS. SO I HEAR ONCE AGAIN, "FLUSH IT!" I LOOK DOWN BETWEEN MY LEGS AT THE BOWL OF WATER & A WELL CHURNED DINNER, WHEN THE THOUGHT OF WHAT THIS BLENDER DID EARLIER WHEN I TOOK A PISS COMES BACK TO MEMORY. "HECK NO!" I THINK TO MYSELF. THIS 2 GALLON PIRANHA IS GONNA EAT ME ALIVE! "FLUSH IT!" AFTER ASKING GOD TO FORGIVE ME OF ANY RECENT SINS, I LIFT MY PRIVATES WITH MY LEFT HAND, THEN WITH MY RIGHT I REACH BACK IN SOME MISCONSTRUED CONFIGURATION & PUSH THE BUTTON. AFTER THE WATER HAS SETTLED ONCE AGAIN, AND I FIND THAT I'M STILL DRY & IN ONE PIECE, I THINK TO

MYSELF, "MAN I WISH I HAD THOUGHT TO DO THAT OUT ON THE STREETS. I WOULD HAVE SAVED A BUNDLE ON GAS MASKS FOR THE REST OF THE FAMILY."

EVEN THOUGH IT'S STILL MY FIRST DAY IN HERE, I FIND THAT WITH AS MANY TIMES AS YOU HAVE GUYS MOVING IN & MOVING OUT, FOR WHATEVER REASON, IT'S REAL EASY TO COME ACROSS A WIDE VARIETY OF INDIVIDUALS IN JAIL. MY CHANCE TO MEET ONE IN THE CATAGORY OF DESPERATELY ADDICTED MOVES INTO OUR QUOD A COUPLE OF HOURS AFTER MY CONFRONTATION WITH THE TOILET. HE COMES OVER TO THE ONLY 6 MAN CELL WITH AN AVAILABLE BUNK, DROPS HIS STUFF, AND INFORMS THOSE OF US IN THERE THAT HE HAS TO DO A #2 REAL BAD. AFTER WE STEP OUT INTO THE DAY ROOM TO WATCH T.V., HE HANGS A SHEET ON THE RAILS & UNLOADS. (HE OBVIOUSLY ISN'T IN NEED OF THE TRAINING I RECEIVED EARLIER) ABOUT 10 MINUTES LATER WE SEE THE SHEET COME DOWN & HEAD BACK FOR OUR BUNKS. UPON PASSING THE NEW GUY IN THE CELL, I SEE HIM AT THE DESK BUSILY UNWRAPPING SOME PLASTIC WRAP FROM A BIG HUNK OF TABACCO THE SIZE & SHAPE OF A HUGE CIGAR. I THINK TO MYSELF, "WAIT A MINUTE. I THOUGHT WE COULDN'T HAVE TABACCO PRODUCTS. HOW DID HE GET THAT IN HERE?" THEN IT SUDDENLY DAWNS ON ME WHAT ELSE IT'S THE SIZE AND SHAPE OF. "OH MY GOD! NO WONDER HE HAD TO GO SO BAD." UPON SEEING A STUNT LIKE THIS FOR THE FIRST TIME, I WAS LEFT IN A STATE OF PERPLEXITY. BUT NOW THAT THE YEARS HAVE PASSED, I'VE HAD TIME TO LEARN MORE ABOUT MY NEW COMPANY. UNFORTUNATELY, THE FOREMOST THOUGHT THAT STILL COMES TO MIND WHENEVER I HEAR OF TACTICS LIKE THIS IS HOW

IT'S REALLY A SHAME TO SEE THE TIME & DETERMINATION SOME OF THESE GUYS HAVE, THAT COULD BE USED EFFECTIVELY, GET WASTED ON SOMETHING LIKE STICKING A HUNK OF TABACCO UP THEIR BUTT SO THEY CAN HAVE A SMOKE LATER. IN ALL HONESTY I CAN'T SIT HERE AND SAY THAT I HAVE NEVER THOUGHT OF USING THIS MANEUVER TO BRING SOMETHING IN THAT I COULD ENJOY LATER. BUT I CERTAINLY WOULDN'T WASTE THE TIME & EFFORT FOR SOME MEASLY CIGARETTES. UNFORTUNATELY, I DON'T THINK MY CHANCES OF FITTING A LARGE PEPPERONI PAN PIZZA & A PITCHER OF MOUNTAIN DEW UP MY RECTUM ARE PROBABLE.

IT'S COMING ON 5 P.M. WHEN I REALIZE THAT I HAVEN'T TAKEN A SHOWER IN TWO DAYS. I START TO UNDRESS WHEN THE QUESTION POPS INTO MY HEAD, "JUST HOW MUCH DO I TAKE OFF HERE, BEFORE MAKING THE 30' TRIP THROUGH THE DAY ROOM TO THE ONLY AVAILABLE SHOWER AT THE OTHER END?" I ANALYZE THE SITUATION. WOULD I APPEAR TO HAVE NO SELF-ESTEEM IF I WORE MY PANTS? WOULD I APPEAR TO HAVE LITTLE SELF-ESTEEM IF I WORE MY BOXERS? WOULD I APPEAR TO BE A TRANSVESTITE IF I ONLY WORE A TOWEL AROUND MY WAIST? OH, GIVE ME A BREAK! WE'RE ALL MATURE GUYS HERE, RIGHT? IT'S NOT LIKE I WORE ANYTHING TO THE SHOWERS BACK IN SCHOOL. SO AFTER STRIPPING COMPLETELY DOWN, I GRAB MY SOAP, THROW MY TOWEL OVER MY SHOULDER AND HEAD FOR THE SHOWER. AFTER ENTERING THE SINGLE MAN SHOWER & PULLING THE DRAPE, I'M IMMEDIATELY STARTLED BY THE SOUND OF A GUY SLIDING ABOUT 10' ON THE FLOOR & CRASHING INTO THE

WALL NEXT TO THE SHOWER. MY PANTS SUDDENLY GET THRUST THROUGH THE DRAPE WHILE I'M HEARING A GUY SHOUT, "NO, NO, NO, MAN! THAT'S NOT HOW YOU DO IT IN HERE!" HOW THAT GUY RAN ALL THE WAY TO MY CELL, GOT MY PANTS, AND RAN BACK DOWN TO THE SHOWER THAT FAST I'LL NEVER KNOW. BUT I'VE ALWAYS APPRECIATED THE INFORMATION.

WHEN THE 6 O'CLOCK NEWS COMES ON IT SEEMS TO ATTRACT EVERYONE LIKE A MAGNET. I HAVE AN INTEREST AS WELL, UNTIL SOME GUYS LET ME KNOW I'VE BEEN ON FOR THE LAST COUPLE OF DAYS. I FIGURE MAYBE I BETTER JUST STAY ON MY COT BACK IN MY CELL AND WATCH FROM A DISTANCE THROUGH THE BARS. FROM THIS DISTANCE I'M NOT ABLE TO HEAR MUCH, BUT WHEN MY MUG SHOT APPEARS ON THE SCREEN IT LEAVES ME WITH NO DOUBT AS TO WHAT THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT. WHEN THE STORY IS OVER, ABOUT HALF THE GUYS LOOK BACK AT ME WITH TOTALLY EXPRESS-IONLESS FACES. IT'S THE KIND OF TIME WHEN YOU WISH TO GOD YOU HAD THE ABILITY TO READ MINDS. I THEN NOTICE 4 OF THE GUYS GET UP AND START WALKING TO MY CELL. AFTER MAKING THEIR WAY IN, EACH ONE HAS A SEAT SOMEWHERE, EACH WITH HIS EYES FOCUSED ON ME. ALL I CAN DO IS HOPE THAT THIS IS JUST SOME FRIENDLY INFORMATION. THE GUY DIRECTLY IN FRONT OF ME STARTS SHAKING HIS HEAD SLOWLY & SAYS, "LOOK MAN, YOU'RE NOT GETTING OUT OF HERE ANYTIME SOON. YOU'VE GOT SOME STUFF TO LEARN. #1 YOU AIN'T GOT NO FRIENDS IN PRISON. ALSO, WHEN YOU GO INTO PRISON ALL YOU HAVE IS YOUR WORD, DON'T MESS IT UP. AND, THERE'S 3 MAIN THINGS THAT YOU STAY AWAY FROM IN PRISON: DRUGS,

GAMBLING, AND A SISSY." BETWEEN THE 4 OF THEM, THERE WAS A LOT OF OTHER BITS & PIECES OF INFORMATION. BUT THESE FIRST FEW ITEMS ARE THE ONES THAT I'VE HAD NO PROBLEM REMEMBERING.

NOW THAT EVENING HAS ARRIVED I FIGURE NOT TOO MUCH MORE EXCITING CAN HAPPEN. SO I SIT DOWN AT ONE OF THE TABLES TO DRAW ONE OF MY MAZES, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME ANALYZE MY SURROUNDINGS. I SEE THAT THE ONLY SOURCE FOR AN OUTSIDE VIEW IS A 6" x 30" WINDOW IN EACH OF THE 4 CELLS. THEN ON THE OTHER SIDE ARE LARGE SECTIONS OF SAFETY GLASS GOING ALMOST THE FULL LENGTH OF THE QUOD. THESE GIVE A VIEW OF THE OFFICERS CONTROL ROOM AND A HALLWAY. A LITTLE MORE TIME OF WATCHING REVEALS THE PASSING OF A PRISONER MOPPING THE HALL. THIS DOES LITTLE TO BREAK THE MONOTONY, BUT AN OFFICER WALKING BY CAN CAUSE SOME WORRY TO THOSE JUST NATURALLY GETTING INTO TROUBLE. IT CAN ALSO CAUSE THOSE WHO ARE ALWAYS WANTING SOMETHING TO START WAVING THEIR ARMS & YELLING TO GET HIS ATTENTION. A LITTLE WHILE LATER I HAPPEN TO TAKE A GLANCE AROUND FROM MY DRAWING JUST IN TIME TO SEE A COUPLE OF OFFICERS ESCORTING A PRISONER DOWN THE HALL WHO'S WEARING NOTHING BUT BOXERS. MY VISION IS SUDDENLY BLURRED BY THE STAMPEDE OF ABOUT 15 PRISONERS ALL RUNNING FOR THE WINDOWS. ONCE ARRIVING TO THE GLASS, THEY ALL START GOING INTO A CRAZY ACT OF WHISTLING, BARKING, DROOLING, PLEADING, & DREAMING. MY SECOND GLANCE REVEALS TO ME THAT THE INMATE BEING ESCORTED IS A MALE THAT WOULD RATHER BE A FEMALE.

YES, THAT'S RIGHT, IT HAD 3 BULGES NOT JUST ONE. NOW I REALIZE WHAT ALL THE UPRISING WAS ABOUT. (HAHA) ONCE THE SHOW HAS PASSED THE PRISONERS PICK THEIR TONGUES UP OFF THE FLOOR & RETURN TO THEIR PREVIOUS ACTIVITIES. I SIT BACK WITH A COUPLE OF NEW THOUGHTS TO PONDER IN MY MIND. 1ST, HOW COULD I HAVE EVER DOUBTED EVOLUTION. 2ND, WHO'S THE POOR GUY WHO HAS TO CLEAN THOSE WINDOWS IN THE MORNING. I GUESS THE MOST DIFFICULT THING ABOUT A SITUATION SUCH AS THIS IS LEARNING TO ACCEPT. I DON'T MEAN ACCEPTING THE FACT THAT GUYS WANT TO CHANGE THEIR SEX, I MEAN ACCEPTING THE FACT THAT THE MOST PERFECT SET OF C-CUPS I'VE EVER SEEN IN MY LIFE WERE ON THE CHEST OF A GUY.

THE CLOCK FINALLY READS 11 P.M. AND WE'RE ALL INFORMED THAT IT'S TIME TO LOCK UP FOR THE NIGHT. AS I LAY BACK ON MY BUNK, I FEEL GOOD KNOWING I'VE LEARNED SOME IMPORTANT THINGS ON THIS DAY. BUT THEN I REMIND MYSELF THAT I STILL HAVE A LOT MORE TO LEARN AND I'M PRETTY MUCH CONVINCED I'LL HAVE PLENTY OF TIME TO DO SO.

AS THE YEARS HAVE PASSED BY, MY WATCHING AND ANALYZING HAS TAUGHT ME A FEW THINGS THAT SEEM TO BE THE MOST INEVITABLE ABOUT THIS NEW WORLD I'VE ENTERED. IT'S A WORLD WERE...

... YOU NEVER KNOW WHO YOU CAN TRUST, IF ANYBODY.

... THE ONLY DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MANY OF THE OFFICERS AND THE INMATES IS THE FACT THAT THE OFFICERS JUST HAVEN'T GOTTEN CAUGHT YET.

- ... YOU'RE IMMEDIATELY THOUGHT TO BE JUST LIKE EVERYBODY ELSE, NO MATTER WHAT TYPE OF PERSON YOU ARE, WHETHER IT BE BY THE OFFICERS, PRISONERS, OR EVEN THE NURSES.
- ... YOU'RE SURROUNDED BY HUNDREDS OF GUYS WHO DON'T KNOW, DO TO THE WAY THEY'VE BEEN BROUGHT UP, WHAT IT MEANS TO DO ANYTHING UNLESS THEY PERSONALLY WILL PROFIT FROM IT.

THE LIST GOES ON, BUT I DON'T WISH TO BORE YOU WITH MY PROBLEMS. JUST ALLOW ME TO OFFER YOU A COUPLE OF WORDS OF FRIENDLY ADVICE, "STAY OUT!"

A handwritten signature or set of initials, possibly 'CJD', written in a cursive style.