

## BACK AGAIN.....

Sorry that I have been missing in action again, but I have been in the fight of my life with the Department of Corrections in California. I was recently transferred to a new prison in Chowchilla, California and I thought things were going to be good, well the Department decided that they did not want Trans Inmates at this facility so all Trans had to go, so I decided to get off hormone treatment and mistakenly thought that would solve the problem. I was informed by my Correctional Counselor that I was not allowed to decide if I wanted to continue being Trans and that I would have to go, regardless if I was on hormones or not. Now anyone who has had any dealings with the department knows that Trans Inmates are not viewed on favorably in this MR.(Macho) enviroment. There are many reasons I did not want to leave this place one of the major reasons is that they offer a variety of Vocational trainings for Inmates including Cosmetology. Of course That is what i signed up for. anyway it was a long 3 month fight of appeals going back and fourth, I actually went and cut all of my hair off (short and sassy) and yes Im ROCKIN IT. Literally one day before I was to be put up for Transfer I met someone here who was sympthetic to my cause and I was able to stay. Im in a low security prison that does not look like a prison. It is actually kind of beautiful here. I'm currently on the waiting list for Cosmetology school which by the way is not offered anywhere else in this state. I can breathe and it is peaceful....

I found that the hormones were not my identity! I cherished ny hair as most Trans MtF do, My hair was not my identiy. Im still TERRA, I can still fight for Trans rights. I can still be who I choose to be and I came out of this fight alot stronger and smarter. I had to go to great lengths to get what I wanted and be afforded the opportunity to rehabilitate in a safe enviroment. The Girls who were not so lucky are now living in a dorm type enviroment with 200 other Inmates, open showers open toilets and are now exposed to all kinds of abuse. It is not pretty. I know that prison is not supposed to be a picnic but you would think that someone would have some common sense when dealing with Trans Inmates. Put all the Trans in an open door enviroment with rapisit and sex offenders and then act surprised when they are raped and sometimes worse. It is easy to get frustrated and side tracked. The Department of Corrections has finally at least begun acknowledging that Trans exist as they have started to issue Bras to Trans Inmates. It is a greats first step but there is a long way to go. There is a woman names Assata Shakur(google it) who wrote lots of stuff actually but there was one piece that struck a cord with me..