

In 1988. I committed a horrible act upon my fellow man. I took his life. I was offered a deal (plea bargain) that would allow me some benefit. If I plead guilty to first degree murder. I would get out of prison in 15 years as long as I was not the cause of any major problem in prison. I accepted the deal and was sent to some of the most dangerous places on the planet. Like I was being set up to be killed before I could reach the 15 years. Yet, after I made it. I was not released. I was placed in storage.

The life of a Black man is less than that of an animal in this country. Here is my brief story of my prison stay. How I survived and what I experienced going from...

WARZONE TO WAREHOUSE

In 1990, at the young age of 22 years old. I arrived at Pelican Bay State Prison (The Tip Of The World). At the time it was the newest state of the art, high security level 4 prison. (Level 4 is the highest level prison in California. 4 is max.). The design of this prison was meant to allow correctional officers easier control of the population. It was filled with what the powers to be, deemed as the most violent and most dangerous prisoners in the state. It lived up to it's notoriety.

My first week at the The Bay. I witnessed my first look at prison violence my first day on the yard. Two south sider mexicans (Mexicans that are affiliated with gangs from southern californnia) attacked one northener (Mexican affiliated with gangs from northern californnia). The one victim had no chance. He was cornered in at the meeting of the fences at a V point. The fences divide the yards into 4 smaller yards. This particular yard for building 1&2 was named Desert Storm. Because of it's nomad appeal and the time. The yard had no recreation at all. No weights, basketball, soccer, grass, nothing! Just open space an opportunity for great violence. Buildins 3&4 'Beirut', 5&6 'Vietnam', 7&8 'The Tombs'. This is the structure of B-YARD at the Bay.

As the 2 mexicans systematicly stabbed the northener. I slowly turned and walked away from the attack. Careful not to draw attention to the comotion because of MY movements (To bring attention to such things is concidered dry snitching. Snitches find themselves in the same perdicament as the northener in this attack). He tried to ward off his attckers. It was no use and things were about to get worse.

The guards finally seen the attack. They put the yard down. I managed to get only about 30 feet away from the attak, before I had to get down. Anyone still standing is deemed combative. Only the three mexicans are standing now. Gun shots are comming from 4 different gunners and 4 different locations. I see bullets hit the ground 3 feet from me, then 2 feet. Afraid, I began to roll on the ground to get further from the attack. Bullets chace me. They also are hitting the mexicans, but it seems as though 1 or 2 of the gunners are targeting ME! Bullets chase me as I roll further away. Now 3 other people are rolling along with me. Bullets are hitting the ground where we 3 previously were. Making it clear that we are targets also.

Shooting finally stops when the stabbing victim falls to the ground. the 2 stabbers calmly lay down on the ground away from the victim. The guards run in and cuff the 2 stabbing mexicans. Medical technicians run in and gurney away the lifeless body of the victim. The guards also come to us 3 that were rolling away from bullets. Me

another black guy and a white guy. The police cuffed me and the other black guy and taken us to the police station. We were placed in the standing cage for hours. Until finally were questioned as to why we were rolling away from the attack? Can you imagine that question? WHY WERE WE MOVING AWAY FROM BULLETS!!??

Anyway, we explained to the Sergeant that the bullets were closer to us than the fighting and we were trying not to get hit. The sgt. looked at us both and said that we were no longer at a place where we can make choices for ourselves. Procedure says to get the fuck down and don't move. We tried to tell him that had we not moved we too would have been shot. He looked at us both and said, I don't give a fuck. I would just be bagging up 2 dead niggers and 1 beaner. Why you think I didn't cuff the white boy? The next time I see you not following procedure. I will make sure that you are booked as a participant". It was clear to us that we were no longer in Kansas and our lives meant nothing here. All we have is ourselves and it is far better to be fighting a murder you did not commit, than to be shot dead for a fight you did not fight.

A day later we all got the news. 2 mexicans charged with the murder of another. The victim was stabbed numerous times and died of a gunshot wound to the neck. PELICAN BAY! The beginning of my higher education. Class began on day one. Here you don't pass your exams. You survive them. For those that have never been to prison before. Like myself. The structure can be confusing. Once you step beyond the walls, you learn quickly and that which seemed abnormal becomes clear and makes sense.

The very first thing you learn is that the pen is political and there are 4 major parties. BLACKS; WHITES; MEXICANS; AND OTHERS. (Others consist of asians, central & southern americans, mexicans not gang affiliated with american gangs, islanders, native americans, etc.. Anyone that claims to not be black, white or american born mexicans). Each group also divides it's self. North or South California. Then further separate themselves with gang affiliation. A person can limit his circle from thousands to 10. The larger your small circle the more power you have. Check it. A black man starts with ALL BLACKS. He'll break his circle down to first blacks from southern california; then to Los Angeles California, then Bloods in L.A.; then a particular blood gang. His gang can have only 10 people on the yard. That would be a large group at some places and small at others.

Most people take themselves to this limit because more than likely. They will end up hanging out with the very same people they were with on the streets. If new people come to prison year after one guy has been in prison. Chances are he is a child from the older folks one once knew.

Even religious groups segregate themselves. There is safety in numbers in prison. I personally was a member of the most exclusive club in prison...The NON-AFFILIATES. This means I am not a party to any gang. Therefore, I have protection from the blacks only from other Race parties. Yet, I am vulnerable and alone within the blacks. Meaning, If I had a problem with a person from a gang, and he decided to get others involved. I had no real recourse and could be subject to losing out. Even if I was in the right. Strange? Confusing? Complicated? Racist? No doubt, but it is the california prison way.

Needless to say, I walked this highly volatile yard, for all intents and purposes..alone. If I got into trouble. I was completely by myself. No mommy. No daddy. No body. I had only myself and God as I understood him and at that time I understood him to be very upset with me and not really caring what happens to me. I was on my way to becoming a very bad member of the prison population. I beginning to become the worse part of my surroundings. It was not until I met a couple brothers who took the time to guide me and show me how to do my time best for myself. To just be myself and not allow anyone to take advantage of me. Weakness in prison is like blood in the ocean. All the sharks are coming to get a piece of the action.

Sadly to say, prison resmbles another institutional life style in america. It's called HIGH SCHOOL. The only difference between prison and high school is that all ages are in prison together and the level of violence is grown. Other than that, there is no real differnce.

Anyway, my goal is only to stay alive and out of trouble. Both will be difficult. Living with people sentenced to terms like: Double Life, Triple Life, Life Without the Possibility Of Parole (LWOP), 200 years with half time, 25 years to life plus 50 years. It goes on and on and on. People that know for a fact they will die in prison. The only question is when and how? People with nothing to lose and nothing to gain. This is truly "Trouble's House" and she is ALWAYS home!

Fortunately, I survived The Bay without getting hurt or having to hurt anyone. I got a trnsfer to another level 4 prison. This is another new prison just opening. I had not heard anything about this one. I figured it had to be better and safer than the WARZONE at the T^hip Of The World.

April 1992, one week before the Rodney King Riots. I transfered to Calipatria State Prison. Culture Shock!? The Bay stayed cold or rained 9 months out of the year. Calipat was hot 9 months of the year. In a 24 hour period. I went from a rainy 50's to a hot ass 118's! I was naive to think this prison would be better. I learned there is no such thing as a better prison. This prison was worse in some ways. This for example. The violence was the same. Yet, you had to get down and the asphalt generated heat at 125's. People risked getting shot by just getting up and getting to some shade. Sometimes when the yard resumed. A few people didn't get up do to passing out from the heat. Heat strokes were common.

At the end of the day. This is still another maximum security prison. Just like all maximum prisons, violence erupts and wars are to be had. Especially in the summer. The heat makes people crazy! It took just the first summer for Calipatria to get it's new name, "KILLA-PATRIA". Death became a familure companion to prison life. Getting use to having a person around is risky. That person could be gone the next day. The victim or perpatrator of violence. Or just so scared he leaves.

To stay out of trouble for the most part. You have to find something to do with your time. I choose to play sports. I played in the basketball leagues. I was on the winning team in the very first league in The Bay and here at Killapatria. (B-Yard the bay, D-Yard the pat.). The winning team got 10 dollars on their account and the runners up got 5 bucks. This ofcourse only works if you can program. This was a problem at The Pat. The wars were so vicious that the lock downs had to be sever.

The first lock down the summer of '92 went by fast. Because we had the Olympics to get us through. From early june to late September we lived in our cells and had nothing coming.

We were finally let off lock down. We programed for 2 weeks. The war was not over. More killings and we were back on lock down until late January of '93. Multiple wars simutaniouly going on. Kept the prison on state of emergncy lock down. The East Coast Crips and the Raymond Crips had their beef with the police, the southsiders beeing with the whites. Then the southsiders beef with the blacks. Whites always run and support the southsiders. So when the war between the blacks and southsiders was over, so began the war between the blacks and the whites.

These wars changed the design in the yards to this day. No longer is there one large yard with easy access to the police station. Now the yard is broke into at least 2 yards and you need the police to let you to the police station. This also terminated dayroom activities at the Pat. My stay here at this violent place taught me how to live with myself for long periods of time. I also had the same cellie for a good 4 years. We learned together and taught eachother. We grew in our spirituality and learned to become autodidactic. 5 years at Killa-patria. 1992 to 1997. Time to go.

Tehachapi IV-B. A strange place. Here the prison guards were more criminal that the prisoners. So many were arrested for so many different things. They ranged from Trafficing drugs into prison; child molestation; lewd conduct; stealing and selling CDC arms and artillery; planting weapons on prisoners do to grudges; to murder. (A male and female guard had a relationship together. They where charged with killing her husband for the insurance money. I heard they beat that rap also).

The cycle of criminality was prepetuated in this prison by the police themselves. The police would KNOW a stabbing is about to occur. They would not prevent it from happening. They would wait until it occured. It's harder to prove conspiracy to commit assault. It's easier to prosecute the actual act. Free prisoners are not conducive to the prison union or the companies benefitting from the prison industry. This was not as violent a place as the others. It had it's share. For the most part this was a prison focused on PIA. making money for the man. This is all most were concern with. I stayed here only a year. In 1998. I arrived at Lancaster State Prison. This place was no different than the last. Yet, people here were more tolerant of each other. I believe it was because people appreciated being close to where their families lived. The prison was real convient for families that lived in L.A. The train and bus made it real easy to come see your loved ones. So when problems happened here. You really had to piss someone off.

It was here I really got to know my wife. It is also here we got married. She would visit every other week. We would talk, eat lunch and dicuss our future plans. Then prison happened again. Taking control of my life. Because I had been behaving and staying out of trouble. My points were dropping. At this time they dropped to a level 3. So as a reward for my being a modle prisoner. I was punished by being forced to leave the closeness of my family and move to a prison further away. I had spent 12 years on the 4 yard. I had become accustom to the stressful way of living. Now I was moving to a medium security prison. Believing I had only a couple more years to do. I and my wife figured we could handle this until then. So, off I went. Back to the desert in Blythe, California. To a level 3 prison called Ironwood.

2001 I seen so many faces that I had seen in the previous prisons I had lived. Most of them were not changed. They were just good at not getting caught. So the violence still reigns supreme. And it did. B-Yard was the most violent yard and we had in one year the blacks and the southsiders had 2 wars. Not to mention the self cleaning of their own.

People talk about the danger difference by the levels. I understand the propensity for violence may be greater on a higher level than the lower. Even the viciousness of violence may be greater. However, I know one thing is for sure. It don't matter what level one is at If that person was to get stabbed. It is going to hurt the same no matter where he is at! Ironwood was really no different than the higher level's I had lived. In some respects, it was worse. Mainly because the police here had no respect for the danger they lived with. The police on the higher levels treated the prisoners with respect for the most part. Because they knew that anyone could really commit great bodily harm to them at any time. Most of the police have seen it and experinced it first hand. This can not be sadi for most of the police at level 3's.

Most of the police came from the San Joaquin Vally College. Wnen they learn to be correctional officers. This was the worse thing that could have happened. It's like going to school to become a gang-member. This shit just aint right. Anyway, police that have never wittnessed the brute violence that could be bestowed upon them Tend to carry their own agenda. Most where bullied in school by people like the ones they are paid to watch. Some of them may have been victimized and want to get retrobution on a daily baisis. Treating prisoners like they are worthless. This only adds to the tention an when it blows up...It blows up. If the police survive these attacks, they now become more respectful, or not, Some become worse!

What truly made Ironwood worse for me is the disrespect they would bestow upon prisoner's family when they would come to visit. After driving hundreds of miles in the over 100' heat. They now are subject to long unneccessary lines, petty trips with dress codes, unnesscessary strip searches of peoples grandparents. Even some of the police try to make sexual advances on peoples wives and mothers. They would start rumors and spread lies just to make the woman angry at her visitee. For me, that was the hard part. Having to restrain myself from not acting on what I want when the police would come and tell me that I cannot hold the hand of my wife. She travled all this way and we cannot hold hands? This is MY WIFE...(o.k., I'm calm :)

Discouraging people from visiting was a tactic used by CDC at Ironwood. I hated it! Fortunately, Ironwood was the last of the really violent prisons I lived in. I was still a good model peisoner. (Maybe next time I will share what all I did with my prison time to become the man I am today). Behaving allowed my points to drop again. I was now transfered next door to Chuckawalla State Prison Level 2. After 17 years living in a cage/cell. I was now moved to an open dayroom type setting.

After living 15 years under the gun I now was free to move as I wished without the watchful eye of the gunner. The majority of the people here were thoes who have life sentences and have been behaving for a long period of time, and people that have come to prison with young time (Between 1year and 10 year sentences). Most of the people here can see the end of the tunnel for their stay in prison. So, wars are very much non-existing. This place was a kind of resort...at first glance. I decribed this experince like this. Of all the dangerous prisons I had been to. Had I not learned my lesson from them and changed my life. My stay at Chuckies house did the job itself. When I was sentence. If they really wanted to punish me. All they had to do was send me straight here to The House of Disorder.

I was sent to the most dangerous prisons on the planet. At a young age. I grew up with killers and kidnappers as my friends and mealtime company. I witnessed violence as a recreational passtime. Causing my CTSD (Current Traumatic Stress Disorder). While currently suffering from my disorder. I am transfered to the worse place ever. Dealing with people with psycological impairments. Having to program in a prison that is unable to handle it's overcrowded population. You cannot imagine the chaos. This is the perfect mixture for the worse violence the state has ever seen. That in itself is what keeps it from really happening.

We are living in cubicals. They are designed to house females with only 5 single bunks per cube. With 24 cubes. Each building should house only 120 females. The buildings have way past that shit. I moved in and the cube had 4 triple bunks and 3 double bunks. Making it a total of 18 men in a small ass space. Some cubes had 20 men in them. The building had an average of 210 men. Sharing 16 showers, 8 shitters and 6 pissers. You talking 'bout lines. You cant live like this and not be a little crazy.

Imagine if you will. Let's take a regular double bunk bec your kids sleep on. Now, let's add another bed in between the upper and lower beds. Then tell three grown as men to share that. Then at arms reach you put another triple bunk, add 3 more men and the tell them to share that space between the 6 of them. Oh my God! I almost lost it. On top of that. People that have been in prison for more than 2 decades. You tell them to take all their possessions they have in the world and store them in a locker that is no bigger that an airport locker.

I took a trip to Avenal State Prison in 2007 and then sent back to Chuckies house in 2009 where I have been ever since. Things are a little better now. It took the deaths of many prisoners to get the state to fianally take care of us as though we were people. Even though they resisted. Nevertheless, I wont bore you with what you already know of California's overcrowding reduction order. I want to focus on this aspect. Here in these level 2's we are just sitting here. There are no real programs. All self help are truly SELf HELp. People here are simply being stored. Stacked on top of one another like packages. Given a number burried **Behind The Wall**. There is no real effort for rehabilitation. Yet they fleece the public as though they are correcting us.

I was supposed to do 15 years and go home. Instead, I was sent to prisons I was not ment to survived. However, I did. Now I am stored in a WAREHOUSE they call a prison. Being continously tortured and denied my constitutioal rights. We prisoners are being packed in these ware-houses like boxes. refusing to let us out because we are job security. We are treated worse than animals by the police and some of the public

Did you know in the state of California in the 2008 voting year. The people of CA passed a bill that demanded that animals be able to live their lives freely before they are slaughtered. A few propo-sitions later the same people voted to increase a prisoners sentence up to 15 extra years even if they have served many years passed their original time senteced to by the court.

Animals seem to have more organizations fighting for them then there are for people who are suffering at the hands of their overseers. Animals have their habitat made to give them MOKE space. Where we have to beg for the space we intitled to as humans. Animals are fed and cared for with the bst of things. We are fed the bare minimum to be kept alive and only get medical when really sick.

In the state of California. Everyone use to be able to have family visits. Where one could earn the privledge of spending quality time with his family. To maintain and strengthen family ties. They have since taken this privilege from most of the population. Prisoners are treated with the most disrespect of any people on the planet. Most prisoners are returning to the very same people they believe are allowing the inhumane treatment to happen. It is hard to accept when this is considered a civilized society. How civilized can one be when they treat their most needed class of the population with less care than animals? Animals are allowed to adhere to their natural way of life. They are even ecouraged to mate and procreate with themselves. Prisoners are restricted from adhereing to their nature. Then are punished when they react as any creature being forced to be other than what they art created to be.

Well, here I am. Still in prison. I not only survived the most dangerous prisons in CA. I did so without contribituing to the problem I did so while making myself a better man. I did it by not causing major problems in prison. I lived threw the WARZONES (As we say. I completed my tour of duty). I earned the right to go home by fulfill- ing my end of my plea agreement. However, the state wants to hold on to me and house me in their WAREHOUSES, for no other reason than because they believe they can. I refuse to allow them to bury me BEHIND THESE WALLS.

I believe the worse of man is still more valuable then the best of animals. That's not to say animals are unworthy. I just believe humanity is owed to humans first. My question to you is...AM I WORTHY? In Romans 12:3 of the Holy Bible. Paul says, "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." I don't think of myself being higher than any other man or woman. How- ever, I do come to every man and woman to support THIS man in his plight.

So I reach out to you, the public. I believe there are people who still care about people and see us as human. At least treat us as equal to animals. If animals can get BILLIONS of dollars to live better. I'm sure I can get help to obtain what I rightly have comming to me. I may not be as cute as a bear cub, or as entertaining as a chimp. I may not be as special as an elephant or as innocent as dolphins. Yet, I do believe I am just as important as all and FOR all of humanity; I am positive I have more to give than all of them comb- ined.

Bondage is cruel in itself, freedom is ment for all man and animals alike. I pray that I did not bore you with this crap. I am just in need of help to get back my life. So that I may be able help the lives of others, before they are lost. Thank you for reading my journey threw the penal system in CA. I pray that all of humanity is healed of it's ill's. May you have a blessed day.

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