

3/16/14

## A Good Day in Prison

I find myself smiling today because I woke up thinking that it was a "Good Day in Prison"! I found it amusing when thinking of the "Big Picture". For some it would be sad and depressing but for me it is amusing. See, in prison I hope for a day without violence. A day without worry of chaos, a day without a riot or a stabbing. For me a good day in prison is knowing I have a cup of coffee to drink, a Top Ramon soup and some crackers as a meal later on if dinner sucks (Which is often! This is prison food we are talking about!) and just hopefully a day where this good old broke down typewriter works through a whole letter or in this case a project like writing for the Blog. So far so good! Even with my little "e & a" looking strange it is still working so I am a happy camper!

A good day in prison. It doesn't take much to give me a smile anymore. Life in prison is so boring with moments of intense chaos and fear and madness and then back to the boredom of prison life. Life in prison is a life that only the person living it can decide how it turns out. It is so easy to get "Caught up" as they say in here. Caught up in the games of drugs and phones. Caught up in the stupidity of other inmates madness and games. Caught up in the game of the Officers and their games and madness that is never ending. Don't get me wrong when it comes to the cops I am realistic. They have a job to do and sadly, I hate admitting this on the average, they do it well. I say they do it well in "How they are "Trained" to act and think". Mostly, it is the "Power Trips" that some tend to go on. That whole "I am in Charge and you are scum" trip a lot of them have. But, so goes prison life! The reality and truth is if you leave them alone and stay out of their way and do what I call the "Whatever you say" look while they talk they will leave you alone.

A good day in prison. I am hoping to actually have a great day in prison soon. I went to work! I am having "Good Days" because I am one of the very lucky few to be transferred to this so called "Honor Yard". I say "So Called" because the Officers refuse to say "Honor" and inmates in the same sentence! Yes, seriously! So they call it a PPF yard. Which stands for "Progressive Programming Facility" or, Honor Yard! Considering the violence and madness and chaos on other yards it really is an Honor Yard. Since I got here about 16 months ago there has been a few fist fights and one stabbing. (Not really a stabbing in my book since the guy who got stabbed walked over to medical and then got a few bandaids!) That is a slow "Day" up at some places like New Folsom where I spent the previous six years. I watched one riot between Hispanics and Blacks go on for a good twenty minutes there. That is fucken scary! Excuse the language but it fits!

The problem with this yard is there are no jobs for new guys. Not something I am used to! I am not the "New Guy"! I have been down 30 + years now and I am NOT a "New Guy"! See, on most yards I was a good guy, kept my nose clean and worked hard and did my job well. In prison that is a big deal. Prison is full of the uneducated and illiterate. So a good clerk, a guy who stays out of trouble, has no problem getting a ~~good~~ job and will quickly move to a good job. On regular yards guys get in trouble ALL THE TIME! So jobs come open and guys move around. Here, Nobody really gets in trouble, so no jobs! Hard to take but considering the violence and chaos on other yards it is tolerable! Just hard to deal with day after day. But... I don't have to take a moment each time I walk out of my cell to work down the list of "What is going on!" See, for most of my life I had to be aware of what was going on. It is life or death at times to know what is going on. So I would have my mental check list of what is going on. Which groups are having problems with whom, Like the Blacks are mad at the whites over unpaid drug debts or a bad drug deal between different factions of blacks or the Northern and Southern Mexicans are at it again or the Skin Heads are having trouble with whoever is breathing! (Sorry, not fans of them!!)

That was something I HAD to do each time I was going to leave my cell. I had to know what was going on or I could walk into the wrong area and end up a victim for no reason other than being a white guy in the wrong area at the wrong time. That is a "Bad Day in Prison!"

Here though, I can walk out and do as I wish. I can go hang out with a black friend "Spoon Jackson" who is a good friend and a very smart man. On most yards in this state if I did that I would be stabbed or at least beaten all because I am white and he is black. We could talk but only casually and quickly. It was a very thin line. Here I can spend hours walking and talking with him. We did that yesterday and it is another reason today is a good day in prison.

Another reason is I am still smiling from my visit last week with my Sister and her Girlfriend, soon to be wife on 8/8/14 thanks to Prop-8! Sorry, I am happy for them! See, visits in prison are precious! Especially with this fucked up, stupid, unreliable and asinine "Appointment System" that CDCR has put into place (costing millions of tax dollars and something I could have done on a junk computer in my cell for free!) that makes it damn near impossible to get an appointment time to see each other. But, they did finally get an appointment after trying since December then finally got an appointment for 2 P.M. (visiting closes at 3!) and even though it was only an hour it was magic and amazing. After 30 years in prison it is



so hard to explain how nice it is to get a visit from anyone but especially family. I have lost most of my family since coming to prison, most without ever speaking to me since coming here. My fault, not theirs! But my little Sister has never gave up on me, she never forgets me and always lets me into her life and the lives of her amazing children who also love me and make my life worth living. This time it was just my Sister Kim and her AMAZING and Beautiful significant other Brooke who is so kind and loving and smart and most important of all, makes my sister happier than ever before! A side subject, I swear, I watch my sister and Brooke and I wonder how anyone and I mean ANYONE could be against Gay Marriage! I had never even really thought about it but after watching these two amazing women look at each other and after reading all their letters I can really see what love is meant to be! Yea, I am pretty happy for them!

So, I write all this and wonder about even posting it! My good friend told me to stop writing and throwing what I wrote away. It is my "Therapy". I love writing but as you can see from my other postings it has been hard lately and in prison it is hard to express what is inside. So I write. It is good for my sanity! It is good for the soul but I wonder so often if it is good to post it! Writing about Wendy has helped me so much and for "me" it has made her unforgettable. That is what I wanted and hoped for. As Beakangeroo posted "your friend will not be forgotten". That is so nice. I honestly wasn't even sure if anything I wrote was being read! Probably not by many but it is still nice. So here I sit once again writing about a "Good day in prison".

See, just like out there prison is just life but in a different and smaller world. I may not be able to control as much of my life but I try very hard to control "Who I am and How I feel". Yea, just <sup>like</sup> all of you out there, life could be much better! I need a job! I am so tired of being broke! The cops are crazy and childish but unlike Wendy, I don't have to worry about them beating and raping me. I am tired of being in prison and figure some day I should be forgiven for a crime I committed at the age of 19! But, I deal with it and find the best in what I can have. It does not take much to have a good day in prison. My typewriter is working so I can write and that makes me very happy! I can walk outside and not worry about riots or stabbings. I have a soup in case dinner sucks so i wont be hungry tonight! Sure, I wish I was rich and could buy lots of goodies and a new typewriter! Hell, lots of people out there want new cars and computers! So yea, it could be better but for today, for right now, "Today is a Good Day in Prison"! Until next time, SMILE!

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