

The Dreary Weapon

It was the morning of August 14, 1998 the beginning of starting my life sentence in jail. Oh my God it was a rough night. I laid under my blanket all night crying. I would just mumble slightly under my breath, I don't even know what happened to my son. I would like to know, Lord. Show me Lord I pray. Next thing I hear count time and wake up at 5:00 am. We had to stand beside our bunkbeds as the jailers counted us.

After they counted us. We remained up; getting ready for our day. We showered with our little hotel soap. We had a list of who cleaned up daily. Whoever cleaned up for that day got the tv. Next the first door slid open, then the second door it was the male trustee and jailer bringing our breakfast. which was nasty. The coffee was dark with no sugar or creamer. Old hard two pieces of sausage, distasteful eggs and grits. In a want to be biscuit.

In my mind I was thinking what the hell I did to deserve this BS. I had forgot all about Christ for a ~~moment~~ moment. Man, what is next. All of certain jailer came in collecting all our blankets, sheets, clothes, and shoes. We had to be quarantined because one of the male inmates came in with the crabs. yo! by the second day, I was tired of all this foolishness but what can I do I am stuck.

The C-cell I was in was a total of 9 women bunk upstairs and 9 downstairs. I mostly knew everyone in the cell. Except for Sofia who was doing 2 years in the County. Also I didn't know this chick named Lynn who was doing 3 years in the County. So my days went somewhat like this for three months in the Decatur County jail. I would play cards with my cousin Laura, friend girls Carolyn, Sweetie. In my other spare time I would study my bible, socialize sometimes, go to bible study on Wednesday last but not least I would watch people come in and out of the county jail very often basically repeat offenders. Sunday's I would have visitation with my family.

Everyday I was in this county jail I dread being in this place. I felt like crawling into hole just dying. I cried myself to sleep every night. What have I done to deserve a life sentence for something I don't know about. Please somebody help me, I begin to question what kind of God would let an innocent person suffer and mother who wants to know what really happened to her son Joshua where does this end?

Oh no who done pissed in these women cereal today. Sofia and Lynn was fighting and cursing each other out. I ought to throw you down the stairs Lynn said. Man I was sleep, finally getting some good sleep. why in the hell I am being woke up to this foolishness. So the jailer came in; handcuffed both of them crazy behind women. Took them to lockdown. I asked my cousin Laura what the fight was over. She said cleaning zip and tv. I was pissed off yo!

Well it's November 1st, 1998. My cousin Laura was waiting to go to prison just like I was. My cousin Laura and friend Carolyn got shipped off to prison in the middle of Sunday night. My cousin and I had never been in trouble with the law. Now we both headed off to prison, wow! this is crazy; I must say. Laura hugged me; she said good bye that Sunday night. She said hopefully we will meet up again on this journey. Department of Correction shipped her to Metro State Prison diagnostic where she remained for three weeks. By the time I got shipped in December, 1998 to Metro State Prison diagnostic my cousin was shipped to Pulaski State Prison. I felt like the ~~umbilical~~ umbilical cord had been cut.

Because seriously now I don't have nobody. Most of my family had already turned their backs on me. God I know you said you wouldn't leave me nor forsake me. My tears increased every night. Every time all the other inmates would go to pavillion or yard call. I would stay in the dorm alone and just cry. I would tell the Lord, please do not let me become bitter ~~in~~ in my circumstance, with the guards or the other inmates around me.

During my days at Metro State Prison diagnostic up until December 18, 1998. It was hard we marched day in and out. Cert team was always making us talk to a tree. We had to do PT exercises at 4:00am in the morning. Women was slipping into each other beds having sex; while the guards was in the booth. Some of the women tried to approach me; talking about baby I can make you feel better than a man. The women would say you are so cute, sexy and fine. I would say I have a husband there is nothing you can do for me.

Oh my Lord, I am paining on the inside, why me? I would just cry and cry. I started going to church at metro but I would still feel so dreary and sad. I felt like there was a dark cloud over Metro State Prison. I was ready to get out of this place. I would love to go to Pulaski State Prison where my cousin Laura was.

Finally December 18, 1998 they told me to pack it up. When I get to Id. There was two Correctional Officer present on each side. One set of Correctional officer was from Pulaski State Prison. The other set was from Washington State Prison. The Id Correctional officers said Inmate Jennifer Johnson you get on the side with the Washington State Prison officers. When she said that my heart dropped with aching pains. I said in my mind, I don't know nobody their. What am I going to do.

I slightly had tears in my eyes. I am already suffering for something I didn't do. Now I can't be with my cousin. Come on Lord, I have no one. As I road the bus to Washington State Prison; I had all kinds of mixed emotion going on. I just wanted to crawl in a hole, to isolate myself from everyone and everything. When I got to Washington State Prison. I did just that. I was assigned to the intake dorm G-2.

Oh my Lord do I really have to live with this female; I don't know. You know majority of female talk too much and ~~are~~ nosy. Oh, I dread this craziness. I've already made up my mind to isolate and not talk to anyone. This roommate tried to build a relationship with me. ~~(she)~~ ^{Cindy} would say where you from? Somewhere! Why you want to know? huh! I would say. Then she would say do you have family? Some, why? Cindy begin to get into debate with the officers. I am glad I didn't befriend this chick.

Because one morning Cindy was cursing the officer that was assigned to our dorm. All of certain the officer begin cursing Cindy back out. The officer wrote Cindy a ~~disciplinary~~ disciplinary report. Cindy was due to be in DRcourt the following week. DR investigator called me to do a statement for officer and inmate. I wrote politely (NCA) No comment available cause both of them was wrong and I do not get into mess. Eventually Cindy went home.

I got classified for a detail. They put me on Laundry detail. Wow, this is cool I never worked in a real laundry. The very same day I got moved to F2 which is a regular population dorm. My roommate was ANN, oh no another female. This big "le" "5" Albino woman, said hello I am ~~not~~ ANN. I said hello & I don't like to talk. I was saying in my mind, Lord you are really funny. This is whack! SO ANN left out the room.

I put my things up and made my bed. I got relaxed and pulled my prayer books & bible out. Then took my shower it was so relaxing because at diagnostic we had no shower doors or curtains. Thank God we had shower doors here. In a tub, wow! I went down stairs, short after my shower, to get some water and ice. This strange girl came to the water fountain. I said, "Do you know who you live with, I said No". She said this is the woman ~~that~~ who cut up her newborn baby also cooked & fed him to her husband.

Suddenly invisibly I begin to shake in fear. Lord I am scared. What am I going to do. I slept that night but not peacefully. I kept waking up scared in the middle of the night. I would quote psalm 59:1. I would say to myself God got you Jen, Jen so don't fret.

It's morning again, wake up Count 5am, by your doors. Next count cleared, time to go to chow hall to eat. Then to my detail in the laundry. I was excited about being in the laundry until ~~a~~ detail officer would begin to harass me daily. Every day she would find something wrong with whatever I was doing. Would send me back to my dorm. My detail officer couldn't stand my guts. If I laugh or talk to anyone that would give her a reason to send me back to the dorm. I told myself I am going to give my detail officer to the Lord. God will take care of my enemies.

All of certain one morning, we had the laundry buggies lined up to go get the laundry from the dorms. We normally leave out the laundry at 6:08am at least to pick up laundry from one side of the compound. My detail officer was in the same position in her chair in the office when it had turned 6:45am. We like something is wrong. We seen a Sgt. walking by the laundry door going to count the ~~dorms~~ dorms. ~~After~~ The other inmates and I begin to bang on the door loudly. We got his attention, immediately he ~~open~~ opened the door. The Sgt went into the office checked on our detail officer. They had to call the ambulance because she couldn't move.

Later on we find out that our detail officer had a light stroke. But that didn't stop her from continue being stubborn when she came back. She continue to be stubborn towards me. As always I didn't disrespect her, I kept praying for her. Next thing we know she begin pass out (fainting) and falling to ground on a regular basis.

We the inmate would always be the one to get her help. After our detail officer would recover from each incident of sickness. She would even get bitter and stubborn in a worse way towards me. So I kept praying and fasting. Lord do something, I have not done nothing to this lady. One day, our counselor called me to her office. My counselor said Everybody who was in the ~~Kitchen~~^{Laundry} on AM and PM will be changed to the Kitchen detail. Some will go to AM shift and some to PM. I received a schedule for PM shift. None of us knew what had happened. We all just know that God had worked a miracle.

Later on we find out that a probationer had been hit in the head with a iron ~~pitcher~~ pitcher in the kitchen. Are you serious, man they don't suppose to be on the compound with states inmates no way. They are boot camp was housed in J-2 building. I was like so mad, but then I had to shake myself, remember all the hell you was going through with your detail officer. This was God way of rescuing me from haensway. Even though I didn't want to be in the kitchen. Thank you Lord for the miracle.

Jennifer Johnson, Jennifer Johnson, Jennifer Johnson mail call! When I was in diagnostic I never got mail because my dad was trying to recover from bailing me out of jail on this case. It was \$20.00 money order. We could only spend \$25.00 on the store, in 1999. But things was so cheap. I can get me a lot of food - yeah, yeah I love to eat because they was not feeding us much. Then I received two more letters.

One from my mother in law. Your son Wendell asthma is getting worse. His lung was constantly filling up with fluid. The doctor had him hospitalized. I was hurt that I couldn't be there with my 2 year old son. I had to remind myself just the way you prayed about that detail. God can work a miracle again. Then I received a letter from my husband/co-defendant. I thought it was something encouraging but it wasn't he was talking crazy.

I am like Lord what else is coming my way. I am tired of going through can I ever be happy? All my life everytime I look around I am going through a storm whether it's with people mistreating me, laughing at me or setting traps. Are my family being attacked by Satan. To top it off I am in prison for something I didn't do. This is awful.

Well the year of 2000 has entered in. What time has flown. Not knowing my life would almost end. I took sick, I was constantly having ~~symptoms~~ symptoms that appear to be heart burn and some chest pain. I started to lose excessive weight. I would constantly go to medical. They would only give me pepto treating me for indigestion. I felt that something was wrong with me; that was worse than indigestion.

I kept telling medical I am real sick. They would say its just indigestion but they insisted I didn't know what I was talking about. So one day I was coming from the supply room. I begin to get dizzy, suddenly I passed out. Couldn't remember nothing. When I woke up and I didn't know nothing. I had found out I was coming out of coma after 10 days in Milledgeville Hospital. After three more days in there. The STATE of Georgia said they had to take me back to the Prison because I was costing The STATE of Georgia too much money.

I would learn through the doctor who find the problem. That the other two doctor that was assigned to me gave upon me because they couldn't find out what was wrong me. This doctor that find I had gallstones that was the size of grapefruit. The gallstone was rubbing up against all my major organs. The doctor said I had to have surgery ASAP. How many know this was not the end of this storm.

I was taking back to the Washington State Prison only to be sick for two more weeks. With the same ~~symptoms~~ symptoms. I was put in this room with a girl named Charlene. Charlene tormented and curse me out etc. Remember I was frail and weak, this woman wanted me to clean the room and buff the floor. I couldn't even stand two seconds without being dizzy.

I went to the desk to tell our dorm officer to tell her my bunkmate Charlene was harassing me. Come to find out originally the plan was suppose to be that I was supposed to be housed in ~~Infir~~ Infirmary (medical) when I had came from the hospital. We found out all this when the officer called ~~to~~ to security about the situation. When the officer gets off the phone, she said you was supposed to go to infirmary, but their is no room. So pack your stuff your going to protective custody (segregation) in lockdown unit. I stayed in lockdown unit until they took me out to have surgery.

I went in Laser Surgery to remove the gallstones at 12 noon on a Wednesday at Georgia Baptist hospital in Atlanta, GA. I came to from the medicine around 4pm it had worn off. The nurse kept telling me don't use the bathroom because if you have bowel movement we are going to have to release you from the hospital. So at 12 midnight the officers took me out in the rain and cold weather. I only had a thin white jumpsuit on with only my bra and panties.

I was in so much pain because the doctor cut me in my navel and two cuts above my private area. I was taken back into the Metro State Prison infirmary where the nurse was suppose to give me pain medicine. I was in so much pain, all I could do is cry. When I ring the emergency button, asking for pain medicine. The nurse would ignore me. All of certain this angel came to my room it was the Chaplain that took me under her wings when I first came through Metro Diagnostic.

Chaplain began to rock me in her arms as she begin to pray for me and tell me it's going to be ok. All of certain around 2:00am they moved me to dorm H2. I was in so much pain, it took three people to get me to the dorm. Remember I was supposed to go back to Washington State Prison. I had no personal or property. All I had was the bra, ~~and~~ panties and jumpsuit I was wearing.

Washington State Prison Correctional Staff was suppose to come get me. But their was a ~~was~~ no show. Oh my God I was in so much pain till I couldn't even get out of bed. The Warden and his inspection team came the next morning. Warden said, what is going on here? The other inmates begin to explain. The Warden said, someone is going to see about you or else they will not have a job.

Medical begin to give me pain medicine. The prison gave me some fresh clothes and supplies. My cellmates took care of me real good and was friendly with their store goods. I became close to them in a short time. Suddenly early the next morning Washington officers came to get me.

During my times of illness, I got to see our people in society's true colors and how they feel about inmates. I had to go to the doctor in Atlanta, GA before I ever had my surgery. I remember getting off the prison bus being handcuffed and shackled. Everybody in the parking lot was looking and talking. Then when I get into the building. People was looking and talking.

The officers' and I had to get in the elevator in order to get to my doctor's office. Do you know people would drop their belongings just to keep from getting on the elevator with me. It was so detrimental. One guy drop his tool box so he didn't have to get on the elevator with me, wow.

That showed me how people in society is very judgemental. Will ostracize you just because your in a prison uniform. Handcuffed and shackled. Not knowing whether ^{that} person is truly guilty. Are that person had a sorry behind public defender representing them. Before we judge anyone. It good to know all the facts.

Nobody shouldn't be judging no one anyway. Because the society we live into today. Anyone can come to jail or prison that is not even guilty. That really touch me the way the people was ostracizing me. Didn't have a clue who I was or why was in prison. All they seen was handcuffs, shackles and white prison jumpsuit.

Finally things was looking up for me 2001-2004. I hadn't seen my children in two years. I had been trying to get into Court. Yes hip hop hooray my positive transfer went through to go to Pulaski State Prison. I would be closer to home. I can get more visits. Shortly after this I was out of Washington State Prison on my way to Pulaski State Prison November 14, 2001.

After I arrive at Pulaski I got to see my children and went out to court. Now I am on this Journey at Pulaski. Lord I hope this journey be better than the one I left. Slowly but surely things begin to happen. My money begin to flow in from my church and Dad. My mother in law would do what she could. My marriage was getting better. I was part of the choir, praise team, in school and had a good detail.

2004 I let my guard down because I am a person who believes in forgiveness and giving other people another chance. I allowed my whole immediate family to come visit me. Later on through my transcript I had found out after fighting for them two years. I received them those individual family members who came to see me was one who gave the police false accusation against me and my husband. My own birth mother pushed everyone else up to lie on me. Which she has a long history of being that one who try to inflict pain on me continuously.

ON TWO OCCASION AT VISITATION MY MDM HAD WITCHCRAFT ITEMS ON HER. MOM CONSPIRACY WAS GETTING THE BEST OF HER BECAUSE SHE COULD NOT SET STILL. I COULD SMELL THE SATCHET OIL AND POWDER ON HER. I WAS FAMILIAR WITH WITCHCRAFT BECAUSE MY MOM BEGIN TO USE IT WHEN I WAS 10 YEARS OLD. THINGS BEGIN TO GET SOUR FOR ME AGAIN 2004. SO I DECIDED TO TAKE MY WHOLE IMMEDIATE FAMILY OFF MY VISITATION LIST. NOT ONLY THAT I HAD MY MOM PHONE NUMBER IN THE SYSTEM. SHE BEGIN TO CALL DOWN HERE AT THE PULASKI STATE PRISON LYING; SAYING I WAS HARASSING HER WHEN SHE TOLD ME TO CALL ANYTIME.

The lesson I've learned is to forgive but I don't have to deal with my enemies especially if they have not changed. It took coming to prison to realize that I had to learn how to cut people off that is not going to help me grow in life. Sometimes because they are friends or family who we have bond with for many years. We don't want to cut ourselves from the bad apples. So we gamble with ourselves, hey, there has been plenty of good times we have had.

When another person has full control over your life. That means they can bring what they want to in your life. No matter if it's destructive or not. It comes a time when we have to say no more from whomever. God gave us the authority to make our own choices no matter whether it's good or bad. I have lost decades of my life in this place, while my enemies that I act has had a successful life.

I forgive them but something has to be done. Prison life can either develop you into a mature male or female that views life differently than you did when you came into this system. One prison can have you depressed, feeling unworthy and some becoming cold hearted not caring about nobody else including themselves.

Prison is dark world for some people. Some don't even want to live anymore so they try to commit suicide. For my journey it has been like a storm where someone has left me in the rain alone in a deserted land. With nothing or no one to rescue me or come by and say hey, you need help? My journey has including many ~~nights~~ crying uncontrollably on my pillow at nights, sleepless nights, headaches, hungry day and night.

My visitation has not been on a regular basis like I thought it would. Lies and betrayal has been great through inmates and staff. Everytime I thought somebody cared about what I was going through, I would learn later it was false compassion just being showed to get my business, to go around spreading false rumors, twist my words and to always make me look bad so others would laugh at me and persecute me as well.

The jealousy has been a lot as well. Everything I do the next inmate says what makes her so special; she always get the good details or get to do this or that. I put my make up ~~on~~ on and it looks good not to be conceited. The other inmates ends up wanting to use my make up or get some like it. I do my hair a certain way or get it cut in style the other inmates end up wanting it.

It's like a competition amongst the other inmates wanting to be me. They even steal my conversation. If I am talking about a subject. These individual will go to the next person with same subject to make it like it was their ideal topic. To me it's humiliating to know that I am around a lot of competition in the wrong way.

Being in a system like this is hard hell to live in with all these females. They complain about everything never satisfied. I believe if the warden gave them a t-bone steak. The female inmates will find something wrong with that steak. Next complaint they will have is who deserved the steak and who didn't deserve the steak. Some inmates feel like people owes them, ~~they~~ they deserve the best of everything.

The ~~few~~ female inmates thinks that they are better than next ~~the~~ inmate feels like they deserve the best is the main ones are breaking the rules and very rebellious towards the correctional officers! I just wish the people in society could read some of the damn representative questions.

I know you wonder what is damn representative. That is a ~~Role model~~ inmate out of each dorm that goes before the Wardens' to present the dorm questions', as well their problems. In order to be a dorm representative who knows how to follow the rules and respect authority.

Some people in society wants to know what life is like daily for inmates. We wake up at 5:00 am lights on and prepare your for inspection. You can take a shower after count clears at 5:30 am if your detail is not to report out until 7:58 am. Some female inmates get up earlier like 2:00 am and 4:00 am for the purpose to shower. Before they go to their details such as kitchen, outside the prison, Prison Industry and medical for insulin. Immediately after count clear they go to breakfast.

Then you have first block at 7:50 am education programs, wellness and other details report out. Majority of the compound inmates are busy daily. Monday thru Friday, you have to be inspection ready Monday thru Friday from 9:08 am to 4:30 pm. The Warden is faithful to come do inspection whether it's raining, sleet or snowing. We eat breakfast before 8:00 am Monday thru Sunday. Lunch is served around 12:30 pm Monday thru Thursday. There is no lunch for us Friday thru Sunday unless we work a detail that consist of 5 hr or more. Those details are outside the prison, kitchen, F-1 lockdown, sanitation, ~~or~~ medical orderly or maintenance.

Also they have special diet called Monday thru Sunday because the doctor has put some inmates on special diets for health reason. Today in our women prison in Georgia are some of the ^{most} mean ~~and~~ spirited women. They will cut, fight, sexually harass and abuse another female inmate. I imagine being bunch up with 48 women to one side of dormitory. Could you imagine are living in a dormitory there is 96 women in one dorm. Could you imagine all them talking at once time. Wouldn't give you a headache. It does me.

Then you have the inmates who tries to find ways to get in with staff to bring them contraband. you have inmates that exalt themselves by trying to everything correctly in the eyes of staff because they feel this will get them early release. you also have inmates who fakes sickness or mental health to try to get staff attention. There is a lot of female inmates who do anything to get someone attention.

Prison has been a humbling experience for me but has been very oppressing situation. I've learned and gained different perspective concerning life. But I've lost a lot through this oppressing situation. I've had many love ones to die in my family since I been in prison. Last but not least I have gained my education and better attitude so I can be that productive citizen upon my return to society.

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