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## SEEDS OF FALL CHANGE

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Thanksgiving wasn't too bad this year. The prison actually does give us lowly prisoners a SLICE of turkey, and the prisoner workers that run the kitchen (prisoners run all departments in prison; though, as I've said many times before, ninety percent of the paying jobs--\$.50¢/hour--at the plant are held by a ragtag of child molesters) try to make dressing from existing ingredients. The horticulture department guys grew a few rows of sweet potatoes, and those got turned into pies. They procured some cranberry sauce, somehow, this year; and everyone got a heaping tablespoon of it--a rare treat.

It's amazing what food--with flavor--can be like to someone that's starving. I'm the kinda guy that usually would put back six servings of turkey/stuffing/gravy in one sitting, easily. Now, you can take everything I eat in a thanksgiving day's time, and fit it in a coffee cup, no lie; some of the guys actually do that--they sneak it back to their cell in their cup, so they can add to it whatever items they've purchased from the prison store--that is, those few lucky enough to have money on their JPay.com SCDC accounts. The child molesters with paying jobs have stocks of food--they use it to trade to poor prisoner prostitutes.

The prison is going through a LOT of changes, and right now, Mental Health is being forced to separate the crazies from the somewhat norms. As it is now, total nut-jobs share cells with average Joes here serving sentences for nonviolent crimes (don't you love Freedom of Speech?). This new-found division is adherent to the Constitutional rights of both sides of that coin: prisoners with mental health issues, and those without them. Although, incarceration itself imposes, and fosters the growth of mental instability, by its enforcement of an uncontrolled Total Institution. The current change, is beneficial to us all. Prisoners with mental health issues are not suppose to be housed in general population, they are instead, suppose to be in special buildings dedicated to their well-being, with trained staff/guards on hand that know how to deal with their issues. And vice versa, prisoners in general population are not suppose to be subjected to the...idiosyncrasies, and outbursts, of mental patients.

Right now, the issue for us of the Character-Based Unit, CBU, is that Mental Health has been given the building we're currently in. Meaning: we're being moved. And, the building we'll be sent to? The semi-condemned Marion Unit, missing toilets (or sinks) in some cells, beds in some, electrical in others, and a few have large holes in their walls, or broken windows. Marion used to belong to the gangbangers--

and let me reiterate, BELONG--because guards were not allowed in there. It was the same group that used to be at the Lee prison, causing havoc. They were all brought here, because local media in Lee County had drug SCDC through the mud over the string of prison riots. Well, Lee was never FIXED per se, (though the riots have since subsided) the problem was merely moved to other prisons--a building's worth were brought here to Broad River. Nearly two years have passed, and acknowledgement has finally been made that South Carolina does in fact have a gang problem. Ghetto drones (gangbangers) are being sent now to buildings designated just for them, complete with extra staff. Ten years late; but maybe not TOO late.

Things are already improving.

Those of us in the CBU program will run the wildlife out of Marion--the birds and critters that've taken up residence--and scrub out all of the black mold, repair, and repaint the place. In the end, it'll be as good, if not better. Unfortunately, the Unit Manager we have here will not be transferring with us--which sucks for us, because she's done a good job with the CBU program. Plus, she was good at keeping the troublemakers out.

Change is always inevitable.

Several guys with life sentences just made parole this past month, and a few more got their cases OVERTURNED. I can only hope. I'd much rather be out there in the free world, getting ready to give one of my daughters--Michaila--her birthday party. (Happy Birthday Michaila)



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