

MACGYVERS IN THE MAKING

REMEMBER THE T.V. SERIES ON ABC CALLED MACGYVER? IT WAS THE SHOW WHERE SOME DUDE COULD MAKE AN ATOMIC BOMB WITH A LIGHTER, A BATTERY, AND A PAPER CLIP... OR DISARM AN ENTIRE COUNTRY WITH NOTHING MORE THAN A LAPTOP, A CELL PHONE, AND A SUNDIAL. WELL, HERE IN PRISON, WE'VE GOT QUITE A FEW MACGYVERS OF OUR OWN. GRANTED, I DON'T SEE ANY OF THESE GUYS AS EVER BEING IN A T.V. SERIES WITH THEIR LITTLE CONCOCTIONS, THAT PROBABLY AREN'T ANY MORE BIZARRE THAN WHAT MACGYVER LEARNED TO MAKE IN KINDERGARTEN. HOWEVER, CONSIDERING WHAT THEY HAVE TO WORK WITH IN HERE, I MUST ADMIT THAT I HAVE BEEN AMAZED AT SOME OF THE USEFUL DEVICES THAT I'VE COME ACROSS. LIKEWISE, IF YOU CONTINUE TO READ ON, YOU MAY FIND THE INGENUITY OF THESE MACGYVER WANNABES A LITTLE INTERESTING YOURSELF.

OH, IF YOU HAPPEN TO BE AN EX-CON, DON'T GO GETTING ALL EXCITED. I MEAN, IT'S NOT LIKE I'M GOING TO EXPOSE SOMETHING NEW THAT COULD HELP YOU BUST YOUR BUDDY OUT OF PRISON, OR DISCLOSE SOME KIND OF SECRET WAY TO BREAK INTO THE D.O.C. COMPUTER SYSTEM SO YOU CAN CHANGE HIS RELEASE DATE. THESE ARE JUST SIMPLE KNICKKNACK THINGS FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC, AND I WOULD BE WILLING TO BET THAT EVERY ONE OF THEM HAS BEEN ON THE OFFICERS RED FLAG LIST LONGER THAN I'VE BEEN DOWN.

TOOLS: IN THE AREA OF TOOLS, YOU'VE GOT A COUPLE OF DEVICES THAT I MYSELF HAVE USED IN THE PAST. THEY INVOLVE TRANSFORMING THE GUTS OF A "AA" BATTERY INTO A SEWING NEEDLE, AND THE SHAPING OF A PEN CLIP INTO A SCREWDRIVER. THIS CATEGORY ALSO INCLUDES THE CREATING OF A LIGHTER WITH NOTHING MORE THAN A COUPLE OF BATTERIES AND SOME STEEL WOOL, THE MAKING OF A BATTERY CHARGER WITH SOME WIRE AND THE FLUORESENT LIGHTS IN OUR CELLS, AND THE BUILDING OF A STERNO (PRISONS VERSION OF A BUNSEN BURNER) WITH THE BOTTOM HALF OF A SODA CAN AND SOME LARD.

ENJOYMENT: THIS CATEGORY INCLUDES THE PLEASURES OF BEING ABLE TO LISTEN TO THE T.V. THROUGH A RADIO, THANKS TO THE ELECTRONIC WHIZZES WHO KNOW HOW TO TAKE AN FM TRANSMITTER FROM A STANDARD WALKMAN RADIO, AND STRATEGICALLY CONNECT IT TO THE SPEAKER WIRE OF THE T.V. WE ALSO HAVE ONE OF THE FIRST THINGS I LEARNED, HOW TO MAKE A DECK OF PLAYING CARDS WITH 13 MILK CARTONS. THEN WE HAVE THE INDIVIDUALS WHO CANNOT QUIT THEIR ADDICTIONS. THEY HAVE DISCOVERED THAT YOU CAN TAKE THOSE BROWN

PAPER TOWELS, SOAK THEM IN COFFEE, AND VOILÀ YOU HAVE ROLLING PAPER. OTHER ADDICTS HAVE LEARNED TO CREATE BUCK, (PRISONS VERSION OF AN ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE) BY SIMPLY CURING A MIXTURE OF WATER, SUGAR, AND FRUIT IN A TRASH BAG. (PREFERABLY AN UNUSED ONE.)

COMFORT: IN THIS CATEGORY, MY FAVORITE HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE ABILITY TO MAKE EYE COVERS FROM A TRIMMED PIECE OF CARDBOARD, A SOCK, AND SOME ELASTIC. (THERE'S ALWAYS GOING TO BE A LIGHT ON SOMEWHERE, THAT IRRITATES YOU THROUGHOUT THE NIGHT.) IF THE TEMPERATURE IS AT AN UNCOMFORTABLE HIGH, THE EASIEST WAY TO MAKE YOURSELF AN A/C UNIT IS TO PUT A TRASH BAG OVER THE WINDOW AND CUT A HOLE, SO THAT AT LEAST THE BREEZE FROM OUTSIDE IS BLOWING YOUR DIRECTION. IF THE TEMPERATURE IS AN UNCOMFORTABLE LOW, MANY TIMES YOU'LL SEE GUYS WEARING SKULL CAPS MADE FROM SOME OLD LONG JOHNS.

PERSONAL HYGIENE: THERE ISN'T REALLY TOO MUCH TO MENTION REGARDING THIS CATEGORY, AND I SWEAR ON A STACK OF BIBLES I HAVE NEVER TRIED EITHER ONE. HOWEVER, I WAS TOLD BY MY INFORMANTS IN HERE THAT THEY HAVE SEEN GUYS USE TOOTHPASTE AS AN ACNE MEDICINE, AND OTHERS WHO HAVE USED HOT WATER AND SUGAR AS A BODY WAX,

MAKING MONEY: IN THIS CATEGORY, WE HAVE MACGYVERS WHO WILL USE THEIR TALENT TO EARN MONEY, AND OTHERS WHO WILL USE IT TO STEAL MONEY. A TATTOO ARTIST, FOR EXAMPLE, HAS TO FIRST DESIGN AND CONSTRUCT HIS TATTOO GUN, USUALLY FROM A BATTERY POWERED RAZOR. THEN, THE MAKING OF HIS INK IS GOING TO TAKE THE CHANGING OF SOMETHING LIKE KITCHEN GREASE, HAIR GEL, OR (ARE YOU READY FOR THIS?) HEMORRHOID CREAM. QUICK QUESTION. WHY ARE THEY CALLED HEMORRHOIDS ANYWAY? THEY SHOULD BE CALLED ASTEROIDS. AT ANY RATE, THE THIEFS JOB IS A LOT EASIER, BECAUSE HE CAN MAKE A LOCK PICKING DEVICE FROM A SLIVER OF A SODA CAN.

SAVING MONEY: BEING THE TIGHTWAD THAT I AM, I WAS A LITTLE UPTIGHT WHEN MY COMBINATION LOCK STARTED STICKING AND JAMMING UP. FORTUNATELY, BEFORE SPENDING \$6.99 (PLUS TAX) ON A NEW ONE, A MACGYVER IN MY DORM SHOWED ME HOW TO CREATE SOME GRAPHITE DRY LUBRICANT FROM A #2 PENCIL. IT NOW GLIDES LIKE IT'S BRAND NEW. OTHER MONEY SAVERS REFUSE TO SPEND \$4.69 ON A NEW WATCH, IF JUST THE BAND BREAKS. SO THEY'LL USE THE BACK STRAP FROM ONE OF THEIR CROCS AS A WRISTBAND. ANOTHER FAVORITE IS THE SAVING OF \$3.04 ON A RAINCOAT BY USING A TRASH BAG, WITH A HEAD SIZE HOLE IN THE BOTTOM, TO COVER THEMSELVES. (PREFERABLY AN UNUSED ONE.)

COOKING UTENSILS: THE CHOW HALL ISN'T THE ONLY PLACE A PRISONER CAN EAT. I KNOW I WOULD MUCH RATHER ENJOY MY MEAL IN THE COMFORT AND SERENITY OF A CELL. THIS WAS MADE MUCH MORE CONVENIENT AT A PARTICULAR CAMP I WAS AT, WHERE EACH CELL HAD ITS OWN HEATER THAT WAS OPERABLE 12 MONTHS OUT OF THE YEAR. SO THE TRANSFORMING OF THAT ROOM HEATER TO A STOVE WAS QUITE EFFORTLESS. HOWEVER, THAT'S NOT THE WAY IT'S BEEN AT ANY OTHER I'VE BEEN TO. SO YOU HAVE A GADGET KNOWN AS A STINGER, (PRISONS VERSION OF A HEATING ELEMENT) THAT SOME GUYS WILL MAKE FROM A PIECE OF PLASTIC, A BELT BUCKLE, AND SOME ELECTRICAL WIRE. OH, AND DON'T FORGET ABOUT THE STERNO I MENTIONED EARLIER. THAT COULD BE VERY USEFUL IN THIS CATEGORY AS WELL.

SO THERE YOU HAVE IT FOLKS, JUST A FEW EXAMPLES OF THE TYPE OF INVENTIVE HANDIWORK DEVELOPED BY THE MEN OF D.O.C. I'LL ADMIT, THEIR DEVICES MIGHT NOT BE AS BRILLIANT AS MACGYVERS CREATIONS, BUT THEY ARE A LOT MORE CONCEIVABLE.

MAZE
