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Life In Columbia Correctional Institution, Part Two,
created 30 Sept. 2019

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Starting 12 Sept. 2019

Things were going smooth during my Buddhist group: I was calm from meditating, had some enlightening discussion about quotes from a Dhammapada. Then, 10 minutes to two PM, Chaplain Teslik got off the phone & told me I was getting a cellie, that I might want to go back early & meet him.

"What?!" I blurted. "I already have a cellie. What the hell are they trying to do?" I wondered & said. (Earlier that day the Sgt. tried to give me another cellie, until my neighbor [I was gone, in the library] persuaded him that my cellie was only temporarily gone [for a week of training, to be a peer mentor], would be back and want his cell back. So, it was weird that the Sgt. was again trying to give me a cellie & doing so while I was gone.) The chaplain signed my pass & I marched out, intent on finding out what was up.

On the way out I saw two prisoners walking toward my unit (Nine), trailed by the Restrictive Housing (RH -- f.k.a. "Seg.") property C.O., Rhode.

"Apparently they want to make one of you my cellie," I said as I approached them. "I already have a cellie. They're on some bullshit. I'm trying to get it sorted out."

One of them was White with a shaved head, while the other was Black; both were over six feet tall, & the Black guy was at least 280 lbs. I wasn't the best welcoming wagon; not their fault, but I've had too many bad experiences with staff using another prisoner to do their dirty work. They & I looked & felt uncomfortable.

The Sgt., who was not our regular Sgt., helped make things worse by not even turning around when I tried to speak with him about the problem. (Sgts. work in a "bubble," surrounded by concrete-block half walls, the upper walls consisting of armored glass -- ironically, they too are in solitary confinement, thus suffer Seg. Psychosis too.) It was five to two; his shift was almost over; he couldn't care less.

As I had a hearing with a federal judge (about staff here destroying or letting a prior cellie destroy my property, including the entire file for E.D. Wis. Case # 18-CV-2027) coming up at three, I decided to just accept the situation & straighten it out with second shift.

"I'll take him as a cellie, for now," I said, pointing to the White guy.

"No," the formerly indolent Sgt. aggressively said, pointing to the Black guy. "That's your cellie."

I grinned, peeping the game.

"C'est la vie," I said, then marched down to my cell with the Goliath Black man behind me.

Once in the privacy of my cell I explained the situation to my new cellie, and let him know that I have a swastika tattooed on my chest (but ain't on any racist shit), asked him if there was going to be any problem because of that, let him know that my cellie should be back in a couple days & be back in the cell, but it wasn't his fault or problem & in the meantime I'm a respectful, clean guy & would do my best to get along with him. Although I said that, I was intensely uncomfortable & it came out in my expression, making my new cellie intensely uncomfortable.

"I got a court hearing," I said, grabbing my paperwork. "I'll talk to you when I get back." (The hearing went well, as I explained in another post.)

When I came back, I got to know my cellie -- easier as I was happy from the hearing. He was from Arizona & California, did time in both states' prison systems, where it's unheard of & not tolerated for a straight White man to cell up with a Black man. We both knew that, but he didn't know how WI was/is.

There was/is also the tension of my segregation-induced social retardation, what Professor Shaun Gallagher (s.gallagher@memphis.edu) calls pseudo-autism in his article: The cruel and unusual phenomenology of solitary confinement. I often feel severely uncomfortable being close to people, looking them in their eyes, and especially being touched by males; loud noises (clapping at games on TV) irk me, trigger anger. Then the guy's leaves dirty clothes on the floor, slimey soap in the sink, & he's always loudly telling me of his girl problems, when I have my own lack-of-girl problems. His feet were blown up while he was a Marine in Afghanistan, and he was a paraplegic from a shooting in America, etc., all which gave him PTSD, something I too deal with -- PTSD allows us to understand & tolerate each other, plus we both have values (e.g. we don't steal from prisoners, won't snitch).

A couple days after I got my new cellie he told me that Lt. ___ Taylor, who's Black (darker than my cellie) got on the phone with someone while my new cellie was nearby & said "We can't cell him with Lindell! They'll stab each other before the night's over!" While my new cellie & I laughed about it, we knew that what the Lt. said put me in real danger: my cellie could've believed the Lt., made a weapon & decided to get me before I got him, or "simply" confronted me, which would've resulted in me deeming him a serious threat & dealing with him; funny how, despite the Lt.'s concerns, they've left us in this cell together....

On a lighter note, they busted my buddy, another Black guy, who worked serving food on the unit. They found a garbage bag full of wine in his cell, gave him 60 days in seg (he'll get out in 30 days tops).

Then they brought back over another buddy, a guy who's pinkie finger got somehow traumatically amputated (he always wants to fist bump people with that creepy hand! =(), who's been walking around the unit practicing his coked-up Mr. Burns(from The Simpsons)-as-a-stalker impersonation, as that's what he looks like; one day I looked up from my bed, after my cell door opened, saw him there just staring at me. "What the fuck!?" I said,

jumping. Dude held up his fist, for a bump. (My disturbia at this guy's justified, as he's severely beat two inmates, breaking the cheek & nose of one guy, the ribs & teeth of the other.)

Next they let Chicken Patty out, another buddy, who got his name from getting busted (I think they followed his footprints in the snow to his house) stealing a crate of chicken patties from a restaurant. We were at WSPF years ago; he went on a hunger strike to get out, just absolutely refused to eat anything, for around 30 days, TWICE; yeah, he almost died to get out. He & I were talking in the library today, Sept. 30, about all the strong guys we knew from WSPF who ended up cutting themselves or hurting themselves in some serious ways to get out of there. "There's no way anyone could be there as long as we were & not be fucked up in some way," Chicken Patty said -- he did a couple years there; I did 15.

Anyway, on a lighter note, Chicken Patty looks as much like a plucked chicken as a person could: hooked, long nose; long neck, Adam's apple protruding; head slightly bobbing with each twitchy step he takes; beige skin. I always laugh when I see him, & I don't think he realizes that I'm picturing him as a big, plucked chicken. :)

This place is more a mental hospital than a prison. We can't keep our razors in our cells, as too many prisoners here cut themselves. Just the other day a young Black guy, Little Lord, went & told staff all dramatically that he was gonna cut himself, getting the unit locked down. Lil' Lord has deep cuts all up his arms, which he's ashamed of, tried to cover with a tight jacket (I asked him, "Hey man, I got a question;" he said "Yeah, what?" then I asked, all serious, "Who do I gotta write to get them tight-ass pants and jacket you're wearing?" & started laughing uncontrollably. He smiled, fist bumped me & walked off.); he tries to intimidate/bully some guys, wimps, other seriously mentally ill prisoners getting handfuls of pills like him.

A lot of the Black guys here think I'm crazy. They told my new cellie so, offered to let him move in with them. Hell, my new cellie thinks I'm crazy too, but, as I told him, as he realizes: he'll never see me on the stand testifying on him (he's facing a murder trial & a pistol case); I'll never touch or steal his stuff; I ain't on any gay shit; I'll do my best to be respectful, listen to any concerns he may have. We've had some disagreements, misunderstandings, but we've worked them out, maybe because we know how serious things would get, & neither of us wants to give staff what they probably wanted when they put him in this cell with me.

More later.

Please help me by ordering me (address at the beginning) postage-embossed envelopes from www.JLMarcusWisconsin.com & sharing this saga with your friends. Thanks !

END

II. New Post

Reply ID: Blog4HR

The Amber Guyger Miracle & Corruption
created 5 October 2019

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It was stunning, had me in tears, alone in my cell here, when the brother of the victim in Amber Guyger's murder trial pleaded to hug his brother's killer, then hugged he and she hugged him back. Clearly Amber was desperate for forgiveness. The 18 year old urged Amber to become a Christian, saying that it's what his brother would've wanted.

The moment soured, for me, when the judge sua sponte went to Amber, gave Amber her (Judge Kemp's) own Bible & told Amber that for the next month she needed to read it daily, saying that it was the Bible that the judge read before work every day. Amber bore all of that, not clearly embracing nor rejecting that proselytizing -- regardless of how Amber felt about it, the judge's actions showed a religious-based favoritism, which would tend to sway a person dependent on that judge for justice to impress the judge by claiming to embrace the Judge's preaching

Would Judge Kemp be kinder to you if you let it be known you were an Atheist or open to Christianity? If you were a Muslim, would you feel comfortable having Judge Kemp decide your fate when the judge knows you don't accept Jesus as the son of Allah?

What Judge Kemp did was violate the Constitution, sour a beautiful PRIVATE moment between a victim & a murderer by making it a STATE act of proselytization, sending the message that forgiveness & restorative justice was available in that court...if you're willing to accept the gospel, adopt Christianity.

Some may think I'm nitpicking; they are likely Christians, don't appreciate the First Amendment, or are unaware of how Christianity bullied its way across Europe & the world. I can't convince a virulent Christian of Judge Kemp's immorality, nor do I care to explain the importance of revering the First Amendment to a hater of it; but, I will invite those unaware to take a brief look of how Christianity infected Europe. Look up "Teutonic Knights," "Slavic Paganism," for starters, "A Brief History of Europe," then "Spanish Inquisition," which will give you a glimpse of how the largest, most fascist & best organized sect of Christianity, the Roman Catholic Church, exterminated all traces it could of native European tribes' religion/culture (later doing the same in the Americas & Africa), using everything from genocide to little favors for playing along with it, economic benefits (e.g. not seizing the lands of Muslims who converted to Catholicism).

Some "people" don't mind government dictating their beliefs (hopefully I've ran all such humanoids off my blog!), but I roll with Thomas Jefferson & our other intellectually enlightened founders at the opposite end of the spectrum. So it was great to see on Court TV that the Madison, Wisconsin branch of the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF), represented by Andrew Seidel, filed a complaint about Judge Kemp's action -- not the LAWFUL actions of the victim's brother, although religious fanatics will surely conflate our (Atheists') concerns -- with Texas's judicial oversight board. Judge Kemp could clear the matter up by publicly apologizing for doing what she did (in court, in her robes, publicly, rather than doing so on her own time, after the case was fully resolved & she had no more authority to help/hurt Amber, so neither Amber nor others might feel the judge was acting or would act coercively based on religious reasons), assuring the public it wouldn't happen again, that she'll treat Atheist (& believers of

other faiths) as humanely as she did Amber & that she understand why what she did was offensive to the First (Establishment Clause) & Fourteenth (Equal Protection Clause) Amendments to the U.S. Constitution. But this happening, given the delusions of righteousness inherent in Christianity, will be a miracle too much.