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I survived COVID-19 . . . And all I got was this lousy T-shirt.

COVID-19 finally came to Stanley. A staff member brought it in and it spread throughout the prison population. Until a couple of weeks ago, no one took it seriously because it hadn't gotten to us. We are so packed in together it is impossible to social distance.

On Tuesday October 27th, they tested the guys in my unit and on Wednesday they locked us down because so many guys tested positive. We were the 3rd unit to be locked down. I don't know if the remaining 2 units are locked down or not.

My test came back negative but I started getting symptoms Tuesday afternoon and I've been sick for the last 10 days. Fever, chills, dizziness, body pains, exhaustion, runny nose, cough and a terrible-never-ending headache. I'm lucky because I'm only moderately sick - like having the flu - and even though I'm 66 years old, I'm healthy with no underlying medical conditions.

On the news today it was reported that 10 prisoners have died of COVID-19 in Wisconsin prisons and 5,000 have tested positive. I know the number of infected prisoners is higher than that because they only did mass testing twice in Stanley and no individualized testing of symptomatic prisoners. My cellmate and I both got sick after we tested negative and neither one of us has been tested or offered any medical attention. We are all locked in our cells and counted 4 times a day. As long as we can stand up for count, that's all that matters.

As far as medical attention goes, it's nonexistent. They simply have no plan for treating anyone except to isolate prisoners in their cells until they are no longer contagious. I guess if you are the governor and are determined not to release anyone to relieve the overcrowding, then the next best thing is to reduce the death toll.

Notwithstanding the administration's unwillingness to release prisoners to save lives, actual conditions during quarantine could be worse. We are fed regularly, get a shower every other day, can make a phone call on alternate days and have our tablets in our cells.

The biggest problem is that not everybody has been infected so when the lockdown ends there will be a bunch of guys out running around getting exposed to COVID-19 and as soon as they show symptoms we'll be locked down again for another 2 weeks. Since my cellmate and I both got infected, we are immune from further infection (temporarily, at least). By the time we lose our immunity, a vaccine should be available. Future quarantines should only involve prisoners who

haven't been infected yet. That would be the logical thing to do but I'm pretty sure the next outbreak will see us all locked down for another 2 weeks.

Stay tuned . . .