

What's Inside My Private Prison Journal? Pt. 7

(The one about dehumanization)

4-28-26

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May 24, 2025 - FINAL ENTRY!

I should clarify something. Contrary to the tone of my last journal entry (May 23, 2025), getting a rejection notice for an obviously non-rejectable piece of mail is actually not the worst thing about being caged like a rabid monkey. I mentioned

yesterday that I was shaking as a result, and I don't often mention "shaking" from outrage and adrenaline very often these days. That makes it seem like there's no worse torment in prison than being denied a magazine. That's not quite true, though the smirking "fuck you" of unjustified mail rejection is a part of what's really worst about all this. Being ~~confined~~ ^{confined} in a cage and having one's daily existence constrained to a postage-stamp sized piece of land for years or decades is pretty terrible. Being chained up and moved about like ~~freight~~ ^{freight} is quite awful, too. A constant, looming dread of loss is a hard condition to live in. When and where violence is a persistent threat, well... no one likes that. Starving is bad. Freezing is unpleasant. Lack of care and treatment for injuries is hardly a selling point. Relentless loud noise, bad smells, and unforgivingly hard surfaces are all constant tortures. But the main things that make this kind of "life" unlivable ~~are~~ ^{are}, I think, the radical separation from family and friends; the loss of ability to make some mark, to have some impact on the world, especially on someone you choose and truly want to be of value to; and the general, all-consuming experience of dehumanization. That last is a bit of a catch-all, of course. Everything I mentioned is a symptom of or contributor to dehumanization. This is where the mail denials come in. Why should I physically shake over that? Well, for one, I'm just so tired of fighting. So tired, especially of fights I usually cannot win because of the shameless cheating and stacked deck against me. It's powerfully demoralizing, the ever-changing "rules", the overall attitude that ~~I~~ ^I will and must be the loser even before the contest begins, from court to the appeals process to public perception. Also, the unhidden element of "re-education" in these assaults on freedom of speech and conscience. Along with the recent rejection of my mainstream surfing magazine for purported "obscenity" and "nudity of a minor" (neither of which is remotely present, of course), I also received a terse little note inquiring, with characteristically smarmy and utterly insincere "good will", "Would you like me to remove the pages?" The foul bitch is plainly taking real pleasure in her power over me, in her ability (for now) to enforce her moral value judgements against me. She knows the charges I was convicted of, and she disapproves of my very humanity as a result. My existence. This

is her opportunity to get in a few lashes of her own, and she takes advantage of her ~~opportunities~~ ^{chances} to injure or insult every time. This is why I have to fight — for my dignity and that of others, and simply because one fights fascists not because we expect to win, but just because they are fascists. But she knows very well, as do all cops and cop-adjacent authoritarians, that in the punishment system world, from neighborhood patrols to prisons, when they want to fuck with someone, that person might ultimately beat the rap, but will never beat the ride. No matter what the final outcome may be (months or years down the road), in the right here/right now, I still lose my magazine, and I still lose the time and energy it takes to fight. I lose some measure of my dignity, my peace of mind... I lose sleep, and I lose the anonymity that can help protect me from similar assaults by others. She, however, loses nothing. And quite likely, I end up still losing the fight itself. Ignorance and malice protect themselves, so pigs' abusive actions are almost always well protected by all the other facets of the system they serve. I lose another degree of humanity. Her actions dehumanize me, and although I know I am fully human still, always... it often just doesn't matter what we know about ourselves when others decide differently. That's a fact, a reality, that, if you are ever forced to learn it for yourself, may well lead you to shake, too.

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