

"She was too tired to feel anything more, she wanted a book to do to her what books did: take away the world, slide it aside for a little bit, and let her please, please just be somewhere and somebody else." - Lev Grossman, 'The Magician's Land'

Dear Readers,

Fri. 10-20-23

Howdy! I hope you all are well! You are not going to believe the crap that I've been through - and it's not even over yet!

I last wrote about my pending transfer. Well, they came to get me in Petersburg SHU at 11p on Sun., Sept. 10. We have a standing "count" at 9:30p, and shortly after that my cellie had to pee, so I never got any sleep at all that night.

They took us to the holding cells at R+D and we sat there for hours - until around 2-2:30A before they put the shackles and handcuffs on.

When you go anywhere outside a prison in the BOB, they put leg shackles around your ankles (basically handcuffs with a long chain in the middle), + a chain around your ~~waist~~ waist which attaches to your handcuffs so your hands stay in front of your stomach.

They always put the leg shackles on when your foot is in a relaxed position, so as soon as I stand on them, the tendons in my ankle flex and it's very painful to walk. They also gave me really thin, cheaply-made socks, so even after I was sitting on the bus the shackles would rest on the sore spots around my ankle bones so I was in constant pain until they were taken off in Atlanta many hours later.

On another side note, when you're transferred, the BOB treats you like cattle. You sit for hours in holding cells, you're placed in all these painful, uncomfortable chains, and you sit on a bus and/or plane like that for hours, just to get somewhere and sit in another holding cell for hours.

(2)

Sat. 10/21/23

Hi again! Continuing on we finally got on the bus at Petersburg at 3 A, and after a stop for the CO's to get something for themselves at a convenience store, we got on the highway.

Our first stop was at Butner, one of my previous prisons. We stopped at all four of the major individual prisons there (the two mediums, the low, and the medical center - the camp was the only place we didn't go to). At the various stops, a total of six guys got off and eight got on the bus. This took literally 3 to 3 1/2 hours with the rest of us just sitting there. I have no idea how that could possibly take that long.

We got back on the road, made another stop at Alamance County, NC, to pick up two more guys, then back on the highway to Atlanta, GA, to the transit center there. We got into Atlanta sometime during rush hour - so 4 to 5 p.

After getting off the bus and finally getting those painful shackles off, we spent another 3 hours sitting in various holding cells and getting "processed." We didn't make it upstairs to the cells until 8-9 p, by which time I had been up about 36 hours since it's near impossible to sleep on the bus.

While I was in Atlanta, I at first thought that I must've described it to you many times 'cause I've been through there many times. But then it occurred to me that since I started writing on here, I think I've only gone through there once before.

Atlanta is a shit hole. It's one of the oldest prisons in the country and has a huge wall around it. For the most part, you're locked down like you're in the SHU. It's been like that for over 20 years - and probably closer to 30 or 40. All this is because (I heard) of some riot that occurred decades ago (by Cubans?), and so they've kept it that way ever since. In the past I've seen mice there (not this time) and there are roaches and it's filthy.

I think the last time I was there they had bookcarts for the first time, but those were gone this time. There was one full book in my cell, plus my first cellie got another one from the hall, and two partial books. I was there a week and a half and just kept re-reading them.

I was given half a sheet and one blanket (the sheet was torn). They didn't give me a towel, and I had to wear the same set

(3)

of clothes until Tues., Sept. 19th before they finally let us trade out. There was also no pillow, so I usually took off my jumpsuit and used it as a pillow.

On the days you're let out of the cell, you're let out for 2-3 hours, and during that time you can shower or stand in long lines to use the phone or the computer. In both Atlanta and Oklahoma City they shut off my email even though I've had it for 12 years.

On a side note, I received a letter saying that they cut off email for 1200 inmates (SO's or those with computer crimes) at Petersburg after I left. The lines for the phone in Atlanta were so long I didn't even bother.

I was in Atlanta from Sept. 11 to the 21st, and the days we were not let out of our cells were both Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Monday the 18th.

When I got to Atlanta, the cell I had been assigned to was full, so while I was standing around waiting dead on my feet for the W to find me a cell, I saw some white guy in his 40's staring at me from his cell and I asked him if he was alone and if I could move in. This guy went by "Sick" and was headed to Bennettsville (?) in South Carolina. I had him for a cellie until Thurs., the 15th, and then got another guy named Games.

The constant cry you hear at Atlanta is, "Anybody got a red-head?" or "I got a redhead for a piece!" A redhead being a wick which is used for lighting pieces of "deuce," (K2) which is prevalent there. Being of limited means, I didn't buy any, but "Sick" did the night after I got there. You can often smell smoke there and the W's don't bother with it.

When I finally left Atlanta on Thurs., the 21st, I was awakened sometime around 4 A.M., so I at least got some sleep. On the way out I had to verify my name and number five times while still in the prison. Then there was the usual waiting around in holding cells for 3 hours.

I ended up being transferred with a guy who left my unit in Petersburg six months earlier to go to a "low" and was now being sent to a "camp." He also ended up in my unit in Oklahoma City (OKC).

When I got on the bus to be taken to the Atlanta airport, I

(4)

sat beside yet another guy from Petersburg who arrived in Atlanta the previous Monday and was on his way to a "low" in California. He told me that Lt. Aikens - whom I had requested the investigation about in Petersburg for possibly assaulting me - had a lawsuit filed against him by this guy's former cellie for assaulting him when he had a seizure, and, after I went to the Hole Aikens assaulted yet another inmate - breaking his ribs - and was subsequently escorted off the "medium" compound in Petersburg and is now at the "low" next door pending investigation! Figures.

After we got to the airport, we had to wait for the plane to arrive, then go through the long process of people getting off the plane, us getting off the bus (where I had to verify my name and number again), and be patted-down and searched before getting on the plane. This took about 2 hours - at least.

"Con Air" is nothing like either of the movies I've seen (being "Con Air" and "U.S. Marshals"). I think the one we got on is a 727 (three seats on either side of a central aisle). It's not unusual to see duct tape on the wings or elsewhere, but I didn't see any this time (I've also been on Con Air many times). Luckily I got a window seat and we then flew to OKC.

Sun. 10/22/23

To continue this saga... we landed at OKC and after getting the handcuffs and shackles removed (I was sneaky and managed to wear two pairs of socks so it wasn't too painful!), we were processed again and waited in holding cells for at least 3 hours - and possibly 4 - 'cause at some point they had the 4 p "Count" and they left us downstairs till after that cleared and the units were fed.

At some point I started chatting with a tranny whom I saw in Atlanta but hadn't spoken to. It turns out she was also at Petersburg several years ago and I vaguely remembered her although we never spoke then either.

All this time I had been freaking out about where I was going 'cause no one would tell me (they rarely do), and if you recall, I was only told "north." Fortunately, when you get processed in OKC they will tell you. I was headed to Marion.

What a relief! If you've followed my blog, I had written about my thoughts on going to Marion. Several people I had spoken to at Petersburg who had come from there gave it bad reviews upon my last report. However, what I didn't follow up on is that I asked them again after they had been at Petersburg a while, and they generally reported that they would rather be back at Marion.

For the record, Marion is in southern Illinois. It is not "north" of Petersburg - it's west. If I could look at a map, it might even be on a slightly lower latitude. Anyway, I was told the population is just like Petersburg, they have a good Unicorn, and you can apply to get a single-man cell which would be WONDERFUL! To cellie to deal with! I was really looking forward to getting there.

On the meantime... we were finally brought up to the units in OKC. When we got to the unit, the CO said to "pick a cellie." Since I was the only obvious Big Fag in the group, everyone avoided me, but luckily there was an odd number of us so I was able to get a cell to myself that first night.

Mon. 10/23/23

Hey! I had a lot on my mind and didn't feel like writing much yesterday.

So anyway... the transfer center at OKC is a lot like a detention center for pre-trial inmates. You stay in the unit the whole time, they have a bookcart (thank goodness!), there's an exercise/fresh air area with a grill way at the top to let fresh air in, various tables for eating or playing cards, and three TV rooms - one black, one white, and one latino.

On Friday, the day after I got there, I got a cellie. He was coming from the "low" at Seagraveville, TX, and was headed to the "medium" at Three Rivers in Texas. We talked about how stupid it was for him to have to come 3 hours north just to go 6 hours south. He was a bit hyper and spent most of his time there trying to get high.

I spent most of my time in the cell reading. The TV room is small and crowded and I mainly felt like keeping to myself. While I was there I ran into yet another guy who left Petersburg in 2018 or 19

(6)

who was in B- South when I was there. He was on his way from a "medium" in Georgia to a USP in Pennsylvania. I also got "hit on" while I was there by three different guys, but declined 'cause I wasn't interested.

Also, at one point we were locked down for part of a day. The reason I heard for this according to Inmate.com, is that a staff member was either raped or it was attempted, and a bunch of CO's beat the crap out of the inmate (rightfully so in this case).

After 3 weeks on the road, on Mon, Oct. 2, I was woken up at 4A to head downstairs and go through that whole process again. As always, we spent about 3 hours in the holding cells. When they started calling names to get "shackled up," my name was one of the first they called. The reason for this? They put a fucking black box on ~~me~~ me!

A black box is literally a black box which they chain on to the middle chain on your handcuffs, with an extra chain which gets padlocked to the chain around your waist. This is some Hannibal-Lector-type shit! They use it for violent offenders or people with pending charges. I don't know why the hell they put one on me all of a sudden, and it was seriously freaking me out.

Since I have extra long arms, this was really painful and uncomfortable 'cause I couldn't move my hands beyond the chain around my waist. I had bruises on my arm for over a week. The only good part is that they automatically give "black boxes" a window seat, so I spent ~~the~~ the flight staring out the window looking ~~for~~ for crop circles (none), and listening to the idiots around me run their mouths.

Oh! I forgot! Right when the plane took off from Atlanta, some guy in the back had a seizure! The plane had literally just taken off and was still climbing, so it took the US Marshals a few minutes to realize what was going on and to finally send someone back to help him.

Meanwhile, on the flight from OKC, we made one stop in northern Illinois, at Rockford (I think), where some people got off and on. Then we took off again to land a second time at Mid-America Airport outside of East St. Louis, IL. When they were calling out names, the officer first just called "Gones." I rolled my eyes and shuffled to

(7)

the front of the plane. Of course it wasn't me. I'll never understand why some officers will just call out "Gones" with no first name like it's not a common name.

Anyway, after that group a different officer called my full name and I got off and headed for the bus. There were 14 of us on the bus ride to Marion, five went to the "camp" and nine to the "medium". It used to be a USP so it's still called USP-Marion even though it was downgraded to a "medium".

Marion is an old prison. It was opened in 1963 to replace the maximum security prison on Alcatraz in San Francisco. Many parts of it aren't air conditioned - like the SHU, for example.

Speaking of the SHU... after arriving about 3p and being processed (this time it only took 1 1/2 to 2 hours), the nine of us were put in the SHU "pending bedspace."

In the SHU we were given boxers and an orange jumpsuit, but no t-shirt. I was given one sheet and a blanket. For hygiene we were only given a short toothbrush and toothpaste, and a small deodorant and that's it. We had to ask for toilet paper and when we asked for soap to wash our hands, we were told we would get some when we showered - which wasn't going to be that day. So... using the bathroom with no soap. Disgusting. Fortunately I found a small sliver of soap in the cell, but that was just by chance.

As I said, Marion is old. So the cells in the SHU have bars facing the hall instead of a wall, so it's all wide open. I believe the SHU consists of four hallways - or "ranges" - two upstairs and two downstairs, with 18 cells along one wall. Across the hall is a large metal-enclosed "room" running the whole length of the hall, which someone said used to be the Rec area, with open windows on the far side.

We are taken out to shower three times per week to a shower down the hall, and the soap they give us is a little pod (someone compared it to a Tide pod) which dissolves in water. In order to take some back to the cell to use for soap (hand soap), I brought a milk carton to the shower from breakfast, along with a "spork" from the meals (thank goodness they don't give us paper spoons like at Petersburg), and used the spork to poke a hole in the

(8)

pod, use what I needed, then bring the rest back in the milk carton.

Tues. 10/24/23

There's not much more, so hopefully I'll finish this today.

The nine of us who transferred to the "medium" were put on a range by ourselves. On Wed., the 4th, five guys were released to the compound. On Thurs., the 5th - my freakin' birthday (it was lousy) - two more were let out. Not me. That left me and one other guy.

That same day (the 5th), me and the other guy were moved to a cell at the end of a range downstairs. Then comes the bad news.

On Sat., the 7th, a lieutenant came by our cell and called my name. He said that I had been transferred here to take a psychology program which I didn't sign up for and have no intention of taking, but that I couldn't take this program 'cause he said I couldn't be on this compound and would be transferred - AGAIN - and that I would stay in the Hole until then! WTF?!! He refused to tell me why.

I can only guess two reasons for this: ① either I have a "separatee" on the compound (possibly my ex/co-defendant was transferred here or (less likely), someone who assaulted me?); - or - ② I'm being put on "diesel therapy" under the direction of Warden Lee at Petersburg for the lawsuit and complaints/requests for investigation I've filed.

Talk about depressed!

The Lt. said he'd talk to the head lady in charge of transfers (called a CMC) on Tues., the 10th since Monday was a holiday. For the record, I asked her this past Thurs., the 19th, about the status of my paperwork, and she said I was already "designated" - in just 9 days! That was fast! So, I could leave any time. Again. And go through all this shit all over again.

On the meantime, the last guy who came with me left on Wed. the 11th, and I got moved in with a guy from the compound on another range upstairs. He's a real joy. He murmurs when he talks, so with the fans blowing air and the guys yelling to each other, I can hardly hear him. Plus, he CONSTANTLY bitches and complains about EVERYTHING. When I caught him making up "facts" to complain about I stopped believing anything he says. Since he won't

(9)

Speak up even after I've told him many times that I can't hear him, I usually ignore him and let him murmur to himself.

Although early October was warm, it started to get chilly later this month, and the windows are kept open and I have only one sheet, one blanket, and no shirt. I've started sleeping on the bare mat and using my one sheet and blanket to stay warm.

I just bought stamps last week, and until this past Friday I only had a pencil stub (golf pencil) or flexible pencil (garbage) to write with (I got a short, flexible pen on Fri.). The pencils weren't worth writing with.

So, here I am stuck in the Hole once again for no good reason, stressing out about where I'll end up, and facing going through all that crap again.

Oh - almost forgot - the first thing I noticed about Larion is that all the staff are white! Petersburg had a majority of black staff. I've been told that there are only two black staff members on this compound. The majority of them here seem to be ex-military rednecks. That is a bad combination.

From what I've heard - and this seems typical of a staff like I've described here - these people are psycho. Staff here seem to abuse their authority - and the inmates - on a regular basis. And they all stick up for each other!

One guy is in here for being caught with a phone. Now, of course he should get sanctions. But, he said several CO's beat him up for it - once in front of Medical staff! What the hell?

My cellie claims that a CO searched his cell for several days in a row and then later, planted a knife out in the open and locked him up for it! As hard as it is to believe him, from what I've heard he just may be telling the truth. Also, he's been in here a month past his sanction 'cause there's no bedspace.

I just might be better off somewhere else.

If any personal contacts are reading this, I'll write you when (if?) I get settled somewhere.

May you all have a blessed Samhain (Halloween)!

Until next time, I wish you all...

10

Love & Blessings,

A stylized, cursive handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long, sweeping tail.