

Victor Ganus

I am a 30 year old white male. I came from a family of two older brothers, two younger sisters and one younger brother. None of my siblings has lived any similar lifestyles as mine.

For the last three I have sat in a supermax prison in Tamms, Illinois. I am here in my cell 23 hours a day alone. It is big and gray. I get out alone for one hour a day in an animal-like kennel called "yard". I can only see a little sky.

There is no human contact. Many slip out of reality here.

There is no TV. Or radio for most inmates. It is a level system where you can get it in times, but they call this the roughest of the rough. Most inmates are segregated for long terms with no relief in sight for a history of destructive behavior in prison, usually stemming from homemade wines, drugs, and gang related crimes.

I've completed seventeen years straight on my current sentence. My only release is in a placement of a tomb.

I can stand on my bunk and look out a very small window and see a small part of a world out there that I no longer know.

I remember my first drink. Myself and a couple of friends, around the age of thirteen walked along this creek path, which came behind this bar. In the creek we found a case of TJ Swan Mellow Days that had fallen off the truck and into the creek. All three of us walked away very drunk.

By the time I was fifteen I had overdosed on Valium and whiskey mixture.

I also have a criminal record for burglary, robbery and other crimes. During this time I also got a case that would take me out of my home and place me in a juvenile youth detention center for boys for two years. I had started a bit of gang banging in those days as well.

When I got close to seventeen years old, I had not much of a life. I worked a bit but still mostly got drunk, high, and doing crime. Before long, I landed back in jail, where there we continued to smoke pot and stay high.

I was considered a youth and was going to be sent back to the youth boys home at seventeen, but when I was in the county jail, myself and a few friends decided to start a jail break. Four of us climbed out the jail window, which landed me in prison for three years, at seventeen years old.

When I was released, I once again began to drink, use drugs, smoke pot, acid trips and different smaller things. Eleven days after my release I hit a telephone pole doing over 100 mph with two female friends and another friend, drinking Jack Daniels. Luck we all walked away.

I stayed out for almost six months. I got my girlfriend pregnant, she raised my little girl alone, which now I am a grandfather and NEVER seen either my daughter or my grandson.

I had to go on the run from the law. In my two freedoms I traveled all about the country enjoying different things, beginning to shoot crystal meth, heroin, and cocaine and smoked anything, drank anything (cough syrup and all).

In my travel back in the state of Missouri I got caught doing a crime and sent to prison in that state in mid '82. There, drugs and booze ran wild as well as crime. I did four year sentence there, but I got released in '85, March 21st. When I walked out their doors of the prison I was drink and high and hell bent on destruction on the world out there. In a drunk and high state for 21 days in your free world, I created as much havoc as possible. On May 1, 1985 I got arrested for murder and robbery and given a natural life sentence at 23 years

old. I was very wild, very high in the system, not happy doing this N/L sentence at all. Illinois was infested with any drug and drink of choice. And so much crime; gangs ruled the system back then.

Three years into my bit, I did a gang hit and got charged with attempted murder. Stabbed the stool pigeon eight or nine times; he told on the gang.

I was sentenced a year in segregation, but only did six months.

About a year later I was charged with murder and armed robbery in prison on a gang related case, which would pave a different path for me. It put me on death row for the past eleven years.

I was out in a regular death row for eight years. I only stayed with using drugs, smoking pot, and drinking wine. I was creating crime on death row, assaulting people in binged anger, which I paved the way to Tamms Supermax.

Now when I look out the window alone, there is no gang, no drink, no drugs. I just sit here and get closer to an execution. Being creative in doing my isolated time. I have come to love Shakespeare, poetry, yoga, and Buddhism. Try to find peace from the destructive life I have lived.

Every time I see my mom she has a tear in her eye for she cannot touch her any longer.

I get to see people four times a month for two hours. I have a TV and a radio now for I have climbed to my highest level.

My system has been clean for four years now. I enjoy my little abyss here in supermax now, even more for I see in a clear state where I can enjoy my being. Some of the finer clean thoughts that run through my mind.

But many, many crimes and embarrassing times stay in my mind from the history behind me. And I will still face the execution from them days. Which just my life those from drugs, booze, and gang banging.

If you go to your bathroom and close the door, stay in there 23 hours straight with a book and only have people bring you three meals that day, in the bathroom; that is basically my life now.

There may not be my life at the end of your destructive road, but it will always come to a bad end. You can count on it lowering your standards; you will embarrass yourself and family and hurt many people. Nothing is worth it.

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