

"Welcome to life"

by Ignacio Medina Jr.

In 23 years The San Joaquin Valley was clear of any significant snow and certainly not seen through my many travels up this way, from L.A.

Delano, CA small town mostly made up of farming land and this Correctional Institution smack in the middle of town, atleast thats the manner it seemed having rows of homes adjacent to the fence line giving an embracing air to the place when I was ment to be forgotten and put away.

Still dark early morning, 37 on the bus stopping by an orange metal sliding door was entering the giant slumber party playing out in the mind of my new life, escorted to that first holding cell, waitingcalled to verify the address where the property I was arrested in was to be mailed. Allowed to keep white tennis shoes, plastic wrist watches, wedding bands or gold chains, any of which I kept being that my gear was for this weather, and chain didn't meet the criteria.

Over 5 inches fell that day having a special treat for every new arrival helping to understand The Rules & Regulations of C.D.C. (Rehabilitation still not existent), were walked in-line towards our designated Housing Units carrying a pillow case filled with a Title 15 (Rule Book), 2 Blankets, 2 Sheets, Bath-towel, pair of socks, and boxer shorts. We made our way until an alarm was set-off signaling all of us to prone out on the snowy ground, loud screams a vivid memorie like that guard walking out of the watch tower holding his rifle across his chest, pacing, pointing with it daring us to test his patience.


"When you fucken hear this alarm" an Officer yelled, "you don't look around for a fucken dry spot to lay the fuck down", and another Officer finished the sentence "you lay the fuck down gentelmen, there's no warning shots here! you lay down or get shot period!

I felt snow going into my ear, chilling my neck, losing my breath from the cold on my chest causing something to move and I closed my eyes. I didn't pray but, wished this snow was surrounded by trees and cabins, not this chain link fence.

That many years ago

sinking stretched on the ground

turning cold welcomed me to a life without hope, January of 1999.

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