

A JOURNAL OF EXPRESSION FROM BEHIND BARS

PAPER CHAINED



CRC community
restorative
centre

ISSUE 23 / SEP 2026

Posted free to incarcerated people



Curtin University



PAPER CHAINED



Editor: Damien Linnane
Associate editor: Jedidiah Evans
Proofreader: Alexandra Loh

Website: PaperChained.com
Email: damien.linnane@crcnsw.org.au
Instagram: @paper.chained

Postal address:

**PO Box 2073
Dangar, NSW
2309 Australia**

Published by the Community Restorative Centre
Issue 23, September 2026
ISSN 2653-0775 (Print)
ISSN 2653-0783 (Digital)

Cover art by Anil Chand
Inside cover art by Damien Linnane
Back cover art by Isaac Qiolele

Paper Chained is printed and produced on the stolen lands of the Awabakal people. We acknowledge the rightful owners of these lands; sovereignty was never ceded.



In December 2025, NSW Premier Chris Minns proposed new laws limiting the rights of people to gather and protest, which were implemented later that month. The following month, Israeli President Isaac Herzog was invited to visit Australia by Prime Minister Anthony Albanese. United Nations Commissioner Chris Sidoti said Herzog's visit should not have happened as the "international court of justice has found that Israel unlawfully occupies the Palestinian territories, has unlawfully purported to annex parts of the Palestinian territories and unlawfully plants, encourages and maintains unlawful settlements in Palestinian territories".

On February 9, 2026, police used heavy force to dispel and arrest anti-Herzog protesters at Sydney Town Hall, which instigated an independent inquiry into police brutality by the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission. The Minns Government's anti-protest laws were struck down on April 16, 2026 after the NSW Supreme Court found them to be unconstitutional.

Numerous charges against protesters were subsequently dropped.

WHAT'S ON THE INSIDE

WARNING: CONTAINS EXPLICIT LANGUAGE

***Paper Chained* is a free, not-for-profit quarterly journal for incarcerated people. It is funded by the Community Restorative Centre with assistance from our partnership with Curtin University.**

If you would like to support *Paper Chained*, tax-deductible donations can be made via the Community Restorative Centre.

If you are currently in prison, have experienced time in prison, or have a loved one in prison, we welcome your contributions to this journal. Contributions from those supportive of prison reform will also be considered.

Submissions are accepted year round. Contributions can be writings or artworks in any style. While exceptions can be made, we strongly prefer that submissions do not exceed 1,500 words. Please advise us if you would like submitted art returned.

Please specify if you would like your contributions to be anonymous. Due to our agreements with Corrections in Victoria, NSW, and New Zealand, people incarcerated there may only be credited by their first name, initials, or a pseudonym.

If you are currently in prison and would like to receive a posted copy of the journal, please see the details to the right. Those outside prison may access the journal free online via our website, **PaperChained.com**.

TERMS OF PUBLICATION

Handwritten contributions will be typed unless the author requests to have a scan of the original text in the journal. *Paper Chained* reserves the right to edit contributions for grammar, length, clarity, and to remove any stigmatising language. Please advise us if you are not open to your contribution being edited.

Copyright for art and writing is retained by the contributor. Please advise *Paper Chained* if submitted contributions have previously been published elsewhere.

Due to limited printing space and other logistical concerns, accepted contributions may not necessarily appear in the next issue of *Paper Chained*, and may be held on file for future issues.

We will not publish any contributions that are perceived to contain forms of oppressive language such as racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, nationalism, xenophobia, or ableism. We also do not publish evangelism, or any material that encourages violence or violates the privacy of others.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 04 Letter from the Editor | 27 Book / Film / TV Reviews |
| 05 Letters to the Editor | 29 The Castle Hill Rebellion
<i>By Josie Bull</i> |
| 06 Art and Writing | 31 Wazza Happening: An
Interview with Glen Fisher |
| 21 Home
<i>By Po</i> | 33 Tagimoucia Art Gallery
<i>By Damien Linnane</i> |
| 22 WTF is Insight
<i>By Cameron Terhune</i> | 36 Historical Prison Comics |
| 23 Volcanis
<i>By Kyle Zammit</i> | 37 CRC / Information Page |
| 25 Prison Survival: An
Interview with Dennis
3r'dee Richardson | 38 Next Issue Preview |

SUBSCRIPTION AND SUBMISSION DETAILS

South Australia: Corrections in SA will not allow individual subscribers. Copies will instead be posted to the prison GM. Each GM will decide where copies are made available. Submissions from SA prisons must be approved by the Chief Executive prior to sending them to us.

Northern Territory: We cannot post copies to NT prisoners due to Corrections' ban on anyone receiving mail exceeding five pages. Please request a copy from the library or a PSO.

New South Wales: *Paper Chained* is free digitally on the prison tablets in the 'L&D' section. Please do not subscribe for posted copies unless you do not have access to a tablet.

New Zealand: Contributions must be submitted for approval to education or the prison librarian, who will then send them to us. Please request the magazine from your library.

United States: *Paper Chained* is free digitally on the Edovo Learning Platform, available in most prisons. We are unable to post anyone hard copies due to budget limitations.

If you can access *Paper Chained* via your prison library, please continue to do so, or request it be made available in your library. Otherwise, incarcerated people in Australia outside SA and NT can subscribe by the address below. **Please let us know your release date (or if you don't have one) when subscribing.** Send submissions to:

Paper Chained
PO Box 2073, Dangar NSW 2309, Australia



Curtin University

Study at Curtin from Prison

At Curtin, we want everyone to be able to access the benefits of higher education.

We offer a range of areas that students can study while in prison, helping them gain valuable skills, confidence and enhancing their career opportunities.

- Enabling pathways
- Arts and Fine Arts
- Construction Management
- Commerce and Business Administration
- Health Science, Health Safety and Environment, Health Promotion
- Indigenous Mental Health and Indigenous Professional Practice
- Science Foundations

We know studying inside can be challenging. That's why we offer flexible learning, tailored support, and access to study materials.

To study with Curtin, you will need approval and support from your prison to be able to access learning resources. Please discuss study options with the education staff at your facility.

The Curtin Prison Outreach team are happy to contact Correctional Centres to discuss study requirements and available options to support students.

Curtin University Prison Outreach
GPO Box U1987 Perth 6845
Phone: 08 9266 5671
Email: prisonoutreach@curtin.edu.au

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

BY DAMIEN LINNANE

No matter where I go, when people ask me what I do for a living, telling them I'm the editor of a prison magazine usually leads to a long conversation with many questions. It is, after all, quite a unique job, with an interesting back story. I started out as a volunteer when *Paper Chained* was founded in 2017, motivated by the fact I had no creative outlets during my own imprisonment. I became editor in 2021, however, as a labour of love, the magazine was too unsustainable to run. The cost of printing and posting my first issue as editor, issue 5, used up almost all of the donations I'd managed to scrounge together over the preceding year, and the only reason this magazine continues to exist today is because when I approached the Community Restorative Centre, trying to chase down some money for more stamps, they told me they loved the idea of the magazine so much they offered to hire me to keep making it.

Most of the time the follow up question I get to how I became involved with *Paper Chained* is what my job actually involves. The first thing I do each morning is walk down to *Paper Chained's* PO Box, to see what has arrived from prisons worldwide. Occasionally, there's no mail. Sometimes, there's six letters. Most of the time there's two or three. Usually there's poetry or a drawing in at least one of them. Sometimes there's letters from prisons on the other side of the world that I've never heard of. I've been told prisoners have asked their family on the outside to search the internet to see if there's some kind of prison magazine somewhere. I keep being told *Paper Chained* is the top response no matter where you search from. It's great to be able to reach prisoners around the world now, especially since we came from such humble beginnings, just hoping to be able to reach a handful of Australian prisoners.

I can never guess what letters will contain. Sometimes all six letters are subscription requests (if you're going to subscribe, please include your ID number and release date, or let us know if you don't have one, it really helps with the administration side of things). Subscription requests are easy to process. Other times there's only one letter, but it will be a complex query about something like our annual art exhibitions, but I enjoy reading and replying to letters, so this doesn't bother me at all. Once I'm done with the physical mail, including scanning art for display in future issues, I then switch over to replying to the day's emails. Among other things, I'm often contacted by recently released people, or by the families and friends of people currently incarcerated. In some prisons, education staff email me scanned contributions from prisoners themselves. And as always, in this issue, I'm pleased to share with you a collection of things received in the mail and email.



On the next page you'll find details of a newer prison zine in the US, which you can send your art and writing to as well. As usual there's no shortage of fantastic contributions from people in custody. On page 10, you can see some examples of the awesome envelope art I get sent. I'm hoping this can become a regular feature, so please feel free to decorate any envelopes you post in if you'd like yours featured too. Two things we're particularly happy to share in this issue are on page 19: an impressive model of a prison cell by Scott, formerly incarcerated in NSW, and Phillip's 'Jail Mail' drawing from Victoria, which I'm sure all people in custody can relate to. This artwork was sent to us after it was somehow deemed too controversial to feature in an official prison art exhibition.

Speaking of official prison art exhibitions, on page 33, you'll be able to read all about my visit to the art gallery of Suva prison in Fiji. About three weeks after this issue is posted into prisons, I also would have visited Tasmania's annual prison art exhibition, Artists With Conviction, and I look forward to sharing about that in the next edition of *Paper Chained*. In the meantime, in this issue we're also pleased to share an interview with author Glen Fischer, who was also the editor of a prison magazine when he was incarcerated at Oberon Correctional Centre in NSW in the early 1990s. If you can't find a copy of Glen's powerful memoir, *Predator's Paradise*, in your prison library, ask education if they can order one, or put in a request form to see if it can be made available. And until next time, enjoy the issue, and keep those letters coming.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To Paper Chained:

I have been in segregation for over seven months. Two weeks ago I couldn't draw at all. I have to thank *Paper Chained* for motivating me to start.

To all inmates:

Don't give up on your goals, or the person you want to be. Every day is another day to reach greatness. Gaol's what you make it be. Pick good mates and wise habits, and prepare yourself to come home a better you.



By Jacob, NSW

To Paper Chained:

I have put together my first zine for prisoner poetry and art submissions, a project inspired by *Paper Chained*. I actually thought I would be getting out this year but I lost in court a few days ago and with about another seven years until I'm eligible for parole consideration I want to focus on positive projects, and working to make more issues of the zine is one of them. It is short, only about eight pages to start, but I want to get some experience and expand as I go. I was wondering if you'd be open to running some sort of a call out for the zine in *Paper Chained*. I could make up an artwork and brief description. The postal address would be of a friend outside to keep it simple. Let me know what you think.

Cameron Terhune
California, USA

Editor's note: A 'zine' is a unofficial magazine with a small circulation, usually homemade and created by either one person or a very small group. Paper Chained started as a zine and the first issue was only sent to about 26 prisoners, though it is now considered a magazine due to its availability to tens of thousands of prisoners as well as its registration with the National Library of Australia. Please see the description for Cameron's zine, Beyond The Ninth Wave, below.

*"The gates of hell are open night and day
Smooth is the descent, and easy is the way
But to come back from hell and view the cheerful skies
In this, the task and mighty labor lies."*

—Virgil

BEYOND THE NINTH WAVE,

a journal of prisoner writing and art presented in a quarterly zine and online, is seeking submissions of artwork, poetry, writing, and interviews from behind the walls.

Since 2023, Beyond the Ninth Wave has worked to acknowledge the humanity of society's exiles. Originally conceived to be the voice of the condemned, we now welcome contributions from all walks of prison life.

Only you can tell your story. If nobody knows who you are, they will never know what you are capable of.

For more information or to submit, contact:

Beyond the Ninth Wave
P. O. Box 511
West Fork, AR 72774
USA

Art by Steven LaBelle

ART AND WRITING



'Still Alive' by Paige deJong

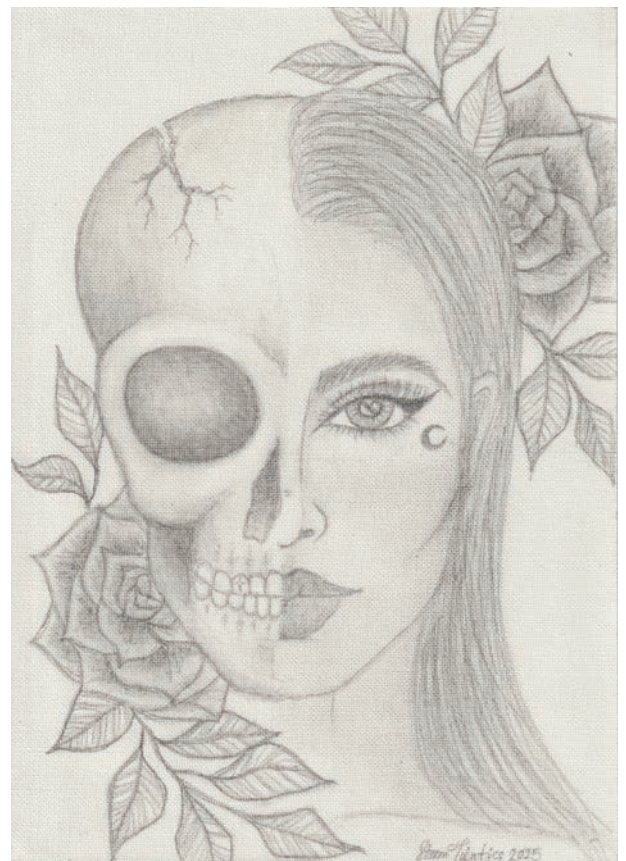


By 'Yours Truly'

WATCH THE DRONES

Watch the vulnerable
Stumble
Fall from their feet
Tired with defeat
More shit they don't need
Others bristle with rage
Too bottled to waylay
Too fierce to escape
The humble will mumble
"More of the same"
"Will life ever change?"
Though the faces may do
I remember you, you, and you
But you there, a stranger
No threat, no saviour
No Jesus Christ pose
Which look down from composed
Supercilious reptilians
Licking their eyes
They never change neither
Of this last truth I know
I find you perhaps too
Also a believer.

By Bronwyn Williams
Bandyup Womens Prison
PO Box 100, Guildford, WA 6935



By Storm Tientjes

Can you see me as I see you?
 As we share in this same pain of disdain
 Like no one cares beyond their own pains
 Of trying to identify beside the child inside who cries...
 Here I am
 Here I am ...
 Can I be me as you choose to be you?
 Through and through in this age of space and time
 designed to remind
 Of a pain we can't take back yet strive to be
 Or live in a new way to loving each other free
 As sisters and brothers true and true,
 To grow beyond the boundaries set by others and hate
 as they do?
 Here I am
 Here I am ...
 Can we move beyond the tall tales of the whales we've
 caught?
 The battles silently fought
 To see the truth in who we are
 To discard the lies of who others say we are
 That presses down the ability we are
 To be greater than even our own imaginations are?
 And say proudly
 Here I am
 Here I am ...
 Can we rise together collectively?
 Growing beyond the individuality
 In this temperamental society that refuses to see the
 beauty
 We all create in being who we are individually
 That is beautiful collectively
 As a bouquet of flowers planted by adversity,
 Fighting circumstantially to agree unanimously
 And love each of us as we are
 For who we are?
 Here we are
 Here we are ...
 Let's Get Free

*Untitled poem by Jeffery A. Shockley ES4796
 SMART COMMUNICATIONS / PADOX SCI-FAYETTE
 Po Box 33028, St Petersburg, FL 33733, USA*

PRISON

High fences, locked doors, guards walkin' the floors
 Tension, hostility, wasted ability
 Violence, drugs, big brainless thugs
 Depression, desperado, excessive bravado
 Treachery, deceit, these bastards think they're elite.
 Hatred, hell, you're a dog if you tell.
 Lockdown, no warning, are we out this morning?
 Laps, yards, games of cards.
 Foil, bupe, an endless loop.
 Caution, fear, the things that you hear.
 Connections, rapport, what are you here for?
 Elapsing, time, surrounded by crime.
 Mistakes, realised, too late.
 Institutionalised!

*By Jordan Brennan #118187
 Risdon Prison, Tasmania*

THE OTHER MAN

Who is that man standing there?
 I know him, but from where?
 He has a rather distant stare
 and in one eye perhaps a tear.

I've known that man; he bears the blame.
 He's the person I call shame.
 The one who's stained with that name,
 is in my stainless frame again.

And so

Stainless mirror on the wall
 I'm the one who took the fall.
 And if I ever leave these walls,
 will anyone love me at all?



Writing and art by 'Boris Kerr', New Zealand

Mar-A-Lago Embargo.
 Put a freeze on Trump's Wells-Fargo.
 Mar-A-Lago Embargo.
 Seize all his cargo!
 Mar-A-Lago Embargo!
 Foreclose on his buildings
 From New York to Chicago.

*By Mohamed Ben Sinclair
 Montgomery County Correctional Facility
 22880 Whelan Lane
 Boyd, Maryland 20841, USA*

YOU GOT IT

The weight room opens first thing in the morning, and within minutes it fills. There are six benches, two squat racks, and plates stacked along a wall that has been repainted enough times to lose its original colour. Someone is already debating shoulder position on the bench press. Someone else is timing rest intervals on a basic digital watch. For about an hour, the room resembles any gym outside.

The conversations are ordinary: programming splits, protein intake, whether incline bench is superior to flat. No one discusses appeals or sentencing dates. In this room, status is measured in repetitions.

I slide onto the bench and settle under the bar. My hands find the same width they always do. The first few repetitions move easily. On the last rep, the bar slows halfway up and hovers for a moment. From behind me, my workout partner says, "You got it." I press through the sticking point and rack the weight.

That is the phrase I hear most often: "You got it." Any gym-goer, inside the fence or out, would recognise it.

It is usually said when a lift slows, typically at the very end of a set. Under the bar, there is no paperwork and no classification system. There is only the question of whether the weight will move. It either does or it does not.

Most of prison is organised around restriction: stand here, wait there, count at this time, move in that direction. The rules are external and fixed. The weight room operates differently. You choose the load. You decide whether to add five pounds. You decide whether to attempt one more repetition.

For sixty minutes, progress is visible and measurable: plates increase, form improves, and a shoulder that hurt last month hurts less now. The metrics are straightforward and immediate.

Then count is called.

We rack the bars, wipe the benches, and line up. The vocabulary changes quickly as keys turn, doors buzz, and instructions resume.

The weight room does not erase anything or change release dates or shorten sentences. What it offers is a setting in which effort produces a predictable result. The formula is simple: add weight, apply force, and adapt. In a place where most variables are fixed, the gym is one of the few spaces where choice still matters.

And when the bar stalls halfway up, someone will certainly say, "You got it."

*By Alan
New Jersey, USA*

RUSTED RELICS

I once saw in an old yard in passing
Of a house that now no longer stood
Amidst all the rubbish and refuse
Broken glass and scared bits of wood
There were old toys of all description
That would've once filled any child's needs
But there they were in decayed disarray
Strewn through the overgrown grass and weeds
It seemed they'd been there forever
Abandoned as they were to the years
Now nothing but old rusted relics
Sharing no more a child's joy or tears
And I believed each toy told a story
Sadly, ones that may never be told
For it seemed to me we're just like those toys
For it seemed to me when we grow old
My imagination took me back to earlier days
And the place where I once used to live
And how together with family and friends
I enjoyed everything that life could give
Then my heart at once filled with gladness
As familiar faces came back to me
Of people who became a part of my life
In regret though some I would never again see
The weather then slowly started to change
Raindrops fell as black clouds darkened the skies
And I felt the bite of a wind gone cold
That chilled the teardrops caught in my eyes
I turned up my collar against the wind
As the rainwater swirled round my feet
And I walked toward the impending storm
Along that dark and lonely street.

By DeWitt B, NSW



By Brendan, NSW

LAST BREATH

I feel panicked as the truth hits me
The 'last night' already starting to fade
Fuck!! The depth gauge says I'm 6 feet
The realisation is making me sway
Stumble left I fall over my lies
Laid bare for the world to judge
Tears well but the eyes ain't mine
Knife in the heart and the handle won't budge
Fall to my right get dirt in my face
Brush it off, try seeing it clear
I see pain, so much hurt to erase
She sees nothing but anger and fear
A wife torn up into pieces and broken
By the man that she loves so deep
Why did he leave our house unspoken
Why couldn't he just trust in she

Last breath I give it all to you
Last breath and it's all yours
Sorry babe I never meant to hurt you
Last breath says drugs are the cause
Last breath and I give it to you babe
Last breath with a tear in my eye
Sorry babe I got nothing new to say
My last breath fades like day to night

I try to breathe but the oxygen's gone
I now see those moments were the last
Should have been better and I'm sorry I'm not
You paid the price for the pain of my past
I'm so sorry, yeah I should have been honest
Should have told you that the struggle was real
Instead I broke out and got straight back on it
I can only imagine the deceit that you feel
Gotta find a foothold and climb
Stand tall and admit my crimes
Got no breath but I got a bit of time
Hope you can see me between these lines
You're a queen and I truly adore you
No matter what my drug rage did
No one after and no one ever before you
Jules babe you are all there is

So yes this has to be the last
Surely love couldn't take anymore
Sorry that the times have gotten so dark
I'm so sorry that I ever walked out of that door
My last breath and it's all for you
It's everything right now that I have left
Get better now is all I can do
Gasping for air in a pool of my sweat
I never meant for anything like this
I couldn't see where this would all go
All I need is your love and your kiss
Jules deep down I know that you know
The man you love is still here it's me!!!
But right now I'm choking for air
Please stay close my beautiful queen
Please know that I've always cared.

*Song by Joel Reid-Roe #218534
Darwin C.C., PO Box 1066, Howard Springs, NT, 0835*

I WANNA TALK ABOUT PRISON LIFE

Us women are very broken-hearted and not being loved by their families, it is so sad to look at these women everyday looking lost, unloved and sooo much unforgiveness that breaks my heart daily, they seem to have given up on life and one's self ...

So many women are broken over their crimes, they believe they are who their crimes speak of. We are being judged by the world and by our community. We get talked down to and it's a shame not only from other women but by staff members as well. No one considers how we feel among ourselves. It's sad we deal with negativity day in and day out.

Sometimes we lose hope in everything, are we ever gonna go home? As I see a lot of lifers ask daily. We sit back and allow their time to define them and some don't try to be positive cause they are stuck in this prison life, they think it's all they have so the hope is gone in most lifers here, they constantly battling with bitterness, being lonely, hopeless, sad, hurt, and even angry at self or others ...

There is constant fighting, robbery in the dorms, there is drama daily people, talking about other peoples crimes and plus you know they look them up to see what they in here for when they talk to their relatives.

Us women are tired of being call a convict or we are not worthy or anything, we are human as well, yes we made mistakes but at the end of the day we are still human ...

As I sit here it's sooo wrong in the prison that people just don't care anymore, we don't get proper treatment in medical, we don't get treated right by staff, we get told what to do daily and they don't care about that. We get told not to talk to big staff members who are higher up, if we do we get threaten and/or go to lockdown which is messed up ...

We get enough mistreatment as it is from outside of prison it's not funny ...

It's messed up because women come back and forth from prison, we need help here, we need better chances, better solutions to help all of us to allow us not to come back to prison ...

And everything costs sooo much and it's sad that we have to pay \$1.35 for a cup soup and noodles ...

But on the flip side I'm always trying to help in any way I can to encourage us to be lovable, kind and respectful.

Well everyone stay true and continue to love self.

*By Quanitta Turner
1000937771-F2
Lee Arrendale State Prison
PO Box 709
Alto, GA 30510 USA*

PLEASE DON'T HANG UP

I put my MIN
And then my PIN
The dial tone
Same old ring

When they answer
The same old drill
Hear my baby
He knows
'That's Mum,' he tells

I say hello,
We talk and laugh
For 10 whole minutes
My world isn't so dark.

I try to shield him
From where I am
He thinks I'm giving
A friend a hand

'Just come to Nanny's'
He always asks
Every time
It breaks my heart

He hears the beep
'Please don't hang up'
Start to weep
Through tears : say
'Mum needs to sleep'

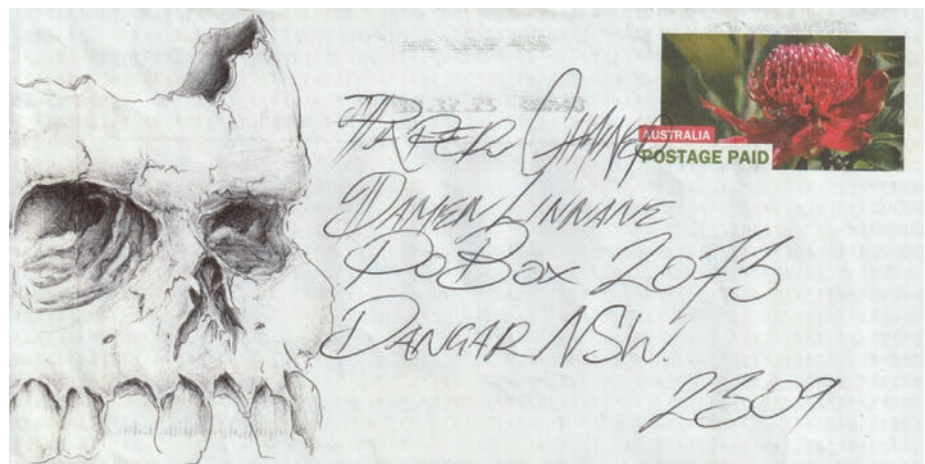
Goodnight my son
He hears the beep
'Please don't hang up'
I choke back sobs
I hold my breath
The final beep
As it disconnects.

By Helena, NSW

Black cockatoos screech
Clouds dissipating slowly
Blue skies will emerge

Sunny blue sky early
Days getting longer quickly
One more winter left

Haikus by Clayton



Envelope art by Melony Attwood, Bronwyn Williams and KJ Tolhurst (x2)

ICE, PART 3

But you mob will find out in your heart that you are mine.
You'll regret that you tried me. They always do.
But you came to me. Not I to you.
You knew this would happen, many times you were told,
But you challenged my power, and chose to be bold.
You could have said NO, and just walked away
If you could live that day over, now what would you say?

I'll be your master, you will be my slave
I'll even go with you when you go to your grave
Now that you met me, what will you do?
Will you try me or not? It's all up to you.
Just don't be a fool cos every corner you choose
There's drugs and booths
Which ever you choose, it is up to you

Cos I will bring more misery than words can tell
So all you mob come take my hand
Let me lead you mob to hell

This goes out to my brothers
and sisters in Western Australia
East and West Kimberly
Love from Troy-Greddon-Benning
God bless and don't stress
Stay strong and keep it real.

By Troy Benning 532019, Alice Springs C.C.



*Art by Krishna Maroney #205851
Delta Correctional Facility
3800 Baldwin Road, CR540
Greenwood, Mississippi, 38930, USA*

BEYOND 'THE FATAL SHORE'

Drowning within four cold walls
I swam among the pages
of convict days and "Terra Australis"
There in the violent brine
There in the cruel times
I saw familiarity break surface
again and again

Where does history end and horizons cease?

These modern times of corruption
Do not hide a tainted past
When beyond the "good order and management"
The 'cat of nine' rules the dark
For so called soft punishment
May rule a 'civilized' world
Minds in need of nourishment
Are locked up and never unfurled
At least when starvation gnawed
leg irons burned
and harsh labour was a reward
there was death to rely on
Now when a drowning man is lied to
cheated on
and locked in a box
death is never offered

How much of convict history forgotten?
This new 'compassion' is not a better way
when no real changes are made
Statements booming
Another night looming with no 'release' in sight
The sea of inhumanity
grows wider and deeper
and
punishment is a joke
with no wished for death in sight ...

*Dedicated to "The Fatal Shore" written by Robert Hughes
Composed in 'The Slot' by J.B.H., Victoria*



*Art by Miranda Dinsdale, H2616487
Bandyup Womens Prison
PO Box 100, Guildford, WA 6935*

DREAMS

These kids and their broken dreams
 The tears they've cried turn into streams
 Then those streams turn into oceans
 They can't control their own emotions
 No secret pills or even potions
 No special creams no special lotions
 So he is asking you right now
 put yourself up in their shoes
 See if the path they have taken
 is the one that you would choose
 See if you can filter better all the pain from the abuse
 All you have to do is try, nothing in this life will lose

By Jaime Hicks



Art by Motion, NSW

Sometimes I think the loneliness inside of me is going to explode through my skin and sometimes I'm not sure if crying or screaming or laughing through the hysteria will solve anything at all. Sometimes I'm so desperate to touch, to be touched, to feel that I am almost certain I am going to fall off a cliff of an alternate universe when no one will ever find me. It doesn't seem impossible!

I've been screaming for years and no one has ever heard me. I closed the world away. Lock it up. Turn the key so tight. Blackness buries me within its folds. I want to smash this concrete world into oblivion, I want to be the bird that flies away. My eyes focused on the barred window and the promise of what could be. The promise of something better, some reason for the madness building in my bones, some explanation for my inability to do anything without ruining everything.

I can't remember the warmth of any kind of embrace. My arms ache from the inescapable ice of isolation. Of prison!

*Untitled writing by Melony Attwood
 Bandyup Womens Prison
 PO Box 100, Guildford WA 6935*

MY MASK

My mask is anger, it hides my fear.
 My mask is anger, it is always near.
 My mask is anger, respond to shame.
 My mask is anger, my way to blame.
 Masking because I'm upset
 Masking, the way I forget.
 My mask is anger, my unstoppable drive.
 My mask is anger, my will to strive.
 Angry at my prison sentence,
 Angry when accountable,
 Now the pain makes sense,
 No longer criminal and gullible.
 Angry at missing birthdays,
 Angry at missing holidays--
 Now I keep the promise I say.
 Self-aware at work and play,
 Peace and joy, my new way.
 My mask was anger.

*By Nathan Sessing #797954
 PO Box 1905
 Tehachapi, California, 93581 USA*



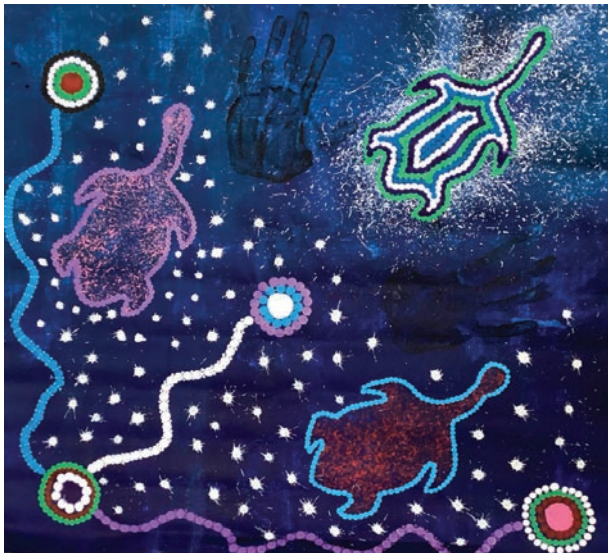
*Art by Joel Minor E31433
 Borallon Training Centre
 LMB 8003, Ipswich QLD, 4305*



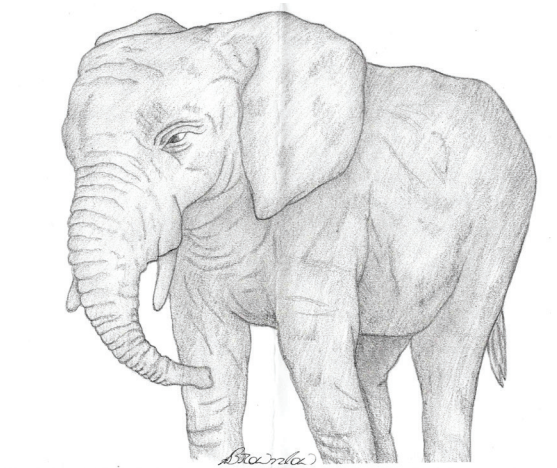
Art by Mitch, NSW



Art by Simon, New Zealand



Art by Preston, Brisbane Youth Detention Centre



Art by Samantha Brownlow



Art by Park, NSW



Art by Paul A Wilson J2812869, Acacia Prison, Locked Bag 1, Wooroloo, WA 6558



Art by Reece, NSW



Art by Ashley McGoldrick



Art by 'The Mysterious Artist D', Yokohama Prison, Japan



'Glen Innes Correctional Centre' by Tony Minahan



Art by Jasmine Punton #D3094095
Bandyup Womens Prison
PO Box 100, Guildford, WA 6935



Art by Steven Labelle, BG3974,
CTF. PO Box 705, Soledad
California, 93960, USA



Art by Nigel G, Queensland

CANDLELIGHT EXTINGUISHED

There was a possibility of love
Between two broken strangers
Both of them in jail
So they knew of the dangers
There was a difference in time
For one against the other
One an imploded father
One a devoted mother
It began with a thank you
For the quality of the art
A genuine wish of appreciation
From deep within the heart.
No reply was expected
Though it did find its way
To a sad father who smiled
As it truly made his day.
The mother offered hope
For a different after-jail life
To the man who had children
Yet had never had a wife
Letters flew back and forth
Between the lonesome hopeful two
Sharing thoughts and dreams
And the possibility of love grew
The time came through for him
To tell her of his crime
She'd already told him
Of the loss of her life's time
So was the candlelight extinguished
The hope for love did end
Together apart hearts too broken
To join together and mend.

By KCDC

Interpretations or perceptions?
That is the key!
We are not the same ... I'm not right,
Nor am I wrong ...
I know what I know,
My family have taught me
My culture shows me
My beliefs are mine!

The art of listening ...
Is to hear what's not said,
And listen to what's heard!

The art of sight ...
Is to look for beauty in everything
And find it anywhere!
Open your mind and you'll see!!

Untitled writing by Kenlee Thomas, NSW

REALITY

It's only right to want things
for your own betterment.
We all need growth, order, and development.
Especially, those swimming in the dangerous
waters of deception.
This ain't no place to emphasise
looks over character.
A real man doesn't live off the weakness
of a woman.
Necessity breeds creativity in the heart
of a determined man.
And when black clouds descend
time is no longer on your side.
But, I can't turn my back on the past,
nor can I run to the future.
I just want to live in your presence.

*By Stanley Corbett Jr, aka 'Knowledge S', North Carolina
Excerpt from Stanley's book 'Wild Roses: Poetry & Prose'*



*Art by 'Versatile Valerie'
Iloilo City District Jail, Philippines*

LIFE'S JOURNEY

Life is a journey we all must travel. Heading forward,
looking at new scenery, collecting memories on a one-
way trip.

Full of options and detours. There are no signs saying
where this or that road will lead us. Yet we still travel
down these roads, not knowing what lies ahead. Not
knowing what was down the road not travelled.

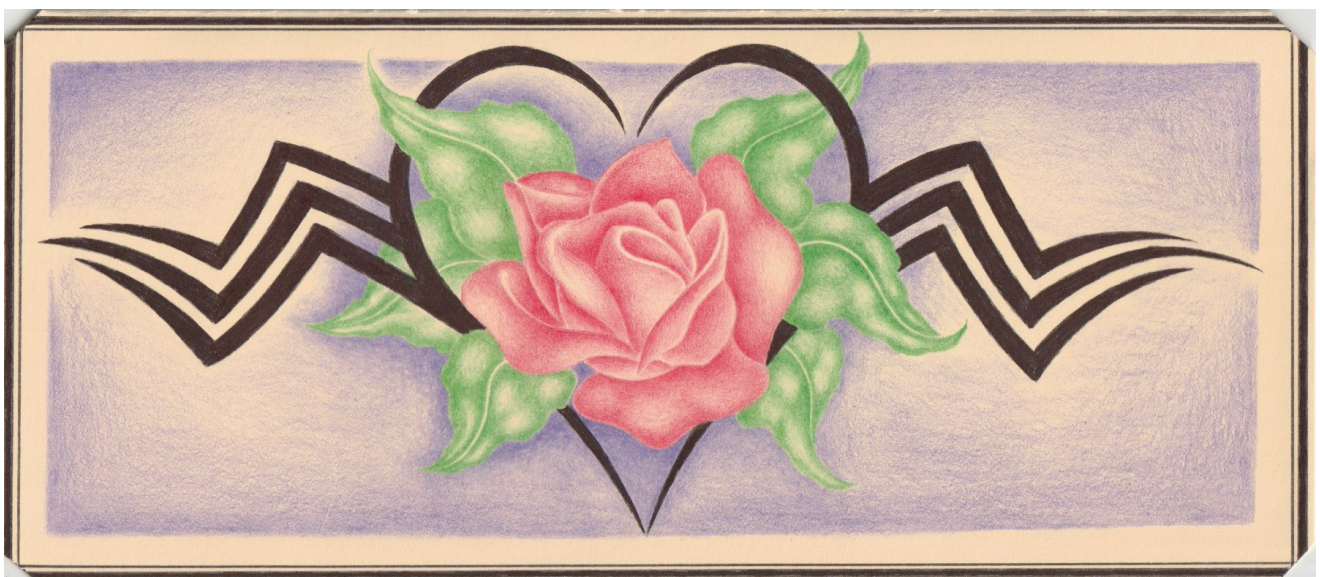
Some roads will be rough and hard, but still, we push
on, hoping the road smooths out. Sometimes the tunnels
seem too dark and too long. But still, we push on, looking
for the light at the end back onto the road. Although a
few of us don't find the light, lost in the darkness, a road
travelled no more.

We travel these roads alone. The experiences are ours to
absorb. Everyone is travelling; some will guide us from
time to time. Advice is often spoken or heard. But only
we can decide if it's worthwhile. It does not dictate our
journey; it just adds another sign to the signpost that
only we can see. We all have different routes to take.

Some people's roads are already paved before they
travel. Some will pave their roads as they travel. Some will
travel down rough corrugated roads that they struggle
down daily. There is always someone worse off. Your
wealth is measured by your memories. They are the only
possessions we will take with us when travelling down
the last road.

We all seem to rush to the end and complain it's too short
a journey. So don't sit there grinding an axe, wasting
valuable time. Let it go. Enjoy the short journey we all
must travel.

By Ken, New Zealand



Art by Robert McCullough P78220, CTF. PO Box 705, Soledad, California, 93960, USA



The big idea behind this artwork is to showcase the horrendous disaster caused by war in our contemporary world. As a pacifist, I do not see war as a means to resolve conflict, which led to creation of the Geneva convention back in the late '40s. For this reason, I decided to capture Spider-Man flying down from a very dilapidated city with a balloon banner which clearly states, "Stop the War, You Morons and Assholes". It is my personal belief that innocent children and women should not die as a result of bad decisions made by the evil egotistical men, who lack moral considerations on how their evil decision have led to disastrous carnage upon their own citizens and the entire globe.

The inspiration for this work came from encountering news imagery on a prison computer depicting war-torn regions, particularly Gaza. The confronting reality of these images — the human cost behind headlines — left a lasting emotional imprint and shaped the direction of the piece. From this, the idea emerged to reimagine Spider-Man not simply as a saviour of fictional cities, but as a humanitarian presence entering real-world spaces of crisis to offer rescue, comfort, and hope.

One thing I tried in this artwork was to blur the background and set a distance dimension without adding many details to the derelict buildings, instead, my main focus was to add more to Spider-Man and portray him as the protagonist of my painting. Then again, the skulls symbolise the dead people that died as a result of war.

By Henry Akano



Art by Scott D

BACK AGAIN

I am back again, once more here,
Back here standing, yet nobody is aware.
Nothing's the same, all has changed,
What's going on here, am I all that remains?
I see no familiar faces, where is everyone I know?
I've been here for a while, where did everybody go?
I know that I've been missing, that I've been gone a bit,
But I am back here finally, does nobody give a shit?
Did anybody even notice, that I was not around?
There is no one here to greet me
now that I am back in town.
This was no formal reunion
so it seems no one does care,
Or is there just nobody left,
or do they have no time to spare?
It seems that times forgotten
all these years I'm not around,
Maybe those I knew have left,
or have they simply gone to ground?
All I see is strangers in this place we used to hang,
So now here I stand, I am one man without a gang.
I am really free but seems there'll be no celebrations,
I have done my years but I receive no congratulations.
I don't know where they've gone,
or if we'll ever meet again?
I have finally earnt my freedom,
but it seems I lost my friends.

By Bukks



Art by Phillip, Victoria



Art by Lee, New Zealand



Model of a prison cell by Scott, NSW

MY SHORT STORIES

Lyrics that have never resonated more for myself. For years I have battled with my own self doubts and fears of success which have constantly led me to the inside of a prison cell. These last 12 months have been the longest though. Especially for my son. Being a mother is the scariest most amazing thing I have ever done, not knowing whether I'll be good enough when he was born to proving to myself that he was exactly what we both needed, to losing everything I'd worked so hard for over and over again. Scared the shit out of myself when I call and he still tells me he cares. He still loves me. Even when my head isn't working and my heart is breaking for him out there. He's still there. Even while I fight for the chance just to see his face. He still cares. Even when I feel like the lowest of lows and cry myself to sleep praying to be home with him cuddled up in my arms somehow I know deep down my beautiful baby boy. Yes he still loves me! My strength to keep going, my reason to come home! Xx

I am weeks away from release and this time I have nothing outstanding or hanging over my head. This time I'm alive with possibilities and growing hope that on the 21st of July 2026 I will walk out of these gates and never look back. I'm trying to stay positive in the most negative place. I ask the officers for help and they just laugh in my face. How shameful for them. When did they become able to treat us this way? Who was the teacher that taught them to act the way they do and belittle us the way they have. How do they have the right to stomp all over our hope and tell us that rules are ours to change and rearrange at will and no you cannot have the basic items and chances. Somedays are easier just to lay here and rot away because asking for mental help can be punished as well. I just have to keep reminding myself, yes bitch, you have already been through hell. Another six months is nothing but a stupid story to tell!

I will forever be making up for lost memories, my baby boy will always mean more. Mummy be home soon!

By Ashley Jade Stone



Art by Sharon, NSW

Isolated depression sets in but it's us against them so I'll never give in. There was hope at the start but a few months and it soon comes apart. Months turn to years and like Johnson & Johnson there's no more tears. The days start to daze drifting past in a haze how do I get out of this legal maze, the depression kicks harder and on I roll with a dull gaze. Will I leave here like old Dave carted off to his grave or will I walk out on my own two feet standing tall? Only time will tell in this system I call hell.



*Untitled writing and art by Lewis Comb
Woodford Correctional Centre
PMB 1, Woodford, Queensland 4514*



Art by Jayde Farrell

poem called = Home

By: Po Xuanwu

I was born in Queensland into struggle in the year of 95,
Moved young to New South Wales where we lived on hard times,
The Southern Cross Suburb of Bulli,

I even remember our street, it was 26 O'Brien.

I remember Bangers and Mash as I looked into my Mothers eyes,
If this was a novel, would not be worth a dime.

She said I wasn't staying no more and she was given me up. Next day took me to the Doc's office and away I watched her go, I still don't understand but somethings aint always clean cut.

They say that unconditional is the love.

Between a mother and her son.

But I tell you now is that time when ever time

I ain't a witness and am yet to see the proof.

Is I thought life was tough before, well wasn't I a stooge,

I am a Burever of every type and form of abuse.

I ran away or took things as the only way to make it through.

Always lived to the Code of Ride Or Die.

Even got it tattooed clear as day above my eye.

Showered always the Loyalty, of which myself was deprived.

See I navigated this ^{the} here path forever lost and alone.

In search of a people I could rightly call my own.

Searching endlessly for a place and person who in my heart I can

lovely call!

"Home"

Chengwei

Energy
Po Xuanwu

A hand-drawn illustration of a treble clef and two musical notes. The treble clef is on the left, and the two notes are on the right, one above the other. The drawing is done in black ink on lined paper.

Rock Rolla

INDUSTRIES

PRODUCTION

WTF IS INSIGHT

Although it can be easy to forget in the face of the many daily challenges, frustrations, and casual cruelties presented by the journey of incarceration, the goal of locking someone up is rehabilitation.

That's not to say - at all - that those who form the cogs of the incarceration machine prioritise rehabilitation, that they accomplish it, or that they even care about it; my point is only that the concept of imprisonment boils down to a timeout so someone can reflect on their actions and the motivations behind their actions, then decide whether or what they are willing to change their life to bring about a better future for themselves.

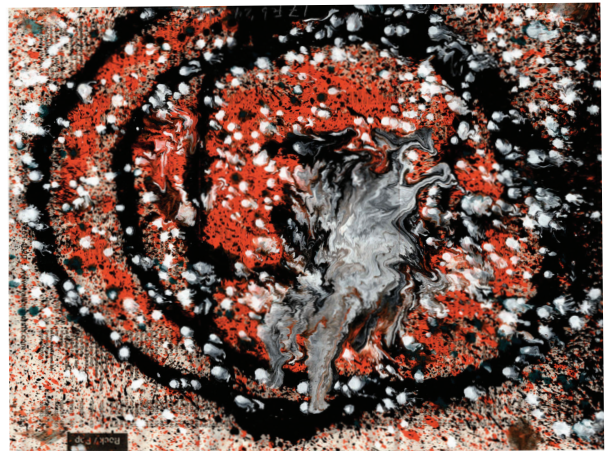
This process, regardless of whether it unfolds within the context of a system that helps or hinders such reflection and change, is 'rehabilitation,' and a critical element of rehabilitation is gaining insight. Insight is another daunting and often misused word which simply means understanding why we do the things we do, and why we feel the ways we feel.

Here's a concrete example, since nothing less generally suffices to teach me a damn thing. There are a billion rules on this side of the razor wire, exponentially more than could ever be remembered by inmates or staff let alone enforced. Because of this immutable truth, beyond the core rules, nobody with a brain would find it surprising there are only a few petty infractions any particular cop enforces consistently - what they trip on, in other words.

One guard may have zero tolerance for inmates not standing up during count. Another might be on a crusade against hanging up laundry crosswise ('obstructing line of sight') or having too many books, or passing food to another inmate, or whatever. There's literally a rule for everything as well as unlimited leeway to invent new ones on the fly for those so inclined, but once you learn the pet peeves of each individual staff member you can go about your day with a minimum of inconvenience and conflict.

I have been at this particular state penitentiary for almost nine years but never in all that time have the powers that be enforced the 'no food to leave the chow hall' rule. Technically it's true, you can't take anything back from breakfast or dinner to eat later. People do it anyways for many reasons: because they can't wolf their food down in the five minutes we get to eat, because they want to heat it up, or dress it up, or because they have nothing else so they collect some extras to fend off the hunger beast, or for medical reasons, or just because they want to eat when they goddamn want to instead of when someone tells them they can.

WRITING AND ART BY CAMERON TERHUNE



Irrelevant. The rule says no food leaves the chow hall and there are no exceptions. Enforcement is a huge hassle, it's super petty, and it accomplishes nothing except making everyone irritable, so for years nobody wanted to be that guy and rock that particular boat. Then, during dinner last night the door banged open and 'that guy' announced no food leaves the chow hall - just like Lazarus, alive and kicking all over again.

I don't take food out of the chow hall. We don't get fed much, it's not that good, and I've been dining in such institutional confines as this for most of my adult life - I can eat fast enough to make a pig blush. By all rights this particular resurrection ought to affect me not at all, yet when I walked out of the chow hall I almost lost it.

Along the journey of coming to self-awareness, we pick up a mixed bag of vocabulary to help make sense of new concepts we learn. A 'trigger' is not something I ever understood until well into my 30s but it means something from outside of ourselves that we experience which causes a reaction inside ourselves.

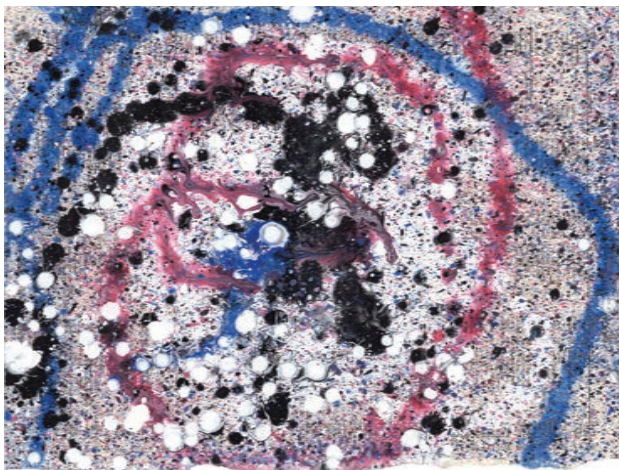
For me, seeing cops posted up with a trash can pushing a hard line and making people dump out their paltry scraps was a trigger. It filled me with rage that came on so fast I didn't even realize how consumed by it I was until I made it back to my cell, heart still pounding, thoughts still racing, hands shaking and unable to focus on anything except how angry I was for most of the next hour.

The rule about food leaving the chow hall meant nothing to me, but seeing the cops adopt such a confrontational posture reminded me of other times and other places I have been where the cops were far more aggressive. It reminded me of all the times the cops have treated me like I'm less than human, put their hands on me, threatened my life. It reminded me of how just last year

they beat my neighbor to death, the guy I used to eat with every day who isn't there anymore. It reminded me of their countless other acts of violence and retaliation I've witnessed over the years and of how powerless I am to do a thing about any of it. It reminded me of being a kid, of being screamed at or thrown into a wall, of how back then I felt just as powerless. Just as scared. Anger is a secondary emotion, a reaction to feeling fear or pain. As a man, being afraid of anything is unacceptable. It denotes weakness, and weakness invites abuse - only the strong survive. The stoic, macho tough guy illusion is amped up within penitentiary walls to absurd extremes, so when I saw cops acting hard it threw me back to the emotional state of a scared kid being yelled at or roughed up by his dad, because cops are a masculine figure of authority also, with a similar history of unpredictable and explosive behavior in my personal life; they are a symbol of those who can and have hurt me under that guise of authority. Flashing back to those times frightened me, but fear is unacceptable. So instead - rage.

This is what I mean by insight, and rehabilitation: recognizing a trigger, not reacting on impulse despite the fight-or-flight response running wild, considering the consequences of becoming aggressive with my antagonists, choosing to walk away and work things out in a safe space with someone I can say stuff like this to without feeling like I'm that same scared kid, and letting it go instead of letting it dictate my behavior or rule my life.

I'm grateful to have a better understanding of the complex interplay between trauma, triggers, and emotions than I once did - I just can't help but wonder if there are better ways to learn than 'no food to leave the chow hall.'



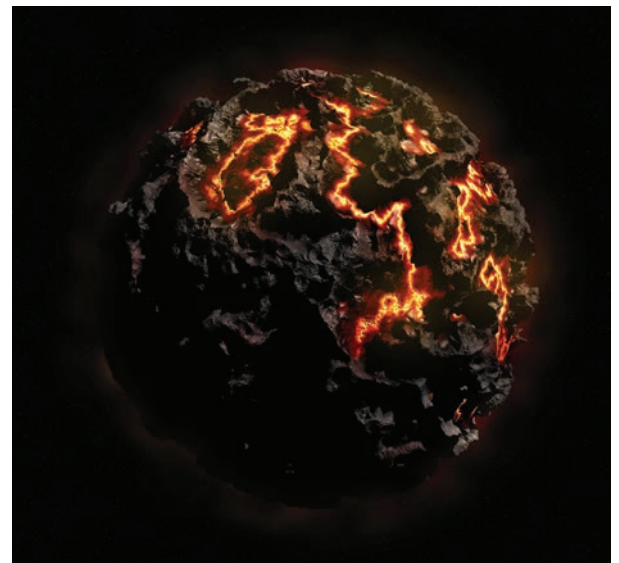
*Art and writing by Cameron Terhune, AD0786
Correctional Training Facility North,
PO Box 705, Soledad
California, 93960, USA*

VOLCANIS

BY KYLE ZAMMIT

Hell planet.

Mountains of fire beyond flurrying ash. Echoing rumbles. Constant tremors. Rockslide. The silhouette of a spider exploded out of a gorge. Its lights swept over the basalt canyon. Crag like teeth. Proto volcanoes. Lava wept up through the splinters in the ground. The spider followed a fault line. Magma threw up light from deep down in the fissure. It reflected off a black glass cliff. Smoked mirror.



Everything shook. Roared. The fissure widened. The cliff receded. The magma swelled up. Shimmering heat. It began to ooze down the canyon. The spider was a blur of limbs as it raced the flow. Transmission: Crisis.

A lake of lava bubbled and spat. Swallowing ash. Elephants stood along the bank. Trunks reaching down to water. Their mournful cries reverberated. Distorted snippets of industry.

The pumps were caked with soot. Wheezing as they drew. Thick pipes carried off the geological soup. Thin pipes circulated the coolant.

Floodlights glared down from atop silo tanks. Power lines cast a web of shadows over a train station. Fluid wagons lay on the tracks pulling lava. Far off through the flurries a star fell. Somewhere a loose plate buzzed in tune with the tremors. Another star climbed back up into the sky, trailing orange.

Earthquake. POP! Lava spurted from the side of a silo. Glowing red. An electrical pylon groaned as its feet warped and buckled. The lights flickered. Rolling tectonic thunder. The fluid wagons disengaged and the locomotive pulled out of the station, electric motors whining. Its snow plough cleared the tracks. A split wave of silt aglow under high beam. The train drove on through the gloom toward the shuttling stars. Two track line. Power poles besides. It went straight where it could. Switchback up a slope. Bridge over a fissure. A tunnel through a ridge came out into sulphurous fog. A headlight plummeted by. Fuzzy glow ahead. A junction. Wraith trains were driving a switch track ballet in the smog. The shuttle stars were talking now. Ring-lit spiders scuttled alongside the tracks, all rushing in the same direction. The sea of lights.

A sheer wall materialised out of the yellow haze. It was crenellated with hoses. Spotlights tracked the locomotive as it passed underneath. Jagged basalt was paved over by reinforced concrete. Black to grey. The factory was lit up like day. Columns of machines sprouting trees of steam and smoke. The locomotive clickity-clacked into a vacant input station. Hydraulic hiss. Locking clunks. The whispers of pipes. Monocopters flitted overhead in ordered chaos. A swarm of them descended on the train chattering blip blop bloop. Arc welders scintillated off steel. Coolant dialysis. Jets of compressed air.



The ash was falling heavier. The flakes billowed in the heat blasts amongst the metalworks. A row of induction pots thrummed. Drinking the geological soup. Reducing it. Separating its constituents. Their many mouths opened. Tongues of liquid metal lolled out. Fanning off. Gushing white hot down into forge bellies. Sparking. Taut chains echoed clackaclackaclackaclack as the wheels spun out showers of plates into quench tanks. Sizzling. Roiling. Ejected onto conveyor belts. Many belts. Different hues and lustres of plates on their lines. All coming together as one. Side by side. The bus.

The ash was falling heavier. The monocopters took shelter in their ports. No more blips and bloops. The factory tremored. Rattled. The lights flickered. Foundry music stuttered. Hitched. Continued. An aftershock.

The last spiders stalked over the bus. They were loaded down with chrome tanks and nozzle guns. Cinders were starting to drift down. Burning flakes settled upon plates of copper, iron and tungsten. The conveyor belts hummed

tunelessly as they fed the metals into a bunker building. Electric motors whirred. Reverberating. Cavernous. Twenty robot arms were offloading the bus stack by stack into a cylindrical chamber. They sounded like twenty thousand. They filled the chamber. Alarms warbled. Black and yellow stripes. The blast doors closed. The rocket silo opened.

The missile emerged into driving soot and kindling. Crude. Sufficient. Perfect. Preparation vapours spilled down its sides. Waterfall of mist. The impression of volcanic ranges stretched off one way. An ocean of lava bared down from the other.

Crisis.

A long skittering mass was silhouetted against the inferno. The thousand spiders had formed a blockade. Arcs of fog leapt from their nozzles. The liquid nitrogen flash froze the lava with whip-crack snaps and white cloud-bursts that

engulfed the front. Visibility was reduced to the glimpses of shadows. The firefight echoed on.

The ocean kept coming. The blockade was pushed back against the wall. The hoses added their flow. The fog-bank became a solid thing. Swirling. Underlit red. Tentacles of vapour flowed over the wall. Coiled around pipes and pylons.

The ground quaked. A crackling roar eclipsed everything. A blowtorch was rising up into the sky on a pillar of fire. The wall was glowing red. Belying in. The rocket was an orange star above when the lava breached the factory. The wall collapsed screeching. Pressurised tanks of liquid nitrogen cooked off. Subzero spatter. All the tangled limbs of the spiders melded with the ruins. Their bodies formed a dam. The lava ocean's flow was stemmed.

The factory worked on.

The ash and cinder flurries abated. The monocopter bots emerged from their ports. Blip. Blop. Bloop. They began to erect a new wall. Rockets burned down out of the lightning sky in relays. Even as they landed, spiders burst from their holds toting chrome tanks. Flurry. Hurry. Rush. Their defences had to be rebuilt. They had to be rebuilt as soon as possible.

Because the sun was rising on Volcanis.

And when it did, this igneous rock would melt.

By Kyle Zammit

PRISON SURVIVAL

AN INTERVIEW WITH DENNIS 3R'DEE RICHARDSON

In this issue, Paper Chained editor Damien Linnane interviews Dennis '3r'dee' Richardson, a prisoner in Texas who is also the author of the Prison Survival Guide. The following interview was conducted by mail after 3r'dee wrote to Paper Chained after seeing it on the tablets in US prisons.

Can you tell readers a bit about yourself?

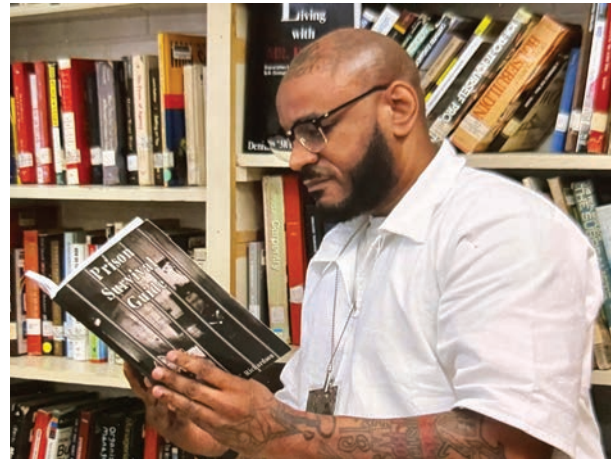
First and foremost, thank you for this exclusive interview. I am a Houston, Texas ambassador, serial entrepreneur, and independent rapper known as 3r'dee. I am also the founder of Houston Hip Hop News, a renowned media platform where I interview celebrities from across the country. Through this platform, I travel from state to state capturing exclusive footage and covering major events nationwide. In addition, I am a published author currently incarcerated under the name Dennis Richardson. Despite my circumstances, I continue to use my voice, creativity, and platform to inspire, inform, and connect with audiences around the world.

I am serving a 60-year sentence in Texas as a first-time offender for an alleged offence dating back to the year 2000. I have been incarcerated since 2016, and my case is currently in the appeals process. Keep me in prayers!

What made you want to write the Prison Survival Guide and can you tell us what it is about?

What began as the nightmare of my conviction became a calling aligned with God's purpose—to use my story to inspire, uplift, and help other incarcerated men and women who may feel forgotten or without hope.

The book addresses a wide range of important topics related to navigating the prison system. It serves as a valuable resource for first-timers and can be even beneficial for people who have experienced incarceration before. The book emphasizes how to conduct yourself while facing the challenges of prison life and provides practical guidance on making the most of your time in a productive and positive way. As of the latest count, over 19,500 incarcerated people have read the book through Edovo. Many readers have described it as highly informative, stating that it has helped them physically, mentally, and spiritually. I share that belief and remain committed to providing knowledge and encouragement to those seeking a better path forward.



What was it like writing a book in prison? What were the challenges of writing it and getting it published?

Writing *Prison Survival Guide* came naturally because God led me to address multiple topics and issues within the prison system. I wrote from my personal experiences and hands-on research with many inmates—especially those who have spent years in the system, including individuals on death row and serving life sentences. That perspective makes the book relatable and appealing to a wide range of readers. The biggest challenge was staying focused despite the many distractions around me, and learning patience while the University of Southern California edited my manuscript. In the end, everything came together smoothly. I self-published through Amazon with the help of my daughter, 713LRich.

Like Paper Chained, your book is on the Edovo Learning Platform, available on over a million prison tablets in the US. Tell us about the process to get the book on Edovo.

Getting my book on Edovo was a frustrating process at times, but I trusted God through it all. Special thanks to the Edovo staff for making it happen. Now it's available across 1,200 facilities nationwide, with no push back because it's truly a lifesaver and a game changer for those behind the walls. According to Edovo, I am the first and only incarcerated author to publish both an English and Spanish version of a book on prison tablets nationwide. The numbers on the Edovo dashboard have been incredible, with my book ranking Top 5 under several keywords. It's truly a blessing to see the impact it's having across facilities.

Whys is it important for a book like this to be written by someone who has experienced prison?

Books like this are most impactful when they are written from real-life experience. Authentic firsthand accounts provide readers with insight, practical guidance, and most importantly, hope. They allow people to relate to genuine struggles and learn from someone who has lived through the challenges they may be facing themselves. It's interesting that you asked this question because, recently, a well-known author released a prison-themed comedy despite publicly acknowledging that they had never spent a single day in jail or prison. While everyone has the right to tell stories, my perspective is different. Prison is not a joke—it is a place where people's lives, futures, and faith are tested every single day.

For those living behind prison walls, the search is often for survival stories, miracles, inspiration, and proof that it is possible to endure difficult circumstances and emerge stronger. That is the purpose behind *Prison Survival Guide*: to provide encouragement, practical knowledge, and a sense of direction for individuals determined to make it through their sentence and prepare for a better future.

Do you have plans for further writing?

My latest book, a memoir titled *Living With Mr. Death*, was released on October 31, 2025 and is available on Amazon. It tells the story of my experience living with my infamous cellmate, whose story captivated audiences worldwide through the TV series *Dr. Death*.

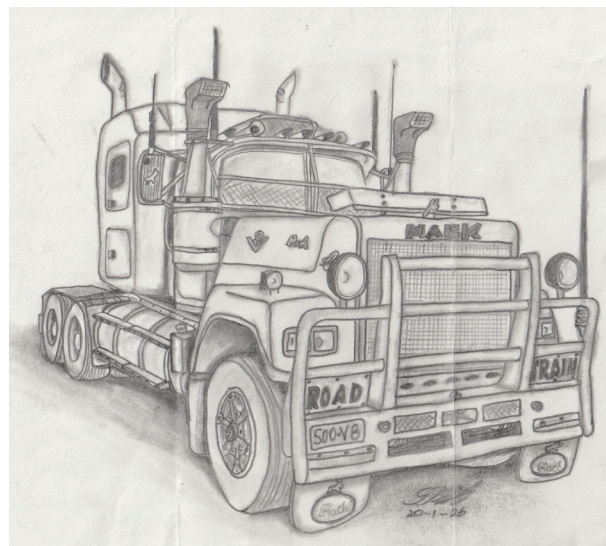
I will also be releasing a Prison Survival Workbook, which will allow incarcerated men and women to earn a certificate of completion on Edovo after completing the course. In addition, the audio book for *Prison Survival Guide* is currently available on Amazon and will soon be available on Edovo.

What's an average day for you look like in prison?

An average day for a king in prison is disciplined and purposeful; prayer, reading my Bible, exercising, self-studying the law, and learning about AI and business. I spend my time seeking knowledge, resources, networking, and continuing to campaign for *Prison Survival Guide* to uplift the people. I end my day by parenting and speaking with my children over the phone. Rest in peace to my son, DRich Jr, who I tragically lost on December 17, 2025 at the age of 17. He remains in my heart and continues to motivate me every day.

If there was only one piece of advice you could give someone from your book, what would it be?

As quoted from my friend Roadie Mack in my book, "Play for the door, not the floor". And a message of encouragement: "Great people do great things no matter their circumstances or location." Look at what I've been able to accomplish. Let this be your motivation.



Art by Gavin Somerville A83106
Borallon Training Centre
Locked Bag 8005
Booval, QLD 4304

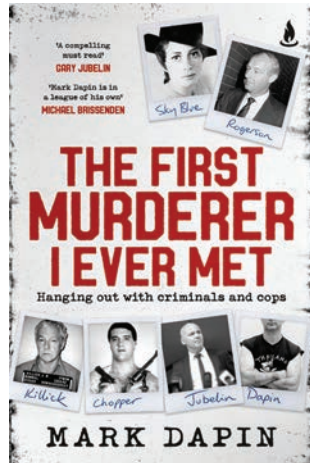


'A Thought for the Unseen'
Art by Colin Burke
United Kingdom

BOOK REVIEWS

BY TIA PEZET

The First Murderer I Ever Met (2025) by Mark Dapin is a work that blends investigative journalism with memoir, giving a nuanced examination of crime through personal encounters with criminals, police, and those working within the prison system. Dapin focuses on the contradictions, moral ambiguities, and human complexities that exist on both sides of the law.



It opens with Dapin's first encounter with a murderer, a boy from his school named Ian Haywood. The chapter recounts Haywood's early act of violence, his subsequent imprisonment, and later crimes—including a brutal stabbing. Dapin presents not only the crimes themselves but also the unsettling characteristics Haywood showed even back in childhood.

Another chapter examines the culture of policing in New South Wales during a period of profound institutional damage following the legacy of Roger Rogerson and the revelations of corruption in Kings Cross. Former police officer Gary Jubelin describes a time when detectives were viewed with suspicion after the Wood Royal Commission exposed entrenched graft within the force, leaving many officers professionally and morally discredited. Against this backdrop, Dapin presents Jubelin as a driven investigator whose intentions were ultimately shaped by his commitment to victims rather than institutional loyalty.

This is most evident in his role in the William Tyrrell investigation, where Jubelin's decision to covertly record a person of interest—undertaken in the belief it would lead to answers for a missing child—resulted in his removal from the force, despite contrasting sharply with the leniency afforded to far more corrupt officers in the past. The book is filled by a diverse group of compelling figures and their stories, including individuals such as 'Sky Blue', John Killick, and even *Paper Chained* editor Damien Linnane, whose image appears among the book's central photographs.

Throughout *The First Murderer I Ever Met*, Dapin employs a sardonic, observational tone that distinguishes the book from traditional true-crime narratives. His willingness to laugh, reflect, and occasionally implicate himself allows the work to interrogate not only criminals and police but also the systems that shape them. Ultimately, *The First Murderer I Ever Met* is a compelling and thought-provoking examination of crime and justice in Australia.

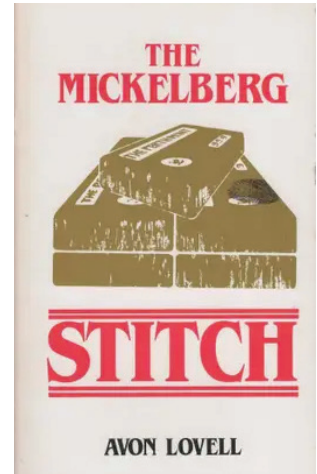
The Mickelberg Stitch (1985) by Avon Lovell, is a gripping and controversial work of Australian true crime that examines one of the country's most notorious criminal cases, the 1982 Perth Mint gold swindle. The book delves into the courtroom and how the Mickelbergs attempt to take down their persecutors.

The book begins with 'the set up', illustrating the book's central claim that the convictions of Ray, Peter, and Brian Mickelberg were not the result of evidence, but of manipulated testimonies, manufactured evidence, and coercion. By structuring the opening this way, Lovell reframes the entire story not as a solved crime, but as a deeply flawed prosecution. This approach immediately creates tension and encourages readers to view the legal system with skepticism.

One of the most compelling aspects of the book is its urgent tone full of conviction. Lovell writes not as a detached observer, but as a journalist deeply invested in exposing what he sees as a miscarriage of justice. He examines how key documents such as a missing diary and fingerprinting could have completely changed the case. This reinforces the book's broader argument that critical evidence was mishandled or withheld, undermining confidence in the convictions. Of note, in 2002, one of the police officers involved in the case confessed to fabricating evidence in the case. The Mickelberg's convictions were finally overturned in 2004.

In terms of style, the book reads like a real-life thriller. The complexity of the case, combined with Lovell's detailed recounting of events, creates a narrative that is both engaging and unsettling. However, the dense detail, legal intricacies and listing may be challenging for some readers, particularly those unfamiliar with the case or the Australian legal system.

Overall, *The Mickelberg Stitch* is a thought-provoking book that makes you question how justice actually works and whether the truth always comes out. It's not completely neutral, but that's kind of the point as Lovell clearly wants readers to challenge the system and think more critically about how cases are handled. It stands out as an important piece of Australian true crime, especially in the way it pushes readers to look beyond the official version of events.



FILM AND TV REVIEWS

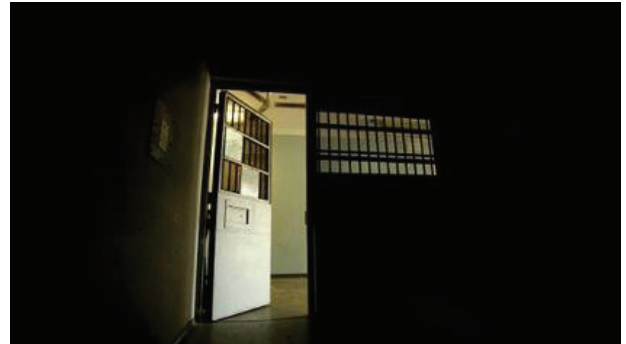


Joker: Folie à Deux (JFD) (2024) is a brilliant and profound sequel to the first Joker movie (2019). JFD is a mixed genre film, deftly weaving between drama and musical. Moreover, comedy is used as an instrument to heighten the scenes of violence and brutality. Jokes provide a glimpse to the impacts of trauma on the human psyche. The second installment of the Joker franchise focuses on Arthur Fleck's (the Joker) life in custody as he prepares for, and confronts, his trial for five murders (featured in the first film). Fleck's legal team intend to plead not guilty to the murders on mental health grounds. They argue that Fleck's dissociative identity disorder gave rise to the Joker persona. Fleck's lawyer contends it was the Joker, and not a sane Arthur Fleck, who committed crimes.

JFD captures the battles laid bare and the conflicts that rage within. The courthouse spectacle; the maltreatment of prisoners; the general public's disregard and ignorance of mental health; the social unrest that fuels support for the Joker unveil the many fissures within and across society. Alternatively, the fight between reality and fantasy, processing of psychological pain through the creation of alter identities, provide a theoretical paradigm through which the Joker and Fleck's relationship may be comprehended. The romance between Fleck and Harley Quinn sits at the centre of this story. Quinn is depicted as offering emotional strength to Fleck. She gives Fleck a reason to fight on and hold onto his dreams. As the public and internal wars come to a spectacular close, Fleck's fate is at the mercy of his willingness to either accept reality or delve into fantasy.

Rating: 4.5 jailbirds out of 5 – A theatrical circus and a cinematic masterpiece. *By Vincent, NSW.*

Australia's Shame (2016), an episode of *Four Corners*, is a confronting and necessary documentary that exposes the brutal reality of youth detention in the Northern Territory. Through a combination of CCTV footage, interviews, and firsthand accounts, the *Four Corners* team presents a chilling narrative of systemic failure and abusive practices.



The official graphic for the episode, used to represent the inside of a 'behavioural management' cell at Don Dale.

The episode focuses on the Don Dale Youth Detention Centre, where children as young as 10 were kept in solitary confinement. It reveals an incident in which, after 15 days in isolation, one boy managed to open his unlocked door. Guards laughed, called him an "idiot," and then tear-gassed all six boys at close range for up to eight minutes before dragging them outside and hosing them down. This was later spun to the media as a violent "riot," despite only one boy leaving his cell and no real threat posed. The boys were kept in extremely inhumane conditions, with cells reeking of urine and no running water.

Four Corners obtained a chilling catalogue of videos recording the mistreatment Dylan Voller endured over five years. It begins in October 2010, when a 12-year-old Dylan was tackled, lifted and hurled across a room. Just two months later, he was again tackled, stripped naked and held down, a pattern repeated in 2012 when he was stripped and left in isolation. There were also incidents where guards placed their full body weight on him and threatened assault. The reason Dylan's story needs to be told in full detail is because it exposes the devastating reality of a youth justice system that not only failed to protect a vulnerable child, but actively contributed to his trauma. These acts were not isolated mistakes; they were repeated, systematic abuses carried out in full view of staff, cameras, and, in some cases, other children.

Ultimately, this documentary is more than an exposé, it's a call to action. It forces viewers to question who the justice system is really serving and what "correction" means for already disadvantaged children, many of whom are Aboriginal. It is uncomfortable viewing, but essential for anyone who believes in justice.

By Tia Pezet

THE CASTLE HILL REBELLION

A FIGHT AGAINST COLONIAL OPPRESSION

BY JOSIE BULL

Convict-led opposition to British transportation sentences simmered throughout the 19th century. The Castle Hill Rebellion was Australia's first organised uprising, highlighting Britain's mistreatment of Irish political prisoners. Far from a mere criminal uprising, it marked one of the earliest acts of resistance against oppressive colonial rule; a system that would face growing scrutiny from Australian convicts and free settlers throughout the 1800s. Castle Hill aided in exposing the flaws of Britain's penal system and laid the groundwork for future anti-colonialism protests.

During the early years of colonisation, transportation sentences were primarily used to exile convicted criminals from the British Empire. However, in the wake of the 1776 American Revolution and the 1789 French Revolution, Britain grew increasingly wary of radical political movements. To curb political dissent, Britain began exiling political radicals to Australia. Inspired in part by the French revolutionaries, Ireland sought to establish an independent republic. In 1798, the Society of United Irishmen launched a rebellion against British rule, sparking battles across the country. The most infamous of these was the Battle of Vinegar Hill, where 16,000 rebels clashed with 13,000 British troops. The uprising was brutally suppressed, with thousands killed or captured by the British armed forces. Over 400 survivors were sentenced to transportation as political prisoners to the penal colonies of New South Wales.

Convict life in Australia was harsh, marked by forced labour, brutality, and isolation. Most men were deployed to build roads, bridges, and public buildings or worked on government farms. Educated convicts were assigned administrative jobs, while women served as domestic servants for colonial officers. Discipline was often arbitrary, with punishments given for even minor infractions, such as fifty lashes from the cat o' nine tails, a lead-weighted whip capable of tearing skin. Veterans of Ireland's Vinegar Hill were exiled to Australia alongside common thieves and forgers. Many remained determined to resist British oppression and longed to return home to resume their fight for Irish independence. Desperation grew between 1800 and 1804, and numerous small-scale rebellions emerged around Sydney and Norfolk Island, but most were intercepted before they could take shape.



'Defeat at Vinegar Hill', by George Cruikshank, 1845

Castle Hill Government Farm, filled with Irish convicts, became a hotbed of political unrest, particularly between 1801 and 1804. During this period, ships arriving in Sydney from Ireland brought not only more veterans of the 1798 Rebellion, but also news of Robert Emmet's failed 1803 uprising in Dublin. Just six weeks after hearing of Emmet's insurrection, following years of quiet planning, the Irish convicts at Castle Hill were moved to launch their rebellion. Irish rebel veteran Phillip Cunningham led the uprising alongside fellow countrymen William Johnston and Samuel Humes. Together, they assembled a force of around 250 men, intending to join around 1,000 other convicts fleeing the Hawkesbury River region. The plan was to rally at nearby settlements, march on Sydney, and reach Port Jackson, where they hoped to seize control of several ships and sail back to Ireland to resume the fight for independence.

On the evening of 4 March 1804, a hut at Castle Hill was set alight to signal that the uprising had begun. Rebels rallied under the cry "Liberty or Death", echoing the voices of the Society of United Irishmen. The convicts easily outnumbered and overpowered their guards and seized their weapons. They split into groups and raided nearby farms for ammunition and other supplies. Some men missed the smoke signal or became lost in the dark, leaving the rebel forces smaller than originally planned. The biggest setback came when their key messenger was captured and gave the entire rebel strategy to British forces.



Painting of the Castle Hill Uprising, 1804

Unaware that the plan had been compromised, Cunningham pressed ahead. The largest group of rebels positioned themselves on Constitution Hill, a strategic lookout with sweeping views of the surrounding area, ready to warn others of any approaching colonial troops.

Major George Johnston and Governor King had already begun assembling troops and local militia, declaring martial law across the colony. Major Johnston led British forces travelling overnight toward Constitution Hill, aware of the large rebel group gathered there. By the morning of 5 March, Major Johnston confronted the rebel convicts and said he wanted to avoid bloodshed by negotiating with their commanders. Cunningham attempted to raise a flag of truce, but Major Johnston broke the agreement and swiftly arrested him, along with rebel co-leaders William Johnston and Samuel Humes. Colonial forces then fired and charged, scattering the rebel forces. At least 30 were killed in the day-long crossfire, with no recorded casualties among British troops. Cunningham was publicly hanged during the rebellion, while William Johnston and Samuel Humes were imprisoned alongside more than 60 other rebels. With the execution and imprisonment of its key leaders, the uprising quickly collapsed, but martial law remained in place for over a week to ensure complete suppression.

Punishments for the arrested rebel convicts varied. After their trial, William Johnston and Samuel Humes were executed along with seven other rebels. Over thirty men received hundreds of lashes and were sent to work on the chain gang at Coal River (now known as Newcastle). The remaining convicts stayed at Castle Hill farm but were placed in leg irons, heavy ankle chains permanently fitted by a blacksmith. These irons could weigh anywhere between 3 and 14 kilograms and were worn throughout their regular labour. Punishments like this were common in Australia's penal system, often serving as visible symbols or reminders to convicts of colonial control.

The Castle Hill Rebellion highlights the trauma of exile, men torn from their homeland, stripped of their rights, and forced into servitude. Living conditions remained harsh in the colonies, particularly for Irish prisoners and their families, who endured systemic mistreatment and discrimination under British rule. For many Irish convicts, life under colonial rule became unbearable, and bushranging felt like their only option. Some of Australia's most infamous bushrangers, including Ned Kelly, Harry Power, and 'Bold Jack' Donohoe, were of Irish descent, shaped by this legacy of Irish resistance.

For decades, Castle Hill was dismissed as a failed mutiny. But modern historians now interpret it as a bold act of anti-colonial resistance. Historian Therese-Marie Meyer argues that it wasn't merely about escape; it reflected an enduring commitment to the ideals of the United Irishmen. Many of the rebels involved at Castle Hill had earned partial freedom through the ticket-of-leave system yet still risked everything to join the fight. This was far from a simple protest; it represented resistance against British rule. Their actions challenged the colonial narrative of passive convict compliance and control, revealing that political consciousness was unaffected by transportation. Castle Hill stands as a symbol of identity, solidarity, and defiance against imperial domination.

The Castle Hill Rebellion marked a turning point for convict resistance in Australia and became known as 'Australia's Vinegar Hill'. It helped shape later acts of resistance, including the Eureka Stockade and the Rum Rebellion. Eureka rebels used 'Vinegar Hill' as a secret password during their 1854 rebellion, and "Death or Liberty" became a common phrase used throughout the colonial resistance movement.

As the 19th century progressed, political unrest only intensified among both convicts and free settlers. By 1868, more than 160,000 convicts had been exiled to Australia, and their forced labour fuelled the rapid expansion of colonial infrastructure. Public opinion began to shift against penal transportation, with growing pressure to end convict labour and rising support for national self-governance.

Today, the Rebellion is commemorated at Castle Hill Heritage Park in Sydney. The men who fought during the 1804 rebellion cannot simply be labelled convicts or criminals; they were political prisoners driven by a vision of protecting their homeland. Their story, which was the first major convict uprising in Australia, forms an important chapter in Australia's penal history.

By Josie Bull

WAZZA HAPPENING: AN INTERVIEW WITH GLEN FISHER

Glen Fisher's memoir, Predator's Paradise, is a gripping story about a childhood of neglect and violence, the incompetence and horrors of state 'care', and life on the streets of Kings Cross. Glen's difficult life inevitably took him to prison, where he was also the creator and editor of the prison magazine Wazza Happening. Paper Chained editor Damien Linnane talks to him about his past, and the incredible work he is doing today.

It's always exciting to meet someone else who edited a prison magazine. Can you tell me about yours?

I started *Wazza Happening* in Oberon [Correctional Centre] in February 1990. I ran it until my release on 26th October 1992. I'm pretty sure it didn't continue after I left. There was a teacher at Oberon named Jane, who ran the education. It was my idea to run a paper and she agreed. It wasn't well received at the start, but after about six weeks, everybody wanted it.

What gave you the idea to start it?

I wrote a lot of poetry and I drew a lot. And people were always asking me to read my poems. I was working in education mainly and we had lots of events. I used to run all the sporting events in jail. I was always running chess comps, table tennis, touch football, cricket, that kind of thing. And so I thought it was a good way to get information out, and we were also trying to get people to come and do education. So I said to Jane, if we put out a paper, we could let people know what things we're doing. We had things like art classes and computer courses.

Was there any push back from the prison system?

The Superintendent didn't like the idea at first, but I would submit it to Jane who would take it to him and it got approved. There wasn't really any push back, but they needed to approve what we were handing out. It all had to be checked. They never completely refused to print anything but I had to change some wording in a couple poems, and a crossword. I had a question along the lines of 'what you use to rob a bank' and the answer was gun or something like that. They wouldn't let me run along that kind of talk. Unfortunately I don't have any copies of *Wazza Happening* anymore. I did have copies but my addiction took over and I lost a lot of stuff I had from prison. I did another paper also called *Wazza Happening* for the methadone clinic in Lithgow when I got out.

Hopefully someone reading this might have a copy of Wazza Happening, or know where to find one, and will let Paper Chained know about it.

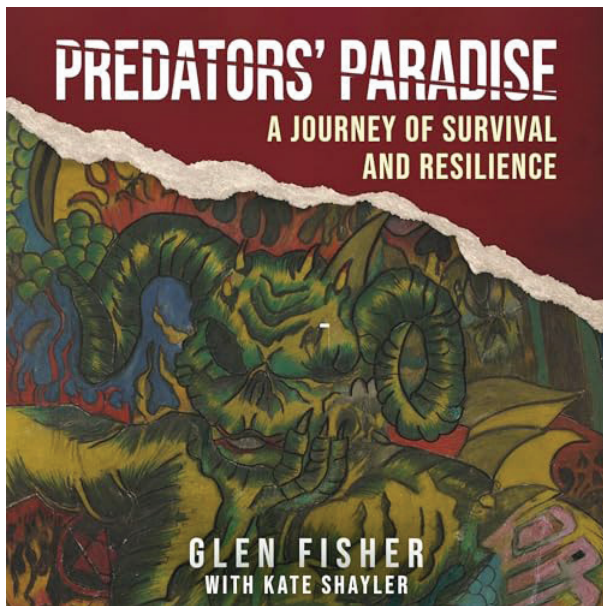


Anyway, so you were in custody when Michael Yabsley was Minister for Corrections?

Yeah. He got rid of the remissions. I actually wrote a song about it. We had a talent quest at Oberon jail. And I did a song about remissions to the tune of the song Mr. Sandman. So four of us would stand in line and two of us would bob up and down. And then I go like, 'Mr. Yabsley, we're sick of you, you took remissions ...' something like that. I can't remember how it goes now. I wrote about all the screws in the jail as well and we actually won the competition, but I handed the prize over to an Aboriginal guy who sang a song called 'I've Been Here 16 Years and Still Got Life to Go'. He was fucking incredible. We only won because all of our friends were there and the winner was judged by the highest clapping, and obviously there was four of us and we were all friends. Everyone sort of clapped for us and I didn't think it was fair. So I gave the prize to the guy that actually deserved it.

Can you tell me a bit about Predator's Paradise? When did you start writing it?

I got really serious about writing the book in 2015, and it got published in 2019. Its become a lot more popular recently. I think that's got a lot to do with my social media getting more popular and that we made an audio book version. I was on A Current Affair and I've done a few podcasts on YouTube that got 250-300,000 views. A lot of people bought the book after that.



The book focuses on heavy subjects like predators who abused kids on the street. Did you find it challenging to revisit all the abuse you suffered when you wrote it?

I did. So at the time I wrote my book, I was going through court cases and trials. I had to go through four separate trials and two different Royal Commissions against what had happened to me as a kid. So it was really difficult at that point. But what I did was I used my DOCS files in my book. And so I wrote what happened and then I'd put the docs version down. So it's like my story and then the actual system's response to what happened. And so, I just started off by writing a timeline, and I got all my files and records to go along with my recollection of things and got it all in order. And then when I finished writing it, I gave it to a woman to make it more succinct and get my spelling right. But I wrote the book myself. I'm actually writing a second book called *Escaping the Cross*. It's a memoir as well but more about the later parts of my life. I want to tell people what's happened. You know, I've turned my life around because when I wrote that book, I was still going through a lot. I'd only managed to get three of the predators I wrote about convicted. I had another guy convicted after that, and then I stopped using and I got my life together. I got off the methadone program. I run a successful program now called the Legup Project. Now I speak in universities, I speak at youth off the streets. I speak all over Australia. If you go through my videos on social media, you'll see I speak everywhere.

Was there one thing that helped turn your life around?

Yeah, I think there was. Firstly, I started sharing my book on TikTok. That was the start of it, but I met a friend of mine who also is an influencer named Gary. And we had a conversation. He said, mate, you've got a hell of a story. He said, you need to be more vocal with it and kind of be more brave and tell it. And so I did, and I was coming back from Melbourne one time from seeing him. And what actually

happened was I saw all these people homeless on the street and I thought, fuck, mate, nothing's changed. It's how it was when I was a kid. So I thought, I'm going to start going out and helping people. And I think having a purpose is what gave me the ability to change my life.

And this is what started your charity, the Legup Project?

Yeah. Originally I just went down on my own with a backpack and gift cards and some toiletries. Then *A Current Affair* picked up my story. If you have a look at that video, I look really unwell. I had no confidence. I was 108 kilos. I was on methadone. And then I did another interview three years later when I'm running the Legup Project and you can see I'm fit, I'm healthy, I'm talking clear. It's like watching two different people.

The Legup Project opened a branch in Cessnock this year. What's your dream for the overall program?

Well, there's a few. One is that we want to be Australia wide. But more importantly, the main goal that I have is that we want to open up emergency crisis houses in the city and start being able to get temporary accommodation for people. I've got a whole lot of volunteers with me now.

Where does the funding come from?

I've been paying for it all from my own book. Occasionally I get a donation. I had a guy give me \$5,000. His wife was struggling with addiction, and after watching my videos, she got her shit together and he wanted to repay that. So he rang me up and said, I want to you know, do something for you because you did something for us. The amount of people that messaged me saying that I've changed their lives is incredible. It's almost impossible to believe.

What do we need to do to keep people out of prison?

One of the problems with prison is that we work towards punishment as opposed to rehabilitation. The problem with the system is that most of the people in prison aren't bad people that need to be made good. They're sick people that need to be made well. You've got a lot of mental health issues in there. So I think if we address the homelessness and the mental health and the recidivism, I think we could make a big difference into the amount of people going in. And it starts with education; stop looking at punitive and start looking at rehabilitation.

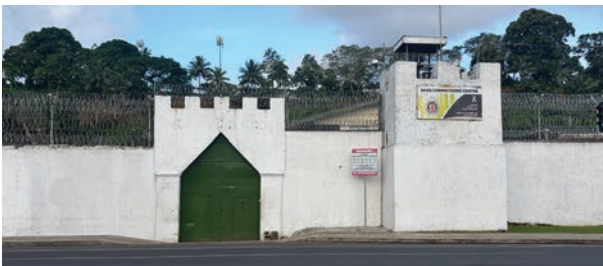
What's your advice for people in prison right now?

Use your time well. You can either spend your time in there and be angry and be a part of the culture, or you can actually invest in an education. I did a school certificate when I was in jail. It's one of the smartest things I ever did, I put my head down, I stayed away from the politics, didn't give a shit about all that stuff. I used my time to learn to read and write properly and get an education.

TAGIMOUCIA ART GALLERY

BY DAMIEN LINNANE

Paper Chained is what I needed in prison. I turned to art and writing when I was told I wasn't eligible for rehabilitation or therapy, and that the prison didn't have the resources to allow me to attempt tertiary study either. But while turning to art and writing was helpful, there was no way to share anything I was creating with the world. While I'm eternally grateful that I've managed to create my dream job, the opportunities the job affords have also been incredible. Putting the call-out to prisons around the world almost always gets a response, and then I get to combine my two big passions. Travelling, and sharing what the magazine does with more incarcerated people.



The main entrance of Suva Correctional Centre.

With its high walls and razor wire, Suva Correctional Centre is an imposing feature on the main road driving towards Suva. However, Tagimoucia Art Gallery, directly across from the prison's entrance, is a small building that motorists would never look twice at. What the gallery contains, however, is absolutely amazing.

I'm travelling to the gallery with Isireli, who prefers going by his nickname Skipper, and has been working with Fiji Corrections for 30 years, with over 12 of them in the rehabilitation section. Tagimoucia Art Gallery is one of the various rehabilitation programs. The main part of the gallery is open to the public though it is not well advertised. I had to send several emails prior to my visit just confirming it was still open, as Google Maps incorrectly lists it as permanently closed. Skipper tells me they have been working with the Fiji Tourism Association to try and bring more visitors to the gallery. I certainly hope this is a possibility, because while this place is Suva's best kept secret, it deserves to be in the spotlight.

I am given permission to go into the studios behind the gallery, to interview the incarcerated artists alone. There are seven in the program, all of which are brought over from the prison at 7:00am each morning, to work on art projects each day until 3:00pm. Most of the artists focus on paintings and drawings, but there is one wood carver; another prison in Fiji has an art program dedicated entirely to wood carving. The first two artists I speak to are Isaac and Leiatu, who occupy the large studio upstairs.

MORE ABOUT FIJI

Fiji is part of Oceania, and consists of more than 330 islands. It has a population of about 930,000, 87% of whom live on the two main islands, Viti Levu and Vanua Levu. Suva, located on Viti Levu, is the capital. The three main languages spoken are English, Fijian and Hindi. A former British Colony, Fiji gained its independence in 1970.



Fiji has 15 prisons, including two for women and two prison farms where people are paid to cut sugar cane. There are approximately 2,400 prisoners in the country.



*Above: Tagimoucia Art Gallery.
Below: Isaac and Leiatu in their studio*

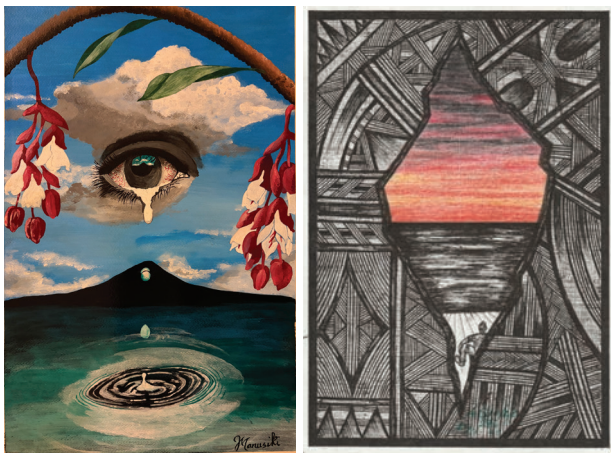


Isaac was first imprisoned in 2005. He has been at the gallery for eight years, requesting to transfer to this prison to be part of the program. "I wanted to come and learn something different," he says. He points to the impressive number of paintings. "This is what we do every day. We just come and learn how to paint. Me and my brother Leiatu. We learnt inside."

Like most of the prisoners here, Isaac is serving a 'life sentence'. All prisoners serving such a sentence must be pardoned by the president in order to be released, though this is a normal process. Skipper explains that most prisoners will be pardoned eventually based on reports that Corrections write about their progress. Isaac chuckles when I suggest it must be frustrating to not know exactly when he will be released. For a person in custody indefinitely, he has a radiating smile and warmth. He explains how the gallery works.

"When an artworks sells, 60% goes to the inmate, and 40% goes to Corrections to keep the program running. We put our own price on the paintings." As well as sales in the gallery, he explains there have been five exhibitions at the Grand Pacific Hotel in Suva. Leiatu, who shares the larger studio, came to the prison last August. "The supplies they give us are good, [Corrections] order it all and give it to us. It's not quite a full supply of everything, but it's enough." He goes on to explain something that mirrors my own art journey. "I did drawings in primary school", he says, "but then when I went to secondary school, I stopped. Until I was convicted, then I started to do art again."

Leiatu shows me one of his paintings. "This is the story of the Tagimoucia flower, which only grows here in Fiji", he says, also indirectly letting me know how the gallery was named. Isaac also explains one of his drawings. "This one is drawn from imagination, like a new freedom outside a prison wall. It's freehand." I purchase both artworks for the annual Paper Chained International exhibition.



The painting by Leiatu (left) and the drawing by Isaac.

Downstairs, there are five smaller studios, two of which are inside the public gallery, and three behind it. Fiji has a large number of Indian residents. There are two among the prisoners here. Vishal has been in the gallery for three years, and finishes his ten year sentence in a few months.

"For me it's good to learn here so I can earn a living when I go out. I cannot do hard work outside because of my age. In five years I will be at retirement age, but there is no retirement age for art. With this, I can still earn a living."



Vishal in his studio.

"Art relaxes our soul. When you pick up the brush, you forget about everything," Vishal says.



Anil with Paper Chained editor Damien Linnane, and the artwork that was chosen for this issue's cover.

Anil's studio shows that he has a particular interest in painting flowers. "We're not making anything inside thinking that we are prison. So we're not painting the handcuffs. No, we're not making things like that, because we don't want to make handcuffs. We want to be open. When you go inside, you don't want to think that you are inside. We want to think that we are outside. That's why I'm making this. Not the prison, not the bars. You don't want to make that, because you already see the bars every 24 hours. But when we are inside the bars we gonna think that we are outside. So we're making this kind of thing, colourful flowers."

One of the other artists Isoa, also explains a painting I find particularly striking. "This is a mixture of culture and modernisation", he says. "Our traditional culture is dying. A lot is lost in translation due to development. There is no sense of direction."



Isoa with his painting, which is now part of the Paper Chained International permanent collection.

I've been overwhelmed with not just the artworks, but being able to talk to the artists themselves. I explain to Skipper that in Australia, prisoners are not allowed inside the art galleries attached to prisons. He looks at me incredulously.

"Then how will they explain their paintings to people?" he asks. "There should be some level of trust. Because if people are not trusted they won't change. You need to take a step forward to trust them. Just imagine when they leave prison, if they felt that they are not trusted inside, the only thing is to return to the cycle of violence. That's what we are trying to prevent. I mean, nobody was born bad. It's just the choices that we make."



Skipper with Josaia, one of the gallery artists



Joe, one of the artists, next to one of his paintings



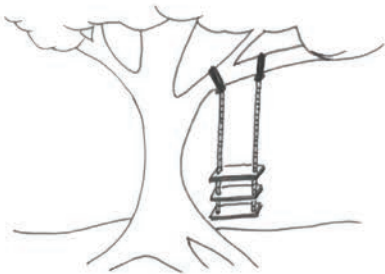
Artworks on display in the public gallery



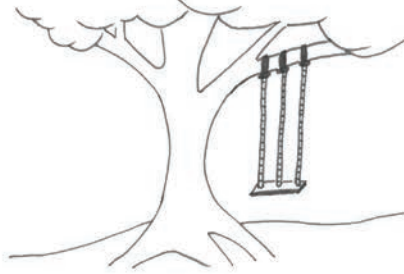
Damien with all artists and the gallery officer

HISTORICAL PRISON COMICS

Department of Defective Services



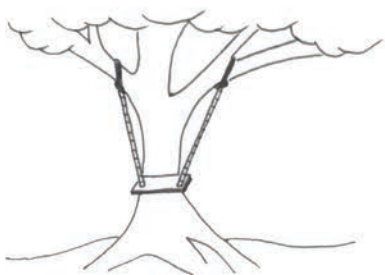
As the Superintendent requested it



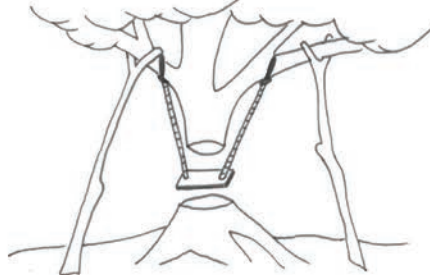
As the Store ordered it



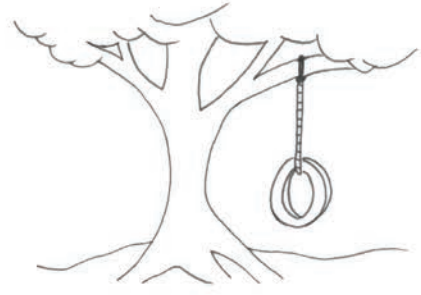
As Building Services designed it



As Industries made it

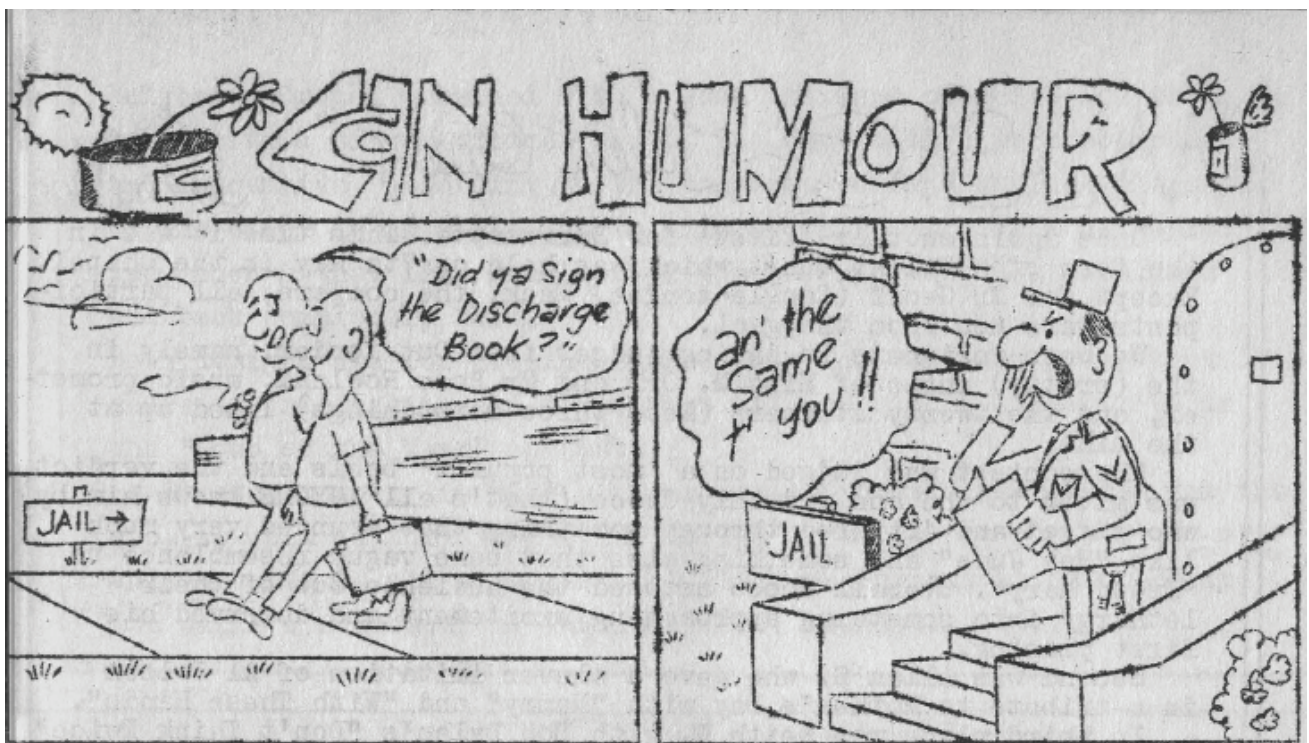


As Maintenance installed it



What the crims wanted

Originally published in INprint, the official New South Wales prisoner's newspaper from 1978-1981. Issue 18, October 1980.



Originally published in Contact Issue 11, Parramatta Gaol, June 1972

Less Within the Walls



Coping with grief is challenging at the best of times, but it is especially difficult from within a custodial environment, where access to support is limited and emotions can feel heightened. Cassie Jewell from the Mind Remake Project in the United States has created a free, original booklet that may be reproduced and distributed to people in custody, helping them with this process.

The 33-page booklet helps explain the process of grief, and contains exercises and information to help with this challenging process.

Your education department or a prison support officer may be willing to print this free resource for you. Alternatively, you may be able to ask friends or family on the outside to print and post it to you.

To learn more, tell them to visit mindremakeproject.org

A direct link to the booklet can be found at :
<https://mindremakeproject.org/2025/01/26/free-grief-booklet-for-inmates/>

Less Within the Walls Coping with Grief While Incarcerated

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	6
Understanding Grief	7
Expressing Grief	13
Grieving Behind Bars	17
Building Resilience	21
Reflection	25
Resources	29
Notes	30
Stages of Grief & Dying	32

The table of contents, giving an overview of what can be found in the booklet.



Are you worried about your loved ones on the outside?
Do your family or friends need support?

When someone has a loved one go to prison, they may also feel socially isolated and reluctant to seek support because of the stigma attached. For many families, the incarceration of a loved one can lead to financial and practical difficulties and many changes that can be stressful.

Counselling is often helpful in supporting families through the stressful process of incarceration and assist in planning for release and family reintegration following a period of imprisonment. You or your loved one can contact CRC to discuss how they can access support.

CRC's Family Counsellor provides telephone counselling and support to anyone in NSW with a family member or friend in a Correctional Centre. Face-to-face counselling may be available for families in the Canterbury-Bankstown Local Government Area.

Community Restorative Centre

✉ PO Box 258, Canterbury, NSW 2193

☎ (02) 9288 8700

✉ info@crcnsw.org.au

🌐 www.crcnsw.org.au



JAILBREAK Prison Radio

Real stories and great music getting you through your time

Listen to Jailbreak on
2ser107.3

Jailbreak is heard on community radio across the country, and you can listen on demand on
www.2ser.com/programs/jailbreak



Jailbreak is a CRC project.
Find out more at
www.crcnsw.org.au or
contact us at (02) 9288 8700

Write to us if you'd like to share your story or tell us what you think

**Jailbreak, 2SER 107.3 FM,
PO BOX 123, Broadway
NSW 2007**

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

ISSUE 24 DUE FOR RELEASE IN DECEMBER 2026



ARTISTS WITH CONVICTION

Paper Chained reports on attending Tasmania's annual prison art exhibition, Artists with Conviction, and visiting the art program inside Risdon Prison.



XMAS CONTENT

If you have any Xmas-themed content you'd like us to feature in the December issue, please post it to us by the end of September.



FAIR THREADS

We interview Luke Anderson, a former prisoner and the founder of Fair Threads, a clothing company helping people impacted by the criminal legal system.

SHOUT-OUTS

Shout-outs to people who are not already contributors to *Paper Chained* can only mention first names or nicknames.

