

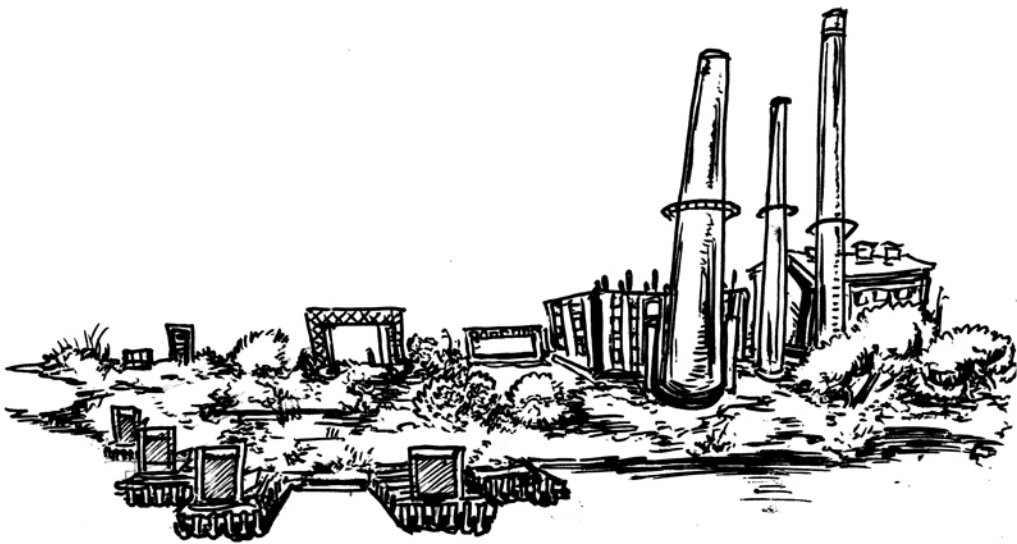


VISITING DAYS

MAUD and NATE
visited JARROD
at RIKER'S and
made a zine about it



JARROD SHANAHAN
MAUD PRYOR
NATE McDONOUGH



2-3 - MAUD PRYOR

4 - NATE McDONOUGH

5-13 - JARROD SHANAHAN

14-18 - MAUD PRYOR

19-29 - NATE McDONOUGH

30-31 - MAUD PRYOR

32 - JARROD SHANAHAN



VISITING RIKERS ISLAND: a guide

Before you visit:

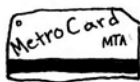
- Check visitation schedule, which is updated + changed occasionally. Certain days only inmates with last names beginning A-L can receive visitors, other days only M-Z.
- Up to 3 visitors are allowed at a time, not including children under one year old.
- Refer to dress code. Clothing that is too revealing (more than 3 inches above the knee, spaghetti straps) or deemed offensive (references to drugs, sex, gangs, violence, swear words) are not allowed. You will either be given a cover up or take a no-contact visit, conducted behind a window. Hoods are not allowed, undergarments must be worn. Hats and body jewelry are to be removed.

NO:



- Bring picture ID (IDNYC, passport, driver's license, etc.) If accompanied by an adult, children under 16 do not need ID. Bring at least two quarters to lock up personal items.

- You must take a city bus onto the island. There is no other way. Bring a metrocard with enough money on it for a round trip.




- Set aside at least half a day for the visit. You will see the inmate for one hour but the full process of security checks and waiting takes anywhere from 2 to 5 hours.

At the jail:

- There will be a variety of security checks: canine, metal detector and X-ray, and finally a body check



- Find the waiting area for the facility in which your inmate is housed. Your thumbprint will be scanned and a photo taken for a visitor pass. Do not lose this. You will now have to wait for a bus to shuttle you to the facility. These buses come every 20-30 minutes.
- At the Facility there is another set of lockers. Bring nothing in except up to 3 books and 3 regulated items of clothing intended for the inmate. These will be handed over to an officer.
- You may be asked to take a chemical detection test via a hand wipe. This tests to see if you have handled drugs in the last 24 hours.
- You will have to submit to a body check in a private room. A guard will frisk you and ask you to undo certain items of clothing, including socks and undergarments. They will examine your mouth.
Four hand-drawn illustrations showing body check procedures: 1. A mouth being examined with a tongue sticking out. 2. A bra being removed. 3. A sock being pulled. 4. A person being patted down with the text 'Nothing in pockets' written above.
- Wait and listen for your inmates name to be called. You will be seated and supervised in a communal room. You have an hour together and are permitted to touch at the beginning and end of the meeting.

YOU WILL DEPOSIT YOUR BELONGINGS IN OUTSIDE LOCKERS. AFTER EXITING THE BUS. AS YOU ENTER, YOU MUST CLEAR A METAL DETECTOR WITH SHOES AND OUTER LAYERS OFF.



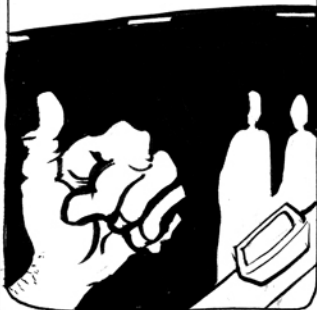
IF YOU DO NOT CLEAR THE METAL DETECTOR AFTER TWO ATTEMPTS, OFFICERS WILL ASK YOU TO CONSENT TO A PAT SEARCH OVER YOUR CLOTHING, LIKE THE AIRPORT. REFUSING A SEARCH MAY RESULT IN A NON CONTACT VISIT OR VISIT DETAIL.



AFTER CLEARING THE FIRST SECURITY CHECK, LOOK FOR THE SIGNS HANGING FROM THE CEILING-FIND THE SIGN FOR THE JAIL WHERE YOUR LOVED ONE IS HOUSED AND PROCEED TO THE WAITING AREA. CHECK IN WITH THE OFFICER. PROVIDE YOUR ID.



THE OFFICER MAY ASK YOU TO PROVIDE A SCAN OF YOUR THUMB PRINT. YOU ARE NOT REQUIRED TO PROVIDE A THUMBSCAN. IF YOU ARE DENIED BECAUSE YOU REFUSED THE THUMBSCAN, CONTACT THE BOARD OF CORRECTION IMMEDIATELY: 212-669-7900



YOU WILL BE GIVEN A VISITOR EXPRESS PASS. MAKE SURE NOT TO LOSE THIS!



A SHUTTLE BUS COMES EVERY 20-30 MINUTES AND WILL TRANSFER YOU TO THE SPECIFIC JAIL.



AT THE JAIL, YOU MUST CLEAR A SECOND METAL DETECTOR. YOU MAY BE ASKED TO SUBMIT TO A CHEMICAL DETECTION TEST (A WIPE OF THE HANDS WITH IMMEDIATE RESULTS FOR ANY CHEMICAL RESIDUE)



LOCK UP ALL REMAINING PERSONAL ITEMS (JEWELRY, JACKETS, ETC.) YOU WILL NEED A SECOND QUARTER



ONE BY ONE, THE OFFICER WILL CALL YOU INTO A PRIVATE AREA FOR A BODY CHECK. YOU MUST REMOVE YOUR SOCKS AND SHOES, LIFT UP YOUR SLEEVES, HAIR AND OPEN YOUR MOUTH. FOR WOMEN YOU WILL BE ASKED TO BEND OVER AND LIFT YOUR BRA FORWARD. MEN MUST LIFT THEIR SHIRT.



WAIT FOR YOUR NAME TO BE CALLED, VISIT INMATE FOR ONE HOUR, DEPART AS INSTRUCTED (ANOTHER 30-60 MINUTES BEFORE GETTING ON BUS BACK TO QUEENS)

“SHANON!”

The guard shrieks an incomprehensible mispronunciation of my name from inside a plexiglass box. There’s no public address system here, let alone computers or cameras or any other technology placing me in the 21st Century. The guard’s box has two small metal grates in the plexiglass that they cover with a logbook when they want to nap undisturbed or simply don’t want to talk to anyone. I am sprawled out on my bed sixty feet away, across a cavernous room filled with shouting men. All day long the guards rant and rave from inside the box that dulls their words into a white noise like the traffic outside my apartment on a busy street that I’ve learned to just ignore. When they call my name, however pronounced, there’s no telling what it could be about. The chances are overwhelming that it’s going to be some bullshit. So if they really want me, they’ll come get me.

When the “A” guard inside the box can’t get my attention, the “B” guard outside the box yells my name, this time clearer, but still butchered. “SHANON! SHANON! SHANON!” By this point annoyed inmates nearer to the booth begin to chant it from the front to the back, sufficient to give me painful flashbacks to Occupy Wall Street’s aurally abusive “people’s mic”. Of course I had begun to suspect on some preconscious level that they were calling me, but didn’t really see the rush to respond, and anyway it’s fun to make the fuckers do a little work between naps. But once the other inmates start to get annoyed, the game is over. I set down my book, slip on my black velcro “Pataki” shoes, yell “I’m coming!”, and see what these idiots want.

“You called me?”

“I’ve been calling you! What are you, deaf?”

“Is that a serious question?”

“I’ve been calling your name!”

“I never know what you’re yelling from inside that box. Anyway what were you yelling?”

“SHANON!”

“My name is Shanahan. There was another guy named Shanon in my last house. They called him all the time. So I didn’t respond”

“Whatever. Get ready, you have a visitor.”

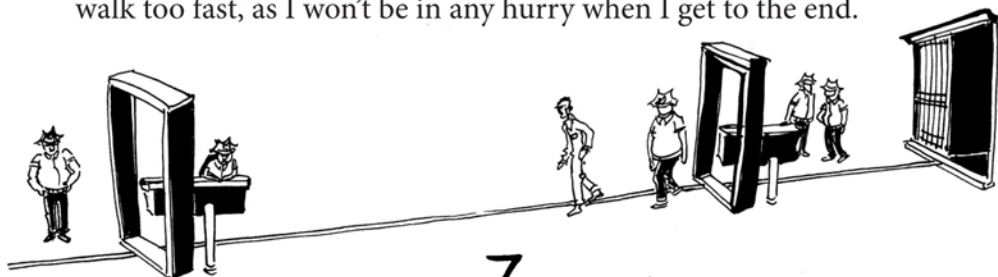
I only have one outfit, a green jumpsuit, shaving is only permitted during the early morning hours, and haircuts and nail clipping are only allowed once per week, by special arrangement, at an ungodly hour. ("Don't they want to confiscate these weapons?" one inmate says, frustrated as his nails grow long with no chance to clip them.) Basically, there's really only so much I can do to get ready. I clean myself up in an open shower with seven shower heads, visible from the guard's booth and the entrance to the house, and where by unspoken agreement everyone keeps their underwear on. I brush my teeth in a big industrial sink with three water fixtures, apply some low quality moisturizer from the commissary, and put on a clean pair of socks. I practice looking "OK" in a dull steel mirror screwed into the bathroom wall that reflects my image like a fading daguerreotype.

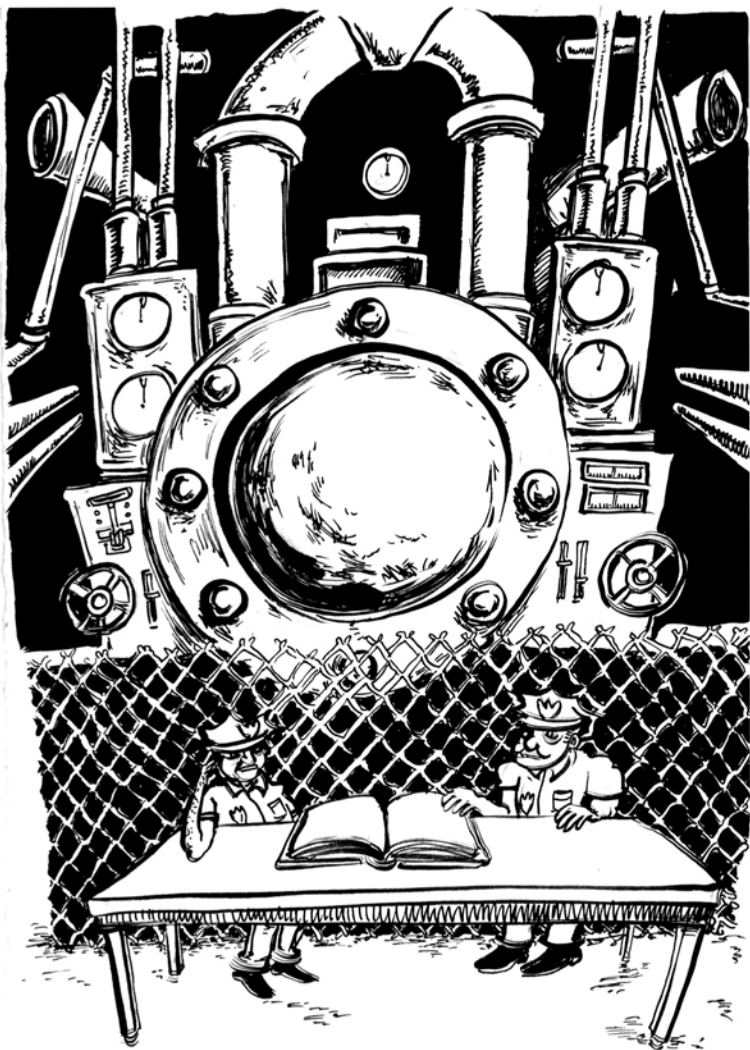
Most importantly, I make a strong batch of instant coffee in my green plastic cup, hoping it gives me the energy I'll need for the process ahead. If there's no hot water in the urn, and I don't feel like being the one who has to change it, I can make my instant coffee with warm water. This may sound disgusting, but it's not as if the coffee would otherwise be delicious. Upwards of an hour of passes, and just when I've comfortably settled back into my fantasy novel and begun to put this shithole out of my mind, I'm called a second time. My escort has arrived to take me to the visitation area. When I return everyone will ask me I went. I'll tell them a "VI", or visit, and they'll joke that I'm such a popular guy. The sad fact is most of these guys don't get visitors. By the time they wound up here, they'd run out of good favor with just about everyone in their lives.

I anticipate a draining ordeal. The old military adage "hurry up and wait" is the order of the day at the Eric M. Taylor Center for sentenced inmates at Riker's Island. If I'm lucky, my escort is tasked with picking up other inmates from other houses, so we can walk around killing time for a while, looking out the windows and maybe seeing a buddy or two from another house, before heading to the visitation waiting room. "Better waiting out here than down there" one inmate tells me, as I pace around in a small box drawn on the hallway floor waiting for our escort to return. The guards

here call inmates “packages” and move them with all the human consideration one gives an inanimate box one is tasked to begrudgingly deliver; set it down for a while, chat with your coworkers, talk like its not listening. Used to waiting patiently like a good package, I peek out the window at the Empire State Building trying to imagine what’s happening at its base, or absentmindedly following the hopping and pecking of a blackbird across one of the disused basketball courts which litter the overgrown spaces between EMTC’s dormitories. Anything to stall on my way to waiting some more in a less interesting room, or to lead my mind away from the enforced stupidity of life on this idiotic island.

The average inmate is rarely if ever handcuffed in EMTC. Instead I am given a bit of slack on an invisible tether to walk ahead of my escort, never behind. It’s not like the thought never crossed my mind, so the precaution is understandable. “If you raise your hands to a CO,” one inmate advised me, “you better make it good. You got four minutes until the riot squad show up. And they’ll be bringing a stretcher for you for sure, so you may as well make them bring two.” Given this risk, if a captain sees me walking behind the escort, the escort will get an earful about it. And likewise with a policy restricting inmates to a special walking lane painted onto the floor, which passes through a series of metal detectors that register my passage with muted grumbles that never seem to alarm the staff. Formally these precautionary measures are all required, but informally, with a lax guard and no captains in sight, these rules becomes superfluties cast aside by unspoken consensus, in a sort of camaraderie between low level staff and the inmates who often hail from the same neighborhoods and sometimes know each other from the outside. But no matter how I’m forced to walk, I know the way to the visitation area well, as it is a straight shot north down a basement corridor spanning the entire length of the facility. And there’s no need to walk too fast, as I won’t be in any hurry when I get to the end.





At the mouth of the visiting area two guards greet me from behind a long wooden table, with an ornate log books like from a funeral parlor, where my ID will stay throughout my visit. Elsewhere in the building my ID is required at all times, and not displaying it outside the dormitory is a common cause for reproach, leading to the widespread practice of wearing it clipped on backward, for the most pathetic pretense of privacy. After turning over my ID at this checkpoint it is a bit unnerving to continue without it, but that just goes to show what a bottleneck I'm being pushed into, from which there is no conceivable escape. Behind these guards looms a massive furnace in seeming disuse, but then again just about everything here looks that way, so it's impossible to tell. This hulking machine

is festooned with large round bathroom scale sized gages straight off the factory floor of Metropolis, utterly filthy, including the ground around it, and penned in with a chain link fence. Even the furnace here is in a filthy cage.

I am bade down another narrow corridor, half blocked at the end by a guard's desk where I must sign in, name and number, as a guard reads the newspaper and chats casually with the inmate workers and the other inmates waiting for their visit. My number corresponds to a plastic bin where I'll place my jumper and shoes, in a towering wall of square box shelves. The changing room is a cramped and shabby rectangular space with a ceiling dripping water into white buckets and a gray concrete floor worn down to display its last three paintjobs like a naturally occurring sedimentary bedding. The plant life spilling through metal grates running along the ceiling tells me that I am practically underground. The verdure of this island provides a heavy odor of wet life wafting through the windows into bleach soaked squalor. Some inmates attribute the smell to the island's history as a landfill, which is partly true, but they've also probably never been out of the city.

Something almost inexplicable happens when I leave my ID behind, strip out of my greens, and draw closer the massive visitation area, a disused basketball gym and embassy to the outside world that most here call "the dance floor". The overseeing guard here in the changing room greets me courteously, seated casually behind a desk, gossiping and and joking with the inmate workers. The latter gently tease back, well aware this slack is instantly revocable if they run too far with it. Driven by the basic laws of conversational common ground, discussions in this facility soon turn to complaining about drug addicts. The inmates mock the "Methadonians" who scarcely rise from bed save for a high dosage of the drug administered by the Key Extended Entry Program ("KEEP", which "keeps you high!"). A guard, who fesses up to having smoked some weed in his day -- but that's it! -- complains that people blame drugs on their bad decisions. "You do bad things whether you're on drugs or not, it's about what kind of person you are." Everyone disagrees, knowing better, but doesn't push back too much. Maybe the guard disagrees too, but needs to believe what he's saying.

Elsewhere in EMTC, the newspapers inmates receive are trimmed to removed stories about corruption in the Department of Corrections, horror stories from Rikers, and perhaps most unacceptable of all, stories of successful lawsuits against the DOC. I never realized how frequently these stories appear in the newspaper until I saw them missing from the copy that made its rounds in the dormitory. But in the changing room you can read the full newspaper and get the goods on what they don't want you to know, and then report back to your house. When the guard union's President Norman Seabrook was indicted for corruption, the New York Post circulating around my dorm started on page 9. But in the visiting area, the outside mixes with inside, and while the former will always trump the latter in the end, the exaggerated roles adopted by inmates and their jailers begin to break down as I approach the little vestige of New York City my friends have braved hours of inconvenience and indignity to smuggle in off the streets.

I change out of my sagging grubby "greens" into a crisply clean tan jumper reserved for visits, and trade in my Patakis for a pair of bizarrely ornate plastic sauna sandals. With any luck I find a jumper smaller than 3XL, and sandals smaller than size 13, but everything here runs large, and my best efforts to appear healthy and well-adjusted to my visitor are seriously undermined by clothing that makes me appear to be wasting away. Sometimes everything works out just as I want it to, and I relish this moment, but then I realize I'm still in jail. Next to the guard's desk a laundry bag overflows with jumpers, washed after every visit. Back at the dormitory I'm lucky to see the laundry cart once a week, and inmates are issued plastic tubs and soap to wash their own laundry by hand in the sink, and little bits of string to make clotheslines.

After changing I am herded into a narrow and long corridor where I will wait for an hour or more for my visit. The door to the changing room is most often kept ajar, with waiting inmates free to hang out with the guards and inmate workers, do some decline pushups with their feet on the square shelves, debate sports -- always sports -- and complain about gay and transgender inmates, to the guards' hearty and overcompensatory agreement. I'll never believe which



inmates have overweight and unattractive partners, the inmate workers tell me, and they smirkingly inform me that they have the breakdown, but they shouldn't tell me, but do I want to know? The only other white guy in the room, in for hard drugs, like everyone assumes I am, because why else would I be here, announces that God didn't make Adam and Steve, and everybody actually laughs as if they'd just heard this pun for the first time.

But when a higher ranking captain is approaching this atmosphere quickly dissolves. The captain is heralded by the warning "COD!" (captain on deck), issued by an inmate to inmates and staff alike, and we are hurriedly ushered away from exchanging Cartman impressions with the guards, and packed into the narrow waiting hallway, with its heavy steel door brusquely closed, our separation from staff abruptly reaffirmed. I'm pressed into tight quarters with inmates I do not know, and the performance of toughness and cartoonish masculinity which characterizes the average day back in my dormitory is amplified considerably by this setting. Sometimes I'm alone in this waiting area, on a bench that's just wide enough to lay down on, though if a captain is coming I'll be told to sit up. I do some bench dips, some ab planks, some bicycle crunches, I stare at the intersection of two bricks on the wall and try to clear my mind. Who is visiting me? What will I say? How will I not alarm them? How do I look and sound, anyway? I haven't seen a clear reflection of my face in weeks. Am I in fact a fading darragueotype of a human being?

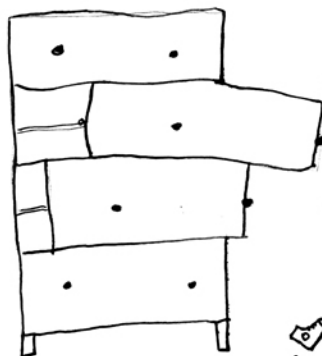
I have no idea how much time has passed by the time the guard calls my name. When I get back to the dormitory, upwards of four hours will have vanished, for a one hour visit. No matter which room it's done in, the waiting, the false starts, the waves of adrenaline and subsequent crashes, combine to sap my energy down to nothing. By the time my name is called I'm ready for a nap, not a performance for my friends who gone through an analogous process, on top of an epic bus trip, just to see me for an hour. And perform I must, because by the time I'm done waiting for the damn visit, if I wasn't exhausted and despondent already, I surely will be.

At last, the inmates who have collected in the final waiting hallway are summoned by the guard who runs the show.

“Alright gentlemen you know the deal. Once you get into the visiting area go directly to your visitor. Do not acknowledge anyone else. Walk down the aisle, do not cross them. Kiss, squeeze the booty once, don’t play with the titties, don’t try to fingerbang, and if you a homo, no grabbing the wiener. If I see you making out too much I’ll pull you off the floor to inspect your mouth, the clock will keep running, and it will take me as long as it takes. That’s my way of being a dick.”

On the way out I will be strip searched, which means I’ll take off all my clothes, turn to face the wall, squat down, and stand back up. “My favorite part,” the guard grumbles, as he mumbles lightheartedly about “you grimy ass Brooklyn niggas”, which he imagines himself able to say being a latino from Queens as wide as he is tall. On my way back I’ll go through the same process again. Conventional wisdom holds these strip searches are mostly security theater, since very few of the guards actually want to stare into the stygian vanishing point of your asshole, except perhaps the ones who spend the day protesting the loudest about “homos” and “mooks”. Once the visitation room worker told me about a guard with prior experience in upstate system, who had raised eyebrows by forcing inmates to run their fingers along their assholes, behind their balls, and in their gums, to make sure no contraband fell out. “In what order?!” another of the staff inquired, to gales of laughter.

I proceed through up a crumbling exterior emergency staircase painted red. Outside stands a wasted landscape save for one lonely stick of a juvenile fruit tree bearing a homemade sign begging the observer to not cut it down. A slanted hallway opens into an equally slanted constructed inspection room, seemingly soldered onto the side of the building in a makeshift fashion. I hear some variation of the same speech from before, with the added detail that if I need to go to the bathroom or drink water I can do so before sitting down, but once I sit down I need to stay.



Hmm, maybe not...

For my first trip to visit Jarrod at Rikers, the day after he went in, I obsessively researched clothing guidelines. I'd read that they don't allow Converse, nor certain colors. I usually wear all black so that was easy.



innocuous yet illicit for some reason



slightly too skinhead-y



It would appear that punk fashion has betrayed me

sports bra - not underwire



steel-toed

has a tank on it



plain black but too low cut & too many holes in risqué places



straight up psychotic



Uhh yea, ok, no

also too skinhead-y

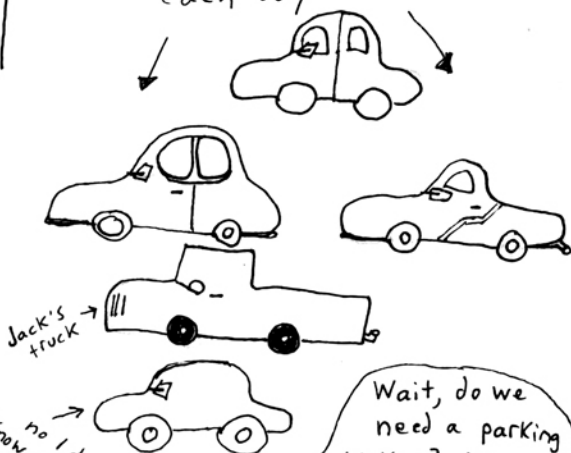
What was not easy was finding an appropriate shirt: no swear words or violent words on it, no straps. Luckily this was before I gave myself an ACAB knuckle tattoo. Who knows what that could have led to.

I wore long pants, as I have the word FUCK tattooed on my leg, which was annoying in the heat.

It was good to visit this first time with Jack, who studies incarceration. We planned to tell people about the visit to prepare them. At first I only came away with it having taken almost a whole day - a 6 hour ordeal.

RIKERS

As many as 1500 people visit Rikers each day



no I don't know why someone drove a monster car

Wait, do we need a parking ticket? All these

other cars have them on their windsh...
Oh.

Those are just fliers for a dancehall show.

BUS STOP



The bus is the only way onto the island, and it's a city bus that you need a Metrocard for. Somehow this information is neglected to be made obvious for visitors. I spent a fair amount of the visit worrying if I had enough money on my card for a return trip. But really, what could they do? Lock me up for fare evasion?



4p. white underwear
4p. white socks
3 white T-shirts
3 books incl. Du Bois' **Black Reconstruction**

Jack & I rode the bus across the bridge and when it stopped, a Corrections Officer came into the bus with a drug sniffing dog to let us know what would happen next.



INSIDE:

Everyone hold your arms out to the side and don't move



This "welcome wagon" did not happen on my next visit. The catch-em-off guard / arbitrary nature of each visit is what seems most disturbing to me, from a visitor's perspective.



Our friend Erin had visited Zach a month prior and had some tips which really came in handy.

However, she underestimated my neuroses.



Yes, dear reader, I brought about 2 weeks worth of laundry quarters. I suggest bringing 2 quarters, 3 if one is wonky. 4 if you want to share with others who weren't forewarned.

Maud at
19



Fuck yeah this
nose ring makes
me so badass!



Maud at
29



Sorry, no, I can't
take the nose ring
out -- it healed
itself outta line...
Can you take the
X-Ray with it in?
I don't mind about
the radiation...

Maud at 31

Sorry-
the nose
ring is
contraband.

Either
take it
out, or
you can

have a
no-contact
visit.

Panicking in the Rikers'
Eric M. Taylor visitors'
bathroom:



c'mon, c'mon,
just rip it out,
the skin will
heal...

I Finally got it out, and hooked it
to my zipper as a final contraband
fuck you + to put it back in later
... but I dropped it on the bathroom
floor after the visit.



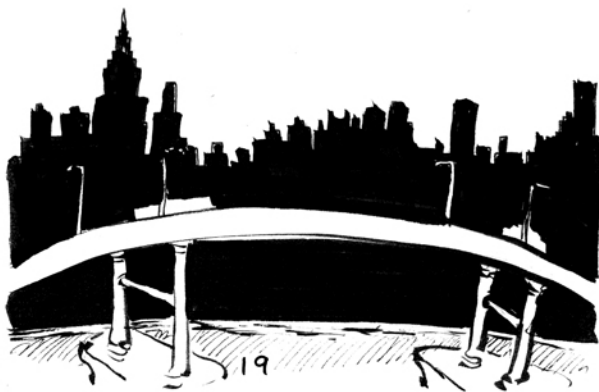
Oh HELL NAH I ain't putting
that back in NOW!

IN NEW YORK FOR THE WEEKEND. UP AT 5 AM.
TWO TRAINS. MET WITH JARROD'S PARTNER MAUD.
BEFORE GETTING ON THE BUS TO RIKER'S ISLAND.



A SIGN BEFORE
THE BRIDGE COVERED
IN ABBREVIATIONS
I'D NEVER HEARD
OF BEFORE.

WE CROSS A SUNNY ARCING
BRIDGE. EVERYONE IS SILENCED
BY THE VIEW OF MANHATTAN.



STRAIGHT OFF THE BUS EVERY
THING BUT THE ESSENTIALS IS
PLACED IN THE FIRST SET OF
LOCKERS. WE PASS THE FIRST
AMNESTY BOX.



A GUARD WORKING THE METAL
DETECTOR GIVES ME A HARD
TIME ABOUT MY WALLET.



I SHRUGGED MY WAY INTO
ACCEPTING NARCON TRAINING
FROM A CADRE OF CUTE LADIES



THE FIRST MUMBLED QUESTION
FROM AN INATTENTIVE GUARD
(IN A LONG STRING OF SIMILAR
QUESTIONS.)



I'M SORRY, WHAT
WAS THAT?



HE'S ASKING IF YOU'VE
EVER BEEN TO RIKER'S
BEFORE

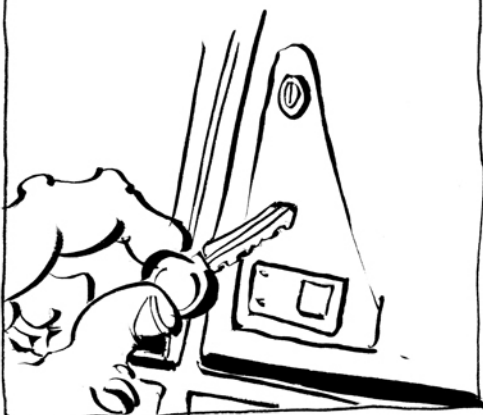




WE PASS A SECOND AMNESTY BOX AS WE PROCEED INSIDE SINGLE FILE INTO THE BUILDING



THE REST OF WHAT WE HAVE GOES INTO A SECOND SET OF LOCKERS.



THERE IS AN ENORMOUS QUANTITY OF DATA AND INSTRUCTION ON THE WALLS. DRESS CODE. NO CHEWING GUM. GIVING CASH TO PRISONERS IS ILLEGAL, ETC



A SHINING BRIGHT PINK NAIL PROBES THE POCKET OF MY NEW SHORTS. . . MORE METAL DETECTORS



BORED GUARDS WATCHING COMMERCIALS AND MAURY POVICH



ANOTHER WAITING ROOM. AN INFANT SCREAMS IN MY EAR.



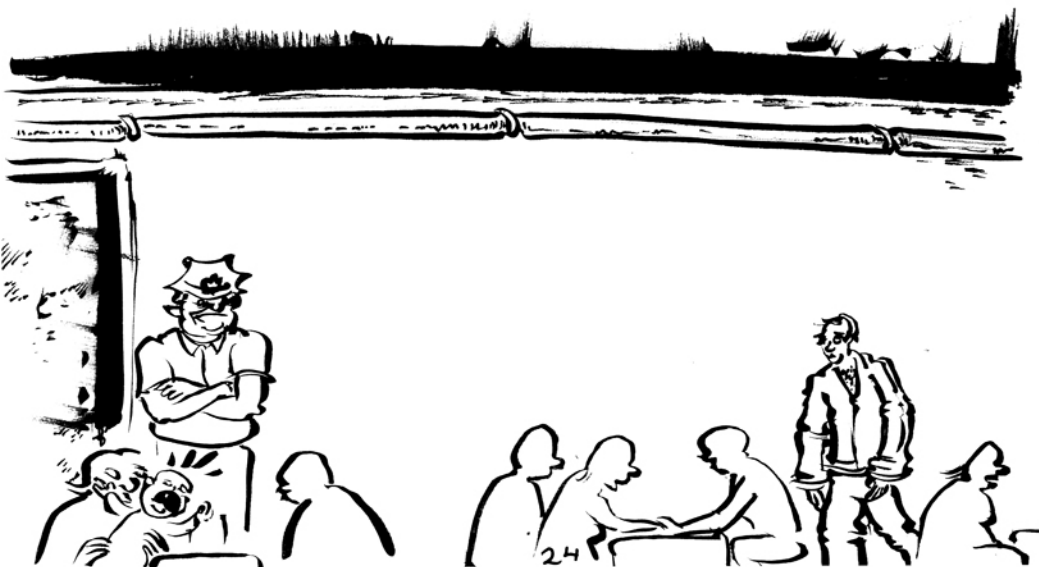
GUARD MUMBLING INAUDIBLY AND GESTURING INDISTINCTLY, MAUD IS ALERT ENOUGH TO SOMEHOW MAKE OUT THE INSTRUCTIONS HE'S GIVING US.



WE'RE SITTING AT A SMALL GREEN TABLE WITH
THREE GREEN CHAIRS THAT LOOKS LIKE IT
BELONGS IN A MCDONALD'S PLAY LAND.



AFTER A FEW MINUTES WE CATCH OUR FIRST GLIMPSE
OF JARROD. IT HAS BEEN FIVE AND A HALF HOURS
SINCE I GOT ON A RIKER'S BOUND SUBWAY CAR.



FROM A DISTANCE, JARROD LOOKS WAN AND FRAIL. HE WAVES BEFORE DUCKING INTO A BATHROOM FOR A MINUTE, THEN ARRIVES AT THE TABLE CHUCKLING.



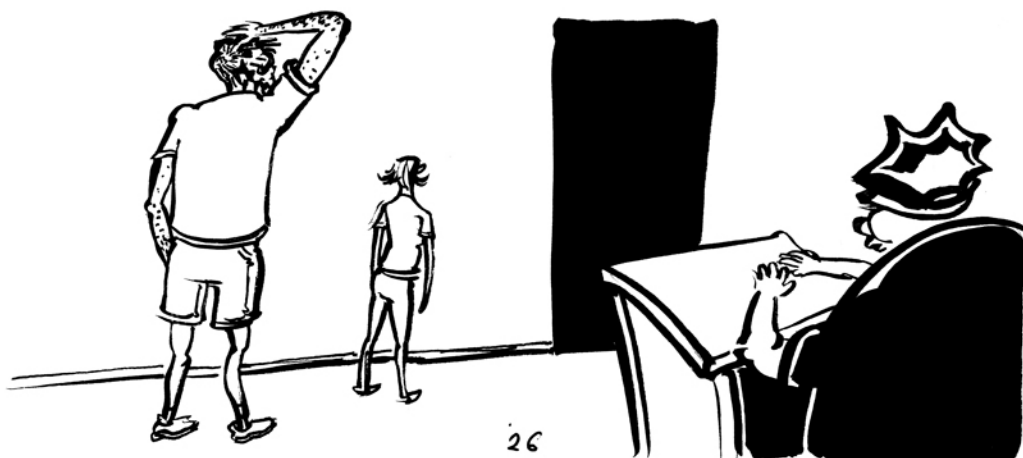
CLOSER NOW, HE'S THE PICTURE OF HEALTH! HE'S SWIMMING AROUND IN A 3XL JUMPSUIT. "SMALLEST ONE THEY HAD!" HE SAYS WITH A LAUGH. HE TAKES A SEAT ACROSS FROM US.



WE SPOKE FOR AN HOUR. I WAS ASKED TO UNCROSS MY LEGS AND HAD GREAT DIFFICULTY NOT SQUIRMING BACK INTO THE POSITION FOR THE REST OF THE VISIT.



WE SAID OUR GOODBYES AND STARTED BACK ON THE INVERSE OF THE SERPENTINE PATH BY WHICH WE MADE OUR ENTRY.



WAITING FOR THE ISLAND'S BUS, A TODDLER LED A BULKY BENT OVER GUARD AROUND AND THROUGH THE METAL DETECTOR.



A TEENAGER I RECOGNIZE FROM THE TABLE WE WERE NEXT TO IS FREAKING OUT CAUSE HE CAN'T FIND HIS LOCKER.

THE GUARD TRIES TO PERSUADE HIM TO TRY ANOTHER SET OF LOCKERS. A SHORT ARGUMENT FOLLOWS. THE GUARD TAKES THE KEY AND STARTS TRYING LOCKERS.



AFTER HE FINDS THE ONE, HE RISES PROUDLY
PUFFS OUT HIS CHEST AND BOWS HIS ARMS OUT.
A GIRL WAITING IN LINE BATS HER EYELASHES AT
HIM, HE STRUTS OFF SMIRKING AS THE BUS ARRIVES.



LEAVING THE ISLAND, I'M SO GLAD TO NO LONGER BE
AWAITING ANOTHER INSTRUCTION AND WORRIED ABOUT
MISSING SOME VITAL DETAIL OR CRUCIAL STEP.



THE BUS BACK TO QUEENS. LESS THAN TWENTY FEET FROM ITS FINAL STOP, HONKED FURIOUSLY IN A MYRIAD OF RHYTHMS AT A STOPPED CAR WITH ITS HAZARDS ON. THE MISERABLY HOT ATMOSPHERE QUICKLY GREW MUTINOUS AS PRETTY MUCH EVERYONE SHOUTED INSULTS AT THE BUS DRIVER..



MAUD WAS HEADED BACK TO BROOKLYN. I WAS HEADED FOR MANHATTAN. THE TRAIN STARTS MOVING AS I FIND A SCRAP TO SCRIBBLE SOME NOTES ON, I START TO CROSS MY LEGS, STIFLE THE WORRY THAT I'LL GET IN TROUBLE, AND RESUME WRITING.



Met up with Nate, Jarrod's friend and collaborator for the last visit I would have before his release. We planned ahead as best we could, even exchanging photos.

I'll wear this shirt!

Cool! This is me!



We picked a time & place to meet; we were even exactly the same amount of neurotically early. I knew I'd like this guy. But... there was one problem...



Nate was wearing FLIP FLOPS

Nate had taken the bus up from Pittsburgh for this visit and I didn't want to start a panic but I wasn't sure Flip Flops were dress-code appropriate.



And so then I figured...

Should I say something??

Should we stop to buy shoes?

I studied that damn code 15 times I can't remember...



So how are you doing?



um. fine.

oh god what if a) b) & c) also

my feet are so small

His other friends couldn't visit because of... what, again?

It'd be horrible if Nate came all this way + couldn't get in

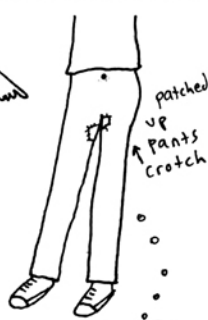
Are Flip flops gang footwear?

I decided Finally to just ride it out, not mention it, and hope for the best. As it turned out, I was the one almost in violation of the dress code, which seems to be pretty arbitrarily enforced, putting you at the whims of the Corrections Officers. I still wouldn't recommend Flip flops.

Female CO body Searcher



Make Sure to keep your legs closed when you sit. The other guards could keep you from a contact visit



But these are the same pants I wore last time?? No one said anything then

I was lucky that my job was understanding, and that I only had to answer for myself.



Hey, ah, I'm going to be a little late to work tomorrow. And... possibly distracted for a month.



Okay. You can take a short lunch.

Are you alright?



CAN I RUN OUTSIDE AND TAKE THIS PHONE CALL!!



Sure. James can cover info for 15

As opposed to trying to co-ordinate around a family



Well the baby sitter can't come early so I'll just bring Anjelica and

We'll skip Jason's baseball game because I know you want to see him...

But we have to be back in time because my mother

And Jarrod was lucky - he mostly flew under the radar, not singled out for punishment



Rest in Power Kalief Browder

I was lucky the guards decided not to pick on me...



I don't understand why the officer made me pull my pants down to see my sanitary napkin. I feel violated.

* Quote From The Intercept article by Raven Raskia.

But I was in a state of low shock the whole time. Visitors are confused into submission and are afraid not to comply with even the most degrading of orders.

And he had people looking out for him on the outside.



Aitabdel Salem spent 5 months at Rikers, uninformed by anyone that his bail was only \$2.

Yes, we were lucky. Yes, it could have been worse. But simply avoiding a worst-case scenario is not a victory. It's enough that even one woman is assaulted trying to visit. It's enough that even one person has died in Rikers; let alone the countless numbers who are beaten. This is to say nothing even about repercussions upon release. Since when is simply surviving a triumph? With a system as volatile and unpredictable as this, there is no managing it. It must be shut down.

I spot Maud and Nate immediately, craning their necks to catch a glimpse of me, and while I want to run over and hug them, my first stop is the filthy dancefloor bathroom, where I take a long-anticipated piss. If I don't go now, I can't go until after my visit, or else getting up will bring my visit to an end. At long last I give them each a short, permitted embrace, and we settle in on green plastic furniture separated by a green plastic coffee table. The sight of two beloved friends from the outside world sitting against the backdrop of this perverse and hostile place is truly uncanny; Maud and Nate clad in their street clothes sitting on Rikers furniture looks about as normal as a Martian reclining casually on a park bench Union Square. And I fear the danger that accompanies my every move in here will be transferred to them. Nate lifts his feet off the floor to cross his leg and I frantically instruct him to put it back, not once, but twice.

They tell me of the ordeal they suffered to get to me, and I tell them of mine, oddly analogous, and perhaps worse for them, unaccustomed as they are to how little human dignity is accounted for in places like this. I spend as much time as I have to allaying their fears that every horror known to American prison folklore is visited upon me here. Instead, I assure them, I'm mostly just perturbed by guys who talk to me when I'm trying to read. They don't seem to believe me, but that's OK, because I don't really believe myself either. This is a tough place to take up residence, and you need to fool yourself as much as possible into thinking it's not so bad. Visiting day makes this delusion hard to defend; as emissaries from the free world sit before me, triggering a thousand memories of life outside. I'll be out soon enough, they remind me, and all this will be behind us. They're right, but it won't be soon enough. After a lovely hour-long distraction from reality, we exchange brief permitted embraces, and I'm lead through another labyrinth, back to the dormitory, with a bittersweet scent of the outside world lingering in my nostrils, though just beyond my reach.



JARROD SHANAHAN
MAUD PRYOR
NATE McDONOUGH

3

Most of the day is spent in idleness and stupid pursuits, like watching garbage television, sleeping off methuene, laying in bed, talking endlessly about nothing. This institution produces stupidity in its inmates and workers in such an efficient way it seems to be by design. The campus is littered with disused basketball courts, an empty gym, no library, and so forth. It is a storage container for surplus population alternatively called "a shelter", "day care" and of course the more Shopovian "plantation", though what scant work inmates do largely makes the institution function.

Lunch is between 11-12, dinner 430-530. Lights out at 9, though I've managed to write in the dark, and read + write as a bird in the bathroom undisturbed. This entire island is a monument to sheer waste - fitting for a former (and perhaps present) landfill.

On the plus side, the views are spectacular, the sea breeze quite pleasant, especially in the cross-breeze across the dorm, and even in a wasteland so inimical to the human spirit, humanity does blossom here and there. That's enough for now, I'm lapsing into cliché, and need to get back lest I miss lunch.

Sending gracious thanks, well wishes, and love
All power to the people! - Jarrod

(From a letter to David Chapin)