

Day Twenty-Two Thursday August 9th 2001

10:30 am.

The journey to Wayland prison in Norfolk, took just over two hours. As I peered through my little window six inches by four I could recognise the occasional landmark familiar on the Cambridge ~~stop~~^{leg} of the trip, but once Cambridge was behind us, I had to satisfy myself with glimpses of signposts whenever we slowed down at roundabouts (PTO) Alenham, Bung St Edmund, Thetford, so for this particular period of my life that very special lady Gillian Shepherd would be my member of parliament.

The roads became narrower and narrower and the trees higher and higher as we approached our destination, and when we arrived it could not have been in starker contrast to the entrance of Belmarsh with its high walls, and countless electric gates, and ^{most pleasing of all} not a member of the press in sight.

Once we had parked outside the reception area, I was quickly aware of the different atmosphere, and the more casual approach of the prison officers. But then the daily banter was not gangland murders, IRA ~~terror~~ reports and drug barons.

Mr ~~Ward~~ signed ^{me} over to a Mr Brown as it was a regulated package. Once again I was stripped searched before he began to ~~go through~~ empty ~~my~~ plastic bag and go through my possessions. He removed my dressing gown, the two large towels William had supplied and my toothbrush. He told me that they would be returned to me once I was enlaced. ?

How long will that take I ask,
Usually about three months he replied ^{as it was a few}
I didn't think I'd mention, that I hoped to have moved on long before that.

He then put on one side my ^{either} socks and blue shirt saying I wouldn't get those back ^{either} I left. He replaced them with a striped blue shirt, and a pair of

prison jeans.

Having signed several documents to show that my personal possessions were being ~~stored~~ ^{stored} for safe keeping I had my photo graph taken holding up a little blackboard with the chalk letters FIF.8282, just like you see ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ the movies.

Once I had completed all the paper work I was escorted to what I would describe as the quarters stores, where I was given, 1 towel (green) 1 toothbrush, 1 tube of toothpaste, one comb, two big razors, and surprise surprise one plastic plate, one plastic bowl and a plastic knife fork and spoon.

Having placed my new possessions in the plastic bag along with those things of my own that they had allowed me to keep I was taken to the induction wing to me the induction officer Mr Thompson.

Mr Thompson told me he had been in the prison service for ten years, and hoped he would be able to answer any of my questions.

He began by taking me through the procedure that was carried out at Wayland. You begin your life on the induction wing he explained, where you will share a cell with another prisoner. My heart sank when I recalled my experience at Belmarsh. Do you know prison would immediately become more ~~horrible~~ ^{horrible} if you could ~~not~~ share your room with a friend. I can think of a dozen people who would fall into that category. After induction Mr Thompson went on to ~~say~~ ^{advise} me ~~that~~ ^{that} I would be moved into a single cell on another block as quickly as possible.

How long would that take I asked. He admitted we are so overcrowded at the moment, that it could take anything up to a month, but in your case I hope it will be only a few days. He then went on to take me through a ^{typical} day at Wayland and it quickly became clear that prisoners spent considerably less time in their cells than they did at

Bellmarsh. From there he went through the work (courses) Education, gardening, kitchen, and workshop, but he warned that always takes a few days to sort out. Nothing I ever done to-day or to-morrow in the prison service. He went over the details of ^{how} the canteen ^{works}, and confirmed that I would be allowed to spend twelve pounds fifty pence per week. I prayed that the food would be an improvement on Bellmarsh.

He ended his disquisition by explaining that he had selected a quite room mate for me, who he felt wouldn't cause any trouble. He ended by asking if I had any questions, and ^{when I had no he} then accompanied me down a crowded corridor of young people aged about twenty to twenty-five who just stood and stared at me.

My heart sank when he unlocked my cell door. It was filthy and ~~not~~ would have been the subject of a court order by the N.S.P.C.A if an animal had ~~been put~~ in it. The window and the window sill were covered in thick dirt, and the lavatory and the wash basin were not a lot better.

I had to get out of here as quickly as possible.

It was clear that Mr Thompson just took it for granted, and seemed oblivious to its state. He had only left me for a few moments before my cellmate ~~entered~~ walked in. He told me his name, but his Yorkshire accent was so broad that I couldn't understand him, and had to resort to checking on the card attached to the door. Chris Mitchell.

Chris was about my height, ~~but~~ ^{but} more stocky. By the time it came for us to go and collect our supplies, I had discovered that he was serving a two years sentence for grievous bodily harm, having stabbed someone with a Stanley knife. This was Mr Thompson's idea of someone who wasn't going to cause me any trouble. He was thirty-six years old, married with three children, ~~but~~ ^{but} was gang through a divorce, so ~~that~~ when he was released ^{he} should be living with his mother.

By now I was understanding one word in three,

and when he settled down on the top bunk to read a letter from his mother, I ~~was~~ ^{began to make} up my bed below him.

He chuckled and read me a paragraph of his mother's letter.

If you don't receive this letter, let me know and I'll send you another one.

6.00

The ^{cell} doors open^{ed} and we all troop down to supper. I walk slowly ~~along~~ the hot plate and quickly realize it's as bad as Belmarsh. I return to my cell empty handed, grateful that cafeteria orders at Wayland are on a Friday. (to + mmm)

I pour myself a bowl of sugar puffs, and thank Del Boy, long life milk and ~~apple~~ ^a Belmarsh apple.

6.30 p.m.

Exercise There are four differences between Belmarsh and Wayland that are immediately apparent when you ~~go~~ ^{walk} out into the exercise yard. First you are not searched, second the distance you can cover without retracing your steps can be multiplied by five, ^{next} the ratio between black and white is now 30/70 and my arrival in Norfolk causes more unspiritual painting ^{and} laughing, which causes me to curtail my walk. On the first long circuit, the salesman moved in, anything I needed drugs, cigarettes, phone cards, and they were all quite happy to receive payment outside. I told them firmly that I wasn't interested, but it's going to take them a few days to realize I don't even smoke.

When the banned boys and second hand salesman have departed I'm joined by a lifer who tells me he's also sixty-one, but the difference is that he's served twenty-seven years, and still doesn't ^{know} when, if ever, he will be getting out. When I ask him what he did, he admits to kylling a policeman. I slip into conversation with a blackman ^{on the other side of me} and he goes away. Is this what your sentence was meant to achieve Mr Justice Rotts.

Many of the more mature prisoners were in for

what I would call white collar crimes. Fiddling the D.S.I.
the Department of Trade and Industry or the Customs,
one of them joined me and said he was in for
five years.

what did you do I asked?

Smuggling
Drugs I ask

Certainly not, Sports he confessed,

what were you smuggling I didn't know
that was ^{still} against the law.

It was when you took sixty-five boxes, to the
value of twenty million and forgot to pay eight million
pounds in duty that they got cross.

Hardly duty free, I admit.

A young ~~man~~ ^{man} of ~~six~~ ^{six} takes his place, and tells
me he's been ~~in~~ ^{sentenced} to six ~~years~~ ^{years} in jail since the age of nineteen,
so if I need a Cooks tour, he's the best ^{qualified} operator.

Why have you been to ~~the~~ ^{six} jail I ask.

over 2000
burgled ~~me~~ ^{me} since the age of ~~six~~ ^{six}, and every time they
take me out, I do it again.

No one wants me, ^{he admits} I've committed ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~same~~ ^{same} ~~crime~~ ^{crime}
and led an easier life.
Isn't it time to give it up?

No not a hope while in making over two
hundred thousand a year.

I return to my cell more and more disillusioned,
more and more cynical. Home secretary I beg you don't
send young people ^{charged with} minor offences to establishments like
this, ^{where} one in three will end up on drugs, ^{and} one in three
will ~~be~~ ^{offend} again and again.

When I walked back into my cell my heart sank,
as I looked at the dank filthy room that was ^{now} my home.

The next humiliation that to endure was provincial
up outside ^{my} ~~my~~ ^{door} queueing to stare at me, not speak, not sit next to me,
just stare and point ^{at me} like an animal in the zoo, I ask

in my cage, ~~was not~~ relieved when another slammed the doors closed at eight o'clock.

I was just about to begin going over my script for the day when Chris put on the television. First we had Robbie Williams, ^{for half an hour} ~~and~~ followed by Top Gear, a programme about cars. ~~It~~ It was not until ten that I was allowed to watch Frazier.

That night I lay in bed thinking about Mary and the children, aware that ~~they~~ ^{they} were ⁱⁿ ~~in~~ ^{my} ~~in~~ their private hell, and I felt as low as I had ~~after~~ ^{after} my first night at Belmarsh.

I have no idea what time it was when I fell asleep, but because the pillows were back to back hard, it took a considerable time to adjust to another form of hell, so much for purgatory.