Alone With a Vent

by Artemis



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The Ventilation System Continues
an introduction by Joadanus Olivas

There was a person in need next door to me last year. The need was socialization and a new perspective. This person needed to bounce something off of another human. They needed to understand a new environment, that they were to spend a very long time in this, was seemingly an island for Artemis. Artemis derives from the Greek female Goddess who hunts men, but this was purely socialization. This person needed to vent and let it out, so she wrote this after our conversation in the quasi-ventilation system. We actually spoke through the wall socket, where we plugged our television in or any appliances. This trans woman Artemis was highly depressed before this, but out of her came this.

Alone With a Vent
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Alot of people in this world are scared of being alone. It makes individuals feel anxious, depressed, stressed and abandoned. I used to have a best friend that was one of these individuals that hated to be alone. His mother had passed away at a very young age and his father was severely depressed from his wife passing away very suddenly and would spend his whole day at work or in his room. It left my friend with a fear of being alone. He would surround himself all day with friends just so he wouldn't feel alone.

I walked into a cell with nothing but a suicide gown on. I had no mattress, no blanket and the only thing I did get was food and water for 35 days. No phone call, no shower and toilet paper was scarce. For the first 2 days I was completely alone in solitary confinement, despite me reaching out for help and seeking mental health support. I got no mental health treatment and suffered from major depression disorder with suicidal ideations. I would lay at night on a hard bunk with no blanket or pillow, only straight steel, in winter. On the third day I got a neighbor and he was in the same situation I was in, so he didn't like to be alone, so he reached out through the ventilation communication system. We would keep each other company for close to a month. We would talk all day and most of the night, as it was impossible to sleep without a blanket in winter. We would go back and forth telling stories, nostalgia, making jokes and sharing personal information.

Without the vent system I might not be the same person I am today. If I had spent all those days alone without a vent would I had been able to keep my sanity? To be alone is to stress and they say stress is the number one thing that causes physical and mental problems and complications.

The vent system not only helped keep me sane, but helped me survive the hardest isolation of my life. The vent was a creation of a higher deity to help prisoners not only vent, but to survive through some of jail and prisons most cruel and unusual punishment. I'm a survivor because of the vent system, but I know I'm not the only one and definitely not the last.

Looking back, I was glad to be alone with a vent.

From two prisoners at the California Health Care Facility, Fall 2026