

# Some stories from prison. How other people ended up being locked up. The landscaper.

Prison is full of stories. Some are lies. Some are half-truths and some are truths that add insight to the human condition.

When you are in prison, you adjust. You adapt. You make friends and alliances. You survive.

You get to know other people; other inmates. And you hear their stories. And you learn from them.

Here is one such story...

## The Landscape Business Owner

He wasn't a rich man, but he was making a good living. He had about fifteen steady customers and a small crew that helped him mow lawns and trim hedges. He had a truck (new) that pulled a trailer that held the tools of his trade, and emblazoned on the side of the truck was his landscape businesses name and his logo.

He lived in a modest middle class house in a nice neighborhood. He was making mortgage payments, but they would be paid off in five years and then the home would be his completely.

His life was easy. It was relaxed and very low stress. He would get up in the morning, eat a nice breakfast and coffee at the local diner, and pick up his crew at 9 am, so that they could start work on the lawns while his clients were working at their regular 9-5 jobs in town.

He described the work as easy.

The crew would do the hard boring tasks and he would supervise and do the tasks that he wanted to do. Like, perhaps, planting flowers, or arranging bushes, or trimming moss. He told me that he would just enjoy the day. Do the job. (Take a) Break for lunch. Take a nap in the truck, and then resume work.

Then he would come home on time and his wife would make the dinner while the kids would be off doing kid stuff.

Then one day...

As he was leaving the house in the morning, getting ready for his normal routine... (two eggs, over medium, whole wheat toast, chicken fried steak with gravy and grits with coffee)...



A hearty breakfast for a working man.

...two police cars pulled up.

One blocked the truck in. The other pulled behind the truck.

“Friendly officer” Dan came out and asked him if he was Mr XXXXXXX. Well, of course he was. He knew the officers himself. Everyone knew everyone else.

His neighborhood was small enough that it would fit within a Norman Rockwell painting.

They told him to turn around, put his hands behind his back, and they loaded him into the squad car to take to the office.

## What is going on?

Once he was handcuffed, they informed him that he was arrested for forgery, creating false documents and accessory to crimes valued at the hundreds of thousands of dollars.

What?

He was 46 years old. Running a laid-back landscape business, that had been in operation for at least 15 years. His greatest crime that he could recall was being late paying his water bill.

What was going on?

Well, as it turned out the anti-terror legislation passed in the wake of 9-11, eliminated the statute of limitations for anything that could be used by terrorists. So an entire swath of crimes, which normally had a seven year statute of limitations now were open-ended and had no "sunset date".

- Forgery
- Identity Theft

- Interstate criminal activity
- Use of the internet to conduct crimes
- Use of a road to conduct crimes
- Use of computers to commit crimes...

Any law can be twisted to serve a purpose...

Further, certain states had agreed to match the requirements of the Federal statutes and his (our) state was one of them.

Which meant that he was being dragged into the “system” by federal anti-terror legislation for crimes committed a long time ago, and was being charged on both the federal and the state level. Two sets of charges for one singular crime.

How is this even possible?

## What happened?

Well, it seemed that over twenty five years ago, when he was in college, he set up a small operation making fake driver’s licenses. In America, they have minimum drinking ages, and you cannot buy alcohol or cigarettes or even enter a restaurant, bar or club unless you were over that minimum age requirement.



In America you need to show identification showing that you are of legal age to drink beverages that contain alcohol.

What he would do is make a fake ID.

With a fake ID the kids could get around that legal requirement. They could enter bars, clubs and restaurants that served alcohol. They could also go into liquor stores and buy beer, wine, and hard alcohol.

The client would give him a name, and he would make an ID for them that resembled a state driver's license in every detail. He had worked out a system where he got original blanks for the ID's, and used the same machines that the state used. Thus producing a genuine appearing, but fake ID.

He did this for his friends.

And then, as his reputation expanded, for others in other schools as well.



At the time, a fake driver's license was not difficult to make, and had no serious criminal penalties attached with it.

He did this for a few years, and then about two years after he graduated, he shut the business down. He no longer associated with the younger set of "kids" and moved on to bigger and better things.

Yet...

Yet...

His cards were still out there. Still being used. Not just thrown into a cluttered drawer of old socks and brick-a-brack. Not just forgotten. Not just discarded when the clients got older.

Some were no longer being used to buy alcohol...

## The events...

Well it turned out, that of the thousands of cards that he sold to students, one was sold to a girl...

...who was now a grown woman.

And who used that fake identification to procure an entire slew of bank credit cards. And she used those card to purchase all kinds of things.

- Expensive clothes.
- Television screens.
- Expensive watches.
- Fine clothing.
- and automobiles...

When she was caught, she had racked up hundreds of thousands of dollars in fraudulent purchases.

And while under investigation, the FBI and the DHS were able to ascertain her system and method. They were able to track down everything back to a lone fake ID that was made some 25 years previously.



She of course, was looking at state and federal charges for wire fraud, and an entire slew of interstate commerce violations.

But...

But...

She used a fake identification. And fake identification, the generation and creation of it, is now a federal issue that involves terrorism and the Department of Homeland Security.

Thus the arrest, and imprisonment.

## Long story short

He was facing both State and Federal charges. He was threatened with everything from Gitmo, to twenty five years in a Federal prison, to life at hard labor in a State Prison.

He accepted a plea bargain.

He got two years of prison in a State Prison (Brickeys – North Arkansas Re-

gional Unit) at hard labor. And that is where I met him.

## A look at the issue of “Rights”

One of the first things that you realize when you hit prison is that the idea of what a Right is, and what it actually is do not match. We are told that we have “Rights” and a “Rule of Law”. But that is not true.

The laws in America, at both the States and Federal levels are capricious.

They are whatever those with the guns say they are.

They are in constant change; in flux, and anyone can get snared in them.

Anyone.

Including you.

If the American Federal and State constitution were being followed, this entire event sequence would be avoided.

- Following the Statute of limitations.
- The criminal activity charge must fit the actual actions.
- Local crimes do not apply to international issues.
- A trial for jury should never be usurped by a plea bargain.
- No double jeopardy.

But none of that matters now.

I am sure that he is out and back to living life.

## Presently

Last I heard, his wife took over the business and ran it while he was absent. When he got out, I'm sure that after he was able to readjust, he went back to work. And his life went on and continued.

He fared better than others that I have met. Their stories are also quite interesting and illustrative. I'll discuss some of them in further posts.

## Do you want some more?

I have more stories about my retirement in my MAJestic Index here...