

From the inside,

Out!

A series of articles about the realities in America's prisons and how they relate to society as a whole.

Today is 10-18-25. The cell house is on lockdown because a handful of people took too long returning to their cages. This article could have easily been about corporal punishment, the entire cell house being punished for the actions of a few. It could be about human nature, people not being in a rush to re-enter a cell after being locked in all day! It could be about the inhumanity that is slowly driving us all insane!

But this article isn't about any of that.

Strangely,

It's about a squirrel.

I was sitting here watching the No Kings Rally when my good friend Steve called my name. He said he had gotten off the phone with his 5 year old son and the conversation was profound.

It's almost Halloween, and the kid had a pumpkin on the front porch, a small one, but still one he was proud of. He exited the front door to see a theft in progress!! A squirrel had his pumpkin between its small teeth, dragging it across the yard!! "Hey"! He screamed and there, in the October chill, a chase began! On one side was this little boy, his house's sovereignty violated and property stolen! On the other was a starving creature of habit, that pumpkin possibly the difference between life,

And death!

The child was hot on its heels, his hand just a few feet away from its bushy tail. Just as it was within his grasp the boy stood shocked as the tiny squirrel began dragging the heavy pumpkin up a tree!

"Dad, that punk-ass squirrel stole my pumpkin!" He furiously cursed.

Steve understood how his son felt, but simultaneously he saw it from a different perspective. In that moment, he saw himself as that squirrel, raised in the cold, just trying to find a way to eat!

That pumpkin probably cost less than a dollar, but to that animal it meant the world. That \$73 in the register was a trifle to the Burger King, but to the drug addict it was everything! The principal that said "no disrespect!" meant little to the man at the club, but to the thug,

it was all he had!

By the end of the phone call Steve's son was no longer upset. In fact, he was proud for being able to provide such a lifeline, and though we never expect the victim to feel good about being victimized, we do hope to one day get to a place where through true empathy, the

problems that turn people towards crime are an important enough part of the conversation to actually find redress.

This is where the robbers are employed, or placed in drug treatment; where the killer is placed in good psychiatric care, and where \$100 worth of walnuts are set out to help the squirrels.

This was just another, on scene, live report,

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