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Dark Days

By Unknown

When I first came down into the tunnel,
it looked dangerous, man.
It was lookin' real dangerous,
'cause even in the daytime it was dark.
And, like, I was scared.
I said, "Somewhere down the line,
it can't be bad as it is up top".
Because out in the street,
you had kids fuckin' with you.
You had the police fuckin' with you.
I mean, anybody can walk by you
while you're sleeping on a bench
and bust you in the head.
At least down in the tunnel,
you ain't gotta worry about that.
'Cause ain't nobody in their right mind
gonna come down there.
So you ain't got to worry about nobody
comin' down there messin' with you.
'Cause they're not.
They gonna be too scared
to come in there.
But to me, once you get past your fears,
the first or second night-
See, after that, man, you adjust.
You'd be surprised what the human mind
and the human body can adjust to.

- Tommy.

- What?

Damn, man, I'm tired.
I'm tired, yo.
Give out.
Mmm.
I could sleep
for about two or three-
I guess about
two or three more hours.
I don't feel like getting up.
Mmm.
Shit. It's fuckin' late.
Or early.

- I gotta take a fuckin' piss.

- Good morning, people.
Good morning, yeah.

Do me a favor, man.
Bring you back an empty bottle?
No. Take it out for me.
Sure.
- It's fucking cold, man.
- It is.
It probably just feels cold.
It's probably like yesterday.
Shit.
I'll get up. I'm ready.
Ready to hit the street.
When I first came down,
I was scared to death, man.
Scared that- Not scared. Just lookin'
at this goddamn place and shit.
I said, "Damn".
At that time,
the only reason I came down here -
just to get out the public eyesight.
But as I looked around and shit
and started noticing shit,
I started building and shit, man.
And that shit just became
into like a little project.
At first, I took it as a little camp
for two weeks.
And then this fucker became like home.
After, I start building.
Found, you know, stuff that I can use -
clothes, TVs, lamps.
Got power.
That camping shit, it went right away.
Left right out my goddamn mind
and shit.
You know what I'm sayin'?
And look at me now.
I been down here
for fuckin' five years, goin' on six.
Who knows it's been that long,
you know? It's been that fuckin' long.
I just forgot completely
about the damn time.
I see the place
looks a little cleaner.

Yeah, but, you know,
it's the fuckin' dog, man.
Ever since I got that dog, the
fuckin' place been fucked up, man.
What you mean it looks a little
cleaner? It looks terrible.
I was just being sarcastic.
I can see the dog
chews everything up and shit.
Yeah, man.
It's hard to keep a place clean
with a dog. -Mm-hmm.
Especially out here.
He drags everything in.
Was it clean before?
Yeah, it was always- It used to be
real nice and clean. -Yeah, it was.
He used to make us
take off our shoes.
Almost every time I came in,
he had a different rug on.
Yup. Every couple of days,
he'd put on another rug, another rug.
The place was really nice,
you know.
And he was always working
on the house. Yeah.
Like what?
Fixing the door. Always the door. If
not the inside door, the outside door.
Working on the roof.
Making the trapdoor to get out
and escape, to come in.
Putting a window in.
Then he take the window out.
You know? All kinds of stuff.
He even had a ladder in here.
Oh, the ladder, yeah. Used to be
in this corner. -Yeah, I took it out.
It used to go
straight up to the roof.
And he was putting a balcony
up there. Then he changed his mind.
He's the only one that I ever see

working on their house.
Everybody else like they's just-
No, they got some nice houses
here, bro.
Yeah, but I've seen 'em.
They did their house,
but then they never did
anything else to it.
Whenever I used to come down here,
I'd always see him working on his house.
I thought I had the nicest house
down here. -Yeah.
But I don't, bro. Well,
it don't look nice now. -Yeah.
But I don't have the nicest house.
You know who got
the nicest house down here?
- Tom. Tommy.
- Tommy? Yeah.
Tommy's got the nicest house.
But he's been down here
a long time, shit, though.
No. Tommy's been down here about
maybe a year longer than I have.
A lot of my friends, you know,
a lot of my fellas come down here.
Like, my boy came down
last night to visit me. -Yeah.
He brought one of his boys
from school down here.
Ain't never been down here.
The kid like to shit on himself...
when he came in
and saw the place and shit.
Hey, that ain't no help to you.
Well, you feel good about it,
I guess, you know.
You think you're livin' outside,
and it ain't as outside as you think.
- Make you feel a little better, yeah.
- Oh, yeah.
You ain't much tramp as he thought
he was when he walkin' down the track.
- That's exactly-

- That always make you feel good.
I don't consider myself homeless,
'cause a homeless man
ain't got a home.
If you don't consider yourself homeless,
then you ain't ready
to cope with this then.
If you don't consider you homeless.
Well, I mean, I do.
It's, like, in the back of my mind.
It's way back in the back of your mind
if you don't consider you homeless.
You know that? You got it a little
too far in the back of your mind.
But what's the purpose- What was the
purpose of me building this place, right?
It's not to be helpless.
That don't say you ain't homeless.
- This stop you from being helpless.
- Oh, yeah.
But if you consider you ain't homeless
once you get down here,
you're not doin'
but throwin' brakes on your life.
Shit. I got real comfortable down here
in this fuckin' dump and shit, man.
Let's face it, man.
I mean, like, down here,
didn't have to pay no bills, no nothin'.
Look at me. I'm shavin' with-
I'm using power right now...
and I ain't even got to pay
the motherfuckin' bills and shit.
I mean, that's part of comfortability
and shit. You know what I'm sayin'?
Turn the TV on, leave the TV on all night.
Ain't gotta worry about paying Con Ed.
You know?
That's fucked up, but that's one reason
how I got so comfortable and shit.
You know?
In the winter time, I don't freeze.
Summer time, I don't burn up.
You know? All they don't got

down here is running water.
And we did have that down here,
believe it or not, at one time.
We had running water.
Of course I got fuckin' comfortable, man.
Got too goddamn comfortable.
That's why I'm really
pissed off at myself, man.
'Cause I, like, lost five, six years
of my motherfuckin' life
being down in this motherfucker.
Man, I'm gettin' ready to
go out and make me some money.
I got to get paid.
Got to make that almighty dollar.
So, what's happenin'?
How you go about doin' that?
I got to do my normal, man.
I got to go out,
try to find me something to sell.
First I got to find out what I got here
from last night.
I got these off of 75th Street.
CDs. You know what I'm sayin'?
I can sell these
to my man on 82nd Street.
And these some good CDs.
Plus I got a couple of books.
You know? Hey, I'm gonna get paid, brother.
You know how us homeless guys do it.
We got to make a dollar.
This my motherfuckin' van here.
That's right. That's my van.
That's right.
That's a bad motherfucker too.
Four-wheel drive. That's right.
This is my motherfuckin'
station wagon. That's right.
If you notice, they the biggest ones,
and there go they motherfuckin' kids.
That's right.
Eeny, meeny and fuckin' miney.
You understand what I'm sayin'?
And the reason why I'm saying this,

because each one of them fuckin' carts
contain something.

And what's that something? Money.
That's like they say - mo' money,
mo' money, mo' money, mo' money...
and mo' motherfuckin' money.

You know what I'm sayin'?
Free enterprises.

What peoples throw away,
other peoples can use.
And by them can use it,
I get paid for it because I find it.
And half of the time, they be
in perfect working condition.
You know? Be just like new.
You know?

But down here, man- You be surprised
the stuff that I be findin'...
and I be sellin', getting top dollar for,
you know?

- What sort of things?
- Like VCRs, color televisions.

Little portable televisions
like this.

You know what I'm sayin'?
I found that.

Heaters like this.

You know what I'm sayin'?
Now, I don't sell everything.
Stuff that I can use, I keep.
But stuff that I just-
I can't use, I sell.

You know?

Everything you got
that you paid for, I can-
Nine time out of 10,
I will go out there and find it,
and it be in perfect working condition.
And I sells it. You know?

That's the name of the game -
hustling.

I'm a hustler, bro. I get paid.
What are you doing?
I'm putting this sign.

There's no- no crack.
Because they be knockin' on my house
sometimes, and they-
and they want to borrow a stem.
And I don't smoke crack no more.
It took- You know-
It- The crack fucked me up, man.
The crack got me down here.
Well, crack helped me
get down here.
And then- Now I stopped.
You know? And it took me
a fuckin' long time to realize...
that that shit wasn't, you know-
That wasn't it. That wasn't me.
So I don't want 'em in my house.
Because if I see it around me,
every time- every time-
and I let people smoke in my house -
then I'm gonna want to get the urge.
It's bad enough that sometimes-
I stopped crack already for a long time,
for more than three years now.
And sometimes I wake up
with the urge.
And I haven't done it
for more than three years,
and sometimes I still wake up
with the urge to smoke it, but I fight it.
And then I'm gonna have these people
knockin' on my house...
talkin' about if I got a stem
or they could go inside and smoke.
You know, that shit's gonna
fuck me all up again.
So I said, "Well, let me go ahead
and put a sign".
So that way, these assholes
could read it...
and don't knock.
I do like you do sometime.
Heat it up a little bit.
Because if you don't-
Ain't no use in wastin' it.

You know?
Just heat it up a little bit.
That's doin' it.
Okay, uh, this is one
of the things I, uh, keep-
to keep myself a little safer than
what, uh, supposed to be down here.
But I usually set up this trap with
these pans and everything over here.
Simply, uh, put a pan like that.
Put a little pencil underneath there...
so, uh, it'll roll if somebody does come by.
Put it like that, make sure it's on there.
Come over here and tie it
to the other side underneath.
So that way, you know,
if they even got a flashlight,
they can't really see
in the dark down here.
They can't really see.
And, uh, I tie it to over here.
Not very tight, but, uh,
whatever movement you give it
from up there-
So, like, when you walk by it, you know,
when you trip the wire-
You can see that at nighttime, you know,
but people that don't really know
what's goin' on, you know,
and they're just looking around,
looking to find something...
or steal something or whatever, you know-
When you walk by it, you know,
you trip the trap.
Make all that noise.
Damn. Y'all still here?
Hey, y'all must want
to hang out with me or somethin'.
Yeah.
Man! Y'all think you can keep up?
Come on.
'Cause I'm gettin' ready to get paid
about right now.
I ain't tryin' to hear it.

I'm gettin' ready to go out
and make me some money.
I bet you I come back with \$10.
I'm gonna get paid.
Ain't no doubt about it.
Eighty percent of the
population down here is crackheads.
And that might be an understatement.
Might be a little more than that.
It's really bad, you know,
because they smoke this shit
and they get so hooked up on it,
they just lose sight of reality.
They don't take care of theirselves.
Half of them don't wash their ass.
You know, and they're always
on some bullshit...
where they always think
that somebody's out to
get 'em and stuff like that.
It's really fucked up, you know?
I've seen guys sell coats right
off their back in the middle of winter,
when it's 20 degrees outside,
just to support a drug habit.
I don't see how people can let
something- something do that do them,
take control of their life like that.
Myself, I can't go out like that.
It was on New Year's.
I was sitting in the room with the-
with my little stepdaughter.
I was sittin' in the room and shit,
and then they call me over
to the room. -Mm-hmm.
And they told me,
"You wanna get high?"
You know?
"You want some crack?"
I said, "No. I tried that shit.
That shit don't do nothin' to me".
So they said, "Well, try this".
- Yeah.
- You know?

So what they did was
that they put res-
You know, they cook it up
and they put res,
and then they put crack
on top of the res. -Shit. Yeah.
So I didn't know anything
about that shit.
And when I smoked that shit, that shit
fuckin' rocked my fuckin' legs, man.
And my shit is like-
You know, I like to O.D.
- I like to almost O.D. on drugs.
- Yeah.
I like to go to the highest.
Man, I loved it.
I loved it. -Wow.
And I kept smoking,
kept smoking.
But I never got to get back to that high,
that first high. -That first high, yeah.
I never got it.
And I wasted
so much money, and- and-
You know,
I made a mess of myself.
Well, you see what mess
I'm into now. -Wow.
You know what I'm sayin'?
Because I wanted that high.
Man, you know,
my wife kicked me out.
She really fuckin'- She had my
fuckin' clothes packed, bro. -Wow.
Swear to God, man. She had
my fuckin' clothes packed, man.
- Had enough, man.
- 'Cause she scared.
'Cause she told me,
"Either the drugs or me".
And I kept saying her, but I kept
fuckin' goin' back to the drugs.
One day when I went home, man,
my clothes was all packed, man.

You know, today is
a fucked-up day and shit, man.
'Cause this Dumpster is empty.
And I ain't seein' shit in here.
This shit used to be stacked
up to the top with garbage.
I used to be walkin' around the edge
of this shit. Nothin' but garbage.
I'd spend about 45 minutes trying to
go through all of this bullshit in here.
Right here,
ain't shit in here today.
Nothin'. Nothin' but garbage.
What did you say about this spot?
I love it. -What'd you say
about this spot?
This spot here,
there's always a lot of plastic.
There's never really been
very many cans here.
It's always been a lot
of plastic stuff.
I used to get, like, easy money.
I usually get three or four
dollars' worth of cans outta here.
But I usually get, like, two bags,
maybe two and a half
bags like this with plastics.
What is the best thing you sell?
The best thing I sell?
It's hard to say,
but I sell anything.
- What-
- What sells the best?
What sells the best?
Nasty movies.
Nasty faggot movies.
Boy movies.
Them dicks be slingin' and shit.
Them faggots be gathered about.
They be muggin' you
for that shit, man.
I mean, basically, those faggot books
and faggot movies...

sell quicker than girlie books
and girlie movies.
I remember me and my partner had, like,
Soon as we came out with this shit,
we sold all of them
before we sold any other book.
You know what I'm sayin'?
Once them faggots be passin' by
and see them dicks hangin' out,
man, they be backin' up.
Man, they go and-
I had a motherfuckin' crowd.
We had a crowd, man, that day.
But that's what sells -
anything in porno, mainly sissy.
You know what I'm sayin'?
But right now, see,
I'm too early or too late, one.
Ain't nothin' out here.
Not yet anyway.
But it'll get better. It definitely will
pick up. You know what I'm sayin'?
By the end of today,
how much will you have?
Uh, well, usually on Fridays, if I work
all day, about \$70- 60 or 70 bucks.
Have enough to play around a little bit.
You know what I'm sayin'?
Stinking rich. I call it- I call it
being crackhead rich for the day.
You know what I'm sayin'? 'Cause I got
enough money to go out there, you know,
do basically what I wanna do
for a day or two, you know?
But it gets me through the weekend.
I usually take Saturdays and Sundays off
and chill, you know?
I've always done that.
I ran away from home when I was 16.
I got tired of putting up
with my parents' bullshit.
So I just said "Fuck," and I left.
My father was a dope fiend,
an alcoholic.

My mother, she didn't give a fuck.
She let my father beat on her,
beat on me and my sisters.
She wouldn't say anything.
She wouldn't do anything.
You know?
I haven't spoken to them in 10 years,
and I don't care to.
I don't give a damn about 'em.
They can rot in hell.
They had 16 years to love me
and treat me like a son...
and much less treat me
like a human being.
They couldn't do it then,
and they couldn't do it now.
So I don't give a damn about 'em.
They gave me life, and that's enough.
That's all I thank them for.
All right. Here go the egg.
- What are you making?
- Corn bread.
Country corn bread.
Here go the meal.
Add a little water.
How'd you learn
to make that?
Well, when you're
from the country,
you learn how to raise it,
grind it and cook it.
You know what I'm sayin'?
Yeah.
Pull it, shell it, get it brown.
And if it don't go right then,
there ain't no right in it.
Down, motherfucker. Get down.
Get down. Get the hell down.
Fuck.
Motherfucker bites, man.
And all he does is go for
the fuckin' hand, man.
All right. All right, get down.
Get down. Stay there.

That's all he does is go for the hands.

He don't bullshit, bro.

Uh!

Motherfucker kicks my ass.

This buttermilk makes it taste better.

You can always make it without it.

Sweet milk makes it more kind of crumbly.

Buttermilk makes it go together better.

And gives it a sort of better taste too.

Being homeless, you can, like,

consider grow down here.

Because if you're homeless on the street-

Some of 'em have just what they got in

their arms or a little pack on their back.

If they get caught in the rain,

they ain't got shit.

Just, like, simple as that.

So if you're homeless,

this is the best spot.

You got a door to lock on it.

You got a Frigidaire.

Where you can come in,

have just what you want to eat

'cause you got somewhere to cook it.

You can go buy.

I think these done. I'll take

this top off and let 'em brown.

That ain't gonna do much brownin'

with that top on 'em.

You got a TV.

Up top, if you see a TV,

you're peeping in a store window.

You know? So that's like-

well, you know, like growin' down here...

compared to being homeless

anywhere, you know?

Here.

Yeah. These are my doggies.

This is Ladybugs, the mommy.

I've had her for about four years.

And these are her little kids.

This is her little boy.

This is Junior.

And the other two are little girls.

This is Princess.
She has a bad leg.
She once fell off the roof.
Which is the reason why I built the pen-
to keep 'em up here so they're safe.
Plus so they don't wander
all over the place.
Come here, Fatty.
Come here, Fatty.
Come here.
This is the other little girl.
This is Fatty.
She looks just like her mama.
They're about- The puppies
are about a year and-
about 14 months old.
This is my, uh, pet.
- Uh, my first one. Ted.
- Roger.
Yeah, Roger.
Tammy brought this one to me,
you know?
And, uh, he's- he's real cool.
He's a lazy cat,
but a pretty one, you know?
- You know.
- Eats rats.
Yeah. No, he does,
but he really don't.
But Rusty does.
Mr. Rusty over here.
- Eats Martians.
- Shh, shh, shh.
Shh, shh, shh.
Oh, there goes a mouse.
Rusty does eat rats.
He don't eat 'em.
He just plays with them, man,
and-and-and do a little damage...
so they don't come
into my territory, you know?
He's kinda like a trooper, yeah.
- A trooper.
- A little protector, yeah.

- Trooper-protector, yeah.
- Trooper.
That's my little Rusty.
Get outside.
Fuckin' dog.
Oh, man.
He plays, but he plays
too fuckin' rough, man.
Look at that.
Now we can play some darts,
you know?
That dog, he bit me, man.
You can hear
all that in here.
Yeah, all the racket. Yeah, no.
But... who told me to get a dog?
- You know? I gotta- Huh?
- Who did tell you to get a dog?
Who told me to get a dog? The
motherfucker that stole my TV and shit.
Mm-hmm.
That's the motherfucker
made me get a dog.
Then we got the most famous gerbil -
Miss Peaches.
- Peaches.
- Yeah. She had 12 kids, man.
Peaches had 12 kids.
She was all right, man.
Miss Peaches was all right.
What'd she do with her kids?
She- Four of them died, and-and-
and she ate the rest of them, man.
I could- Yeah,
I couldn't believe it, man.
And- And then I come to find out
that they do eat their young.
How the fuck are there
so many of them then?
You know?
- What the fuck?
- Shit.
But this is my precious
flying babes, man.

You wanna talk about an airplane?
This is Miss Bleeks, man.
When she flew around,
she used to fuckin'-
The papers and the clothes
and everything went flying.
The rats- Everybody went flying when
Miss Bleeks got out of her cage, man.
And I should never have
kept her in a cage.
And for me keeping her in a cage,
she got killed. You know?
But Miss Bleeks was the best, man,
you know?
Not the best, but close to it.
'Cause Roger was.
Come on. Come on.
Don't start your shit.
Hey, come here.
What'd I tell you about that, huh?
I told you about your bullshit. Get
the fuck over there. You can wait.
Get over there.
You can wait today.
Asshole.
Come here, Bugs.
Go eat. Go eat.
Come here, Fatty. Come here.
Come here.
Come here.
I had some problems with a fella.
And he threatened
to burn my house down.
But I didn't believe him.
But to think that somebody
would actually burn down my hut...
and hoping that I was in it, you know?
Hey. She got burnt out, man.
What-
What the fuck can I say?
She got burnt out. She did somebody
wrong, and they set her ass on fire.
Which I do feel bad.
I do feel bad.

And it's not funny, 'cause
that could happen to anybody.
That can happen to anybody.
That's one of the things you got
to go through living in the street.
You know what I'm sayin'?
Could be it's that way.
You on your own down here, man.
You on your own.
But you can't run to the police,
'cause the police gonna tell you,
"Get the fuck outta here".
You know what I'm sayin'?
They ain't gonna be-
They're listening- They don't listen,
man. You know what I'm sayin'?
Plus what police gonna come all the way
down here in this motherfuckin' tunnel...
just to investigate
a goddamn fire?
You ain't
no motherfuckin' taxpayer.
I feel sorry for Dee though, man.
Because, like-
Dee did a little building down there,
but she'll get it again.
Just like she got that- I don't think
she paid for nothin', bought nothin'.
And whatever she lost,
she'll find it.
She'll get something else.
I walked around for a little while, then-
after cryin' and... hurt-
I went to Ralphie.
And I asked Ralphie if I could
stay at his house for a few days...
until I could, you know,
find some more wood and stuff
to build another hut for myself.
You gonna put eggs in there too?
Sure.
Man. Eggs, mustard.
That's what makes it
taste so good.

Don't stretch your luck now.
You've been okay today.
I haven't been bustin' your ass today.
Get over here. Over here.
Stretch it here. Get here.
That's cool.
I gotta feed the dog.
The dog's already fed.
His food's prepared. -You fed him?
All you gotta do is put it in a bowl.
You gotta make some
collard greens someday, man.
It ain't nothin'
but just roll them up, cut 'em.
That ain't all to it.
You gotta clean them suckers.
- Yeah, you gotta clean 'em a little.
- Clean them from the little bugs,
you know, that they collect.
Yeah. -Yeah, I know
how to do that.
I clean 'em and then- and then-
and then I roll them up...
and I cut 'em, like, in little slices.
- Oh, yeah.
- And- And then-
That's cold water.
I know. Cold water's no good
to wash that.
Well, thanks a lot.
I told you I-
I just take the spaghetti and put
the top on it and just go like this.
Simple, man.
Instead of goin' through all that.
Yeah, well, like, you cook
different from I do.
I- I- You know.
- I mean, we're homeless people, man.
- Yeah, but we homeless people-
But if you know how to cook,
cook right.
Come outta there, oil.
Come on outta there.

There you go.
Olive oil. Goddamn right.
No, no, no. It's not that, Dee.
Dee, it's not that.
Then what is it?
If you're gonna come and you're
gonna drink out the fuckin' cup, right,
and then you're gonna
lay the cup there...
and then you're gonna go out
and then the cup is gonna
be there dirty all goddamn-
for two days,
then I'm gonna throw it out.
I bet you didn't do that
to your wife, did you?
No, I didn't do it to her, 'cause
she would've kicked my ass.
Yeah, she would've
kicked that ass, boy.
But- But- But I have to do it now
because in the situation that we live.
If you leave- If you leave
shit on the floor, what happens?
What will happen?
I bet you didn't do that shit
to your wife.
But we didn't have rats
like we have here.
Yeah, but still in all, you didn't
do that shit to your wife.
We don't have rats like we have-
She'd have kicked your ass
all over that damn place.
- What type cup was it?
- She's a funny girl.
It was, uh, a cup-
It was a large cup.
It was one of them large cups.
You know what I'm sayin'?
That my friend brought back from
a country where he went to
on his vacation.
What country? -And it was

kinda shaped like a mermaid.

You know?

Just the top like this here.

- That shit was from McDonald's, man.

- It wasn't no damn McDonald's.

- That shit was from McDonald's.

- It was not no McDonald's.

McDonald's don't even have cups like that. -I know. You got the last one.

No. Right, yeah.

I didn't get no last one.

They don't even have cups like-

And it had "Pepsi" on the side.

- 'Cause I got the top to it, you know?

- It's still a McDonald's cup.

It's got the straw to it and got the cap to the straw. McDonald's don't carry-

Whoever gave her the cup went to

McDonald's, got the cup, wrapped it up...

and said, "Hey, baby, here.

I got this up in Spain" or some shit.

My friend don't do no shit like that.

- My friend don't do no shit like that.

- I don't know.

All I know is that if there's dirty stuff here and it's not cleaned-

- Goddamn.

- So where you hide all that shit at?

Keep it in my food bucket.

I got a couple food buckets over next to me.

- Keep it in your food bucket?

- Yeah. In the food bucket.

So where you

put your pots and shit at?

Where you see 'em at.

My man. My man.

I mean,

I understand the situation, but check it out, my brother.

Shit ain't that

motherfuckin' rough, man.

It can get better.

I know you survivin',

and I respect that to the fullest.
With all these big motherfuckin'
horses you got runnin' around here,
you leave your shit right there?
Yeah. I wash my shit.
What's wrong with that?
You talkin' bad on me. -You mean you
got room in this motherfucker for a sink?
Well, you build me one then.
And the rats-
How the rats gonna come
when a dog is here?
They were comin'
through that hole, man.
- Did they- Did they come in?
- Fuckin' right they came in.
- Where was the dog?
- The dog was outside.
Yeah, the dog was outside. The dog let
the rats come in. -That's what I'm sayin'.
Hey, listen. If the dog is outside,
the rats is in here,
how the hell the dog is gonna-
Why you think the dog
when he ruffin' out there like that?
To keep 'em from comin' in here.
He's woofin' that way, and
they're comin' in through this way.
- The dog is woofin' over there.
- I ain't seen no rat up in here.
Hey, put it this way.
You lost a cup.
See, for me, I'm a damn fool.
I sit here and battle
with the motherfuckers
like I was a asshole
last night and shit, man.
Them motherfuckers
wore me out last night, man.
I mean, I'm thinkin' I'm gettin' this one,
and shit, another one's zooming by.
Shoop! Know what I'm sayin'?
They all tried to get inside of here.
They looking right at me and shit

and jumping and shit.
But I almost caught
one of them motherfuckers last night.
Soon as he jumped - bam.
I didn't hit him directly
on his motherfuckin' head,
but that motherfucker went away-
I know he ain't come back
last night for no more.
He said fuck that. He had enough.
But he went and told his relatives.
Tell you, man.
I couldn't sleep at all last night.
Shit. But it ain't gonna
be like that shit tonight.
It might be like that tonight,
but I know they gonna be fooled tonight.
Look like I can't get rid
of this motherfucker.
I got to clean up behind him
worse than I do me.
He don't bring no company
with him either. He by himself.
Motherfucker.
Every time I see this motherfucker,
that make me have a worse night's sleep,
because I know he in here
and I know he walk at night.
He walk at night,
and I try to sleep at night.
So me and him ain't gonna make it
with that kinda shit.
I hope... this'll-
Well, this may make him
go under my bed,
but I'm gonna put that lye down.
I hope he come back and check his
house out and the food I have for him.
And then I got something for his ass then.
Talkin' about now I'm cookin' him
something to eat, man.
I'm tired of him takin' my shit.
Keep tellin' 'em, man,
they ain't got to take it and shit.

Just ask me for it. Shit, you know?
I'll give you- I'll fix you a meal.
I'm definitely gonna fix 'em
something to eat.
I'm gonna fix 'em a good meal. After
this, they ain't gonna want no more.
They ain't gonna want
nothin' else to eat after this.
'Cause I'm gonna put sausages in it, oatmeal.
And I'm gonna put the topping
on top of it and shit.
Once I put that on top of it and shit,
all they gonna want is water.
What is that?
It's poison. Shit.
They got some wise-ass rats out there.
Give 'em a pack of this.
Pack of this'll keep 'em away.
You know?
Once I mix this all up and shit,
they ain't gonna want
nothin' else to eat, man.
Gonna be too full.
After they get their water, all they
gonna want to do is just go lay down.
That's all. And they ain't gonna
want to get back up no more.
You know what I'm sayin'?
Look good, don't it?
It look good, my friend.
I ain't gonna stand here
and lie to you.
It look good.
- You want some, don't you?
- No, sir.
You ain't gonna get none.
There's some things you do
and some things you don't do.
- Well, what's that?
- The shit you doin' now.
What I'm doin' now, I am eatin'.
I understand that. You know-
- This tastes good.
- I-

- This is rice.
- What-
This is ham. Fried.
Seasonin' real good.
And it tastes very good.
And it's clean.
Probably cleaner than some of those
come out of the kitchens
in restaurants and stuff.
This is clean food,
and it tastes very good.
- Lot of flavor.
- The food might-
- It was clean food.
- Mmm.
What's the- I mean-
You cannot dump on this.
All you can do is just eat this
and keep on eatin',
and you'll probably want more.
Yo, Tommy!
- What's up, Tommy?
- Oh, shit. Oh, shit.
What's up, man?
What's up?
- When did they let you out, yo?
- What's goin' on over here?
Oh, damn. Yo. This is Marc.
This is my friend Marc.
What's up? How you doin'? -This is my
boy Brian I been talkin' to you about.
- Yo, you lost a lot of weight, kid.
- Yeah. What's up, man?
Seriously, when did they let you out?
When did you build
the fuckin' loft?
While you was up north and shit.
Proper.
- What's up, yo?
- Nothin', man.
I can't believe your shit, yo.
- Oh, shit.
- No doubt, no doubt.
Hey, eight and a half months, kid.

No doubt. Too long too.
Eight and a half.
- Too long.
- Come on, let's go inside.
Oh, shit.
It looks nice in the back.
- That enough?
- Turn around.
Turn around.
Lookin' good.
What's so funny?
What the hell did you do?
Hold still.
Don't be fuckin' around, Dee.
Holy shit.
Fuckin' cold!
Ahhh!
Oh, fuck.
Oh!
Holy shit. Fucking cold!
Oh, my goodness!
- Huh?
- That's a lot of shit.
You know, hey.
What you expect with four dogs, man?
Especially growing-
You know, growing puppies shit a lot.
Fuckin' shit!
It's like- I remember back
when I just had Ladybugs.
Never got like this. Never.
- Feels good, does it?
- It feels good, but it's fuckin' cold.
Aw, just speed it up some.
Holy shit!
Ohh!
Welcome back to the shit, right?
Brr!
You not gonna stop doin'
anything until you ready to stop.
So don't you think it's about time
for you to stop?
No. When I get good and ready,
I'm gonna stop.

- And when is that?
- When? I don't know.
- It could stop me.
- So, that's the problem.
It could stop you
instead of you stopping it.
Yeah, but still in all-
But I don't like to be pressured.
- I was smoking crack, and I stopped.
- But you still smokin' reefer.
I smoke reefer, but I don't
smoke crack. -Well, all right.
- But regardless, it's still a narcotic.
- There's a difference to it.
- You ain't gonna stop doin' anything-
- There's a difference to it.
No. No, no. -You could smoke a
fuckin' bag of reefer and chill out-
- I understand all that.
- The only thing that-
- No, no, but check this out.
- It's still a drug. It's still a drug.
- But check this-
- Anything you want-
When you get ready
to stop something,
you gonna stop it on your own.
- You don't have to-
- I'm not saying that-
- I'm not saying that.
- Okay, but-
I'm not saying that. -By-By-By you
keep saying to me stop smoking crack,
it only makes me want
to go out and smoke more.
- Why? You a baby?
- You understand what I'm sayin'?
- You ain't no baby.
- Don't pressure me. That's pressure.
- That's putting pressure on me.
- So when you gonna stop?
You understand what I'm saying?
When you stop putting pressure on me-
When you and the other people

stop putting pressure on me-
Yeah, but you put it, like,
I smoke reefer-
- I smoke reefer, but what happens-
- I don't put pressure on you.
But what happens
when I smoke reefer?
- I sit down, I chill out-
- I understand all that.
- And the only thing I do is eat.
- But regardless, still, fact remains.
I still... -All right, I'm not
gonna put no pressure on you.
That's it. You do- You wanna-
Don't- Don't come back and say
that you didn't do it when you did it.
Don't come back over here
talkin' about you didn't do it.
But don't even bother to ask me.
But don't bother to say it.
I'm being punished
for every goddamn thing I did wrong.
And still got more punishment to come
'cause I done so much shit wrong.
I-
I mean,
I done a lot of things wrong.
A lot.
I get to the point where
sometimes I feel like crying.
You know.
Sometimes I feel like crying.
Sort of like-
Because, uh, I-
It was that I was so damn selfish with
myself, with everybody around me.
I was- It was all about me. It was-
I didn't care about what
anybody thought, you know.
I was fucked up.
I went- Listen. I went to jail.
I got caught robbing.
I went to jail, let's say, today.
Yesterday, my daughter was born.

I came out.
Before my daughter was out of the hospital,
I was back in jail.
Then I came out five years later...
and stood out, like, two months.
Out of 10 years that I did in jail,
I stood out two months, two weeks.
What happened, when you
was inside, to your daughter?
My daughter? My daughter-
In 1976- '76?
Yeah. In '76 I was doin' time,
and my daughter was raped.
She was five years old.
She was raped.
Her leg was cut off,
her arm was cut off...
and she was burned.
That made me feel fucked up because I-
You know, part of it, I think, was my fault,
'cause I should have been there
instead of, you know,
being in jail and doing what I was doing-
robbin' and doin' all the things I was doin'.
You know, I wasn't taking care of her.
I went to detox. I needed a break.
Oh, that's what you was.
In detox. -Yeah.
I was fuckin' lookin' for you
all over the fuckin' place, man.

I was sayin:

I hope he didn't go to jail".
No. Mm-mmm.
We had a nice time up there too.
Plus, they changed the menu.
- Oh, yeah?
- A little bit, yeah. There used to be-
My favorite used to be
eggplant for lunch. -Mmm.
Now they don't have it
regularly for lunch.
Now they have that as the chef's special.
Oh, yeah? -So you could

only get that once a week.

How about- The eggplant,

you mean? -Yeah.

- I love that fuckin' eggplant.

- That shit was great. Yeah.

The first time I was there,
that's the first thing I had.

- I didn't even know what it was.

- You had to get double portions.

Yeah. Yeah. Eggplant Parmesan.

- Oh, man.

- Yeah.

Forget it.

I eat that all fuckin' day long.

The first time I was there- You don't
get a chance to choose your stuff.

Get down. Get down! -They just give
you whatever's around until later on.

But when I got there, my first time,
that's the first thing they gave me.

That's my favorite, man.

I said, "This thing looks great.

I'm gonna eat"-

- And I didn't know what it was.

- Yeah.

'Cause I never ate eggplant in my life.

Man, I mean-

I thought it was some weird shit,
you know?

If you would tell me eggplant-

"Who the hell eats that shit?"

But it was good, and I always
order that every chance I get.

Eh.

I don't know what that is.

I don't like to-

I only eat what I'm familiar with.

See, they got all this other stuff
that I ain't never seen before.

See?

See, this is beef.

Good stuff.

Very, very edible. Very tasty too.

This is one of the safest spots

you can eat from. You know?
'Cause the food is clean.
Plus, it's kosher.
See, once they throw all they food out,
they put it all in one bag.
They don't mix it up, like, with garbage,
coffee grounds, trash or nothin' like that.
It all be clean.
Take a few of everything, man.
And tie the bag back up.
We put it in that box.
- There goes the chocolate.
- Where? Where?
Chocolate.
I got a whole fuckin' bag
of doughnuts, man.
Look at that shit.
And these are today's doughnuts.
You want one?
Yeah.
- These are good, man.
- They're good. Yeah.
They're fuckin' good.
They're my favorite.
- They are good. Yeah.
- Where?
Oh, okay. Thanks.
These motherfuckers is good, man.
All right.
Fuckin'- A.
I'm gonna eat these motherfuckers.
I'm gonna eat these too.
Get me a container of milk.
- Just in time.
- Maybe two containers of milk.
Phew!
Yo, Brian, that motherfucker stinks, man.
Well, if you'd wash your fuckin' ass-
No, if you'd wash
your fuckin' ass, man.
Dump it, man. Dump it.
I was in jail and, uh,
it had came on the news...
that two kids had got burnt in a fire-

My two sons. You know.
I regret so many things
I may have done.
I didn't have no right to lose my children.
Sometime I ask...
why it couldn't have been me.
Why couldn't it have been me?
I like that responsibility
of being a mother,
somebody a little one can look up to.
Sendin' 'em off to school.
They get the education they need.
Man.
I miss all those things.
I do.
When they woke me up, man, they had
their guns and everything, you know.
And it's, like, what the fuck, you know?
Because it took me time to get ready,
you know, put my shoes on,
'cause I sleep comfortable
in there, all right?
Take my socks off, you know, my jacket.
I wasn't gonna come out here
in my underwear...
with my shit hangin' out, you know?
You know what I'm sayin'?
"What, you gonna come out or what?"
Bangin' on the door.
You know what I'm sayin'?
"Hey, take it easy, okay?" You know?
So when that happened,
they saw that I took my time,
and then I came out fully dressed.
And they had their guns.
I was, like, "Hey"-
I went over there to take a piss.
"Hey, where you goin'?" You know?
"Hey, relax, man.
What the fuck is wrong with you?
I'm not against you. You guys are comin'
down here to fuck me up, all right?
Huh? I'm not- I can't do
nothing to you guys because

there's too many of youse, all right?
I'll take you on one on one,
and I'll talk to you.
All right? Nothing about guns,
bats or nothing like that.
I'll talk to you one on one".
They said they
wanted me to clean that shit up.
I said, "I ain't cleanin' shit up".
I got to move?
Fuck, I ain't cleaning that shit up.
They must be mad.
Take me to jail.
You know what I'm sayin'?
I need a little rest anyway.
I ain't cleaning up that garbage
if I got to move. Shit.
That's makin' they job much
easier and shit. 'Cause last time-
They was here during the winter.
They said we had to leave.
They said they were gonna do it
in a humane way. They was gonna-
We were gonna sit down at a table.
Gonna be some big wheels from Amtrak
to discuss where we gonna go at.
Last time they was here, they tell me
they don't give a fuck where we go.
We just gotta go and shit.
They said they were gonna try to get
us housing or shelter or something else.
I don't know what that something else is.
I don't wanna go to a shelter...
'cause I don't wanna worry
about them stealing my shit.
They're gonna steal all my clothes.
They're gonna steal everything I got.
Drugs- It's infected with drugs.
What they should do
is leave us down here.
That's what they should do.
Leave us down here
until they get housing,
and when they get housing,

they ship us out.
But not just take us outta here.
I mean, we're over here,
down here by ourselves, my friend.
Like family, all right?
Now you're gonna break up
the whole family, all right? Huh?
And it's not worth it, man.
It's not fair to us.
I mean, they gotta have something, at least.
If you're gonna construct down here,
okay, put some of us to work, you know?
Huh? Or for us to get something out of it.
Because this has been our home
for over three years- for me.
Imagine all the people
that been down here for 20 years.
I got- I got three words-
I got three word for whoever's
fuckin' idea this was, okay?
And it's not "I love you".
It's "Leave us alone".
People residing in the tunnel...
are experiencing
a lot of health difficulties.
There are respiratory conditions...
from living in cool, dank conditions-
Uh, asthma I know is prevalent
amongst a few individuals.
Um- And it's just-
There's a lot of vermin and disease
that spread from the-
from rodents and vermin in the tunnel.
And, of course, the danger of living
close to high-speed trains.
Individuals run the risk
of being struck by trains.
We've had two fatalities there
in the course of the year.
One woman froze to death from exposure,
and another individual
was struck by a train.
It is absolutely a dangerous,
horrendous living situation.

Oh, this tastes pretty good.
There- There you go.
Be like it ain't right.
It tastes pretty good.
- Look at him.
- Why are you smiling though?
You better be thinking
about where we're goin'
when we get out of this motherfucker.
Maybe the cooking's over.
I'll probably go back
on the East Side.
- Yeah? You can't build over there.
- Huh?
Can't build nothin' over there.
We'll find somewhere.
That sounds shitty.
You can't go- Can't go in the park.
Damn know that.
What you gonna do?
Gotta move on.
You gotta- See, you gotta learn
how to go with the flow.
Yeah, I know, but I been goin' with the
flow, man, since I became homeless.
That's how he got in here
is goin' with the flow.
No, I'm sayin'... -Uh-huh.
Every time, I stay in the flow.
I'm sayin'... -When are we
gonna get the fuck outta the flow?
Bein' homeless, it's all types of problems.
- You never know what lies ahead.
- Mmm.
So until it comes, then you deal with it.
Can't plan shit,
being really homeless. -Mmm.
- You know what I'm sayin'?
- No, you can't.
- Can't plan shit.
- No.
You know what I'm sayin'? You say, "I'm
goin' home and goin' to sleep". -Yeah.
They fuck around. You get there,

and that motherfucker's gone.
Yeah. Your home is gone. Yeah. -Yeah,
you can put more water in there.
I remember what happened to us.
You know what I'm sayin'?
It's very hard to plan,
so what you gotta do...
is- is deal with it day by day.
Yeah, when we used to sleep upstairs,
when they were goin' home
to go to sleep-
Our home was gone.
I was gonna go down to 28th Street
and let 'em sign us up in the Y.
'Cause I ain't goin' in no shelter.
Gotta sign us up someplace.
- Shelter's out.
- Say what?
Shelter is out.
I ain't goin' in no shelter.
I'll ride the train.
I ain't gonna ride
no motherfuckin' train.
I tried that about two nights.
That ain't nothin'.
Our first response,
because of the long relationship
that we've had with our clients,
was to immediately go to court.
Previous to Amtrak's decision
to evict people out of the tunnel,
we had just sued Amtrak on the grounds
they could not throw people out of Penn Station,
a travel area here in New York City.
So when we found out that Amtrak
was gonna come in, we were-
Immediately we thought law suit,
because we knew...
we had to stop them from
throwing people out of the tunnel...
who had called it their home
for 10, 15, 25 years.
We met with Amtrak officials, and
they were very- at first very abrupt.

They wanted everybody out.
Had to be in a few days.
They were gonna fence it off,
put in security guards.
And we worked out a plan
that we would assist people...
into moving into temporary shelter
if Amtrak would not evict people.
Um, but soon thereafter
we learned of a program...
run by the federal government-
a Section 8 program-
and we guaranteed Amtrak...
that no one would be left
inside of the tunnels.
The Section 8 program, the housing
program here in New York City,
is a great ticket into housing.
It guarantees someone an apartment,
helps pay the brokers
and the security fees.
So it was a perfect chance,
and I think Amtrak knew that,
uh, it's a good opportunity
to work with advocates...
rather than having a legal challenge.
And, um, on our part, on civil liberties'
part, we were pretty confident.
Had we had to go to court,
we would have won.
It was a crystal-clear violation
of people's rights.
But we didn't want to defend people
to live on the street.
We wanted to get them into housing.
That was the ultimate goal.
And, uh, we're glad
we didn't have to go to court.
A'ight. You ready? Go!
Ah.
We're outta here!
We're outta here!
Whoo!
It's hard to believe

it's our last day in this place.

Right? I thought this day

would never come.

- Right?

- It did.

I thought this day would

never come. Right? -Yup.

No doubt.

- Are you excited?

- Excited?

- Yeah. No doubt.

- Excited.

- Excited.

- Blazing excited.

Feel like a crackhead who just found

a thousand bottles on the tracks.

- Yo. That's all dirty laundry.

- Yeah?

Yeah. -So wanna put

all the dirty shit in here?

Yeah. -A'ight. That way, we don't mix

the dirty clothes in with the clean ones.

All right.

There it goes!

That's goin'.

Hey! Strong hands.

All right, load it up

and make it strong.

What was it you said

about you got a job?

Oh, yeah. Got a job.

Comin' up. 8.50 an hour.

Working at King's Steak in the Bronx.

That's all right 'cause I'm gonna

blow you out of the water...

once I get this mountain bike

and start working this messenger's job.

As a cook. -Start makin', like,

seven or eight bills a week.

What you gonna do then, huh?

Hey, enough to pay the rent.

Enough to help out with food.

- I don't care.

- No doubt.

- Anything helps.
- Once we start these jobs,
ain't gonna be no more fried chicken
and shit like that.
Gonna be straight-up steaks,
filet mignon and all kinds
of good shit every night.
I'll bring steak home
every night of the week.
No doubt.
We gonna gain about- We gonna
gain about 400 pounds apiece, right?
Mm-hmm.
Break that house.
Got some good memories
here, too, in New York.
You gonna miss it?
- Sometimes.
- Definitely gonna miss it.
Not bad enough to come back though.
Just gonna miss
the freedom down here.
The thought of "This is mines, and
I can do whatever I want to with it".
'Cause in an apartment,
you can't do that.
That's all right.
What's next?
Just have you sign
some of these things.
This white piece of paper is your- It's
proof that you're actually homeless.
So long
Little chapel
Damn!
Rack up your light
Rack up your light
Fuck!
God! God! God! God! Damn!
All right, now!
Come on!
Whoo!
I love my apartment, Jack.
I love my apartment!

I hooked my apartment up.
All the little money I made when I
hustled or made when I was out there,
I'm putting it all back in here
on this apartment...
to make it look decent.
I definitely love my apartment.
As far as the living room's
concerned, you know,
once I get it together the way I want it,
there's eventually going to be
a nice new set of furniture goin' around.
I hope to get these corner couches-
You know what I'm talking about, right?
The kind of sectionals.
Like, this is one sectional here,
as you can see.
But what I want to do
is get a matching sectional...
that goes all the way around like this.
And eventually I'm gonna get
a new entertainment center.
As you can see, right now
I'm just making do with a bookshelf.
But I'm hoping to eventually get
a new entertainment center...
to put on this wall for everything.
And eventually there'll be
a nice 25-inch color TV here...
with cable hook-up and a VCR
and a nice stereo system.
I plan to get, like, a nice rug
to sit out here.
Yeah, it feels good.
I'm getting new furniture, new carpet.
Yeah, it feels good.
I can't wait. It's like-
I'm telling you, to me, it's like having a-
giving a baby a toy.
He'll play with it all day.
That's the way- That's the way I am.
Every day it's something new,
but it's something good. You know?
Now it feels like I never was in there.

But see, that was the most saddest part...
of my journey through life.
You know what I'm sayin'?
Dark- That was dark days.
Dark. Real dark.
But during the time,
it didn't bother me at all.
But once I sit back and think about it,
I ask myself, "Damn. How could I,
you know, have done that?
Let myself go like that?"
But it be that way, you know?
You don't realize until you get out of it,
and then, you know,
you look back every now and then-
what I went through-
and you say, "Damn. I used to do that?
That used to be me?"
And you say, "Oh, no way".
Yeah. That used to be me.
It definitely used to be me.
I'm tellin' you, to me,
it's like it never happened at all,
and it never will happen again.
Ever, ever, ever.
Never, never, ever happen.
I will never go homeless again.
That was like a nightmare.
You know?
And I woked up out of it,
and I'm staying awake.
I'm serious. I don't want that shit.
I don't need it.
Mm-mmm. I'd rather stay working
and, you know, doing good.
I don't wanna be homeless no more.
Whoopee!
It feel real good.