

Jacob Barrett #11123024  
3405 Deer Park Dr. S.E.  
Salem Oregon 97310

### *Thunder Dome*

On April 15, 1996, after spending 4 months in DSU for assaulting Dave, I was moved to the Oregon State Penitentiary's Intensive Management Unit (IMU). The IMU was Oregon's first venture into the "supermax" solitary confinement craze, which became the norm in the U.S. penological practice in the 1990's. Prisoners immediately dubbed it "the Thunder Dome". The Thunder Dome is a non-descript two-story rectangle building with frosted windows on the outside designed to keep prisoners from seeing in or out but also having the consequence of keeping light out. It looks something like a storage warehouse. If it were just a building on the side of the road and you drove by you would think it looked like somewhere something is stored. In a sense, that is exactly what it is designed to do. Instead of merchandise, however, it holds damaged souls.

When I walk up to the Thunder Dome I am shackled at the feet, cuffed and shackled at the waist with the infamous "black box". A box that goes around handcuffs and attaches to a chain meant to make your hands immobile. A prisoner allegedly invented it. I am quickly ushered into the intake room that doubles as a property storage room. It is here my IMU saga begins. The strip search routine will be carried out again.

I was placed in one of only two holding cells. One is about 3.5x4ft with nothing but a cement bench; the other is about 5ft.x3.5ft with a cement bench and a small stainless steel toilet-sink unit. I go into the latter cell. Guards begin to take off my waist shackles then have me face the wall and kneel on the cement bench with my head against the wall. They take off my shackles but tell me to stay on the bench as they back out of the cell.

At that point I have only my handcuffs in front of me. That's the last time I'll have handcuffs in front of me in IMU. After that I'll be cuffed behind my back and attached to a dog leash (which staff call a "tether"). I'm strip searched, photographed and questioned, as if I've just been arrested again. I'm told to always keep my eyes forward or they'll take my head movement as a threat and pull up on the tether which will result in me being dropped on my face. They list off a plethora of reasons that can result in