

A CHANGE OF HEART

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I had a lot of changes of heart while living buried in a human warehouse on the fringes of society.

A change of heart about whether I need a headful of hair, especially when the humidity makes the walls of my cell sweat.

A change of heart about facial hair. See, clean shaven faces are suspect on Planet Mindfuck, so now I grow a patchy, greying goatee.

A change of heart about "America," a disillusionment and hard-earned wisdom every inmate gleans once swallowed whole into the belly of the beast.

A change of heart about reading, a hobby that has become my salvation.

A change of heart about writing, both my compass and anchor.

A change of heart about mental health--it is real, it is everywhere, and it is out of control--prisons have become defacto mental health institutions, and they are failing a whole generation of people in dire need.

A change of heart about whether I am brave enough to stand up for myself and for what I know to be right even when faced with brutal repercussions...much to my own surprise, I am.

A change of heart about exercise, sleep, and staying healthy in general cause I find myself wanting to live again.

A change of heart about race and class; it is one thing to imagine monsters in their cages, it is quite another to meet the angels inside them.

A change of heart about what the fear factory will take from me and what I will take from it.

And finally, a change of heart about what matters most to me in this world--no longer a what or a how, but a who and a why.
