

Over The Wall
By Steve Crocker

The Wall of the Parkview prison is no match for me. I have studied its vulnerabilities for years; the loose stones I can use as footholds, the breaks in the old razor wire that is supposed to line its peak. I scale it with no problem, up one side and down the other. I hit the ground without making any noise and run, hunched over, for the shadows.

The searchlight scanning in a pre-set pattern almost catches up to me. My heart is pounding and my lungs wheeze. I can't control my breathing. I have always taken care of my body, giving it plenty of rest, comfort foods, and never asking it to perform any strenuous activities. Now it is repaying my nurturing ways by fighting me at every turn.

If I get caught again, it won't end well for me. The light comes back around and I have to dodge it. I hunker down and try to time it just right to make a break across the open area, but miss my chance. I let it pass by me a few more times while taking a breather. I hear the sentries moving around in the guard tower. I glance up to see if they are looking in my direction and accidentally look into the spotlight, losing my night vision and replacing it with spots.

I can't stay pinned down here much longer. A sharp set of eyes might pick out the man shaped figure trying to avoid being seen. I resist the urge to pray. I got myself into this mess, I'll get myself out.

With a burst I didn't know I had in me, I sprint toward the nearby building. If I make it to the door, I can slip inside and blend in. I splash through a small puddle as I move, Groucho style. The adrenaline is turning my legs to jelly. I'm so close, but until I get in that door, I might as well be miles away.

With the light on my heels I push my limits, finally rounding the corner, just feet from the door. I stop and stand upright, inches from the supervising guard and prison warden.

"Corrections Officer Carson," the supervisor says, rolling his eyes at me.

"Yes sir," I answer.

"Late for work again?"

"Yes sir."

Third Prize Winner of the 2011 Friends Baxter Memorial Library Writing Contest ~
Adult Fiction Category