

THE  
**Final  
Straw**  
A WEEKLY ANARCHIST SHOW

The Final Straw is a weekly anarchist and anti-authoritarian radio show bringing you voices and ideas from struggle around the world.

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# Sean Swain's 10 Year Radio Anniversary

THE FINAL STRAW RADIO  
JANUARY 17, 2024



Sean Swain is an anarchist prisoner who's serving an indeterminate sentence in Ohio for a self-defense killing. Sean has authored 3 books (one co-authored with Travis Washington) and released an album of his music (with collaboration of a number of artists) while behind bars. Sean is also a dear friend and collaborator on The Final Straw for 10 years, now. We're sharing here a conversation Bursts had with Sean Swain to mark the 10th anniversary of Sean's (mostly) regular segments on the show, You Are The Resistance.

The show notes will be chock full of links to segments and articles worth checking out, but you can find a full rundown of Sean's audios on the first link labeled "You Are The Resistance", our first interview with him about the Army of the 12 Monkeys linked in the first paragraph and a whole bunch more writings and audio at **SeanSwain.Org** and at our website. You can find contact info there to reach out to Sean if you want to strike up a conversation.

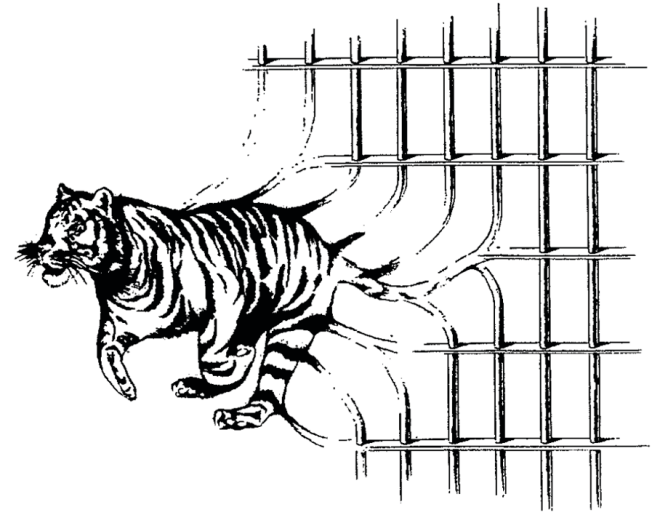
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prison, and they took it down. Right after that, they shut down all my communications again. No good deed goes unpunished. You try to bend over backwards for the State to prove to them that you're being as nice as pie, and they kick you in the face for it. It's what they do.

**TFSR: We have one minute left. Thanks for 10 years of recording segments.**

**Sean:** It's been awesome for me. It's been life changing for me.

**TFSR: It's been nice to get to know you and be your friend.**



take notes and that's never been allowed before.

So, it appears as though they're setting up where there is going to be some sort of check and balance to their power, because they're going to be aware that somebody's looking over their shoulder for the first time ever and that's because of what my attorney filed. There's already changes that are happening. With any luck I'll be seeing the parole board within the next six months or so and my attorney will be sitting in the room and they're not just going to know me as "that guy whose politics we don't like, so let's crush him." They're going to know me as "that guy" who has forced them to clean up their act. Let's get him out of here. Which, in discussions with my attorney, he's even said he doesn't understand why they just haven't gotten rid of me. If somebody is that much of a problem for you, as they say that I am, why wouldn't they just give me a parole and get me out of their hair, he can't figure that out.

**TFSR: It's not like you've been getting charged with assaults running up and down the prison in the meantime, and that you're posing an actual threat to personnel safety or anything like that. These are all opinions and feelings about words that you're saying or that are being attributed to you.**

**Sean:** Yes. Not to ruin my insurrectionary street cred here, but pound for pound, I might be the least dangerous prisoner in Ohio penal history. I've never been charged with a fight, with a single act of violence. There's nobody who would say I even gave them a paper cut. No drugs, no alcohol, no serious misconduct of any kind, no actual gang activity. Gangs don't write articles. I'm not beating people up and taking their property, slinging dope and causing havoc and mayhem. I'm actually pretty self-managing. All the things that they normally say they hate, I'm not. All the things they actually wish their prisoners would be, I'm all of that. It's just that when I'm that, they don't like it.

**TFSR: Maybe the problem is that you are a model prisoner, and they want to keep you.**

**Sean:** You actually have a point there. There was internal paperwork from the parole board and a lawsuit about two and a half decades ago, that they had a title they gave to prisoners, who were "stabilizers" in the prison population. They kept them in prison longer because they were stabilizers. They officially stopped doing that when they got caught doing it. But I'm sure they still do.

In this case, it's not even so because of what I do. It's because of who I am. I think that's an important distinction to understand their behavior from start to finish, the whole trajectory of what they've done. It isn't what I'm doing. It's who I am. I could sit perfectly silent, and they will still find a reason to hate me. Even though Blast Blogs has been taken down, [redacted] and I got that taken down when we were still together. We explained to the people who were hosting it that this has been attributed to me and it's screwing up my chances of getting out of

**TFSR: I was doing some looking in my calendars and I realized that the ten-year anniversary of your first segment (probably about swivelization and the hierarch dilemma, or about people having sex with doberman pinschers behind the Capitol Building) was recorded ten years ago this January, which means that we've been having regular conversations for that long!**

**I was hoping that we could go over some of the history, because there's been a lot that's happened over the last ten years of you doing the segment that sometimes makes it into the [episode] segments and sometimes doesn't. I think for anyone who's listening and maybe hasn't been aware of your work and your writing and your resistance, it'd be cool to have an opportunity to recap some of it and process through some of it.**

**Sean Swain:** And ten years, that's kind of amazing! That's really irresponsible of you! Over ten years and you haven't pulled the plug on me yet!

**TFSR: Thanks to all of the stations that have aired us. I need a hobby.**

**Just to get it rolling, the first time that I heard about you was probably from a post. I wasn't doing a lot of direct communication with prisoners at this point. There was a post about this police raid of a cell that occurred that was on AnarchistNews.org, which awarded you an award at one point. So I started talking to Ben Turk, who was a part of Redbird Abolition in Ohio at that point, and had been corresponding with you and doing support work with you. I'll link it in the show notes for anyone who wants to go back and listen to that episode, and they can hear a much younger you and a much younger me, and Ben Turk, who doesn't age, and Blackjack, all have their voices in there. But I wonder if you could regale us with what was happening at that time, what that was all about, where you were at and all that jazz?**

**Sean:** Yeah! At Mansfield, there was a thing called the Army of the 12 Monkeys. They wilded out and they kind of tore the prison apart. We didn't know it at the time, but the prison officials were working with the Joint Terrorism Task Force of the FBI. They came in and did ideological profiling. I ended up in the hole with three other prisoners at one point. It was two at the beginning, and they subjected us to a year of torture, it was terrible. Based on my ideology... which, they said that it was anarchists that tore their prison apart, I've read the material, and it seems to me that they were more like Maoists, but what do I know? So they sent me off to the super duper max and that's when Ben told me that there was a radio station that wanted to do an interview with me. I said, "Well, I mean, tastes aside I guess yeah I can do that." And that's how we ended up talking. For whatever reason you wanted to talk to a guy like me.

**TFSR: Well, I think that piece of writing was really good and exciting about the experience of sabotaging the attempts of the CERT team to clear**

**the room that you and, I think Blackjack were in at the time. It was entertaining stuff, but also Ben opened up with this piece of writing that said some people wanted me to write a personal ad. "I don't know why. But here we go. I'm seeking a woman who has training on flying a helicopter, meet me in the courtyard, laying down suppressing fire..." or whatever.**

**Sean:** Yep, "Single white male seeking long-term or short-term relationship with a female helicopter pilot. Any ethnicity. Must be willing to lay down grazing fire" or something like that. For some reason people didn't feel I was being genuine and sincere. I don't know.

**TFSR: Yeah, it wasn't until you started talking about turkey basters that they really got serious about it.**

**All right, so you and the other two prisoners were accused of being co-conspirators in that case, where somehow apparently a bunch of the material--copious amounts of photocopied manuals of sabotage--were entering prisoner cells.**

**Sean:** I didn't have any of the materials in my possession. They searched my cell for three hours and they came up with nothing. They came up with a Jpay article I had written critical of Jpay, but they found all these materials everywhere else. To link me to the Army of the 12 Monkeys, because they wanted to make me the leader, they had to say that essentially, I thought like a Monkey and the Monkeys thought like me, and therefore I was the one who did it all. Even though there was absolutely nothing connecting me to them, including ideology. Really, it turns out they're Maoists, I'm not a Maoist, not that there's anything wrong with that. They did tear a prison apart so they're not all bad.

I got pieces and parts of my FBI file. I've got 223 pages out of over 4000. I wrote something, I think it's posted online somewhere, called the "FBI Can Go Fuck Itself," and that's in the FBI file. It's pretty clear that they immediately jumped from the shenanigans at the prison to Sean Swain, to anarchists, to Ben Turk, to doing his support, to what-are-anarchists-in-the-free-world-doing? They immediately went into an investigation of Redbird Prison Abolition, then Turk, because they were more interested in just having a kind of open door to get into investigating anarchists. That's why I think they probably did this frame-up that's so obviously a frame-up.

**TFSR: How did that case resolve? How did you get out of the torture cell, the black site?**

**Sean:** Well, we spent a year in the "special mangle-ment unit" at Mansfield. And then I guess they just got tired before we did. And after a year of torture, they just sent me off to the supermax with Blackjack and the guy named Les Dillon. From that point forward, I guess they just had devoted themselves to a campaign of slow

Trevor Clark. The ODRC Council had railroaded me through the RIB process--the disciplinary process--where even the chair of the RIB will tell me, "My hands are tied on this, you know who wrote it, you know I'm going to find you guilty." They have no due process through their disciplinary action. You're not entitled to due process there, the US Supreme Court has said so. They're allowed to be a kangaroo court and they're allowed to come to their own kangaroo conclusions, which they routinely do with me. Then I see the parole board and the parole board who has to provide me due process looks at these kangaroo decisions, and says, "Well based on these kangaroo decisions, we're gonna give you five more years." Well, wait a minute, you have to give me due process. I don't understand how this can possibly be due process, fundamental fairness, when you're relying upon decisions that didn't require fundamental fairness, so based upon what somebody said, and stamped on a piece of paper, you're going to give me five more years.

The other thing is one of the parole board members specifically told me that they found what I had written in my campaign slogan to be a threat. Even though I had never been charged with the threat, nobody had ever accused me of a threat. He's the first person to think that my campaign slogan was a threat. Right on the spot, they essentially charged me with misconduct, found me guilty, and gave me five more years in prison for what is provably protected speech in a public forum. It wasn't even my speech, it was posted by somebody else. They go online and cherry pick things that are posted. They will attribute that to me whether I wrote it or not. Then they'll simply say, "Well, we think that's a rule violation, we think that's a crime." And they'll just give me more time.

Something else that they did, that they're not doing anymore: there was a checkbox on the parole decision form that allowed them to give you more time because people in the free world objected to your release. At one time, they have this process setup where people can call the parole board hotline and tell the parole board what a jerk you are and if there was enough popular sentiment that you're a jerk, they would check that checkbox and give you five more years in prison. They've essentially done that to me. This really is a questionable process, because first off, my release is determined upon winning a popularity contest in the free world. I have to win Miss Congeniality to get out of prison. Second, I don't even know who's voting on who gets Miss Congeniality, because nobody's telling me who is calling in and trolling me. So, there's no way for me to change their minds. Part of what my attorneys doing in discovery, he's saying, "Okay, well one of the reasons you gave is that there's popular support for keeping him locked up: tell us who called in, show us the communication and let us call these people as witnesses to see if they actually called in or not." Since the parole board doesn't want to give that up, chances are they're going to they're going to negotiate a settlement in this case. That's part of it. What they've also done now: they've taken that checkbox off the forms. Not only have they taken that checkbox off, but after my attorney filed the lawsuit against them, in a historic reform for the Ohio parole board, prisoners can now have their counsel sit in on parole hearings. They're not allowed to talk, they're not allowed to interject in any way, but they're allowed to be present and

they're saying.... Welcome to Germany 1936. We have propaganda films before you get to watch the movie.

My attorney, Eric J. Allen out of Columbus, OH, is suing the parole board. He's suing Annette Chambers-Smith. We still have the possibility of a lawsuit over one of the digits of my right hand. We're hopeful because he's sued the parole board and won several times and typically what they do at some point, they come and negotiate with you and they bring it back up to the parole board. As of right now, the parole board has been unresponsive. I had been granted 25 months of time credit that they haven't given me at my last parole hearing. I really should be seeing the parole board in May or June of next year, rather than in 2026. But they seem to be unresponsive, and they don't want to give me the time credit just because I'm me and they're hateful. But all things being equal, I should go up next spring.

Probably because of the lawsuit we filed, the parole board has engaged in a series of reforms and my hope is that they tell me, "Mr. Swain, we have some bad news for you. You can't stay here for free anymore." That means I'm going to get out. Adam is having house built right now, so his intention is to simply let me move in to the house he's living in now. Apart from that I've got family in Iowa, and I've got friends in Michigan so, if the parole board actually wants me to go out of state, I have places I can go other than Ohio. And I've got enough to get by at least for a minute because of what I inherited from my parents. I've got a little bit of money stashed aside to get back on my feet when I get out there. I'm not sure what exactly the future holds, but I'm sure that something will present itself.

I think we're all responsible to some degree to find a way to make our lives have purpose and meaning and I think whatever scenario we find ourselves in whether it's prison, whether it's out there on the other side of the fence, wherever we are, I think there are ways that we can struggle to find that purpose and meaning. So, when I get out, I don't think that'll be an issue for me. I think something in my life will present itself. I'm kind of an optimist that way. I'm a glass half-full kind of guy.

**TFSR: I was hoping you could say a few things about what are the grounds of your lawyer's challenge to the parole board, have that they've been dealing with your case on a regular basis under false pretenses, what's the legal argument there?**

**Sean:** I first came up for parole in 2005. I served about 15 years to the parole board. From that point forward, all the time that I've done has been in increments because that's what the parole board has assigned to me. The parole board creates its own rules. It is the most powerful agency in the state of Ohio. It has absolutely nobody over the top of them telling them what they're allowed to do and not do. They pretty much write their own rules, and they give themselves permission to break their own rules whenever they feel like it. But they still have to abide by the Constitution, that's one of the few things they have to do. What they have consistently done with me is: first, they will rely on disciplinary findings that were written by people like

roasted torment of me, specifically of me. So, I came here to the to the supermax. And that's when you and I were talking, and I started doing the radio show.

**TFSR: Yeah, within a month of your first segment, I think it was the 19th of January, you announced your run for governor of Ohio. I don't know if you want to talk a little bit about that and how that went.**

**Sean:** I've never conceded that election, by the way, I've never conceded. Ohio is not legally a state. Ohio, according to the treaty of Greenville, was set aside as quote, "unceded Indian Territory." So there are 13 tribal entities that still legally own Ohio. And I ran for governor, the promise of abolishing the state and returning it to its proper owners. Nobody ever announced my vote totals, so I think at that point, I announced myself "governor in exile." It was shortly after that they shut down my communications for the first time.

**TFSR: For anyone who wants to get a hold of the content of that argument about Ohio, you can find a book that LBC published with the subtitle "The Truth Behind Bob's Lane" or the essays themselves full and unexpurgated are available online.**

**Sean:** And with Ohio I hate pitching my own stuff like this, but with Ohio that LBC came out with there's a part four that talks about how we can topple the entire system. You don't find it online, so that's the bonus. That's just in the printed version. Most of it's in there. They had to consult their attorneys to find out what they weren't allowed to put in there that could get them arrested.

**TFSR: You had said at the end of describing the time at Mansfield, after this is when you were put on communications blackout?**

**Sean:** Yeah. when I came to the super-duper-max, it wasn't enough that I was just at the super-duper max, they had to suspend my email, suspend my phone privilege. I had an attorney at the time and there was already a lawsuit filed. There would be an ongoing pattern: each time I said something that made them uncomfortable or made them look bad, they would simply black site me in place. You know, shut down all of my communications and just leave me right where I was.

This happened when I left here, I went to Lucasville and from Lucasville I went to Warren. When I was at Lucasville, the guy who is second in-charge of the entire prison system came to talk to me about Blast Blog. I had written a proposal while I was being tortured and I sent it out to like a million people talking about how the SHAC seven, the Stop Huntington Animal Cruelty group had doxxed corporate officers and put their home addresses online. This wasn't an original idea, but I had proposed a site that was similar, because the Ohio Department of Retribution and Corruption engages in torture, which is an international crime. The people who are involved in that should have their home addresses posted, and

somebody actually did that! I keep saying stuff, I don't expect people to actually do it, but they actually did that! I was at Lucasville and a guy named Ed Vorhees came to talk to me. Ed Vorhees is a fuckweasel from way back. He insisted that I was in charge, and that my minions had done this. Every time they talk, it tells me they don't know anything about what being an anarchist is, because they imagined that I'm a leader of some cult. He insisted that I get that stuff taken down, or else they would consider it a threat and they would make my life a living hell. And they did.

**TFSR: Yeah. I think their political education ended at the Adam West Batman TV show.**

**Sean:** Yeah, all villains are the Joker.

I ended up going from Lucasville to Warren, which was getting my security dropped. I posted something about a "Klan Lynch Fest and Crab Cake Bake-Off" that was going on at Lucasville. The staff there hated me, so the warden had me emergency transferred a month early to lower security just to get me the hell out of his prison before his staff killed me, and I went to Warren where my communications were shut down again.

**TFSR: The company that was handling your communications, at least the email stuff, was the company that you had written an essay criticizing. In part it was because of their privatization scheme in coordination with the prison system of communications not only cost people's family a bunch of money, but--didn't some of your family's personal information get taken by them for communicating with you?**

**Sean:** Yeah, so Gary Moore was the director of ODRC at the time. In something I wrote I described how he had engaged in 10s of 1000s of counts of identity theft, because all our approved visitors have to file these applications. All of that paperwork was handed over to Jpay, so that they could handle money transactions from approved visitors. None of these people approved of the ODRC handing over that information to a private company, so all of it was absolutely illegal from the very beginning, all of this corporate outsourcing. So JPay hated my guts, and the ODRC hated my guts. It turns out also, the FBI hated my guts, because we didn't know that at the time but JPay was a kind of information gathering meta data source for the FBI. They can monitor transactions in real time and then create hubs of investigation surrounding the people who are sending money to and from prisoners. I didn't know that at the time, but that's why the FBI also hated me.

This is a whole collection of fart goblins and fuckweasels who just who just wanted to crush me. Every time they would shut down my communications, I'm sure JPay and Global Telebank, were more than happy to just pull the switch on me, because I had already kind of peed in their cornflakes. They did it quite frequently. When I was at Warren, they shut off my communications for 14 months. I couldn't even talk to my mom or my dad. I couldn't talk to Ihsan at the time. This

around and she had an episode sitting in her chair. She started breathing funny and passed out, and they couldn't bring her back. So yeah, I lost my mom. She was a really really amazing human being.

**TFSR: I think I saw her at a time when she was pretty tired, maybe before the pacemaker, but she was really funny. I could see where you got your sense of humor from, although I never got to meet your father. Really sweet, really caring, like I could see... You called during the visit and talked to us. Just sharing space with her was a delight. It wasn't too long of a visit, but it was really pleasant.**

**Sean:** What a lot of people will relate to me about my mom: whenever you were in the presence of my mom, you felt like you were being seen. You felt like my mom was able to clear out anything else that was happening in the universe, and just focus on you, and that she understood you. I was in high school, and I would come home and my mom would be sitting around on the floor with all of these girls I went to school with and they would all be staring at me and they'd be crying because one of them had broken up with their boyfriend or something. They were having this crying session and I'm like, "What are you guys doing here?" They're like, "This is private. You can't know anything about this stuff." I had to go to my room because my mom was sitting around with all these girls I went to school with and I'm like, "What are they even doing here? They don't live here." But my mom was that way for everybody. She was that person. I don't even know how they knew my mom, but they did. And this was this wasn't an irregular thing. My mom was that kind of a person.

I miss her. This is my first Christmas without being able to call her and hear her voice. That's kind of hard. That's hard. But we can't leave it at that, we can't just leave it at my mom dying. That can't be the last thing.

**TFSR: Oh no, if nothing else, unless I'm skipping too far ahead, I'd like to hear about what your plans are and what your legal situation is like and what your hopes are, the next steps forward.**

**Sean:** I've got some really great people in my corner, some really good friends. It seems like that circle of friends keeps expanding over time, despite the best efforts of the fart goblins and fuckweasels. One of those is a friend of mine, Adam, Adam Bomb, who has been central to my whole support network and all of that. He's a really great guy. My hope is--I've got counsel, largely because Adam forked out a pile of money. Counsel is suing the parole board, suing the chair of the ODRC. Just a quick side note here before I forget, the ODRC has these little film shorts that they play at the movie theaters before you see a movie. It's propaganda telling you how great the Ohio prison system is. And I'm here to tell you the whole thing is bullshit. If you ever see a movie in Ohio, don't believe anything they're telling you. Adam told me about that, he saw a movie and he just can't even stomach what

overriding the fact that I'm supposed to be at a minimum, with the fact that I'm a member of the Army of the 12 Monkeys, even though right now in the Ohio prison system, I'm the only member of the Army of the 12 Monkeys. I am a gang of one teaching myself secret handshakes at night. They're supposed to be taking that designation off of me, except DJ Norris--last time I spoke to him, I told him he was useless-- DJ Norris is the ODRCs security threat group guy. He keeps promising to come down here and talk to me and then take me off of the Army of the 12 Monkeys designation and it's been two years and nobody's talked to me. I think we know what's up. That's why I'm still here at the supermax, because they keep contriving the reason for overriding what my security was supposed to be irregularly.

So yeah, with [redacted], we move to Ohio in anticipation of me getting out and I didn't get out, clearly. I was here at the super-duper-max. My hope was we were going to ride this out. And, like a lot of personal relationships do, things began to change with ours and my experience was that [redacted] became a little more neglectful and abusive. There were some violations of trust that were happening. September 2022, we spoke for the last time and I filed for an annulment and then shortly after that, [redacted] contacted the prison and told them that I was harassing and/or threatening over the phone, even though they are no longer on my phone list. I'm not simply saying that I wasn't abusive, I'm saying that I couldn't have been abusive because this person wasn't even on my phone list. I couldn't call them any more than I can have dinner with the King of Denmark. Now I'm involved in all kinds of drama trying to unravel all of that because that can impact my release possibilities, so I have an attorney who is now filing a defamation claim against this person and hopefully we're gonna get that nonsense taken out of my file so that it doesn't impact my parole.

I don't like drama in my personal life, but that seems to be what I've got. I think [redacted] is an amazing human being, I just think that there's a lot going on there and it became very hurtful for me, and I have to protect myself from that. So yeah, I wish them the best.

**TF SR: Pretty soon after this you got some bad news about your mom, I don't know if you want to talk about this.**

**Sean:** Yeah and my mom really adored [redacted]. My mom was even trying to help us plan for baby names and one of them was Brooklyn. I said, "Mom, you know that Brooklyn is a borough in New York, and you've never even been to New York. Why would you want to name our kid Brooklyn?" No offense to anyone in Brooklyn. When all of this kind of unraveled with [redacted], my mom was really devastated. It was just shortly after that my mom's health took a turn.

My mom was hospitalized right before Thanksgiving of last year, and then hospitalized again in December. Then in January 2023, she had a pacemaker put in, and she was doing so much better. Again, because of Jamie and Alex, my mom could stay in her own home and be functional, and not have to be in assisted living. About eight days after her birthday, February 11, she had friends and family

is inflicting a kind of psychological pain not just on me but on the people who love me. I think we talked about this in one of my segments: I went on a 50-day hunger strike in order to get my communications restored. This was at Warren. Sometimes they would use their disciplinary process to justify shutting down my communication. Sometimes they would just flip a switch just because they were mad at me. I went on a 50-day hunger strike to get my communications restored. And less than a year later, they shut my communications down again. So, yeah, the efficacy of hunger strikes!

**TF SR: You had mentioned Ihsan, I don't know if you want to talk a little bit about Ihsan.**

**Sean:** Yeah. When I was in seg at Mansfield, in this "special mangle-ment unit" being tortured, I started getting mail from Ihsan, from Houston. Ihsan loved cats and saw some story that had been posted about my cat Spike when I was a kid. She started writing to me and we took up a correspondence. Ihsan got on my visiting list, surreptitiously, contacted my case manager to get on there, and then drove all the way from Houston to come see me. When I asked her why she had done that, she said that she wanted to come see me, but she was afraid that I would make her leave. This way, she would at least get to see me for a minute. And I was like "Awww" and we really hit it off, so she scheduled to come back to see me again.

In Texas they have very loosey-goosey laws about how they can involuntarily commit someone. Someone, for their own interests, had gotten Ihsan committed and Ihsan rebelled against that and she ended up suffering medical neglect. They kept dumping lithium into her, which is a salt derivative, so she was dehydrated, and she wasn't eating or drinking. They ended up sticking her in a geriatric ward in a diaper over in a corner next to a radiator. She had burns on her arm from the radiator, and she suffered medical neglect. Her kidneys shut down, and she died. They had to revive her. She ended up suing Ocean's Behavioral Hospital-- I think I can say their name. She sued Ocean's Behavioral Hospital for this and got a few million dollars, but she had suffered brain damage from all of this, and she had her own struggles. This really impacted her quality of life. Later, I got transferred to Virginia and she was really going through some real crisis and ended up getting hospitalized again, we lost touch for a moment, and they shut down my communications. I had no way of getting a hold of her.

The next thing I found out is that she had died. She had overdosed on a prescription medication. I still don't know the reasons for this or what happened, because my communications had been shut down for several months on orders of the high command. I miss her. She didn't deserve that.

So all of these things that they do, the black site-ing in place and all of the nonsense, it doesn't just hurt me. I'm pretty impervious. I'm pretty resilient. But it hurts real people out there in the world. And I can't help but wonder what role all of that played in what happened with Ihsan.

**TFSR: There's a story right there about institutions at various levels in various places, all making decisions about what's best for people and shoving them into the boxes that they want them to be in.**

**Sean:** Yeah. I miss her. We all have our struggles, and hers were compounded by what had happened to her. But she still had some childlike wonder in the way that she viewed the world and it was very refreshing.

**TFSR: I didn't know her all that well. We chatted a few times on the phone and sent emails back and forth, mostly where you were the main character. Just checking in like, "Have you heard from Sean, what's going on?" But she seemed like a really lovely person who deeply felt things.**

**Sean:** Yes, she did. I was at Warren and I went through a series of having my communication shut down. They started blocking my legal mail. This is what ODRC Council, Trevor Clark, presented as the theory behind blocking all my legal mail: they were investigating court officials to see if they were part of my gang because they were sending mail to me as the authorized agent of the Army of the 12 Monkeys.

A little bit of context here: what I had done when they told me they would never let me out of The 12 Monkeys, I actually filed incorporation papers. So, I own the Army of the 12 Monkeys. And it's registered as an animal enterprise. If they try to interfere with the Army off the 12 Monkeys, they are engaged in a federal crime with a 20-year terrorism spec. [Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act]

**TFSR: Thank you, Green Scare.**

**Sean:** They were pissed off when they found out that I had filed this paperwork, and that I registered the trademark, and that they could no longer register the Army of the 12 Monkeys in the Department of Justice database and still get their block grant funding. They can't use that name to get money. They started blocking all of my litigation on the grounds that they thought the judge was in my gang, because he was sending mail to the leader of the Army of the 12 Monkeys. It was shortly after I had filed a lawsuit against Trevor Clark, and against the STG coordinator at Warren, a guy named Kevin Chamberlain, that Clark and Chamberlain got in cahoots and tossed me in the hole and blamed me for postings online and sent me back to the super-duper-max. I was only there maybe a couple of months and that's when they came at four o'clock in the morning, tossed me in a van and sent me to Virginia, the capital of the Confederacy.

**TFSR: To give a timeline, we were talking about stuff around the 12 Monkeys that was starting up in 2012. Our segment started in 2014. Then you got bundled up and shipped out from OSP when?**

Ohio, I'd become supermax dangerous again. I come back here, they don't bring me back to reception, they bring me back to the super-duper-max. They give me an intake review and according to that intake review, I'm supposed to be minimum security, so that got filled out and sent the central office and central office said "Oh hell no, keep him in the supermax."

**TFSR: But then they didn't want to keep you at the supermax. Right? They wanted to ship you out again.**

**Sean:** Right. They decided "We're not even going to keep this guy in the state. We're going to hold him at the supermax until we can find somebody else to take him." And they decided it was going to be Maryland. In the meantime, I already had an attorney who was suing the Ohio Adult Parole Authority for their shenanigans and the reasoning that they keep giving for continuing me five years at a time. He had already filed that lawsuit, and I got with him about this interstate transfer stuff and he's like, "Well, you do realize the Ohio constitution forbids that. Article One section 12 of the Ohio constitution specifically says that no prisoner convicted of a crime in Ohio will be sent out-of-state." He filed a civil action to stop my transfer to Maryland. They got wind of this because they got served a copy of it and so they expedited their process of getting me to Maryland, and they still didn't even do what the law required of them. They just skipped all that.

The van showed up to get me to Maryland, and I had COVID at the time. According to CDC guidelines and everything else, they were intending to stick me in a van with three other staff and go traipsing across several states with a guy in the van who was positive for COVID. It was such a last-minute thing, everybody was so flustered and they were coming around with food trays and everything else and that's when I lost my finger. Dismemberment. That happened right at the time that the van was already gassed up and idling in the garage waiting for me. Some idiot slammed the food slot and I lost the digit of my pinky finger. I can no longer throw a spiral. My career as an NFL quarterback is over.

**TFSR: This is another pending suit. Right?**

**Sean:** The interstate transfer one was. I haven't sued over the pinky finger yet. I have until February to get my lawyer on that and see what he wants to do. Because I mean, I'm a registered paralegal, I'm certified and now I can't even get a job doing legal typing, because everything I type is going to come up to one long paragraph. I can't reach the return button. I think that has to impact my future employability.

**TFSR: So you've been sitting pretty at the at the OSP.**

**Do you do you want to talk about the divorce happening or just kind of skip over it?**

**Sean:** We can. I don't mind. In terms of me staying at the supermax, they keep



ences and had a chance to throw away dinner together, which was kind of nice. We exchanged notes and some people to get in touch with and it was a really nice time. Then the following morning, I got brought up here to Ohio. I think people need to know this about Rashid, Ohio had hidden from him a medical diagnosis of prostate cancer. He returned to Virginia and found out sometime later. Even with me, my medical records just never traveled with me for whatever reason. They're supposed to, but they never do. He didn't find out until much later that he had been diagnosed with prostate cancer and he's struggling now. I'm sure it's in the magic of the interweb that people can look up and find out where to get the latest updates with him. They have transferred him back to Red Onion State Prison, which is where they said they weren't going to send him and they're denying him medical care, essentially. You know, this is a medical assassination to one of the most revolutionary Black figures in prison and they're doing it from the capital of the Confederacy. If nothing else, the optics look pretty bad. Maybe somebody needs to alert them. There's a reason why those Confederate statues were knocked down. How about you stop trying to kill Rashid?

**TFSR: I got a chance to talk to Rashid in 2016 or 2017 if folks want to listen to that. His website is RashidMOD.com, which for minister of defense, and he's also had a bunch of his legal paperwork stolen in the last couple of months and not returned to him all while he's been back-and-forth about whether or not they'll actually give him any treatment for his condition.**

**With the ODRC watch, as I think it was going to be called, or maybe is called I'm not sure if it took root. If you've heard of IDOC watch in Indiana, this is attributable to Rashid's interstate compact getting sent there and helping to organize among other prisoners and folks on the outside. This is like part of his legacy. He has a similar legacy in Florida, in Oregon, I think, he was in Texas at one point. He's been transferred from state to state, and he keeps getting targeted and he keeps organizing. Now he's finally back in the state that put them in the first place.**

**Sean:** And they're killing him.

**TFSR: Yeah, this is what prison does... So they sent you back to Ohio. Despite the fact that you've been in a medium, they sent you back to the super-duper-uber-mega-ultra-maxy-max.**

**Sean:** You forgot "turbo."

When I got back here, they gave me an intake review, not the yearly review. Keep in mind that when I was in Virginia, I was getting yearly reviews on Ohio security reviews. My case manager had to come to me to have me fill it out, because he didn't understand how to do it, because he's from Ohio. I had to walk him through the paperwork. Ohio had to approve me staying at that medium facility the whole time I was there. But strangely, as soon as I crossed state lines and come back into

**Sean:** That would have been April of 2019. I was in Warren for a few years, having my communication shut down, turned back on, hunger strike, get my communications turned back on, then shut down again, another hunger strike.

**TFSR: You start taking heart medication at one point too for blood pressure, right?**

**Sean:** Yeah, blood pressure medication. That's when they tossed me in the dungeon here at OSP, which they're not allowed to do that, if you refuse. They were trying to interfere with medical decisions, because they didn't like the fact that I was using that medical decision to try to get my communications turned back on.

**TFSR: Then in relation to your prior, what you've called black site-ing, do you want to talk about the complaint that you filed and where?**

**Sean:** Sure, yeah. This would have been back during the year of torture when I actually got started with that. I had filed a claim in the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, which is part of the Organization of American States. It's kind of like a sister organization to the UN. I made claims of torture initially. Then I later added in claims that Ohio is not even a state, that it is a violation of international law for the United States to claim ownership of this area called Ohio. Fast forward, I get to Warren, and I'm not receiving any mail from the Organization of American States or the IACHR, and I get all the way to Virginia in 2019 and they wrote me a nasty gram, essentially saying, "If you're not going to litigate this case, we're just going to close it." I wrote them back and said, "Look, I haven't heard from you since 2013. I don't know what you're talking about." They sent me a whole boatload of documentation that they had been sending to me that Ohio had been concealing from me, because it appears they knew I was in an international court challenging the legitimacy of their state and they didn't want me to be able to be successful.

Once I heard back from the International Court, and I started litigating again, I got a decision from them and this made history, and nobody ever talked about this. This is the first time that claims of torture against the United States were filed in the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and I got past the initial dismissal stage and got to what is essentially the trial stage with that. The Court said that these claims have merit. That happened around 2019 or 2020 while I was still in Virginia.

**TFSR: Yeah, there's got to be a law against that, about some state blocking a human rights commission from being able to communicate with someone... That's like an ultimate bullying action right there.**

**Sean:** Well, the other thing about it is they're so sneaky because it's not even like they give you official paperwork, letting you know what they've done, because they're cowards. Everything that they do, they never actually tell you the truth as to

why they're doing what they're doing. All bullies are cowards.

**TFSR: That's ACAB (spelled) the wrong way though. All cowards are bullies. ABAC?**

**Sean:** I forgot to mention something. Before I went to Virginia, they had attempted to send me back to Lucasville from Warren, and I had been contacted a month before that by somebody in Lucasville, whose legal work I had done. He said, "Be careful, because they're planning on sending you here because the guards are going to take you to J3. And there's no cameras back there and they're going to hang you from a bedsheet and say, you killed yourself." I ignored what he had to say. I was like, "Come on, these people can't be that incompetent." And then a month later, I came up on the transfer sheet to go to Lucasville.

I had to give that some credence and I'm lucky that I have people out there in the free world who went to bat for me and exposed all this. Otherwise, I would have been hanging from a bedsheet. That was right before that director of the ODRC, Gary Moore, was resigning and this would have been one of his last acts in office. It would have been a final dig that he would have gotten, the killing of his greatest pain in the ass. Instead, they sent me to OSP and a couple months later they stuck me in a van to Virginia. and I was at in medium security in Virginia. I was wearing Levi's and my own clothing, my own boots, hanging out watching Game of Thrones in the inhouse TV channel, spending all day out on the yard getting a good tan. They had nice pizza on Wednesdays.

**TFSR: We are missing some stuff in there, too. For instance, in 2015 artists using songs that you'd written, released an album called Burning Down that's still available on bandcamp.com. Right?**

**Sean:** Oh, yeah. That's awesome. Luke Romano, from Ramshackle Glory put that together. A whole bunch of really cool bands used my lyrics to music that they had created and put that out there. That's really good stuff--not because I was involved, but it's good stuff even though I was involved.

**TFSR: I mean, the collaboration is something that I think is really cool. I will say that folk punk is not my cup of tea, but there are recognizable bands: Ghost Mice I've seen a few times, Moon Bandits, this is just naming a few as I go down. Cottontail, You People, Immaculate Misconception. There's some recognizable bands on here, which I think is pretty great. And the music is good. I think they did a really good job of collaborating with you. It's still up for people to listen to.**

**I see a post on here from 2015 in June where you were thinking that you were going to be interstate transferred. Do you recall that? "After thinking a bit more about the plan security level reduction, Sean now suspects the ODRC is fixing to send him out of state." They blocked your video**

**TFSR: Can you talk about the process of getting transferred back and what that looked like for you and what you learned later?**

**Sean:** Yeah, so after two-and-a-half years of being in Virginia and wearing my own clothes and getting a nice suntan, they came in, abruptly got me early in the morning and told me to pack my stuff. They stuck me in a van and sent me to the reception center and told me I was going back to Ohio. They were exchanging me back for Kevin "Rashid" Johnson, who was being sent back to Virginia. Ostensibly, I was told that Rashid had created [ODRC Watch] which had pissed off Ohio, so Ohio was sending him back. So in a tit-for-tat they were sending me back to Virginia. What I later learned was that it was because I had filed a federal lawsuit against Virginia and filed a habeas. Their attorney general had looked over all of the paperwork for that, and had said, "You know what, everything that happened here is illegal. Get that guy in a van and get him out of our state right now."

I think everybody's in agreement from Ohio prison officials in their own internal communications, to what Virginia officials said, about what I've been saying all along: what they did to me was absolutely illegal. Not that it matters, because it's just me.

**TFSR: Gotta love it. You've shared this before, but just a little context, because I really appreciate Kevin "Rashid" Johnson. Rashid was the minister of defense for the new African Black Panther Party, which is a Maoist organization specifically for the prison chapter. Rashid has since left, in 2020, the NABPP, and formulated with some other comrades who went along with him the Revolutionary Intercommunal Black Panther Party, which is again dedicated to destroying capitalism, patriarchy, and white supremacy. And he has written two books, which listeners can find pretty easily: *Defying the Tombs* and *Panther Vision* that are both available through Kersplebedeb. Can you talk about the dinner party that you had with Mr. Johnson?**

**Sean:** Yeah. So I had been at the reception area in a specific block that's segregated away. It's not segregation, but it was segregated away from the rest of the population there. I had been there for a day or so when Kyle Roush came. He's the interstate compact guy, and for a guy who works for the fuckweasels, he's actually a pretty decent dude. He was talking to me, and he said, "Sorry to see you leaving, we enjoyed having you." He said, "Have you met Rashid yet?" And I said, "Who?" And he said, "Come with me!" There was a guy who had just moved into the block that had just gotten transferred there and he walked over and Rashid is a big guy. And this big guy comes out of the cell and Kyle Roush points at me, and he's like, "Tell him what your name is." I said, "Sean Swain." And Rashid looked at me funny. He's like, "Tell him what your name is." He said, "Rashid Johnson." I'm like, "Oh, wow." Kyle's like, "You two get to know each other" and walked away.

So the two of us sat down and had a discussion about our own experi-

**worried when you're on hunger strike or on medical strike, or, aren't grieving the fact that they can't share space with you when they want to, and see you be as free as you want to be.**

**Sean:** The other components of that is, would they have ignored me, the way they ignored my parents? If I was pushing for my dad to get his bypass surgery bumped up? If I had stayed on the doctors, would they have ignored me? If I had been there to advocate for Ihsan, would they have recommitted her?

I don't know what the answers to those questions are, but I think they're valid. Would my dad and Ihsan still be alive today if I hadn't remained captive all this time after I could have been released? I don't know.

**TFSR: Which begs the question of the role of prison in society, or the implications of prison society, where all these families and communities that are broken up by people in positions of petty power who need to impose it on other people. Really was this worth it? Because you were drawing angry cartoons that were funny, and calling people fuckweasels? Is this really a realistic reaction? This is what our money goes to, to slowly kill people and break apart families. Great. God bless America.**

**Sean:** Just as a side note to that, later that year 2020, I saw the parole board from Virginia and essentially one of the reasons they gave for continuing me for five more years, was that they didn't like my campaign slogan, when I ran for governor. They interpreted my campaign slogan, to be a threat against the life of the governor. They're the only people who interpreted my campaign slogan that way. Essentially, what they're saying is, "We don't like you. We don't like what you say, We don't like what you write. We don't like what you stand for. And since we're right-wing extremists, and we don't appreciate your sense of humor, we're gonna give you five more years in prison." That's what stopped me from getting out in August of 2020. The people in power are pretty petty.

**TFSR: After this, was it August of 2021? When did you get married?**

**Sean:** Yeah, that was September 2020.

So this would have been when [redacted] and I started corresponding in the summer of 2020. [redacted] was from Canada and was into roller derby and was working a Women and Gender studies master's degree. Just a couple of months after we met, we decided we were going to get married.

[redacted] moved to Ohio for me to have a place to parole to, and then traveled all the way to Virginia for us to get married. We got married in September of 2020. I misspoke before: I saw the parole board three weeks later, and the parole board continued me for five years. So that was my 2020. It was just heartbreaking to have to tell [redacted] over the phone that I was going to be locked up for five more years, at least ostensibly--we have an attorney to deal with that.

**visits in January, went on hunger strike... I don't know if that was based on a "what else could they do to me" thinking or if that was based on other material that led you to believe that it was going to happen?**

**Sean:** Well, this is kind of the pattern of what they do. They'll have security reviews once a year. Mine typically occur at the end of summer sometime. If you go two years without any kind of disciplinary action, they're going to drop you to the next level. I was going to drop down to medium security, and I would have access to programs that would get me eligible for parole. Every single time I would get that close, they would fabricate something, in order to toss me in the hole. Trevor Clark, the ODRC Council at the time, would pull a Chicken Little and run in circles talking about "the sky is falling" and "Swain is bringing the world down around our ears again" and this time, it was the drones article that was posted online that they attributed to me, even though my name wasn't even attached to it, and even though my communications had been shut down for six months.

I was black site-ed in place when this thing came out. They just decided I wrote it, tossed me in the hole, featured in Opposing Torture, also released from Little Black Cart--since they attributed it to me, I'll just take ownership of it. That article was also compiled in Opposing Torture. Keep in mind I haven't even been charged with a rule violation of any kind in two years, I was about to go up for a security review and get dropped to medium. It was at that time that DJ Norris, the STG head, security threat group coordinator at central office, came to me and said, "We're sick of your shit we're gonna send you out of state." I laughed it off because you can't send me out of state just because you don't like me. I haven't done anything. I haven't even been accused of doing anything. What developed after that was the disciplinary pretext for justifying the thing that they wanted to do. They decided they wanted to kick me in the head, and after they've already set in motion the kicking in the head, they will come up with the excuse for why they had kicked me in the head. It's kind of the same mentality as a domestic abuser. "I'm slapping you around because you burned the casserole," even though there's nothing wrong with the casserole. That's the mentality of people who run prisons.

That's when they sent me to Virginia. In the middle of the night, no paperwork, no anything. It's funny, there is an official named Tracy Reveal who used to be on the parole board, fun fact, and Tracy has emails that she has sent out, talking about the event of my transfer to Virginia. Even though they keep telling everyone that this was an interstate compact, she admits in her email that this was an illegal rendition, using those words. The ODRC itself, their own officials, refer to this as an illegal rendition. They know what they did, they didn't do any paperwork. They just pawned me off to another state where I wore Levi's, and my own boots, and my own shirts, and went outside and got a suntan and ate good pizza.

**TFSR: And the state of Virginia is still standing somehow... [both laugh] So you keep skipping ahead. Why are you trying to hide your 2016 presidential bid? What do you have to hide?**

**Sean:** Oh, yeah! Well once I got to Virginia, I ran in 2020. In 2016, I ran for president and my campaign slogan was “Abolish Everything,” which is what I’m running on in 2024, if I run, and I think I’m running. That’s my story, and I’m sticking to it. We had T-shirts and bumper stickers and I had a campaign pledge to abolish the entire United States. Legally, this is colonized land. I had a strict policy that no other presidential candidate has ever endorsed, a strict policy of battling illegal immigration and I’m going all the way back to 1492. So, if I’m elected, we have to get a bunch of cruise ships and we have to find countries that are going to take 200 million crazy white people.

**TFSR: And just sail us around in the middle of the ocean...**

**Sean:** I mean, we’ll find a home, we have to decolonize.

**TFSR: It’s not the USA’s problem anymore.**

**Sean:** Right. We have to give the land back to the people who actually own it. Now, if you could work out some sort of deal with them and stick around, that’s probably in your best interest. I can’t guarantee how long they’re going to keep feeding you on those cruise ships.

**TFSR: [laughs] This is the initial plan behind the COVID outbreak, you remember that? The cruise ships...**

**Sean:** The “founding fathers”, as they’re called, of the United States called this an experiment. Well, it’s failed. It’s time to stick a fork and turn it over, it’s done. Let’s just abolish it. This is science.

**TFSR: So you ran for governor again in 2018. Since you were already governor, you’re kind of a shoe-in. Oftentimes when people are running and already have the position, they’ve got a lot of institutional sway.**

**Sean:** Yeah, I was the incumbent governor-in-exile.

**TFSR: Then 2017 Little Black Cart published version of *Last Act of the Circus Animals*, right?**

**Sean:** Yes, I began my publishing relationship with Little Black Cart was *Last Act of the Circus Animals*, which is awesome. With Little Black Cart we’ve never actually had a publishing contract. We both came to the conclusion that we didn’t want to be in business with somebody that needed a contract to keep them honest. I just kept writing and they just kept publishing and every once in a while, there was a shoebox full of cash.

**TFSR: There were two other big events that happened. First, your plans for release. Oftentimes it was couched in “Look, I just want to get out. My parents are elderly. They’re like living in the southwest. I want to just go and mow their lawn and hang out with them and just keep my head down and live a life...”**

**You were in Virginia and the COVID pandemic started, and facilities were in lockdown. Do you want to like start the story there?**

**Sean:** Virginia was pretty hectic. I got bumped around from block to block. They only had two deaths at the prison I was at, which is pretty good, particularly given the amount of mismanagement that was happening. That only speaks to human resilience. It would be in October or November of 2019 [that] my dad went in for some heart tests. The doc didn’t like what he was seeing, scheduled my dad to see a specialist and they said, “Well, you’re gonna need bypass surgery.” From that point up until March of the following year, they just put my parents on a spin cycle. My mom expressed frustration that once you get past a certain age, you become invisible. Nobody cares because you’re not productive anymore. When my dad worked at Ford, when he was in his 30s and 40s, he was a big guy, so he could be intimidating. Apart from that, he was somebody because he’s a producer. When he was in his 70s, and he had a heart bypass, and my mom’s in her 70s, nobody’s paying attention to them. My dad went about five months before he finally got the bypass surgery but by then there had been so much damage to his heart. It was a few days after the surgery, he was still in the hospital. I got called to some administrator’s office. My mom had called, and they put my mom on a speakerphone with me to tell me he didn’t make it. I went back to the block and just talked to her on the phone from the block. I didn’t want an administrator sitting there listening to the conversation. From that point forward, my mom had Alex and Jamie, who are two really great people helping her out. She couldn’t have stayed, in her home, she would have had to have been in some sort of assisted living without them. My mom was really grieving. This is 2020 so they had been together for 55 years and my mom would tell me that she didn’t know who to be anymore. Part of her identity had always been that she was Paul’s wife, she was Sean’s mom and she had always defined herself in relation to other people, and those definitional roles were gone for her and that was really difficult for her.

My dad was a really incredible guy. My parents deserved to see me come home, I was their only child. My dad worked at Ford, they’ve always paid their taxes. They’re the folks that will stop at a stoplight even when there’s no traffic, and there’s no cops around. Always do the right thing. Always be honest in your affairs with other people. And they held their breath. My dad held his breath until 2020 waiting for me to get home, and we lost him.

**TFSR: Another example, you pointed to with Ihsan: it’s hard for you to lose loved ones. But as you’ve been pointing out also, it’s not like the relationships don’t go both ways. It’s not like, your friends and supporters aren’t**