

#IamtheHomeless

As I was out walking, getting ready to sleep under the stars one eve, Bob Dylan – Gates of Eden was uploaded by a Googler to my .mp3 library just about the time I found a park bench where I sat to gaze before sleep.

I flicked open my knife and popped a can of Campbell's Chunky Sirloin Burger Soup and ate and listened to Bob croon as it became dusk.

Satisfied I wasn't spied by no-one I made my way to a nearby park on federal land. I went in by the unmarked back-route, through the woods.

With my flashlight I uncovered a field of planted poison ivy, aimed at keeping the terrorists out. Where I sought to lay my head that night had become a wasteland of mutilated criss-crossed trees and deliberately planted fields of poison ivy, protecting the reservoir lands on this night from only me. It was impassable, so I walked in through the front, quietly, luckily, now trespassing and still unnoticed.

It was only five, or was it ten, years ago that this was a forest of hospitable plants, and lively, growing trees, housing a sanctioned park. Damn terrorists.

I walked through the entry gate, to a little field of green grass, one they can't take away, one only jail can take away. One not on Google maps, found nowhere on Google Earth. It stretches just behind the pump house. It used to be my paintball base. That's where I laid my ground cover.

This night was rough, I do declare. Fresh from prison, on this night, I had no lawful option.

This body knows the sting of the cold, the kind of cold where you end up with an extra layer, where I ended up wrapped in the tarp that was covering the ground for me.

Fitful sleep led me to thinking: "I'm gonna freeze if I don't move. I'm gonna die out here. My core is frigid". Luckily I was sober.

I packed up and slinked out and headed to Lechauweki Park (a place you might've visited if this were oh, 1880). A cave or two still dots this land (what you might call a root cellar).

I finished that night a huddled mass, having all the layers on me I had before, in a dark, dank, underground cave that smelled like pee.

It sure beat a jail cell.

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James A. Blatt

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