

Ear Hustle
"Catch a Kite 8"
April 26, 2023

Lateefah: My name is Lateefah Simon and I'm a criminal justice reform organizer here in the Bay Area. The following episode of Ear Hustle contains language that may not be appropriate for all listeners. Discretion is advised.

[phone ringing]

Teresa: *Hi, my name is Teresa and I'm calling from Morada, California.*

Laura: *Hi, my name is Laura Duda. I'm calling from Pennsylvania. And I am a pediatrician and I'm interested in knowing--*

Amy: *Hi, my name is Amy. I'm from Portland, Oregon.*

Andrea: *Hey, there. My name is Andrea and I'm calling from Alberta, Canada. My question is for the people who are doing life.*

Sonia: *Hi, this is Sonia from Sacramento and for the upcoming Catch a Kite episode, I was wondering--*

Nigel: Earlonne, it has been a while since we've explained what a kite is. Could you do the honors here?

Earlonne: Yes. A kite is basically some type of writing that's usually secretive from one prisoner to another prisoner.

Nigel: Yes.

Earlonne: Or it could just be simple as "Send me a shot of coffee."

Nigel: Okay, so it's a request or it's information.

Earlonne: Something.

Nigel: But it's like you said, sort of secretly sent.

Earlonne: Secretly. It's not passed the regular way. It's not something that someone would say over the tier. It's just a direct communication between one person to the next person.

Nigel: Okay, so the way the Catch a Kite episodes works and, Earlonne, we have been doing this since Season 2?

Earlone: Season 2.

Nigel: Listeners send us questions about life inside prison.

Earlone: And we do our best to get them answered.

Nigel: Yes. And up until now, they've mostly been answered by people inside San Quentin.

Earlone: Right.

Nigel: But this time, we're going to do something just a little different. I'm Nigel Poor.

Earlone: And I'm Earlone Woods. This is Ear Hustle from PRX's Radiotopia.

[Ear Hustle theme]

Katrina: *I'm Katrina Hovie.*

Sarah: *My name is Sarah Rothchild.*

Annemarie: *My name is Annemarie Harrison. I have two life sentences and I've been incarcerated 19 years.*

Nikki: *My name is Nikki.*

Kier: *My name is Kier Anderson.*

Michelle: *Hi, my name is Michelle Cato, C-A-T-O.*

Nigel: Ever since we started going into the California Institution for Women-

Earlone: CIW for short, they go them acronyms, Nyge.

Nigel: [laughs] Prison is full of them. We've been thinking, it would be really fun to base a Catch a Kite episode in there. I mean, it's a very different kind of place than San Quentin.

Earlone: Right. So, for this Catch a Kite, we asked listeners to come up with questions about life inside of women's prison.

Nigel: And there were definitely some questions we could have predicted. I mean, a lot of people asked about periods.

Earlone: And they asked about some new stuff too, Nyge.

Nigel: Yes, you're right.

Earlonne: Let's get started.

Nigel: Let's do it.

Liz: *Hi, this is Liz from Washington state and I'm curious, what is one banned item that you wish you had access to in prison? Thank you.*

Annmarie: *Probably internet access.*

Angel: *An air fryer.*

Quesha: *A cell phone. Come on now.*

Nigel: *What is one banned object that you wish you could have?*

Gladys: *Electric stove. [laughs] Something to really cook with. [crosstalk] Yes. I could sneak one of those into my room. I'd have it.*

Nigel: *What would you make?*

Gladys: *Oh, everything. I can make rice and Puerto Rican food. And I fried food, some fried chicken. Some real fried chicken.*

Nigel: *That'd be nice.*

Earlonne: Nyge, you know what I would have said, right?

Nigel: What?

Earlonne: An air fryer.

Nigel: Are you serious? Out of all the banned things, that's what you would've wanted?

Earlonne: An air fryer, yeah. That has made my life so meaningful out here, Nigel.

[laughter]

Nigel: But what food would you have been able to air fry in there?

Earlonne: I'd air fried a bologna sandwich. I mean--

[laughter]

Nigel: Oh, my God.

Earlonne: But you get mackerels in the pack, you get all kinds of stuff. You'd make some concoctions up in there.

Nigel: If you could have one banned item in prison, what would it be?

Kier: *One banned item?*

Nigel: *Yes. And you wouldn't get in trouble for it, it's just that one thing that you really would want to have.*

Kier: *A recording studio.*

Nigel: *For music?*

Kier: *Yes. Primarily for music.*

Nigel: *And what would be the first song you would record?*

Kier: *I'd probably record an original song that I wrote with another prisoner in 2013. It's called Get a Grip.*

Nigel: *Are there lyrics?*

Kier: *Yes. [singing] Get a Grip. Don't even trip. It's time to show you what I've got. I've got, oh yeah, oh yeah, I've got the answer to your prayers. That's it.*

All right. What is on the banned item list that you want?

Lorraine: *Nail polish, perfume, hair dye. We have a lot of banned items we can't have. So, yeah, mostly it would be stuff to make us feel better about ourselves.*

Earlonne: *Okay.*

Nigel: Beauty products, Earlonne.

Earlonne: Okay. This is a topic that didn't come up too much when we did these episodes from inside San Quentin.

Nigel: No.

Haley: *Hi, my name is Haley from Ventura, California. I was wondering if women in prison are coloring their hair ever, or if there's a way to do that. Thanks for listening.*

Nigel: *Can women color their hair in prison?*

Gladys: *I think they used to when the salon was here.*

Earlone: *Until pretty recently, CIW had a cosmetology vocational program, where women could learn salon skills and it would pretty much help them find work once they get out.*

Lorraine: *We used to be able to dye our hair, do pedicures, even fake nails. But we don't have a teacher currently right now, so we're not allowed to do it.*

Earlone: *And how did you do it?*

Lorraine: *With the real dye. Somebody would do it, a student. A student who was training that needed their hours would do our hair. They'd do haircuts, they would dye your hair.*

Earlone: *I'm curious. Did was Tyra a part of that?*

Lorraine: *No. So sometimes people that know how to do a hair from the street, they just do it on the yard. Tyra used to cut my hair on the yard.*

Nigel: *Can you remind listeners who Tyra is?*

Earlone: *Tyra was my nephew mom, and she's been in a couple of our episodes, including one called Bittersweet, the one when I got out.*

Nigel: *Yeah. I remember that well.*

Earlone: *And for a time, she was incarcerated at CIW. I remember she used to write me and tell me about the cosmetology program that she was taking there.*

Nigel: *I can totally see her doing that.*

Earlone: *And sadly, Tyra passed away last year.*

Nigel: *Yeah. And I noticed whenever we go to CIW, you always ask if somebody knows her.*

Earlone: *Yeah, so I get a new memory of somebody saying something that happened there.*

Nigel: *Yeah. And it's like keeping her alive and close.*

Earlone: *Yeah. It's a trip.*

To come back to Haley's question, now that the cosmetology program is closed, women who want to dye their hair are kinda shit out of luck.

Earlone: *Can you order dye anything off the catalog?*

Lorraine: *No. We can't get any hair dye on the catalog. The only thing we can buy is makeup.*

Nigel: Yeah, I mean they can't order hair dye from any of the catalogs. It's contraband.

Earlone: But there's always a workaround.

Gladys: *I've seen them color their gray with coffee. I mean, I've seen them do it with Kool-Aid.*

Nigel: *You're looking right up at my gray hair when you said that.*

Gladys: *Oh, I'm sorry.*

[laughter]

Gladys: *It's okay because I have some. Not as much, but I have some. And I'm a whole lot older than you.*

Sonia: *Hi, this is Sonia from Sacramento. I was wondering for the women in prison, what some of their favorite snacks are. Thanks.*

Nikki: *Beef jerky. [laughs]*

Aerin: *Chocolate donuts.*

Kier: *Celery.*

Lorraine: *I love string cheese.*

Nigel: I got to know, what was your favorite snack in prison?

Earlone: For me, it was oatmeal cream pies and donut sticks with some coffee.

Nigel: What? I've never heard of a donut stick. I never saw donut sticks before.

Earlone: You know how you got a round donut with a hole in it?

Nigel: Yeah.

Earlone: This is just a donut stick.

Nigel: Like a stick inside that hole?

Earlone: No, just the shape of a stick. That's how the donut looks. It's like a donut bread. Like, like a loaf of bread shrunk down.

Nigel: All right. Well, I'll remember, you like a donut on a stick.

Earlone: That don't sound right, Nyge, at all.

Nigel: [laughs]

Earlone: You just changed that whole little--

Nigel: Something pure into something awful? I'm sorry.

Earlone: Yeah, something awful.

Nigel: I'm sorry. Well, let's see what else the people at CIW snack on.

Aerin: *I love ice cream.*

Nigel: *When you get a pint of ice cream, there's no freezer here. So, you have to eat it in one sitting, right?*

Aerin: *Pretty much. And it would be nice to have some kind of cooler, because, man, I--*

Earlone: *Just don't want to eat it at that moment. I want to eat it but--*

Aerin: *I want to make it last.*

Gladys: *I like everything that's snack food. I don't need the food. Coffee's my go-to food.*

Nigel: *Coffee's a food for you?*

Gladys: *Yes.*

Nigel: *Cream and sugar or black?*

Gladys: *Cream and sugar.*

Nigel: *That makes it a food.*

What's your favorite snack?

Angel: *Hot Cheetos.*

Earlonne: *That's a good snack.*

Angel: *Yeah.*

Earlonne: *You mess your hands up.*

Nigel: *I know.*

Angel: *They really do. Not good to have hot Cheetos while reading a book, that's for sure.*

Earlonne: *Evidence.*

Angel: *Yeah.*

Nigel: *When we were doing a project in the library in San Francisco, a couple librarians said the worst thing is people eating hot Cheetos and returning the books.*

Angel: *Yeah. I don't do that.*

Nigel: *What is your favorite snack?*

Quesha: *You know what? Since I've been down, I've been realizing I like hummus and pretzels, surprisingly.*

Nigel: *Hummus and pretzels, that's a good snack.*

Quesha: *With carrots, and I only realized I like it since being in prison. That's what they offer us, and I didn't know I liked that.*

Nigel: *What did you think the first time you tried it? Were you suspicious or were you like--*

Quesha: *Of course, but I was hungry, so that also took bait, but I was like, "Wow, this is so healthy, and it tastes good." Who knew healthy stuff tastes good?*

Nigel: *Earlonne I believe you have a relationship with hummus.*

Earlonne: *Yep, I hate hummus.*

[laughter]

Earlone: *What's your favorite snack to snack on here?*

Nigel: *Wait, didn't I just ask that?*

Earlone: *Oh, did you?*

Nigel: *I did.*

Earlone: *Oh, my bad.*

Nigel: Earlone, come on. I mean, seriously, we had just asked her that question, I'm going to be generous, eight seconds ago.

Earlone: Distracted by the hummus.

Nigel: [laughs]

Earlone: Hate hummus.

Amy: *Hi, my name is Amy and I'm calling from Austin, Texas. And my question is, what is it like to have a period in prison? Thank you.*

Earlone: We got a bunch of questions about....

Nigel: [chuckles] You mean period?

Earlone: Yes. We got a bunch of questions about periods.

Nigel: *A listener wants to know what it's like to have your period in prison.*

Lorraine: [laughs]

Nigel: *You can always pass on answering a question if you don't want to.*

Earlone: *Unh-huh, she got to answer this.*

Lorraine: *Well, it's uncomfortable most of the time for me at least. The cardboard applicators are very uncomfortable. Especially if you have a visit and then you have to strip out and all that, it can be--*

Earlone: *And you still have to strip out even if you're going through that at the moment?*

Lorraine: *Yes. If I have a visit, then yeah.*

Earlone: *Oh, when you have a gang of women together in an environment, do everyone's periods get on Bluetooth and all sync up?*

Lorraine: *[laughs] So usually with your cellie, yes. With your cellie, yes. You usually do get in sync with your cellie or someone you're really close to.*

Earlone: *So, here is only two-women cell.*

Lorraine: *Two-women cell.*

Earlone: *Okay. So, if you were in--*

Lorraine: *When I was up north with the eight-men cell, probably the people you were closest to or the strongest woman in the-- they always say the strongest personality.*

Earlone: *Strongest personality?*

Lorraine: *Mm-hmm.*

Earlone: *Okay.*

Nigel: I think some listeners are concerned that women don't have enough access to tampons and sanitary pads. And I have heard that from women, for sure. So, I'm not diminishing it.

Earlone: Right.

Nigel: But I swear at CIW, I have never seen so many pads and so many tampons. Every time I turned around, there was another damn bag of tampons.

Earlone: And women were finding all kind of creative things to do with the pads. I remember seeing them stuck to the top of women cell doors.

Nigel: Oh, yeah, like to prop the door open or keep it from slamming shut. And also in the cells too. Remember looking at the sinks?

Earlone: Yeah. And the sinks, they had pads on the top, they had them on the side, like on the corners. If, I guess, you bump into the corner, it ain't going to hurt as bad as that metal would hurt at that point.

Nigel: Once again, the prison workaround.

Earlone: The prison workaround. I remember seeing one lady had them. She had the pads on her shoulders, on her head, on her forehead.

Nigel: [laughs] Come on.

Earlone: She said she was going to go play football.

Nigel: [laughs] You had me for a minute there.

Earlone: We're going to take a quick break. When we get back, finding happiness in prison.

Nigel: And Orange Is the New Black.

Mo: *My name is Mo. I'm calling from Massachusetts. And my question is what makes people happy in prison? Not hopeful, but happy. Thanks, bye.*

Angel: *My happiness comes from doing for others and my family and visiting. And I have a daughter.*

Quesha: *Being able to get on the tablets and watch movies, connect with my family now, which is for free.*

Nigel: *When did you start being able to use a tablet in here?*

Quesha: *When I first got here, so within the week I got here, days actually.*

Nigel: *And that really changed things.*

Quesha: *Definitely. I was even talking to some people that had been in prison before and they was like, "What? Y'all got tablets? Y'all are spoiled compared to how we was in prison." So, I definitely came to prison at a good time. Still doesn't negate freedom, but it's a band-aid. Definitely a band-aid.*

Nigel: *That's a nice way to put it, a band-aid.*

Earlone: Tablets are a big deal in prison.

Nigel: Yeah, what can you do on them?

Earlone: Well, when I was in prison, we had the basic tablets, like all you could is read a book or play a videogame. But now, they have it to where you can do emails, you can pretty much FaceTime a person. You can call a person. It's not the internet. But they're able to communicate.

Nigel: That's amazing. That's change--

Earlone: No, definitely. And you don't have to stand in line to use the phone.

Nigel: But they're not at every prison. For example, San Quentin doesn't have them.

Earlonne: Right. I think it's only a couple of prisons that it hasn't been rolled out to.

Nigel: Mm-hmm.

Earlonne: San Quentin's supposed to get them this year.

Nigel: *What makes you happy in prison?*

Annmarie: *I say my education because nobody could take that from me. I could grasp as much as I want. And not only is it free, but it takes me to a whole other place. And I could get lost in a book, I could get lost in my homework. When I look up, "Oh, I'm still in prison." But when I look back down and I continue writing, I'm not. So, it takes me away.*

Earlonne: *What makes people happy in prison?*

Leroy: *I can't really say that I'm happy in prison. It makes it easy if one has support, one has financial stability, it makes it bearable. But happy, there's nothing happy about prison other than you're blessed enough to wake up every day.*

Cato: *Well, I find happiness with the peace that I have and just the joy that I have, despite me being in prison. I'm 40 years old with a life sentence. The reality of that is scary. I've seen friends commit suicide. I've seen friends die in here. I've seen friends get released just to die here. Prison is hard, but I'm okay, I have joy. I'm alive. I got all my senses. I can breathe, I can see. You can hear the birds, you can see the snow on the mountains.*

When we're in here in ourselves, we have a mirror probably about the size of this paper, and I just see a bigger picture. Whatever I'm feeling small about, I just don't feel it no more. It goes away, and that's joy. And that's something that you've got to get for yourself. Nobody is going to give you that. You can look at your cup as half empty or you can look at your cup as half full. But I'm blessed because I know that my cup is half full.

Kathy: *Hi, my name is Kathy Sanchez, and I'm calling from Crockett, California. I want to know how much Orange Is the New Black is accurate in a women's prison. Thank you.*

Earlonne: Kathy didn't specify whether she meant *Orange Is the New Black* book by our friend, Piper Kerman, or the TV show.

Nigel: So, we asked about both, and we got a few bites.

Earlonne: Eh, more like some nibbles.

Nigel: *Did you think the book was realistic about life in a woman's prison?*

Gladys: *Yeah.*

Nigel: *What about it?*

Gladys: *More county.*

Earlonne: *More the county jail aspect of it?*

Gladys: *Yeah. It seems to me more like the county. I was reading it in county, "Wow, this is a lot like being here in county." Not so much here. Prison is a big difference from county.*

Nigel: *What's the difference?*

Gladys: *We get to go out. I was in county for five years and didn't see the outdoors at all.*

Nigel: *As for the TV show, well, that's a hard question to get an answered in a prison.*

Earlonne: *Have you ever seen Orange Is the New Black, the TV show?*

Gladys: *No.*

Earlonne: *No Netflix in prison.*

Nigel: *That's right.*

Laurie: *My name is Laurie McConnell. I'm the senior librarian here at California Institution for Women, and I'm in my ninth year now.*

Earlonne: *Laurie's free staff. She works at the prison. So, she gets to go home at the end of the day.*

Nigel: *And then, she can watch whatever she wants.*

Earlonne: *Whatever she wants.*

Nigel: *Have you ever seen Orange Is the New Black?*

Laurie: *For about one episode and then it was like, just--*

Nigel: *What did you think of it? Did you think it got anything right?*

Laurie: *Probably, yeah, because I didn't really want to watch much of it. Some of the catty stuff that was going on and listening to all that, I was like, "Okay, I hear this all day." We hear that here. [laughs] I think women rather than fighting, we mostly hear the complaints. [laughs]*

Nigel: *So, you think at least from what you saw, it got it right?*

Laurie: *From the little bit I watched and then I told my husband, "Oh, it's too much talking. I can't listen anymore." [laughs]*

Nigel: *I was so glad we got to talk to the librarian at CIW.*

Earlone: *Why?*

Nigel: *Because there's nothing listeners ask us about more than books.*

Nigel: *I'm going to say the number one question we get from our listeners is about reading and libraries. People want to know what are the popular books in prison? What gets requested?*

Laurie: *J.R. Ward, Tom Clancy, Sarah Moss. Hobbit, all the Dune books, and Nora Roberts. Also, the urban fiction, that's super popular.*

Nigel: *How about if we don't go by authors, what genre do you think is the most popular?*

Laurie: *The vampire romance is big, but I don't know if that's actually a genre of its own. [chuckles] True crime is huge. We can't keep the Ann Rule books on the shelves. They are so tore up, it's bad. But they love those.*

Nigel: *What's the last book you took out of the library?*

Gladys: *Oh, The Rosie Project.*

Nigel: *What's that about?*

Gladys: *[laughs] It's about a man trying to find a mate. He's on the spectrum, kind of. It was hilarious. Everybody I tell, "You've got to read the book."*

Nigel: *What was the last book you took out of the library?*

Quesha: *The Mark.*

Nigel: *What is that about?*

Quesha: *It's a spiritual book. It's a Left Behind series from the movies. So, it's about being biochipped. At the end of the day, they're going to biochip you and how it would be if Satan ran*

the world. They're doing it in Sweden right now, where people have to be biochipped in order to buy and sell. This is fiction, but I think it's going to one day happen.

Nigel: *Would you be left behind or would you be gone?*

Quesha: *Had I not come to prison, probably.*

Nigel: *You would've been left behind?*

Quesha: *I would've been left behind. But now, I'm out of here.*

Earlonne: *Hello, Nikki. What's the last book you checked out of the library?*

Nikki: *Actually, I am currently reading Emotional Unavailability: Recognizing It, Understanding It, and Avoiding It.*

Earlonne: *And is there some good shit up in there?*

Nikki: *[laughs] Hell yeah. It makes me think back on all the unhealthy relationships I had. [laughs] And the impacts and I think it'll really help me to identify so in the future, I'm not going to be looking for some Mr. Romeo or something.*

Nigel: Earlonne, what was the last book you read when you were locked up?

Earlonne: I believe the last book I read while locked up was *The Alchemist*.

Nigel: I do remember you reading *The Alchemist*. And I never seen you like this, you got all misty eyed about it and you were like, "Nigel, you have to read this book. Everyone has to read this book."

Earlonne: Serious?

Nigel: Then, you kept saying, "Have you read it? Have you read it yet?" And, Earlonne, I've got to admit, I still haven't read it yet.

Earlonne: You haven't? I mean It was a—

Nigel: I've got two copies of it at home.

Earlonne, do you remember we spotted that box in the library? It was wooden and kind of the size of the shoebox and had a slit at the top.

Earlone: Yeah. That's a place where people can request books that aren't in the library yet. And Laurie can either use her budget to buy some new books each year, or maybe someone will donate them.

Nigel: So, we asked Laurie to read some of those requests out loud.

Laurie: *Scent of Darkness series by Christina Dodd. So that's romance. Tears of a Hustler. Author is Silk White, urban fiction. And The Chosen Ones, did I already say that one?*

Nigel: *Um-hmm.*

Laurie: *No. Okay. The Chosen Ones, Christina Dodd, romance. Another one is the Winslow series by Gilbert Morris. So, this is 40 books in the one series, so I have yet to put that on my list, but somebody wants it, so I will.*

Nigel: *Donation.*

Laurie: *Yeah. Oh, that'd be a great one. And we'll make room for it.*

Nigel: There are some books that, well, it doesn't matter how many times you request them--

Earlone: You're not going to get them.

Laurie: *The Game of Thrones, when it first came out as a series, it was super popular here. What is it, five, six books now? I don't even remember. But we have a banned list of certain things that we're not allowed to have. The Game of Thrones, Clash of Kings, there's a couple of pages in there that we're not allowed to have. So, the book, therefore in its entirety, has to be removed from the collection. So, if you want to read The Game of Thrones, you're going to have to skip book two. [chuckles]*

Nigel: *And what were the pages?*

Laurie: *417, 467 and 600. [chuckles]*

Earlone: We happen to have a copy of *Game of Thrones, Clash of the Kings* here, Nigel. Care to do the honors?

Nigel: Yeah, toss me the book. Okay, I'm going to page 417. "The guards took women off into the bushes at night and most seem to expect it and when--" Yeah. Okay. I think we get the picture pretty quickly.

Earlone: Ah, yeah.

Nigel: Ugh, one was a little girl. Yikes.

Earlone: All right. What about the next one? What about page 467?

Nigel: Okay, 467. "Aegon's been drinking and gets to touching her and might do a little touching meself. Finally, Josh reaches up under her skirt and she shrieks and drops her flagon and goes running off into the kitchen." Well, it would've ended right there. "Tosses the old man, another silver, rips the dress off the wench and takes her right there on the table--" "Wiggling like a rabbit, and she starts making noises." Why am I reading this?

Earlone: Uh.

Nigel: "I laughed so hard, the ale came out of my nose." Oof. I don't like anyone in this book. Why do people like this book so much? What was the last page?

Earlone: 600, I think.

Nigel: Okay. Here's 600. "Lady Tanda's daughter had surrendered her maidenhood to half a hundred shouting men behind the tanner shop." Uh, yeah.

Earlone: Damn.

Nigel: Yeah, I guess I get the picture.

Earlone: I guess the common thread in what you just read was it was a lot of violence against women.

Nigel: Yeah.

Earlone: That's probably the reason.

Nigel: And I said I didn't like these passages but I am 100% against banning any book, no matter what's in it.

Earlone: Right.

Nigel: *Do people donate good books?*

Laurie: *Yes. A lot of times, we do get good titles. A lot of times, it's stuff we already have because we try to stay pretty hip and in with the times with what the inmates request.*

Nigel: Clearly, there are some books that just are not going to fly in prison.

Laurie: *We did get donation of-- what was it called? The Hundred Ways to Escape a Situation or something written by a Navy seal. Somebody donated a couple copies of that once. That was*

hilarious. It was like how to escape from handcuffs. [laughs] So, of course that had to go in the confidential bin and be tossed.

Nigel: *I just want to say to listeners, it's great to donate books to the prison, but donate books that are good and that you would still want. It's not for cleaning out your closet.*

Laurie: *Thank you, because I think that's what people miss, is it's not necessarily like charity donations. Our patrons read. They are avid readers. They're smart readers. They're intellectuals. They don't want to be dumbed down. Give them quality material, they will read it. And they read nonfiction. Not everybody reads the vampire romance stuff. They want to read self-help books, not from the 60s and the 50s. Real material.*

Nigel: If you're interested in donating books to a California prison, just go to the show notes and we'll have instructions there.

Earlone: Nyge?

Nigel: Mm-hmm.

Earlone: Besides our Ear Hustle book-

[laughter]

Earlone: -what book would you donate to prison?

Nigel: Okay. I would like to donate one that really activates the imagination. So, it would be Calvino's *Invisible Cities*. How about you?

Earlone: I would probably donate *America's Conduct: Inner City Escort* by Larry Davis.

Nigel: Oh, yes. Good choice.

Earlone: It basically explains like gangs on the West Coast, how they were formed, why they were formed, the history of it. One reason is to become familiar with other people's experiences and perspectives which may be different from theirs. Another reason is to gain insight and knowledge into a carceral system as well as American politricks.

Nigel: Politricks?

[laughter]

Nigel: I get it.

Earlone: It's a cool book and I think for some people, it gives context into how they got into prison, and how the system works and sometimes how it doesn't work.

Nigel: Yeah, it's a good read.

Earlone: We want to thank all the listeners who sent us questions about life inside a women's prison, including Sonia Gonzalez, Liz Keeler, Haley Morgan, Amy Fletcher, Missouri Ammons.

Nigel: As well as Kathi Sanchez, Teresa Casado, Amy Schuff, Laura, Andrea Archer, and Sue Glew.

Earlone: Thanks also to the people at the California Institution for Women who answered them.

Nigel: That includes Katrina Hovie, Sarah Rothchild, Annemarie Harrison, Nicole Carroll, Michelle Cato, Gladys Ortiz, Holly Gustafson, Angel Navarro.

Earlone: And Quesha Williams, Leroy Robinson, Aerin Shamitz, Kier Anderson, Miccal Martinez, Cassidy Porter, and Loraine Serrano.

Nigel: Ear Hustle is produced by me, Nigel Poor, Earlone Woods, Rahsaan "New York" Thomas, Amy Standen, and Bruce Wallace.

Earlone: With help from Neroli Price, and Tony Tafoya inside of San Quentin. This episode was sound designed and engineered by me, Earlone Woods, with help from Fernando Arruda.

Nigel: It features music by Rudy Van, David Jassy, Antwan Williams, Earlone Woods, and Rhashiyd Zinnamon.

Earlone: Amy Standen edits the show, Shabnam Sigman is our managing producer, and Bruce Wallace, the new dad-

Nigel: With the cutest baby ever-

Earlone: Young Ollie-

Nigel: Oliver or Ollie-

Earlone: -is our executive producer. Welcome to this world, Ollie.

Nigel: We can't wait to meet you. Thanks to Acting Warden Jennifer Core. And for episode's approval, we're turning the mic over to our new friend down there at CIW.

Lieutenant Newborg: *Hi, I am Lieutenant Newborg, public information officer at the California Institution for Women, and I approve this episode.*

Earlone: This episode was made possible by The Just Trust, working to amplify the voices, vision, and power of communities that are transforming the justice system.

Nigel: And please don't forget to sign up for our newsletter, The Lowdown, where you can learn more about each episode and find out what the Ear Hustle Team is up to. Please subscribe at earhustlesq.com/newsletter. You can also find more about the show on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram @earhustlesq.

Earlone: Nigel?

Nigel: Yes.

Earlone: You're going to tell them to go in the comments and comment?

Nigel: Yeah, comment.

Earlone: Comment on our Instagram and our Twitter and our Facebook because I'm looking to get in, I'm looking into dive in.

Nigel: We'll comment back.

Earlone: And respond.

Nigel: Yes, yes, yes.

Earlone: Ear Hustle is a proud member of Radiotopia from PRX, a network of independent, creator-owned, listener-supported podcasts. Discover audio with vision at Radiotopia.fm. I'm Earlone Woods.

Nigel: I'm Nigel Poor.

In Unison: Thanks for listening.

Earlone: *Shit Kickers* used to be a real wanted and sought-after book in prison when I was coming through. *Shit Kickers*. Even the Youth Authority, people love *Shit Kickers*.

Nigel: I mean that's a genre, like cowboy stories?

Earlone: Yeah.

Laurie: How funny. I didn't know that at all.

Earlone: Yeah, seriously.

Laurie: I've learned something today. [laughs]

End

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