

## Guantánamo Diary Script for 4 to 16 Readers

### Reading 1

An escort team appeared in (REDACTED) in front of my cell.

“760 reservation!” they said.

“OK, just give me a second!” I put my clothes on and washed my face. My heart started to pound. I hated interrogation; I had gotten tired of being terrified all the time, living in constant fear day-in and day-out for the last thirteen months.

“Allah be with you! Keep your head on! They work for Satan!” yelled my fellow detainees to keep me together, as we always did when somebody got pulled for interrogation. I hated the sounds of the heavy metal chains; I can hardly carry them when they’re given to me. People were always getting taken from the block, and every time I heard the chains I thought it would be me. You never know what’s going to happen in the interrogation; people sometimes never came back to the block, they just disappeared. It happened to a Moroccan fellow detainee, and it would happen to me, as you’re going to learn, God willing.

When I entered the room in (REDACTED), it was crowded with (REDACTED).

“Hi!”

“Hi!”

“I’ve chosen (REDACTED) based on their experience and maturity. They’ll be assessing your case from now on. There are a couple of things that need to be completed in your case. For instance, you didn’t tell us everything about (REDACTED). He’s a very important guy.”

“First, I told you what I know about (REDACTED), even though I don’t need to be providing you information about anybody. We’re talking here about me. I need you to answer me one question: WHY AM I HERE? If you don’t give me the answer, you can consider me a non-existent detainee.” Later on I learned from my great lawyers (REDACTED) that the magic formulation of my request is a Petition for a Writ of Habeas Corpus. Obviously that phrase makes no sense to the average, mortal man like me. The average person would just say, “Why the hell are you locking me up?” I’m not a lawyer, but common sense dictates that after three years of

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interrogating me and depriving me of my liberty, the government at least owes me an explanation why it's doing so. What exactly is my crime?

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### READING 2

“It says in the Koran somebody who kills one soul is considered to have killed all of humanity,” said the French translator, trying to reach a breakthrough. I looked at him disrespectfully with the side of my face.

“I am not the guy you’re looking for!” I said in French, and I repeated it in plain English.

(REDACTED) started. “I am sure you’re against killing people. We’re not looking for you. We’re looking for those guys who are out there trying to hurt innocents.” He said this while showing me a bunch of ghostly pictures. I refused to look at them, and whenever he tried to put them under my sight I looked somewhere else. I didn’t even want to give him the satisfaction of having taken a look at them. “Look, (REDACTED) is cooperating, and he has a good chance of getting his sentence reduced to twenty-seven years — and (REDACTED) is really a bad person. Somebody like you needs only to talk for five minutes, and you’re a free man,” said (REDACTED). He was everything but reasonable. When I contemplated his statement, I was like, God, a guy who is cooperating is gonna be locked up for 27 more years, after which he won’t be able to enjoy any kind of life. What kind of harsh country is that?

You could tell that the interrogators were getting used to detainees who refused to cooperate after having cooperated for a while. Just as I was learning from other detainees how not to cooperate, the interrogators were learning from each other how to deal with non-cooperating detainees. The session was closed and I was sent back to my cell. I was satisfied with myself, since I now officially belonged to the majority, the non-cooperating detainees. I minded less being locked up unjustly for the rest of my life; what drove me crazy was to be expected to cooperate, too. You lock me up, I give you no information. And we both are cool.

He once said. “Still, because we’re Americans we treat you guys according to our high standards. Look at (REDACTED), we’re offering him the latest medical technology.”

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“You want just to keep him alive because he might have some Intels, and if he dies, they’re gonna die with him!” I responded.

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### READING 3

“Bring me to the court, and I’ll answer all your questions,” I would tell the team.

“There will be no court!” they would answer.

“Are you a Mafia? You kidnap people, lock them up, and blackmail them,” I said.

“You guys are a law enforcement problem,” said (REDACTED). “We cannot apply the conventional law to you. We need only circumstantial evidence to fry you.”

“I’ve done nothing against your country, have I?”

“You’re a part of the big conspiracy against the U.S.!” said (REDACTED).

“You can pull this charge on anybody! What have I done?”

“I don’t know, you tell me!”

“Look, you kidnap me from my home in Mauritania, not from a battlefield in Afghanistan, because you suspected me of having been part of the Millennium Plot — which I am not, as you know by now. So what’s the next charge? It looks to me as if you want to pull any shit on me.”

“I don’t want to pull any shit on you. I just wish you had access to the same reports as I do!” said (REDACTED).

“I don’t care what the reports say. I’d just like you to take a look at the reports from January 2000 linking me to the Millennium Plot. And you now know that I’m not a part of it, after the cooperation of (REDACTED)

“I don’t think that you are a part of it, nor do I believe that you know (REDACTED)” But I do know that you know people who know (REDACTED)” said (REDACTED). “I don’t know, but I don’t see the problem if it is the case,” I replied, “Knowing somebody is not a crime, no matter who he is.”

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### READING 4

“According to my experience, you will cooperate. We are stronger than you, and have more resources,” (REDACTED) said. (REDACTED) never wanted me to know his name, but he got busted when one of his colleagues mistakenly called him by his name. He doesn’t know that I know it, but, well, I do.

(REDACTED) grew worse with every day passing by. He started to lay out my case. He began with the story of (REDACTED), and me having recruited him for the September 11 attack.

“Why should he lie to us,” (REDACTED) said.☒

“I don’t know.”☒

“All you have to say is, ‘I don’t remember, I don’t know, I’ve done nothing.’ You think you’re going to impress an American jury with these words? In the eyes of the Americans, you’re doomed. Just looking at you in an orange suit, chains, and being Muslim and Arabic is enough to convict you,” (REDACTED) said.

“That is unjust!”

☒ “We know that you are a criminal.”☒

“What have I done?”

☒ “You tell me; otherwise you’ll never see the light of day. If you don’t cooperate, we’re going to put you in a hole and wipe your name out of our detainee database.” I was so terrified because I knew that even though he couldn’t make such a decision on his own, he had the complete back-up of a high government level. He didn’t speak from thin air.

“I don’t care where you take me, just do it.”

I figured I wouldn’t degrade myself and lower myself to his level, so I didn’t answer him. When I failed to give him the answer he wanted to hear, he made me stand up, with my back bent because my hands were shackled to my feet and waist and locked to the floor. (REDACTED) turned the temperature control all the way down, and made sure that the guards maintained me in that situation until he decided otherwise. He used to start a fuss before going to lunch, so he could keep me hurt during his lunch, which took at least two to three hours. (REDACTED) likes his

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food; he never missed his lunch. I always wondered how (REDACTED) could possibly have passed the Army's fitness test. But I realized he was in the Army for a reason: he was good at being inhumane.

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### READING 5

The torture was growing day by day. The guards on the block actively participated in the process. The (DETENTION) tell them what to do with the detainees when they came back to the block. I had guards banging on my cell to prevent me from sleeping. They cursed me for no reason. They repeatedly woke me, unless my interrogators decided to give me a break. I never complained to my interrogators about the issue because I knew they planned everything with the guards.

As promised, (DETENTION) pulled me early in the day. Lonely in my cell, I was terrified when I heard the guards carrying the heavy chains and shouting at my door “Reservation!” My heart started to pound heavily because I always expected the worst. But the fact that I wasn’t allowed to see the light made me “enjoy” the short trip between my freakin’ cold cell and the interrogation room. It was just a blessing when the warm GTMO sun hit me. I felt life sneaking back into every inch of my body. I would always get this fake happiness, though only for a very short time. It’s like taking narcotics.

“How you been?” said one of the Puerto Rican escorting guards in his weak English.

“I’m OK, thanks, and you?”

“No worry, you gonna back to your family,” he said. When he said that I couldn’t help breaking in (DETENTION).

Lately, I’d become so vulnerable. What was wrong with me? Just one soothing word in this ocean of agony was enough to make me cry. (DETENTION) we had a complete Puerto Rican division. They were different than other Americans; they were not as vigilant and unfriendly. Sometimes, they took detainees to shower (DETENTION). Everybody liked them. But they got in trouble with those responsible for the camps because of their friendly and humane approach to detainees. I can’t objectively speak about the people from Puerto Rico because I haven’t met enough; however, if you ask me, Have you ever seen a bad Puerto Rican guy? My answer would be no.

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### READING 6

The new (REDACTED) pulled the metal chair away and left me on the floor.

“Now, tell us about (REDACTED)!”

“No, that’s passé,” I said.

“Yes, you’re right. So if it is passé, talk about it, it won’t hurt,” the new (REDACTED) said.

“No.”

“Then today, we’re gonna teach you about great American sex. Get up!” said (REDACTED). I stood up in the same painful position as I had every day for about seventy days. I would rather follow the orders and reduce the pain that would be caused when the guards come to play; the guards used every contact opportunity to beat the hell out of the detainee. “Detainee tried to resist,” was the “Gospel truth” they came up with, and guess who was going to be believed? “You’re very smart, because if you don’t stand up it’s gonna be ugly,” (REDACTED).

As soon as I stood up, the two (REDACTED) took off their blouses, and started to talk all kind of dirty stuff you can imagine, which I minded less. What hurt me most was them forcing me to take part in a sexual threesome in the most degrading manner. What many (REDACTED) don’t realize is that men get hurt the same as women if they’re forced to have sex, maybe more due to the traditional position of the man. Both (REDACTED) stuck on me, literally one on the front and the other older (REDACTED) stuck on my back rubbing (REDACTED) whole body on mine. At the same time they were talking dirty to me, and playing with my sexual parts. I am saving you here from quoting the disgusting and degrading talk I had to listen to from noon or before until 10 p.m. when they turned me over to (REDACTED), the new character you’ll soon meet.

I was just wishing to pass out so I didn’t have to suffer, and that was really the main reason for my hunger strike; I knew people like these don’t get impressed by hunger strikes. Of course they didn’t want me to die, but they understand there are many steps before one dies. “You’re not gonna die, we’re gonna feed you up your ass,” said (REDACTED).

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### READING 7

I have never felt as violated in myself as I had since the DoD Team started to torture me to get me admit to things I haven't done. You, Dear Reader, could never understand the extent of the physical, and much more the psychological, pain people in my situation suffered, no matter how hard you try to put yourself in another's shoes. Had I done what they accused me of, I would have relieved myself on day one. But the problem is that you cannot just admit to something you haven't done; you need to deliver the details, which you can't when you hadn't done anything. It's not just, "Yes, I did!" No, it doesn't work that way: you have to make up a complete story that makes sense to the dumbest dummies. One of the hardest things to do is to tell an untruthful story and maintain it, and that is exactly where I was stuck. Of course I didn't want to involve myself in devastating crimes I hadn't done — especially under the present circumstances, where the U.S. government was jumping on every Muslim and trying to pin any crime on him.

"We are going to do this with you every single day, day in, day out, unless you speak about (REDACTED) and admit to your crimes," said (REDACTED).

"You have to provide us a smoking gun about another friend of yours. Something like that would really help you," (REDACTED) said in a later session. "Why should you take all of this, if you can stop it?"

Humiliation, sexual harassment, fear, and starvation was the order of the day until around 10 p.m. Interrogators made sure that I had no clue about the time, but nobody is perfect; their watches always revealed it. I would be using this mistake later, when they put me in dark isolation.

"I'm gonna send you to your cell now, and tomorrow you'll experience even worse," said (REDACTED) after consulting with (REDACTED) colleagues. I was happy to be relieved; I just wanted to have a break and be left alone. I was so worn out, and only God knew how I looked.

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### READING 8

“Bring the motherfucker back!” shouted (REDACTED), a celebrity among the torture squad. He was about (REDACTED), about six feet tall, athletically built, and (REDACTED). (REDACTED) was aware that he was committing heavy war crimes, and so he was ordered by his bosses to cover himself. But if there is any kind of basic justice, he will get busted through his bosses; we know their names and their ranks.

When I got to know (REDACTED) more and heard him speaking I wondered, How could a man as smart as he was possibly accept such a degrading job, which surely is going to haunt him the rest of his life? For the sake of fairness and honesty, I must say that (REDACTED) spoke convincingly to me, although he had no information and was completely misled. Maybe he had few choices, because many people in the Army come from poor families, and that’s why the Army sometimes gives them the dirtiest job. I mean theoretically (REDACTED) could have refused to commit crimes of war, and he might even get away with it. Later on I discussed with some of my guards why they executed the order to stop me from praying, since it’s an unlawful order.

“I could have refused, but my boss would have given me a shitty job or transferred me to a bad place. I know I can go to hell for what I have done to you,” one of them told me.

The room was as dark as ebony. (REDACTED) started playing a track very loudly — I mean very loudly. The song was, “Let the bodies hit the floor.” I might never forget that song. At the same time, (REDACTED) turned on some colored blinkers that hurt the eyes. “If you fucking fall asleep, I’m gonna hurt you,” he said. I had to listen to the song over and over until next morning. I started praying.

“Stop the fuck praying,” he said loudly. I was by this time both really tired and terrified, and so I decided to pray in my heart. Every once in a while (REDACTED) gave me water. I drank the water because I was only scared of being hurt. I really had no real feeling for time.

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To the best of my knowledge, (REDACTED) sent me back to my cell around 5 a.m. in the morning.

“Welcome to hell,” said the (REDACTED) guard when I stepped inside the block. I didn’t answer, and (REDACTED) wasn’t worth it. But I was like, “I think you deserve hell more than I do because you’re working dutifully to get there!”

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### READING 9

I still had nothing in my cell. Most of the time I recited the Koran silently. The rest of the time I was talking to myself and thinking over and over about my life and the worst-case scenarios that could happen to me. I kept counting the holes of the cage I was in. There are about four thousand one hundred holes.

I started to enrich my vocabulary. I took a paper and started to write words I didn't understand, and (REDACTED) explained them to me. If there is anything positive about (REDACTED) it is his rich vocabulary. I don't remember asking him about a word he couldn't explain to me. English was his only real language, though he claimed to be able to speak Farsi. "I wanted to learn French, but I hated the way they speak and I quit," he said.

(REDACTED) wants to see you in a couple of days," (REDACTED) said. I was so terrified; at this point I was just fine without his visit.

"He is welcome," I said. I started to go to the toilet relentlessly. My blood pressure went crazily high. I was wondering what the visit would be like. But thank God the visit was much easier than what I thought. (REDACTED) came, escorted by (REDACTED). He was, as always, practical and brief.

"I am very happy with your cooperation. Remember when I told you that I preferred civilized conversations? I think you have provided 85% of what you know, but I am sure you're gonna provide the rest," he said, opening an ice bag with some juice.

"Oh, yeah, I'm also happy!" I said, forcing myself to drink the juice just to act as if I were normal. But I wasn't: I was like, 85% is a big step coming out of his mouth. (REDACTED) advised me to keep cooperating.

"I brought you this present," he said, handing me a pillow. Yes, a pillow. I received the present with a fake overwhelming happiness, and not because I was dying to get a pillow. No, I took the pillow as a sign of the end of the physical torture. We have a joke back home about a man who stood bare naked on the street. When

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someone asked him, “How can I help you?” He replied, “Give me shoes.” And that was exactly what happened to me. All I needed was a pillow! But it was something: alone in my cell, I kept reading the tag over and over.

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### READING 10

The guards wanted to be baptized with the names of characters in the *Star Wars* movies. “From now on we are the (REDACTED,) and that’s what you call us. Your name is Pillow,” (REDACTED) said. I eventually learned from the books that (REDACTED) are sort of Good Guys who fight against the Forces of Evil. So for the time being I was forced to represent the Forces of Evil, and the guards the Good Guys.

“My job is to make you see the light,” said (REDACTED), addressing me for the first time when he was watching me eating my meal. Guards were not allowed to talk to me or to each other, and I couldn’t talk to them. But (REDACTED) was not a by-the-book guy. He thought more than any other guard, and his goal was to make his country victorious: the means didn’t matter.

“Yes sir,” I answered, without even understanding what he meant. I thought about the literal sense of the light I hadn’t seen in a long time, and I believed he wanted to get me cooperating so I could see the daylight. But (REDACTED) meant the figurative sense. (REDACTED) always yelled at me and scared me, but he never hit me. He illegally interrogated me several times, which is why I called him (REDACTED). (REDACTED) wanted me to confess to many wild theories he heard the interrogators talking about. Furthermore, he wanted to gather knowledge about terrorism and extremism. I think his dream in life was to become an interrogator. What a hell of a dream!

(REDACTED) is an admitted Republican, and hates the Democrats, especially Bill Clinton. He doesn’t believe that the U.S. should interfere in other countries’ business, and instead should focus more on internal issues — but if any country or group attacks the U.S., it should be destroyed ruthlessly.

“Fair enough,” I said. I just wanted him to stop talking. He is the kind of guy who never stops when he gets started. Gosh, he gave me an earache! When (REDACTED) first started talking to me I refused to answer, because all I was allowed to say was, “Yes, sir, No Sir, Need Medics, Need Interrogators.” But he wanted a conversation with me.

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### READING 11

“You are my enemy,” (REDACTED) said.

“Yes, Sir.”

“So let’s talk as enemy to enemy,” (REDACTED) said. He opened my cell and offered me a chair. (REDACTED) did the talking for the most part. He was talking about how great the U.S. is, and how powerful; “America is this, American is that, We Americans are so and so . . .” I was just wondering and nodding slightly. Every once in a while I confirmed that I was paying attention, “Yes, sir . . . Really? . . . Oh, I didn’t know . . . You’re right . . . I know . . .” During our conversations, he sneakily tried to make me admit to things I hadn’t really done.

“What was your role in September 11?”

“I didn’t participate in September 11.”

“Bullshit!” he screamed madly.

I realized it would be no good for my life to look innocent, at least for the time being. So I said, “I was working for al Qaeda in Radio Telecom.”

He seemed to be happier with a lie. “What was your rank?” he kept digging.

“I would be a Lieutenant.”

“I know you’ve been in the U.S.,” he tricked me. This is a big one and I couldn’t possibly lie about it. I could vaguely swallow having done a lot of things in Afghanistan, because Americans cannot confirm or disconfirm it. But the Americans could check right away whether or not I had been in their own country.

“I really haven’t been in the U.S.,” I answered, though I was ready to change my answer when I had no options.

“You’ve been in Detroit,” he sardonically smiled.

I smiled back. “I really haven’t.”

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### READING 12

Before prison, I didn't know the difference between a pawn and the rear end of a knight, nor was I really a big gamer. But I found in chess a very interesting game, especially the fact that a prisoner has total control over his pieces, which gives him some confidence back. When I started playing, I played very aggressively in order to let out my frustration, which was really not very good chess playing; (REDACTED) was my first mentor and (REDACTED) beat me in my first game ever. But the next game was mine, and so were all the other games that followed. Chess is a game of strategy, art, and mathematics. It takes deep thinking, and there is no luck involved. You get rewarded or punished for your actions.

(REDACTED) brought me a chessboard so I could play against myself. When the guards noticed my chessboard, they all wanted to play me, and when they started to play me, they always won. The strongest among the guards was (REDACTED). He taught me how to control the center. Moreover, (REDACTED) brought me some literature, which helped decidedly in honing my skills. After that the guards had no chance to defeat me.

"That is not the way I taught you to play chess," (REDACTED) commented angrily when I won a game.

"What should I do?"

"You should build a strategy, and organize your attack! That's why the fucking Arabs never succeed."

"Why don't you just play the board?" I wondered. "Chess is not just a game," he said.

"Just imagine you're playing against a computer!"

"Do I look like a computer to you?"

"No."

The next game I tried to build a strategy in order to let (REDACTED) win.

"Now you understand how chess must be played," he commented. I knew (REDACTED) had issues dealing with defeat, and so I didn't enjoy playing him because I didn't feel comfortable practicing my newly acquired knowledge.

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(REDACTED) believes there are two kinds of people: white Americans and the rest of the world. White Americans are smart and better than anybody. I always tried to explain things to him by saying, for instance, “If I were you,” or “If you were me,” but he got angry and said, “Don’t you ever dare to compare me with you, or compare any American with you!” I was shocked, but I did as he said. After all, I didn’t have to compare myself with anybody. (REDACTED) hated the rest of the world, especially the Arabs, Jews, French, Cubans, and others. The only other country he mentioned positively was England.

After one game of chess with him, he flipped the board.

“Fuck your Nigger chess, this is Jewish chess,” he said.

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### READING 13

In (REDACTED) the U.S. Army released the first letter from my family. It was sent through International Committee of the Red Cross. My family wrote it months before, in July 2003. It had been 815 days since I was kidnapped from my house and had all contacts with my family forcibly broken. I had been sending many letters to my family since I arrived in Cuba, but to no avail. In Jordan I was forbidden even to send a letter.

(REDACTED) was the one who handed me that historical piece of paper, which read:

*Nouakchott, (REDACTED)*

*In the Name of God the most Merciful.*

*Peace be with you and God's mercy.*

*After my greeting I inform you of my wellbeing and that of the rest of your family. We hope you are the same way. My health situation is OK. I still keep up with my schedule with the Doctors. I feel I am getting better. And the family is OK. As I mentioned everybody sends his greeting to you. Beloved son! As of now we have received three letters from you. And this is our second reply. The neighbors are well and they send their greetings. At the end of this letter I renew my greeting.*

*Peace be with you.*

*Your Mom \_\_\_\_\_*

I couldn't believe that after all I had been through I was holding a letter from my mom. I smelled the odor of a letter that had touched the hand of my mom and other members of my beloved family. The emotions in my heart were mixed: I didn't know what to do, laugh or cry. I ultimately ended up doing both. I kept reading the short message over and over. I knew it was for real, not like the fake one I got one year ago. But I couldn't respond to the letter because I was still not allowed to see the ICRC.

Meanwhile, I kept getting books in English that I enjoyed reading, most of them Western literature. I still remember one book called *The Catcher in the Rye*

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that made me laugh until my stomach hurt. It was such a funny book. I tried to keep my laughter as low as possible, pushing it down, but the guards felt something.

“Are you crying?” one of them.

“No, I’m alright,” I responded. It was my first unofficial laughter in the ocean of tears. Since interrogators are not professional comedians, most of the humor they came up with was a bunch of lame jokes that really didn’t make me laugh, but I would always force an official smile.

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### READING 14

(REDACTED) led me outside the building; I saw (REDACTED) looking away from me, shy that I see his face. If you deal with somebody for so long behind a face cover, that is how you know him (REDACTED). But now if he (REDACTED) takes off the face cover you have to deal with his features, and that is a completely different story for both sides. I could tell the guards were uncomfortable to show me their faces.

(REDACTED) put it bluntly. "If I catch you looking at me, I'm gonna hurt you."

"Don't you worry, I'm not dying to see your face." Through time I had built a perception about the way everybody looked, but imagination was far from the reality.

(REDACTED) prepared a small table with a modest breakfast. I was scared as hell; for one, (REDACTED) never took me outside the building, and for two, I was not used to my guards' "new" faces. I tried to act casually but my shaking gave me away.

"What's wrong with you," (REDACTED) asked.

"I am very nervous. I am not used to this environment."

"But I meant it for your good," (REDACTED) said. (REDACTED) was a very official person; if (REDACTED) interrogates you, she does it officially, and if (REDACTED) eats with you, (REDACTED) does it as part of (REDACTED) job, and that was cool. I was just waiting for the breakfast to be done so I could go back to my cell, because (REDACTED) had brought me the movie *King Henry V* by Shakespeare.

"(REDACTED), may I watch the movie more than once?" I asked. "I am afraid I am not going to understand it right away."

"Yes, you can watch it as many times as you wish."

When (REDACTED) brought the TV (REDACTED) briefed the guards to let me watch a movie only once, and then the party is over. "You're allowed to watch your movie only once, but as far as we're concerned you can watch it as many time as you wish, as long as you don't tell your interrogator about it. We really don't care," (REDACTED) told me later.

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“No, if (REDACTED) said so, I am going to stick with it. I am not gonna cheat,”  
I told him.

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### READING 15

But I did ask for one thing.

“(REDACTED), can I keep my water bottle in my cell, and drink whenever I choose?” I was just tired of the lack of sleep; as soon as I closed my eyes, the heavy metal door opened and I had to drink another bottle of water. I knew (REDACTED) was not the right person to ask to take the initiative; (REDACTED) had literally been following the orders of (REDACTED). But to my surprise, (REDACTED) came the next day and briefed the guards that the water bottle now belonged in my cell. You cannot imagine how happy I was to be able to decide the time and the amount of water I could drink. People who have never have been in such situation cannot really appreciate the freedom of drinking water whenever they want, however much they want.

Then, in July 2004, I found a copy of the Holy Koran in my box of laundry. When I saw the Holy Koran beneath the clothes I felt bad, thinking I had to steal it in order to save it. But I took the Koran to my cell, and nobody ever asked me why I did so. Nor did I bring it up on my own. I had been forbidden all kinds of religious rituals, so I figured a copy of the Koran in my cell would not have made my interrogators too happy. More than that, lately the religious issue had become very delicate. The Muslim chaplain of GTMO was arrested and another Muslim soldier was charged with treason—oh, yes, *treason*. Many Arabic and religious books were banned, and books teaching the English language were also banned. I sort of understood religious books being banned. “But why English learning books?” I asked (REDACTED).

“Because Detainees pick up the language quickly and understand the guards.”

“That’s so communist!” I said.

## Guantánamo Diary Script for 4 to 16 Readers

### READING 16

“My job is to help your rehabilitation,” one of my guards told me in the summer of 2004. The government realized that I was deeply injured and needed some real rehab. From the moment he started to work as my guard in July 2004, (REDACTED) related to me right; in fact, he hardly talked to anybody beside me. He used to put his mattress right in front of my cell door, and we started to talk about all kinds of topics like old friends. We talked about history, culture, politics, religion, women, everything but current events. The guards were taught that I was a detainee who would try to outsmart them and learn current events from them, but the guards are my witnesses, I didn’t try to outsmart anybody, nor was I interested in current events at the time because they only made me sick.

Before (REDACTED) left he brought me a couple of souvenirs, and with (REDACTED) and (REDACTED) dedicated a copy of Steve Martin’s *The Pleasure of My Company* to me.

(REDACTED) wrote, “Pill, over the past 10 months I have gotten to know you and we have become friends. I wish you good luck, and I am sure I will think of you often. Take good care of yourself.”

(REDACTED) wrote, “Pillow, good luck with your situation. Just remember Allah always has a plan. I hope you think of us as more than just guards. I think we all became friends.

(REDACTED) wrote, “19 April 2005. Pillow: For the past 10 months I have done my damndest to maintain a Detainee–Guard relationship. At times I have failed: it is almost impossible not to like a character like yourself. Keep your faith. I’m sure it will guide you in the right direction.”

I used to debate faith with one of the new guards. (REDACTED) was raised as a conservative Catholic. He was not really religious, but I could tell he was his family’s boy. I kept trying to convince him that the existence of God is a logical necessity.

“I don’t believe in anything unless I see it,” he told me.

## **Guantánamo Diary Script for 4 to 16 Readers**

“After you’ve seen something, you don’t need to believe it,” I responded. “For instance, if I tell you I have a cold Pepsi in my fridge, either you believe it or you don’t. But after seeing it, you know, and you don’t need to believe me.”

Personally, I do have faith. And I picture him, and these other guards, as good friends if we would meet under different circumstances. May God guide them and help them make the right choices in life.