



THE OPRAH
MAGAZINE

**“I’m always
amazed by
how easy it
is to impact
another life”**

31 WAYS YOU
CAN MAKE
A SERIOUS
DIFFERENCE

**Can you eat your
way happy?**

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THAT’LL CHANGE
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Makeup for Grown-ups!

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO AGE GORGEOUSLY



Beyond These BARS

For men and women in solitary confinement, the world shrinks to a tiny cell, with rare opportunities to look into another human's eyes. This month O joins the efforts of an organization that aims to break through that profound isolation.

AFTER ANTHONY RAY HINTON was sentenced to death for two murders he didn't commit, he was led to a cell of five by seven feet—roughly the dimensions of a king-size mattress—where he would spend nearly 30 years. Except for precious visiting days, most of his conversations were held through a mesh window in his door or a slot just large enough to fit a Styrofoam tray and its contents. For 15 minutes daily, he had a chance to see the sky, but only through an outdoor cage. When Hinton was exonerated and released in 2015, the first words he spoke in fresh air would become the title of his memoir, a 2018 Oprah's Book Club pick: "The sun does shine." But he still struggles with darkness.

"Solitary confinement is designed to break you," he says. "I saw men go in normal, and by the time they came out, they'd just lost what little mind they had left. In a sense, I will be in solitary confinement for perhaps the rest of my life."

The first month Hinton was home, he felt safest sleeping in the bathroom, a space he realized was about the size of his cell. Even now he's sometimes compelled to use his imagination to escape, the way he did on death row to survive. "I told my mind, *I need you to make this cell as big as you possibly can*," he says. "I imagined playing tennis, traveling, having tea with the queen of England. But not every person in solitary confinement can use their mind like that." After lights-out, when he heard men crying in their cells, Hinton tried to help them visualize freedom: Seeing the ocean. Flying to New York. Eating a good meal.

Long-term isolation and sensory deprivation can cause such severe

psychological damage—depression, cognitive impairment, psychosis—that a UN torture expert has called for a worldwide ban on solitary. In 2006, the artist and activist Laurie Jo Reynolds and a group of her fellow artists and poets were so appalled by the conditions at Tamms Correctional Center, an Illinois super-maximum-security prison, that they began sending poems and letters to each person inside, all held in isolation. "In the replies, a lot of them described themselves as ghosts, as if they didn't exist," says Reynolds. The group wanted their correspondents to have something meaningful to look at as well, so they mailed forms asking them to describe the images they wanted to see most. The resulting flood of handwritten requests was "stunning" in its variety, Reynolds says: One man asked for a photo of his aunt's house, another for a Puerto Rican flag. One wanted a "love-sick clown, holding an old-fashioned feather pen."

Tamms closed in 2013, but the exchange continues: The Photo Requests from Solitary site posts descriptions of images dreamed up by prisoners in six states and invites anyone to create them. There are requests for flowers, landmarks, imaginary scenes, some accompanied by instructions for art direction. "It's a collaboration between the person who is incarcerated and the photographer," says Reynolds. "That's almost as important as the photo itself: You're giving someone who feels invisible an image that says 'I heard what you needed to see.'"

O asked some photographers we admire to fulfill a few prisoners' requests; on these pages are the results of their collaborations.

Request #152

Name: Lori

Location:

Pennsylvania

Her vision, in her

words: "An image of an African American woman behind bars, standing sideways, head back, arms flared in back of her—with a mist of her past shedding off of her. Maybe the girl could be in color, or the bars and walls could fade into color, or the bars, walls, and mist could be in grayish hues.

My past: prostitution, drugs, rape, molestation, and all the emotions that come with them."

Specific

instructions:

"Ugly grayish hues for everything except the woman, who is colorful and beautiful even in prison. Some mist must remain on the woman to show she's shedding it/her past."

Photographer's notes:

"There was more pressure than usual with this shoot because we were executing someone's personal, metaphorical vision yet couldn't ask her opinion. I encouraged the model, Tanaye, to do the pose in a strong and powerful way—chin up, long body—and to not be afraid to take up space. She was happy to work as long as it took to get the proper image. Everyone on set seemed to understand that this was something we had to get right."

—Allie Holloway

ALLIE HOLLOWAY FASHION STYLING: STACEY JONES HAIR AND MAKEUP:
STEPHEN HUDSON/REPRESENTED BY KENBARBOZA.COM PROP STYLING: ERIN LARK GRAY



Request #168

Name: Nicodemo

Location: Pennsylvania

His vision, in his words:

"Looking at the ocean and skyline from the boardwalk, just when it's starting to get dark outside."

Specific instructions:

"Make it real."

Photographer's notes:

"For me, the greatest joy in this life is being able to see the world around me. It's humbling to recognize that Nicodemo made the impossible decision of choosing only one image to represent it. Being tasked to create

that image for another person immersed me in my surroundings in a new way. I don't think I have ever walked so thoughtfully down a boardwalk in my life, looking around me with eyes that weren't mine, seeing the light hit the waves in new ways."

—Timothy Mulcare





Request #55

Name: Darrell

Location: Illinois

His vision, in his words:

"This might seem like a crazy request, but I would like a picture of people from the city. It's been a long time since I've seen someone from home. Nothing special, just...a lot of

people, most likely downtown rush hour."

Specific instructions:

"Just want to thank him or her in advance for taking time out of their day to do something for us guys in need. Thank you, God bless."

Photographer's notes:

"I tried to think about what I'd want to see if I hadn't been in the city for a long time. To capture the feeling of sidewalks crowded with strangers, I chose the corner of Michigan Avenue and Randolph Street because it's a

hub of activity, with people leaving work, tourists exploring Millennium Park. For a few moments, this typically stressful and congested place felt beautiful."

—Kristen Norman

Request #191

Name: Alton

Location:
Pennsylvania

**His vision, in
his words:**

“The complete view
from the top of the
World Trade Center
(if possible—if not,
the best view).”

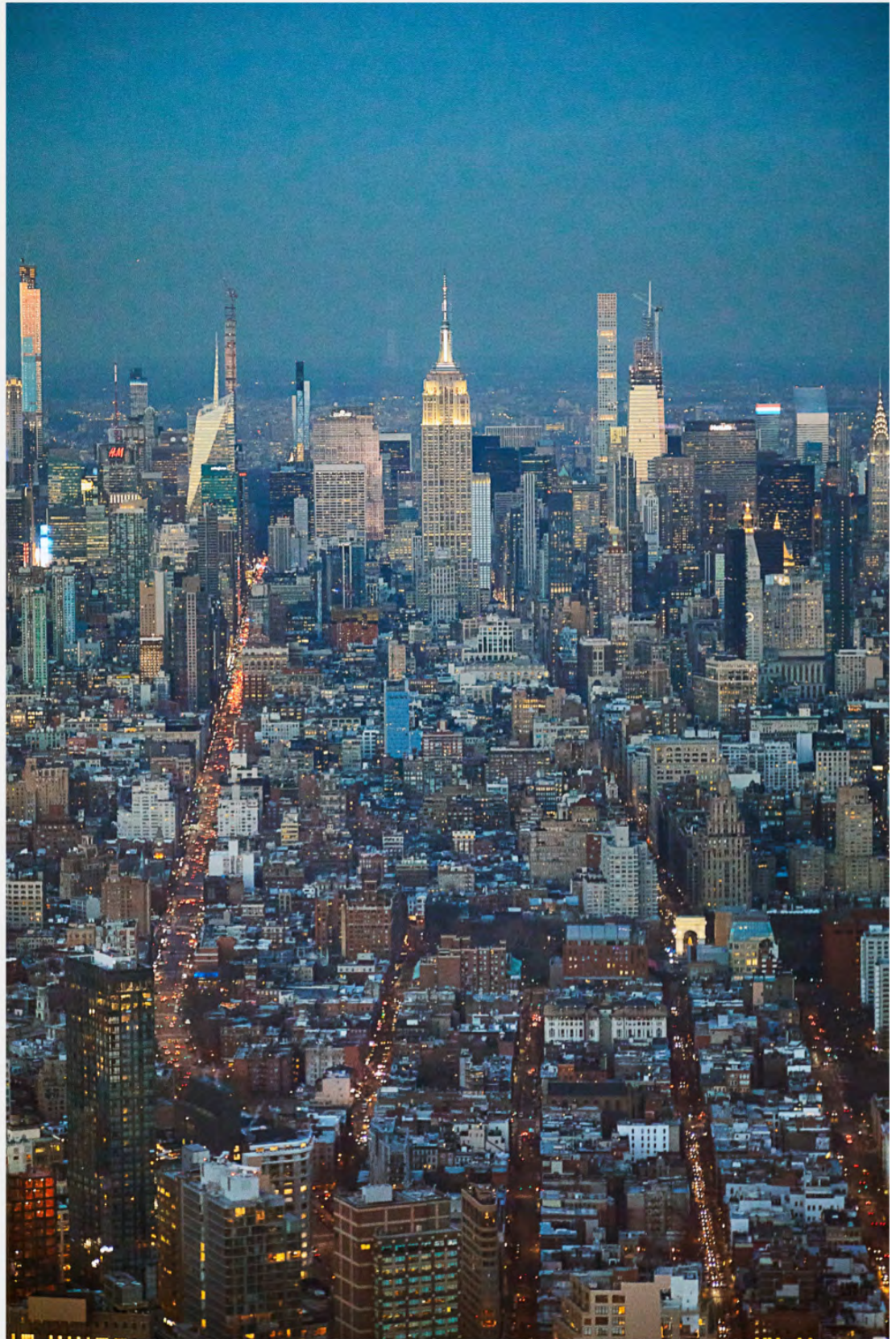
Specific instructions:

No, just thank him
or her kindly.

Photographer's notes:

“I thought it would
be nice to capture
the sun going down,
so at first, that’s
what I did. But after
I got the shots,
I thought maybe I
was doing Alton
a disservice because
I wasn’t capturing
what he wanted
to see. He asked for
the best view, not the
sunset. So I stayed
and kept shooting.”

—Philip Friedman





Request #207

Name: Yafis ("Boo-Rock")

Location: Pennsylvania

His vision, in his words:

"I would like to see a photograph of the superhero Black Panther with the Philadelphia skyline behind him or the street sign of the

block where I lived (65th Street and Greenway Avenue)."

Specific instructions:

"Only to know that they are greatly appreciated for making this photograph for me. THANK YOU!"

Photographer's notes:

"With this image, I wanted to evoke strength and pride. The sun streaming into the shot really brought everything to life. People were driving by doing the 'Wakanda Forever' pose, and it reminded

us of how powerful that movie was, and why Yafis may have wanted this symbol as his photo."

—Allie Holloway

To fulfill a photo request or donate to the nonprofit Solitary Watch, which runs the project, visit photo.requestsfromsolitary.org.