

Interviewer: So people who are watching will know what we're doing, I'll say a few things they'd not heard but just, and then I'll start with general question about the first arrest.

- Okay.

Interviewer: And then we can just go from there. So--

- Okay, whenever you're ready.

Interviewer: Okay, good afternoon. We are very grateful to you for joining us and participating in the Witness to Guantanamo Project. We invite you to speak of your experiences at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. We are hoping to collect your story and the story of other men who have been there and who have been, and the testimony of all the men who have been brought to Guantanamo.

- Okay.

Interviewer: We are creating an archive of the stories so that people in America and in the world will have a better understanding of what you and others have experienced. Future generations must know what happened, and by telling your story, you're contributing to history. We appreciate your courage and your willingness to speak to us. If at any time you want to take a break, just let us know, and we'll take a break. And if there's anything you say that you would like to remove, just tell us and we'll remove it. Okay, and we're going to just start with a few basic questions, just to have it on tape. The first question. Your name?

- My name's Shafiq Rasul.

- And your country of origin?

- The UK. England, UK.

- And your hometown?

- Tipton.

- And your date of birth?

- 15th of April, 1977.

- And your age then?

- 32.

- And your nationality?

- British.

- What languages do you speak?

- Mainly English, but I speak Urdu and Punjabi as well.

- And your religion?

- Muslim.

- And marital status?

- Married.

- With children?

- Yes, one daughter.

Interviewer: And your education?

- I went to university, but I didn't finish.

Interviewer: Okay, and where were you living before you were picked up?

- In Tipton.

- In Tipton?

Interviewer: And now you're living--

- Back here--

- In Tipton?

- Yeah.

Interviewer: And the date of arrival to Guantanamo, and when you left Guantanamo?

- Is mid-January 2002, and we left, I think, it was the 7th of March, 2004.

Interviewer: Okay, so we'd like to begin by just asking you if you could tell us and describe in as many details as possible how it was when you were first arrested, up to the time you were brought to Guantanamo. And we can break that into pieces. If you want to, you can just start telling what happened when you were arrested, where you were taken and what happened at those places, up to the time you to Guantanamo.

- We were actually in Sheberghan Prison. It was a time when then Taliban had lost power, and the Northern Alliance had taken over, and all the non-Afghanis were arrested and put into Sheberghan Prison. And we were there for about a month. And the US military came and took out, basically all the non-Afghanis from the prison and interrogated them. And we were put onto a plane to Qandahar. We was taken off that plane, interrogated again and put into the Qandahar camp. I think it was about six or seven times we were interrogated by different people there. And then about 2 1/2 weeks later, we were flown out of Qandahar and taken to a place which we didn't know, which turned out later to be Guantanamo Bay. But for the first three months that we were there, we didn't know where we were.

Interviewer: No one ever told you where you were?

- No.

Interviewer: And did you ask where you were?

- Yeah. We'd get different answers from different people. The day we left Qandahar, we were told that they were gonna reopen Alcatraz and take us all there.

Interviewer: Really? Did you think you were headed to Alcatraz?

- Yeah, I've seen the movies about it. So that was the story that was going around a lot of the soldiers in Qandahar. So you tend to believe it when you hear it from numerous people when you're there.

Interviewer: Well, can I go back to the beginning, when the Americans first came?

- Yeah.

Interviewer: What did they first say to you? What were they interested in, and what were they asking you, that very first time they interrogated you?

- What we were doing in Afghanistan, that was the first thing. And if we had links to Al-Qaeda, and if we had any links to what happened in America, in New York, and the people that we'd met while we were in Afghanistan. And they weren't really interested in what we were saying, 'cause they had set in mind that these guys are British. They're from the UK. So they must be members of Al-Qaeda.

Interviewer: Why would you be members of Al-Qaeda because you're British?

- 'Cause we were British, really, that's the only reason that they gave.

Interviewer: Really?

- Yeah, and that we must be some high ranking officials in Al-Qaeda because we were British. And they were not really prepared to listen to what we had to say.

Interviewer: Were they military or civilians who were interrogating you at the beginning? Or both?

- They were in military clothing, but there's three of them that I got interrogated, and they all had beards. So--

Interviewer: So did you think they were Arabs or were they Americans?

- The first one, he was like a big stocky guy and he was tan, so I thought he was a Arab. But as soon as he opened his mouth, he had an American accent. So I thought, what's going on here? And I was taken out of my cell. And I don't know if you've seen Sheberghan Prison. There's a long walkway to the end, and there's a lot of soldiers sitting there with guns, just like pointing the guns at me. And I didn't know what was going on. And I was taken there, and just stood in front of him, and they brought a translator and I think he was Afghani, 'cause I couldn't understand what he was saying to me. I said, "I speak English." Well, as soon as I said I speak English, everyone's face just went like, this guy speaks English? And they're like surprised. And--

- I think daddy is in there.

- Do you want me to shut him up?

- Do you want to take a break or--

- Yeah, I'll get him to go out and play.

- Sorry.

- Okay. (inaudible) Your phone is out of time.

- It's all right.

Interviewer: So you were saying that all of a sudden you said you spoke English, and then they were all happy? Or they were--

- They were more shocked than happy. Then they started asking me where I was from, and told them I was

from the UK. Then as soon as I told them I was from the UK, they took me into a separate room. And just like, 'cause I had my hands tied behind my back, and my feet were shackled together at the time, but basically I couldn't walk. So everywhere we was being taken, we were getting dragged there. And I was put in the room. And there was a guy, I don't know if he was military, 'cause he had civilian clothing on. And there was a soldier standing in the corner with a rifle in his hand. And the guy said to me, "If you move, he's gonna shoot you." Which is like a bit, it's quite scary. And he was the one questioning me, "Why did you come to Afghanistan? Who are you working for?" And questions based around that. And I was there for about 20 minutes, being interrogated by him. Then we were taken outside, and a hood was put over our head and it was taped over our eyes, so we couldn't see anything. And then we were made to sit in a place. I could feel those people sitting next to me, which I assumed that they were all in hoods as well. Then about, it must've been about an hour we were sitting there, they were bringing more people in, because you could hear them coming in. Then we were stood up, basically dragged, thrown onto the back of a truck. And then they were walking around. I think they started numbering us then.

Interviewer: Did what?

- Putting numbers on us so they could identify us. Then I don't know how long we were sitting there, because when they started, it was morning time. And by the time the truck left the prison, it was getting dark. And we were taken to what I later realized was Mazar-i-Sharif Airport, and put onto the back of a plane and flown to Qandahar.

Interviewer: When you got to Qandahar, did you know you were in Qandahar?

- No, 'cause we were still hooded when we were taken off the plane. And we were taken off the plane and put into a row and then they put this rope around our arms. And they were putting that around everyone's arms, and they were like taking them, which seemed like they were making us walk in circles for a long time. Then we were put into a tent and made to lie down on the floor, with our hands behind our back, our feet shackled together. And just there for a really long time, while, I think, they were processing everybody that was coming in. And they were like, two soldiers would come. If you'd try to move, they'd come and put their knees into your back. And at this time, while we were in Sheberghan, we weren't getting any food. So I'd lost about, I think it was about 40 kilos in weight. I was really, really, really weak. I couldn't move. And the two guys standing on your back, it was really painful. Then we were taken out of there and taken into another tent, and all our clothes were cut off our body. And while this was happening, we were being interrogated at the same time by somebody--

Interpreter: While he was taking your clothes off?

- While they were taking our clothes off, ripping the clothes off, asking. One of the questions he was asking, where my passport was, and I was explaining to him that it was in Pakistan. And he wanted an address. I didn't even know what the address was. And he goes, "Oh, you should know." And at the same time, having your clothes ripped off you, and some guy behind you pushing you and shoving you and being interrogated at the same time. And at the time, you don't know what's going on, what's gonna happen, if they're gonna

kill you, who these people are. It sounds like it's American military, but they could be anybody. Then our hoods were taken off our heads for about five seconds while they took our photos, put back on. And we were thrown into this barbed wire cell, and they had a pile of clothes there, which they told us to put on. And then we were told to sleep, which was impossible. They had flood lights in there, and they had soldiers constantly walking up and down and shouting, which made it really difficult. I don't know if I got any sleep, but in the morning we were woken up and taken to be interrogated in a tent. Which they made us sit on the floor, hands tied behind our back. And there's about three people in there with guns. And there's three people sitting on the table in front of me with military uniform on, and they were interrogating me. And then they asked me a lot of questions, and they threw these papers in front of me, which were in Arabic, and they told me to translate it. I said, "I don't, I can read it, but I can't translate it for you." Which they didn't believe what I was saying.

- They did or they didn't?

- They didn't.

- Did not.

- Yeah. And that went on for a while, about half an hour, 40 minutes. Then we was taken out and put into an outdoor camp where we spent most of our time, in that camp. And then we were interrogated on different occasions. And one occasion, we was interrogated, well, I found out now he was American, putting on a British accent, and he told me he was actually British. But as soon as I walked in the room, I saw him, he had an American uniform on, which I straightaway knew that he's telling me he's British, but why is he wearing the American uniform for? I asked that what's going on here. He threw some papers in front of me. He said that you're on the Interpol most wanted list. And he put the paper down. But as soon as I went to read it, he pulled it away from me. So I didn't get me a chance to read it. And he also said to me, "24 hours after you left home, your house was raided and your family was interrogated." Which I straightaway knew he was lying, because as soon as I got to Pakistan, I phoned home, and about every day I was there, for about six days, I was there, I was phoning home constantly. And I knew that he was lying. Well, I didn't say anything to him. And he was saying, "Oh, who funded you to come to Pakistan? Where did you get the money from?" And I said, "I was working. I was at university at the time, so I could fund my own." And he said, "I'll pray to God that you paid by credit card. So we can find out." And when I said, "I haven't got a credit card, everything I was doing was by cash," he said that you could be lying. Then he was saying that certain people in the UK said that you were a member of this group, a member of that group. And the way he was saying it, it was just like, I knew he was lying, but it was like putting these accusations on you, and you didn't know what the consequences of these accusations was gonna be. So you was scared of what was gonna happen. And then I'll say, "No, this isn't me. I don't know who you're talking about. I'm not a member of any group." But he weren't prepared to listen to what we had to say.

Interviewer: Were you by yourself when you were interrogated, or were you with others during the interrogations?

- Other detainees?

- Other detainees.

- No.

- Always--

- You were always by yourself.

- Yeah.

Interviewer: And do they ever beat you or mistreat you during the interrogations?

- Many times. That was the first time I ever got beaten. The soldier is basically taking you to your interrogation, you'd have the shackles on your feet, but they wouldn't give you a chance to walk. They'd basically drag you there and you weren't allowed to look up, although they'd put a hood over your head, you still weren't allowed to look up. They'd force your head down, so you'd be in pain going to interrogation. Then you'd be thrown onto the seat, and they'd be holding you down, although you're not gonna go anywhere. Your hands and feet are shackled together. They'd be holding you down in such a way that they're causing pain.

Interviewer: And did it ever get worse? Did they ever have dogs or were there other instances--

- Not in Qandahar, no.

- No? And did you see anybody else get mistreated while you were in Qandahar? Did you notice?

- There was, when we were in the camp outside, they used to bring in new people. And the way they used to grab 'em and throw 'em, punch 'em and kick 'em about, you'd see that--

- All the time?

- All the time happening.

Interviewer: And did they ever ask you different questions at the different interrogations? Or was it the same kinds of questions again and again?

- I think it was just like the same questions, really, about Al-Qaeda, who do you know in the UK, who sent you to Afghanistan, what did you come for.

Interviewer: And when they sent you to Guantanamo, did they tell you at any time they're going to take you

somewhere else, or did they just one--

- No. We were told, there was about two soldiers that we used to talk to. And they told us that they're gonna move us somewhere. And one of them told us we was going to Alcatraz. And the other one said, "You're going somewhere hot." That's all we were told.

Interviewer: And what were you thinking during that time? What was going through your mind while all this was happening?

- I didn't know what was going on, 'cause we didn't know we was going. I just assumed that they're gonna take us to the US and put us in a prison there and keep us there.

Interviewer: And you had no idea?

- No.

Interviewer: And could you describe the plane ride to Guantanamo, what that was like?

- Basically, the day we were taken, we moved from our cells in the night into a separate part of the camp in Qandahar. And we were woken up in the morning and told to sit at the back of our cells. We all had numbers. And they were calling out two by two the numbers of all the people. So my number would come up, and we'd be taken to the front of the cell, and made to lie down on the floor. Two soldiers would come and basically sit on us and search us and shackle us up and drag us to the processing place. They made us sit down on these wooden benches, chained our hands to the wooden bench so we couldn't move, shaved our heads, shaved our beards off, cut all our clothes off of us, and then we were marched naked out of the tent in front of I don't know how many soldiers were there. 'Cause that was basically done to humiliate us, there was no other reason that they did that, into another tent, and there was a guy with a camera there. And we were naked when they were taking the photos. We don't know if they were taking head shots or full body shots of us. And we were given the orange uniform and told to put it on. And we put the uniform on. Then we were marched out to that tent outside, and then they put these mitts on our hands and taped them up. And what else? They put goggles over our eyes so we couldn't see anything. And then they put these hats on our heads, which was probably to keep us warm, 'cause it was freezing there. And then they put these denim jackets over us and made us sit down on the floor for a really long time. Then it was at night time when we were actually taken, by groups, because they did that same thing, putting the rope around our arms and marching us in groups of I think about 10. Then we were put onto the plane with our ears covered, our mouth covered, our eyes covered. So we didn't know what was going on, and put on the plane. And about, I think it must've been about an hour we were on the plane, and then it took off. And that first journey was horrendous because we were sitting on these wooden planks and it was impossible to sit on there for more than five minutes. And we couldn't move, 'cause we were chained to the floor. And it was causing us a lot of pain, because we'd lost a lot of weight at that time. And it was impossible to sit in one position for that long. And we had nothing to lean back on, so I had to sit constantly in one position and not be able to move. And I was in a lot of pain. And I was shouting, "I'm in pain, I'm in pain." And somebody

came, took the mask off me and put something in my mouth, maybe some kind of medicine? I don't know what it was. After that I just felt really, really drowsy. And after nightfall, I went to sleep, but I could still feel the pain in my body. Then that journey must have lasted about, it felt like it was forever, but it was, we landed somewhere, it must've been about 10, 12 hours later. We were taken off the plane, searched. And it seemed like they took us off the plane, they might have put us onto a different plane, or they brought us back onto the same plane, and that must've took about two or three hours. And then we were just waiting there, and where we landed, it was really hot. That's the only thing that I remember about that place, 'cause they kept our faces covered so we couldn't see anything. Then we were put back onto the second plane. And that's the one that took us to Guantanamo.

Interviewer: Could you use the bathroom while you were on either plane? Were you allowed to use the bathroom?

- Yeah, I think we were.

Interpreter: And did you notice when... Did that rope around your arm ever cause any problems for you?

- Not the rope around my arm, but the handcuffs did, 'cause I didn't, for about six months while I was in Guantanamo, I didn't have no feeling in my left hand.

Interviewer: Did you ever report that?

Shafiq: Yeah, I did.

Interviewer: Did a doctor ever see that?

- No, not really.

Interviewer: They never sent a doctor?

- But the shackles had cut my ankle open, and it wasn't healing properly. But they used to come and put a bandage on that and check that, but there was numerous occasions that they took me in to get X-rayed, and I used to ask 'em why they're doing it, but they just gave me blank looks. They'd never actually communicate with us of why they're X-raying you and why they're taking, they took about, when we got there, they took about 12 bottles of blood out of us.

Interviewer: When you first arrived in Guantanamo?

- When we first arrived there. And why they did it, we don't know, because they'd never answer our questions.

Interviewer: Did you ever see a doctor in Qandahar before you came to Guantanamo?

- No.

- No?

Interviewer: So could you describe the first few weeks when you came to Guantanamo, what that was like, and your first interrogation? Do you remember that?

- When we got there, it was just like, we were put into these cages, and it was just like, it was just strange. We didn't know where we were or what was going on. All you'd see is someone in orange in these cells, and there was like, there must've been about 60 cells in our block, all full of people. And we weren't allowed to talk to anybody. We were allowed to look at anyone. If we did look at someone, we were taken out of our cells, and our cells were searched. We'd be thrown onto the gravel on the floor. And two soldiers would be sitting on us so we can't move and they'd come and search our cells. We weren't allowed to do anything. We weren't allowed to stand up in our cells. It just, it felt like hell, where we'd been brought. And the first time I was interrogated was, I think it was within 48 hours of arriving there. And that was by the British.

Interviewer: Wait, the British interrogated you?

- Yeah, the first time.

- The British diplomat?

- MI5.

Interviewer: MI5? How do you know it was MI5?

- They told us that they were MI5 officials.

Interviewer: Were Americans with them when they interrogated?

- There was... Yeah, there was. There was one guy sitting with the American uniform on with them, there's one guy from the British embassy, and there's, I think there might have been two guys who were from MI5, and there's a lot of people sitting behind me who I didn't get a look at, but I think they were military as well.

Interviewer: So that was your first interrogation?

- Yeah.

Interviewer: Could you describe what happened there?

- Basically, it went on for quite a while. They were asking me everything that happened. I was explaining to

them, and he was asking me how we ended up in Afghanistan, about the same questions that I've been asked before, what had happened. That was by the MI5, but the British embassy guy who was asking me about my family, of my address, phone numbers, people that I could contact to confirm that I was British. Then I answered all the questions MI5 asked me, and he turned around and said, "Everything that you've told me is a lie."

Interviewer: The diplomat said that?

- No, the MI5 guy.

- MI5.

- And he says, "You better start telling me the truth, or you're gonna be spending the rest of your life here." And that's when you start getting scared. To hear it from Americans is a different thing. But to hear it from your own countrypeople who were there, who is supposed to be there to help you, it just like starts sinking in that I'm gonna be spending a long time here. And I told him, "Everything I told you is the truth. I've got, there's nothing else I can tell you." And he said to me, "I'm gonna be here all day today. If you decide to change your mind, just ask for me." I said, "There's no point. You might as well leave now, 'cause I ain't got nothing else to say to you, 'cause I've told you the truth." And that was it. That that was the first interrogation that I went to.

Interviewer: And did you ask them if they could tell you or if they could help you at all? Did you say anything to them?

- I asked him what was going on there. The reply that they used to give was, every time they used to come in is, "We don't know what's going on," even though the soldiers used to tell us that we've seen you on TV, we've heard about you in the news. And we'd ask the MI5 guys, and he said, "We don't know nothing. We've never seen you on TV. We don't know even what's happening about your case." Which is, you'd know they were blatantly lying. But that's what they'd say to us every time.

Interviewer: Why would the Americans say they saw you on TV?

- It was the soldiers that we, after a while, seeing the same soldiers, you start getting on with them, some of them, 'cause they'd be walking the blocks and find out that you speak English. And I think, because we were British, they've probably seen us on the news and realized who we were.

- Oh.

- 'Cause they used to get a briefing about detainees before they came to Guantanamo, and they were specifically the Western detainees, they used to get briefed on quite a lot. Why, I don't know. Before they even got to Guantanamo, they knew who we were.

Interviewer: And so did the interrogation change over time, the next interrogation and the following one, was it also with MI5, or with Americans? So how did that develop?

- Most of them were with different agencies, American agencies.

- But not British?

- And British, yeah, every six months they used to come to see us, or if something happened, they'd fly over to specifically see people. It wasn't just the British that they were interrogating. They were interrogating a lot of people in Guantanamo.

- They were at the time?

- Yeah.

Interviewer: How do you know that?

- Because we were told by detainees who had nothing to do with the UK that were getting interrogated. Most of the French were interrogated by the British as well.

Interviewer: And if you refused to give them the information they wanted, or if you couldn't give them the information they wanted, did they punish you at all for that?

- We used to get punished all the time. We don't know what it came from. It could have been from the British. We were told not to give them this. We used to get, every time the British officials came, they were given letters by our families, from what my brother has told me since we've been back. But we hardly ever received anything from them. It's probably 'cause when they start the interrogation, we couldn't give them the information they wanted. And we used to be angry with them that they're not doing anything, and you refuse to cooperate. Say, if you're not gonna help me why should I help you in any way? I think because of that, they refused to give us any news about what's happening to our families here.

Interviewer: And how did they punish you otherwise? What happened?

- They'd be put into solitary confinement, refused things that we're supposed to have in our cells, they'd be taken away, and the only time we could have them is if our interrogators allow us to have them.

Interviewer: Could you describe why they would put you in punishment block? Was there any reasons for it or do you, and what happened that caused it, and how it was in the punishment block?

- They'd put you in for minor reasons that they found something in your cell. You save, like they'd find a spoon in your cell, which it'd be impossible to keep something like that in your cell anyway, 'cause they was constantly searching it. They'd say, they'd come out with things that we haven't done just to put us in

isolation. There's no win-win situation for us in Guantanamo. We couldn't do anything. That we say, "Oh, we didn't do this." And they'd say, "Yeah, it's done, that so and so soldier has wrote this in the book, and so you must have done it. What reason has he to lie?"

Interviewer: And why do you think they did that?

- Don't know. It wasn't just they used to do it to us. They used to do to a lot of people there. So you'd be constantly scared. When your cell's getting searched, what's gonna happen?

Interviewer: And could you describe how it was in the punishment block? What that was like?

- It was solitary confinement, just a metal cell, which was... During the day, it'd be really, really hot in there. It'd be really hard to breathe. And at night, 'cause they used to have AC in their cells, they used to put the AC on at night, although it'd be cold anyway, it'd be freezing with that on, just to punish us, they'd do that. And that used to end up making you really ill. And the people that were already ill and being in isolation would make them a lot worse.

Interviewer: How many times did you go to isolation?

- I think it was three different occasions. The last time I was taken there was for three months.

Interviewer: Do you know why?

- Yeah, basically, they said that they found a video of me and my other two friends in a place, I forgot the name of it, in Afghanistan in 2000, that we were at a rally with Osama bin Laden. And that was the reason that they threw us into isolation. And I told them, "If you contact the British, they can confirm that we were in the UK. I never left the country." But all of that, it took three months for them to do. So we spent three months in isolation for no reason. They told the whole camp, the soldiers in the camp, that we were hardcore Al-Qaeda terrorists, 'cause there was soldiers that used to come up to us and say, "We've caught you. You thought you got away with it, but we've caught you." And after three months, a British came to see us and told us that according to our records, the video that was actually shown, he said the date on there was the first of the eighth, 2000. They didn't know if that was 8th of January or the 1st of August, but it didn't make any difference. 'Cause I was at university at that time. And I was working. And so I had a alibi for both dates. And so did my two friends there, 'cause they were in full time work. But they weren't prepared to listen to that. And the British came and said, "According to our records, they were in the UK. But you're going to take into consideration that they might've traveled on false passports." This is what the British said to them. So--

- How do you know that?

- 'Cause our interrogator, it accidentally slipped out of his mouth that that's what they said. And well, then we were taken out of isolation.

Interviewer: Who were the other two when you say we?

- It's Asif Iqbal and Ruhai Ahmed.

Interviewer: And were you close to them in the, could you talk to them while you were in isolation?

- No, not in isolation, 'cause we were kept separate from each other. There was two blocks in isolation. I think they were in one block and I was put in a separate block.

Interviewer: So for three months you spoke to no one except the interrogator? So could you speak to people?

- You could speak to people in the solitary block, but it was like shouting to them, and there's only a certain amount you can talk while shouting.

Interviewer: And how did you manage that? How did you cope? Was it hard, or--

- It was difficult, because you're in that cell on your own. You've got four metal walls to look at and you just, it makes you go crazy in there.

Interviewer: What kept you from not going crazy?

- I don't know. I can't say what kept me, but it was just probably knowing that I haven't done anything wrong. And one day, if justice prevails, I will be released from here. That was the only thing. The only thing we had in our cells was our Qurans, and just like reading them constantly just to keep your mind off what's going on around you. That was the only thing that just kept us sane, really.

Interviewer: And when you were in your, you started in Camp X-Ray? And how long were you at Camp X-Ray, and were you moved to another camp?

- We was in Camp X-Ray for about three months, then we were moved to Camp Delta after that.

Interviewer: And how was that compared to X-Ray?

- X-Ray? We had... To go to the toilet, we had a bucket in our cells. But you could communicate with a lot more people in Camp X-Ray, 'cause you could see them clearly. In Camp Delta, we had a sink and a toilet in our cells, which made it better for us. But there was limited amount of people you could communicate with, 'cause the mesh was so small. There's only a certain amount of people that you could see until it starts going blurry. And you can't really see the people that you're talking to. You can hear their voices, but you can't see them. But at Camp X-Ray, it was like quite big mesh, so you could see lot of people around you.

Interviewer: So is that how you communicated with people, pretty much by just yelling to them or--

- Yeah. The person next to you and the person next to him, you could see clearly and you could talk to them, but after that it's impossible to see them.

Interviewer: And how did you communicate with them? What languages did you use?

- Well, when I was moved to Camp Delta, there was two British guys next to me. So we used to speak English. And I think there was a Pakistani guy in front of us, so I speak to him in Urdu.

Interviewer: Did you ever see any people go on hunger strikes while you were there?

- Yeah, numerous occasions.

Interviewer: Could you describe the first one you saw and--

- It was in Camp X-Ray, and I think he was Syrian national. I can't remember his name, but he was on camp, he was on a hunger strike as soon as he got there. Yeah.

- As soon as he got there? Do you know why?

- Because he, I think, because he didn't know why he was there and no one was communicating with him, as I said. He just made his mind up straight there and then, if you're not going to tell me anything why I'm here, that he just went on a hunger strike straightaway.

Interviewer: And what happened to him? Do you know?

- Once we got moved to Camp Delta, everyone got separated. So I don't know what happened to him.

Interviewer: Did you see other people go on hunger strike at Camp X-Ray?

- Yeah, in Camp Delta, a few.

Interviewer: Did you ever?

- No.

Interviewer: And did you ever see any people try to commit suicide?

- I am. I saw one Saudi national who was right, in the cell right in front of me that he tried to commit suicide.

- Shall we take a break?

- Zack, Zack. Sorry about that.

Interviewer: Are we on? Could you describe what you saw when he tried to commit suicide?

- Basically, we were praying at the time, when he tried to commit suicide. He just got onto his sink in his cell, and tied his sheet into the mesh and just jumped off. And I saw it straightaway what he was doing. And I started shouting at the soldiers. They came within seconds and took him down. But that was happening a lot there.

Interviewer: You saw that a lot?

- Yeah.

Interviewer: And did you, what did the other prisoners do? Did they--

- Everyone, so as soon as it happened, they started shouting for the soldiers and they'd come running and take him down.

Interviewer: And where were they taken away then, the people who committed suicide?

- They were taken into the medical block. They'd keep them there for a few days, then bring them back.

Interviewer: Were you ever, did you ever see doctors? Did you ever get taken to the medical block?

- Yeah, on a few occasions, yeah.

Interviewer: Could you describe what that was like?

- It was strange, 'cause they take you into the medical block and take blood from you, check you over, but they'd not communicate with you.

Interviewer: They wouldn't talk?

- No, they wouldn't look at you or talk to you. If you asked them any questions, they were just like, "Nobody's spoken, nobody heard anything."

Interviewer: And did you, why did they take you to the medical block?

- I don't know, no idea. I was taken... one occasion, I was complaining about pains in my knees, and they took me out there to get that checked. But there was, I was taken about six or seven times to have my chest X-rayed, but they never told me why. I was taken out of the camp once to have a scan done, a full body scan,

for I don't know where they took me, 'cause they put me in the back of those--

- A vehicle?

- A vehicle and took me somewhere. And I had a scan done and they brought me back, and then they never told me why they did it.

Interviewer: Do you know other people who had to see doctors and do you know, what their experiences were like?

- I think there was like, Omar, the Canadian, 'cause he'd been shot, he was in a lot of pain. And he used to be taken to medical. But he was in that situation where his interrogators had said, "If he doesn't give us information, we're not going to give him any medical treatment." So he'd be taken to medical, but I don't think they used to do anything. They would just make a log of what's wrong with him, if he's getting worse or anything. But they'd refuse to give him any medical treatment, because his interrogators said not to give him any.

Interviewer: Did he tell you this?

- Yeah, this is what he told us.

Interviewer: That they weren't going to treat him unless he told them--

- This is what his interrogator was saying to us. "Communicate with us, give us information that we need, then we will give you whatever you need."

Interviewer: And how old was Omar at the time?

- I think he was about, I think he was about 15, 16 at the time.

Interviewer: Did he tell you anything else about how he was treated?

- Being taken to interrogation at ridiculous times in the middle of the night, woken up and taken there, put in interrogation rooms when nobody's there to see him, just sitting there for hours and hours and then being brought back.

Interviewer: Did that ever happen to you?

- Yeah, that happened to us. And all that I was telling you before about the incident, about the video of us being in Afghanistan, that's what they used to do to us. They're basically short shackle us to the floor, our hands between our ankles, so we were in like a squatting position, and leave us there for hours.

Interviewer: Without food or water?

- Yeah, without food or water. And on some occasions, they'd be playing really loud music and which is deafening, and just leave it in the room for hours.

Interviewer: And what would happen then?

- We were put in the room for hours. Then somebody come, unshackle us, and take us back to our cells. And you'd be thinking, what the hell just happened? 'Cause there's no light in that room. You don't realize how long you've been in there for.

Interviewer: And would that happen again the next day or?

- Not next day, after a few days it happened again. It happened a few times. And then, first they started by just putting us on a chair and just leaving us in the room, and just for hours and hours, just sitting there thinking that somebody's coming and you're just waiting for them, waiting and waiting and waiting. Then you were taken back, put back into your cell. Then after that, they started short shackling us.

Interviewer: Did you ever see, besides Omar, other people who were mistreated at Guantanamo?

- There was a lot of Arabs who were in the same situation. They'd be taken. This one guy, he every, I think it was 15 minutes throughout the day, he'd be moved from one cell to another, one cell to another, and he'd never get any sleep. And they were doing that for weeks and weeks to him.

Interviewer: How do you know that?

- Because one of the cells that they used to move him to all the time was right opposite where we were. You'd see him a couple of hours, he'd be taken from that cell, moved around constantly, and come back and say, "What's happened?" He'd say, "Oh, every 15 minutes they moved me from this cell to that cell, from this cell to that cell."

Interviewer: Did he know why they were doing that?

- No, 'cause then he'd be taken to interrogation. They would be asking him those same questions over, and he'd say, "I can't give you the answers because I don't want what's going on." Then they'd carry on during it to him. And there's a few people that that was happening to.

Interviewer: You saw that happen to other people?

- Yeah.

Interviewer: Did you see any people earthed, where the force came in to--

- Yeah, I've seen that on numerous occasions.

Interviewer: Could you describe?

- There was one Saudi in Camp X-Ray. His name was Juma. He's been released now. He was, they said that he was not mentally stable, 'cause there was psych doctors that used to come and see him. And he used to shout all the time. And he was shouting at a female soldier once, and the block sergeant called the earth team to basically take him out in his cell. And what happens, if you're standing up in your cell, they'll come in and push you to the floor and shackle you. But the procedure is, if you don't want that to happen, you lie down on the floor, put your hands like that behind your head, and they won't do anything to you. And--  
(beeping)

Interviewer: Shall we take a break, and wait for that?

- Yeah.

- I don't know what the--

Woman: Okay, back.

Interviewer: So he was a little crazy? They thought he was?

- Yeah.

- So you'd, so if you lied down--

- If you lie, but it's a procedure. If you lie down and put your hands behind your head, they'll walk into your cell, shackle you up and take you away. Then after a few hours bring you back. I think they used to take him to interrogation and then bring them back. But when this happened, he was already lying on the floor with his hands behind his head. But on the earth team, there's usually five guys. On this one, I think there was about eight of them. (beeping)

- It's the, it's the--

- It hasn't gone off. It's gonna go off again.

- It's gonna go off again?

- Yeah, he's got the keys, sorry about that.

- It's all right.

- We're back on.

Interviewer: So in this case, you said eight people--

- Yeah, there was eight people on the earth team that came to earth him. And the first guy, soon as they opened his cell, ran in, and with his knees just dropped onto his back. And this guy was about 6'4", and he must've been about 250 pound. And all I heard from Juma was just let out a scream and the whole of our block just went quiet, because we thought, that guy has killed him. The way he's just dropped on the ground, don't forget, they've got the knee pads on as well. You know those, when you have the riot gear, you have those pads to protect your legs? That's what he was wearing when he did the drop on him. And then the next ones that went in, was holding him down, punching him, and the sergeant who was in charge that day told the female, "You're gonna go in that cell and what are you gonna do?" And she's like, you could see she was a bit afraid of what's going on in there. And he shouted at her, "You're gonna go in that cell and you're going to kick him in the stomach." And what we didn't know at the time, Juma, he used to be a really big guy, and he had his stomach stapled. So he's got some metal rods in his stomach. So she was kicking him in the stomach and he was screaming. Then about five minutes later, they picked him up and took him, and also his face. It was just covered in blood. And we thought, what was going on? This was being filmed as well on a camcorder at the time. And there's Asif, a British guy, there's Abbas and me. We were shouting at the guy, saying, "What's going on? What you're doing? Why are you filming this way, to help him? Where's our human rights? Yeah, you're treating him like an animal." And the guy, instead of filming Juma, he brings it and starts filming us shouting at him. Then he was taken out of his cell and moved to a different place. And that was about three days before we got moved to Camp Delta. And the day we got moved to Camp Delta, the Red Cross came into our blocks and we told them what had happened. And they said, "Okay, we'll go and find out." They came back a day later and said when the earth team came into his cell, he was provoking them. And that's why they beat him up. And we knew that this had not happened, and it had been filmed as well. And we told him that this had been filmed. And they said, "No, this is what I've been told, and this is what we have to go by." That's why a lot of the Red Cross, in the beginning, were not trusted by anybody.

Interviewer: Do you remember, you said this is a few days before you moved to Camp Delta. So was that in April or in May of 2002, or do you know when you were moved?

- I think we were moved on the 1st of May.

Interviewer: So it was late April that this happened?

- Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: And did you ever hear about him again?

- In Camp Delta, where we were moved, I was in cell number two. Asif, the other British guy, he was in cell

number three. Cell number four was empty. And about four days later, that guy was moved into cell number four. And he still had the same clothes on, he still had the bruise on his face, and his clothes were covered in blood. And the sergeant who was filming it came onto our block and Juma said to him, "Can I have a change of clothes, 'cause my clothes are covered in blood, and I want to change them." And just because he said that, he was taken out of his cell and put into solitary confinement for a week. And we thought, what's going on? Why are they treating him like that for?

Interviewer: And was he put in a mental block too, do you know?

- There was a block, Delta, I think, which was later built. And I think he spent some time in there.

Interviewer: And when he was brought back, he was still near you, so you could still see how he--

- Yeah.

- Did he get earthed again? Did you see any?

- Not that I can remember, but when we got released in March two--

- 2000?

- March 2004. He was in the isolation block that we were in. In his block, he didn't have a sink or a bunk to sleep on. So they said that he could self harm himself on the sink. So in his cell, he didn't have a sink.

Interviewer: Could we talk a little about the Red Cross? How it was at the beginning with the Red Cross and how that changed?

- Well, in the beginning, in Camp X-Ray they were very helpful towards us. They were the ones that actually told us that we were in Cuba, in Guantanamo. And they drew maps for us and told us exactly where we was. And a little bit of history about it as well. And they were really helpful towards us, because in the beginning we weren't allowed to pray. We weren't allowed to stand up in our cells, but once they came, they brought Qurans for us. And we were allowed to pray after that in our cells.

Interviewer: How much after you arrived did they come?

- I think it was about two weeks after. And they were very helpful. But then they left, and after that we were moved to Camp Delta, and a group came then. And that group, it didn't seem like they were there for our welfare. It seemed like they were there to help the military to get information out of us, because there's a lot of, I was taken on one occasion to interrogation and they were asking, not about my welfare, but about other people around me in my block. And it seemed strange. And I asked him, I said, "What, why are you asking me these questions?" That their reply to that was they just want to get background information. But it seemed like we were being interrogated by them, and it happened to a lot of people. And that's when a lot

of us lost confidence in Red Cross and stopped speaking to them altogether. And that was for about a year and a half that nobody really communicated with the Red Cross. And after that, there was a group that came, and they were very apologetic for the previous groups and what they'd done. And slowly, slowly, people started trusting them and started talking to them again.

Interviewer: And was the American military ever with the Red Cross when they interrogated you about other people or was it just the Red Cross--

- Just the Red Cross on their own.

Interviewer: And did they ever explain to you why they would be asking you about other people?

- They'd just say that they want to get background information on them, but they would be asking a lot of questions about how did they end up in Afghanistan, what's their background, or who do they know? Did you ever meet them while you were in the UK? Did you ever meet them in Afghanistan? And you'd just be sitting there thinking, hang on. I'm being interrogated. Are you Red Cross or are you military?

Interviewer: When you said that a lot of people then wouldn't talk to the Red Cross, how did that happen? Was there some conversation among the people there in Guantanamo saying, we're all gonna refuse? Was there--

- No, I think the word got round that people were saying, "Yeah, I was taken to interrogation and they were asking me a lot of questions." And then other persons say, "Yeah, the same thing happened to me." And I think it started spreading that this was happening to a lot of people. And I think it was just like individual's decision to stop talking to the people. They didn't, they weren't there for their welfare. So they stopped talking to them.

Interviewer: Did you see other ways that individuals resisted the military or resisted the officers at Guantanamo? Did you see other ways of resistance?

- Resistance in--

- Well, in different ways, like refusing to talk to them or refusing to eat or--

- Refusing to eat, refusing to come out of their cells when they were, when we had to go out for showers.

Interviewer: And what would happen if they refused to come out?

- The earth team would come in and force them out of their cells. There's one occasion where they decided that nobody's allowed to have a Quran. And we didn't want to give them back. And nearly the whole camp was earthed, just to have the Qurans taken out of their cells.

Interviewer: Do you know when that was?

- I think it might be around the beginning of 2003.

Interviewer: And do you know why they wanted to take away the--

- No idea why they took 'em. But the funny thing was, a few weeks later, they wanted to put 'em back in. And because what had happened when they took 'em out, people refused to have 'em put back in their cells, and the same thing happened. They were earthed to have the Quran put back in the cell.

Interviewer: Were you earthed then too, or did you, you didn't--

- No, we wasn't earthed, because the cells that, I think they didn't have no Qurans in there at all, but the block that we were moved to, and I think they got to a stage when they started earthing people, to put Qurans in their cell, they started taking them to interrogation, and pretend that they'd been interrogated and put a Quran in the cell, instead of having them earthed.

Interviewer: Did you think that because you spoke English, you had an advantage at Guantanamo?

- Yeah, we did have an advantage 'cause we spoke English, but it was very small.

Interviewer: What advantage?

- We could communicate with the soldiers. There was a very small minority of them that would sympathize with what was happening. There was one guy at the very first that actually, he was in Camp X-Ray, and he said to me, "What's happening to you is bad. What happened in America is bad as well. But two wrongs don't make a right. And there's nothing I can do to help you here, but just to let you know that there's some people that sympathize with what's happening to you." And there was one guy in Camp Delta, he said to me that, "I'm really sorry for what's happening to you, but there's nothing I can do. If I do anything, I'll end up in the cell next to you. But I apologize for what my country has done to you. But I'm a soldier here and I have to follow rules."

Interviewer: So some of the guards were nice to you?

- There's people that, when you were on the earth team, you didn't have a choice to go on there. And every time that someone got earthed, it was filmed. So I think they were made to be aggressive. If they weren't, they'd probably get punished for them. And there's some people that were on the earth team, after they had earthed someone, they'd come back and apologize to them.

- Really?

- Yeah. Though thought that was a very, very small minority of them.

Interviewer: Did you ever see guards give extra food to--

- Oh yeah. We used to get extra food out of the guards. They used to go into their chow hall and get food that we weren't allowed and bring it in for us.

Interviewer: And hope nobody sees it?

- Yeah, 'cause if they saw it, they'd be in serious trouble.

Girl: Can I just ask one question about the cameras and taking pictures? How much of it do you think was official military, that was someone's job and it was being archived, and how much of it do you think were snapshots, like trophy shots, just soldiers with cameras?

- I don't think it was trophy shots, 'cause the guy who would come in with a camera, you'd never see him before, and they'd be like, they wouldn't be block soldiers. They'd be like officers that would come in. So I think they might be keeping them for their records, but the other thing is, when we asked to see the film from the Red Cross of what happened to Juma, it strangely had gone missing, that it never existed as well. So what the reason, we don't know why they were filming it then.

Interviewer: Were you ever asked to spy for the Americans, since you spoke English? Did they ever ask you to do anything like that for them?

- They'd ask us to get information of people that were next to us in our cells.

Interviewer: How did they ask that, and what did they say they would give you as a--

- They'd make it like, they'd take you to interrogation and be all nice with you and say, "Oh, which cell are you in?" Although they'd know, and say, "Oh." Then they'd start looking through their papers. "Oh, you're next to so and so person. Does he ever speak to you?" "Uh, yeah, occasionally. What does he speak about? Do you know anything about his family?" Then they start slightly building up. "All right, do you know any information? How come he ended up in Guantanamo?" And they say, "Oh, it'd be helpful, 'cause he's not speaking to us, if you could give us any information about him." It'd start off like that. And there's, okay, before we got released, they were saying that if we worked for them, we'll get released within a week, although we knew that we were gonna be out of Guantanamo within seven days, that they'd play you against each other.

Interviewer: So you think because you spoke English, then the interrogators tried to use you. Is that what you would say?

- Yeah.

Interviewer: And then the guards felt more comfortable talking to you because you understood English then too? The guards?

- Some of them, yeah. Some of them didn't feel comfortable because we spoke English.

Interviewer: And they deliberately didn't want you to hear their conversation. Did you--

- Yeah. And you feel that. And you just, it depended where they were from, which group they were from. 'Cause those groups, the main one that we used to get on with, they were from South Carolina. And most of them we could communicate with and they weren't harsh towards us. But there was one group from Massachusetts. Their job was to make our life hell.

Interviewer: How so?

- 'Cause every time they'd come on the block, they'd cause a problem and just make everyone angry and turn off the water, every day they used to come on the block, so they don't have to give us any food. They don't have to do anything. All they can do is just sit outside and carry on doing what they want.

Interviewer: How would they make a problem?

- They'd go into someone's cell, and throw the Quran on the floor. Everyone on the block's gonna get angry. They start banging in their cells, and there'd be lockdown in the camp. Now nothing can happen. No one can go to interrogation, no one could come out of their cells, nothing can happen. So that would make their life easy. And if they did take us out of our cells, they used to manhandle us all badly. They'd just grab us, chuck us on the floor, grab our heads and just, the mesh, push it against the mesh and just hold us there. And we used to, every time we used to see that group, we used to just dread anything happening, 'cause we knew it was gonna be hell for the 12 hours that they were gonna be there. They're gonna just make hell for us.

Interviewer: And when was that? They were there, I think around, I think end of 2002, beginning of 2003, for about six or seven months. It was around the time when Miller, Geoffrey Miller came to Guantanamo.

Interviewer: You saw him or had you not?

- Yeah.

- You saw him?

- I've seen him on about four different occasions.

Interviewer: Why, how did that happen?

- From what we found out, he, the rules of the camp, when he came to Guantanamo, he changed everything and just made it a lot worse for us. He brought in this level thing in the cell, what you are allowed to have in your cell, if you were allowed to come out of your cell and go for showers, the level one, two, three, and four, he brought that in. And that was all governed by the interrogation. If you weren't communicating with the interrogators, that would be what level you were, and taking people for stupid reasons to isolation and leaving them there for weeks, 'cause the maximum, before he came, the maximum that they would keep you in isolation was three days. And after he came, it was just people there for months and years, they've just been there in isolation, since they've been in Guantanamo, they've been in isolation. They haven't seen the outside or open camp.

Interviewer: And how did you know he made the difference? How did you--

- The soldiers were telling us.

Interviewer: The soldiers would tell?

- Yeah. Saying that since he's come, he's the one who's changed everything.

Interviewer: And how did you see him?

- He used to come on the blocks on occasion. There'd be officials in civilian clothing. They'd be walking the blocks, and I don't know who they were. I don't know if they were interrogators or who. But he'd be walking the blocks with them.

Interviewer: And you would know him as--

- Yeah, 'cause he used to have, I think it was a one star general, I'm not sure. I can't remember. He used to have his star on the side of his name tag.

Interviewer: He had his nametag? Most guards did not have their name.

- No, they still have their name tags, but they used to have black tape over it.

Interviewer: Right. Did they ever tell you why they covered their names?

- They were told to do it. And one said that if we ever get released, we'll track 'em down in America and come and kill 'em. That's why they cover their names.

Interviewer: Did they believe that?

- I think a lot of them did.

Interviewer: Did they ever ask you about that, if that was true?

- It depended who the soldiers were, 'cause you'd think, if he's scared, just play along with it. Yeah, 'cause you're in a situation where you can't do nothing. You're never gonna see these guys again. The chances of us ever coming to America is very, very, very low. Well, we're never gonna see him. But I don't know if I would ever recognize 'em if I did see 'em, but then you'd say, you'd say things like, "Oh, what would you do if you was in my situation?" Yeah, "If I saw you outside, what would you do?" And they'd say "Oh, that's true." But the chances of us ever doing anything was very remote.

Interviewer: But you got the feeling that some guards were afraid of you, afraid of the detainees?

- They were, because when they'd come to take you out of your cell, they'd be shaking. They'd be shaking so much that it'd make you nervous, and you'd end up shaking as well. You're thinking, why is this guy shaking? I was shackled. My feet and my hands are shackled together, my fear are shackled together. I'm not going to do anything. But you feel that they are really scared, because they were, I think the average age was about 23. And when we were in Camp X-Ray, I think it was lower, because they were really young, there were like 17, 18 year old kids there.

Interviewer: So you were surprised to find out that they were afraid of you?

- Yeah, yeah. It was just the fact that if they're scared, they could do anything to you, so you try not to make any sort of movement or anything, because they're free. They could knock you down and do whatever they want to.

Interviewer: When you went, did you ever get exercise? And can you describe how the exercise was when you were allowed in the exercise?

- In Camp X-Ray, we were allowed out of our cells. Those very first photos of the people sitting down, we were allowed to go in that area for about five minutes and walk around. We had to keep our heads down and our hands were still shackled together.

Interviewer: Could you look to the side?

- No, you had to look down and walk around, 'cause there's like people on that side in their cells, and that side, and you weren't allowed to communicate with them. So that was for about five minutes every week.

Interviewer: Once a week for five--

- It was the situation. They'd come into your cell, shackle you, throw you on the floor, hold you down for about five minutes while someone searched your cell, and to go through that just to get five minutes of exercise, it weren't worth it. So hardly anyone used to go.

Interviewer: And did exercise improve over time?

- We used to get, in Camp Delta, it was 15 minutes for every twice a week.

Interviewer: Could you look to the side then?

- Yeah, you could look then. And they started giving us footballs in our cells, but you're on your own in a, I think it's probably about six by six meter cage, and they give you a football in there. You just end up kicking it against the cage, and that's it. That's all you can do.

Interviewer: Did you ever have a football game with other men in the prison?

- No. Only when they moved me to Camp Four for two weeks.

Interviewer: And why did they move you to Camp Four?

- I have no idea. That was just right before the video came out that we had been in Afghanistan.

- Oh, did they know?

- I think it was just a show as to why they did it. They knew that in two weeks, they're going to bring out this video, 'cause they said they're going to move me to Camp Four, which is medium security, which is like a large cell with 12 people in there. And I refused to go.

- Why?

- I thought, what's the difference in me going there or staying here? I'd rather stay here. 'Cause there's only moving me on my own into a group of people that I don't even know. I said, "I might as well stay here next to people that I could speak with." But they refused to listen to me. They took me to interrogation, and they made me change out of my orange uniform into a white uniform, and took me there. And I was there for two weeks, but the soldiers, for some reason, they were just making my life hell there. They wouldn't let me sleep. There was a camera right in the block that used to be on my bed all the time, and they're like constantly being watched. And I just felt like, this is hell in here for me, although I'm open, I can walk around a lot more, but it just felt like hell. And they used to have these floodlights in the cell, and it would be impossible to sleep. So I ended up sleeping under my bunk just to block the lights. And they wouldn't let me do it. They used to make me sleep on top. And after about two weeks, they said that you've got to go to interrogation. And I wake up, got outside the block to go to interrogation, and instead of two soldiers being there to take me, there was about 30 people standing there. Most of them were in civilian clothing, and they were all looking at me. The two soldiers guarding me, they put me onto the back of this, they were called the Gators, the trucks that they used to use, and sat me on there. And it was like a massive convoy of trucks right behind me. They took me out the Camp Four, took me back to Camp Delta into the level four block, which is basically, you got nothing. And they all walked me to my cell. Everyone got off their trucks. There's 30

people walking me into my cell. And as soon as I get in the block, the rest of the detainees, they're saying to me, "What's going on? What's with all these people?" I don't know, I haven't got a clue what's going on. They put me into the cell and make me take off my white uniform and give me an orange one. And they stand there at my cell for about five minutes, not saying anything to me, mumbling amongst themselves. And I couldn't understand what they were saying. And then they left. As soon as they leave, everyone's like, "Wow, what's going on here? Where have you been?" I said, "I was in Camp Four. Now I've been moved back here." They said, "Why'd they move you?" I said, "I have no idea." Then two days later, they moved me from that block into solitary confinement. That's when I started my three month stay in there.

Interviewer: Did you ever think you'd get out of solitary or did you think you might be there forever?

- What happens is, when you go into solitary, they have a book telling you how long you're staying in there.

Interviewer: They tell you in advance how long you'll be there?

- Well, if you ask them, they'll tell you. I asked the guy. He said, "We don't know, because they haven't put a date down how long you're gonna be in there for. So I didn't know what, how long I was in there for. And two days later, Asif and Rahul were moved into there as well.

Interviewer: And then did you know that you'd be there for three months?

- No, I heard, when I was, before I got moved into isolation, when I was in the level four block, I was sleeping, and there was a Pakistani guy next to me, talking to one of the soldiers. And he could speak broken English. And he asked this guy, "Why have they brought me back here?" And he said to him, all I heard, was what woke me up, he said, "We got him." I sat up and I got up and I started listening to what he was saying, saying, "Yeah, we got him. He's a member of Al-Qaeda." I got up. I said, "What are you talking about a member of Al-Qaeda?" They said, "Our seniors have told us that we've got footage of you in Afghanistan prior to 9/11, and you're a member of Al-Qaeda." And I just thought nothing of it. That's when I got moved to isolation. A few days later, I was taken into interrogation and they put the photos in front of me. There's a group of people sitting there. Everyone's face is blurred. You can't make out who's who, and there's three people sitting in a row and they said, "These three are you. You're in a rally prior to 9/11 in Afghanistan." And hearing that, you just go in to shock. Where have they got this from? What are they trying to do? Is this going to make me end up, is this going to make the situation where I'll be spending the rest of my life in Guantanamo? All of these things start going through your head and you start denying it. And they say, "No, no, it's you. There's no point denying it. We know it's you." And you're in this cell in the middle of nowhere. You've got no communication with the outside world. And what do you do?

Interviewer: Certainly, did you feel really hopeless? Is that--

- Yeah. It was like hopeless. They were saying, "Write to your family and tell them to send information to say that you were in the UK." How can I do that in a cell? It's gonna take you eight months to send the letter out. And I don't know how long it's going to take before you get a reply back. And one of the things I said to 'em, I

said, "In democracy, don't we believe in innocent until proven guilty? And where is that now? In your eyes, I'm guilty, and you want me to prove my innocence."

Interviewer: What'd they say?

- They never give you a reply. If you say something like that to them, they'll never give you a reply back. And one occasion, it must've been a few weeks after that. I was taken to interrogation and it was the FBI. They made it clear that they were FBI sitting in there interrogating me. And at this time, I didn't know what the date was on the--

- The video.

- Yeah. 'Cause they were giving me stills of the video, and they'd purposely taped over the dates so I wouldn't know, and the guy is showing me the photos. And I said, "What's the date on here?" He said, "We can't tell you that." I said, "Then that seems like you're trying to screw me over." And he said, "Maybe we am." And that was it. I said, "I can't tell you the date. I can't tell you where I was if I don't know the date." And that was it, and I was taken back to my cell.

Interviewer: Were are you able to talk to the other two men?

- No.

Interviewer: So you had no idea what they were saying.

- It's the same thing. We found out later that they were going through the exact same thing. They were being shown the photos, but the actual video, I was the only one that saw the actual video of what--

Interviewer: And why did they show you the actual video?

- I don't know. They made a big deal out of showing me the video. They said, "Oh, we've got these officials come over from Washington, they've just flown specially over to see you and show you this video."

Interviewer: And did those officials from Washington speak to you?

- Yeah, they were in the room.

Interviewer: Do you know who they were?

- It was some female. I have no idea who she was. She goes, "Oh, we've come over to find out and to prove that it's not you in the video. Please, can you help us?" It really just felt like, you're not here to help me. You're here to help yourselves. And they're just making a big deal out of it, and showing me this video. They're showing me the video, and that was the first time I'd actually seen the date on there. And I said to

him, "Yeah, if you contact the UK, they'll prove that I was in the UK during this time." But they weren't prepared to believe that. And the video, it seems like there's a group of people, and that the one filming these people, he's got a hidden camera on him, because there's people coming up to him and hugging him, and then you can't see anything, it just goes black. So it must've been around here, he had a camera hidden on him. And it's really bad quality. The only person you can make out is Osama bin Laden, 'cause he's standing at the front and he's like towering above everyone else and talking to the people. So you know it's him. Then it pans to the, there must've been about 60, 70 people sitting on the floor, and that's when they stopped the video. And so show these three guys. Everyone in that video is wearing a black turban, so about half their face is covered. And they're saying, "Yeah, these three people are you." And it's just like, it was strange trying to explain to 'em, that is not me.

- Was MI5 there too?

- No, not during that time. They came, I think just before we were taken out of isolation, that's when they came and said that it's not, according to our records, it's not them, but they could have traveled on false passports.

Interviewer: And could you, if, would you describe, is there a situation which was the worst experience you had in Guantanamo? Would this be it or was there another thing that you think was just really the worst? If there's one thing that was?

- I think during the whole experience, it was just not knowing what's happening is the worst experience. But through it, this was the worst. So we had been taken to isolation and from isolation, taken to interrogation, not being interrogated, short shackled to the floor, having really loud music played, and all these things going through your head, what's happening? What's gonna, why are they doing this to me? I haven't done anything wrong. And just like for hours and hours being in that stressed position, then just being taken out and put back into your cell. And you just feel like, what the hell just happened? But the worst is, they can beat you with the mental torture of what they do to you is the worst. It's just not knowing what's gonna happen, if you're gonna see your family again. Because at one occasion, our families were threatened, that if we didn't cooperate with the military, that our families could be arrested and deported back to our home countries, and the Americans can tell them to do whatever they want with them. And you're in that vulnerable situation. You believe everything that they say, and they want information you can't give them, 'cause you don't know anything about it, and they're threatening your families. And just having that mental torture is just unbearable. You get to a stage where a beating is a beating. Physical torture, okay, it's bad, but your body can take it more than it can take mental torture. Mental torture, it's not yourself. It's other people. And you don't know what's happening. So you just believe everything that they say, and you're just, it's constantly worrying about what's gonna happen.

Interviewer: And that never ends for you?

- No.

Interviewer: How did you find out that you were gonna be leaving Guantanamo? How did that happen?

- It was the Red Cross that actually told us that we were gonna be leaving within the next few weeks. I think it was--

- Did you believe them?

- In some ways, yes. But we had to get confirmation from one of the block guards that we used to get on with, that we didn't tell him what was going on. They said, "There's some news about the British detainees. Can you go and find out for us?" And the next day, we were called out. I think it was Jack Straw, the foreign secretary. He released the names of the detainees who were gonna be released. So this soldier didn't know what we knew. And we told him to go find out, and he confirmed exactly what they had said to us. That's when we believed it was true.

Interviewer: And what happened then, when you were told you were released? Did anything change in your conditions?

- Yeah, we were starting to go to interrogation, not to be interrogated, but to watch movies, and given a lot more food so we can start putting on weight. We knew what was going on. But we just played along with it. We didn't mention it to the interrogators who were taking us in that this is what was going on. We knew that we were gonna get released. We never mentioned it to 'em. And the week before we actually got released, they called us in and said to us that, "If you work for us that you'll be out of here within a week." And we already knew the following Tuesday, Monday or Tuesday, that we were gonna be out of there.

Interviewer: And when you were taken to the plane, did you believe that the plane was gonna actually leave for England, did you really think--

- The night before we left, there was two British police officers came and told us what the procedure is gonna be for the next day.

Interviewer: What was the procedure?

- They were telling us about what, they're gonna put, we're gonna get transferred into British custody, taken to the UK, where we will be formally arrested, And taken to Paddington Green Police Station, where we'll be interrogated.

Interviewer: They told you this before you--

- Yeah.

Interviewer: So you knew you weren't gonna be free, that you were still--

- Yeah. Well, what we knew was we were going back to the UK. And the only case that we knew about was John Walker Lindh, when he got 20 years. So we just expected the worst, that we were gonna go up to the UK, we were gonna get tried, and we're gonna spend 20 years in prison. We didn't care about that, 'cause we were gonna be back in the UK. That wasn't--

- It was worth it?

- Yeah, that was worth it, because we'd be in a proper prison there. At least we'd have some communication with our families. But that was like better than being in that situation. So that's what we were expecting. We got transferred, the night before, I think it was three days before we were moved to isolation and kept there for three days. We were measured up for clothes. Why they did it, I don't know, 'cause the clothes they gave us were too big anyway. It was denim jeans and white T-shirt and a denim jacket. About three o'clock in the morning, they woke us up. They gave us our MREs, our meals. Told us to change our clothes. Basically taken out and put onto those school buses, that's what they used to use for transporting people, and taken to the plane.

Interviewer: And how were you treated on the plane?

- They were being real nice with us.

- They were?

- Yeah.

Interviewer: Were you shackled on the plane?

- No. What happened was, when we were transferred from American custody to British, the guys, the soldier who took me, he said "All right, I'm gonna take my cuffs off, and you're gonna put yours on." And the police officer said, "That that won't be necessary. We won't be putting our cuffs on them." And his, the soldier's guy's face, it just dropped. He said "What?" And 'cause he was treating, he was like manhandling me in the bus. Yeah, so I just turned around, I had a big grin on my face. And I just laughed at him. And he didn't like that. But now we were in British custody. I didn't care. And we were with just two police officers who marched us onto the plane. We were sat down, and we had our separate seats. And each of us had five police officers with us.

- Each had five?

- One was sitting here. One was sitting there, and there was three sitting in front of us. And everyone had a camera that, I was sitting here. There's two police officers there, three in front of me, there was a camera right in front of me there, and there was one on the side. So they were filming everything.

- Were they British?

- Yeah. They were all British police officers.

- The five people?

- Yeah.

Interviewer: Were there American military on the plane too?

- No, it was a RAF plane.

Interviewer: And when you came to London, what happened?

- The customs excise people who came on the plane, and asked us questions about, asked our address and family background. Then we were told that we were gonna be walked off the plane, there was going to be a lot of journalists there taking our photos, but just keep your head down. And we said, "Okay." But for some reason, they changed their minds. They brought the vans onto the plane and put us in the vans on the plane. So nobody saw us, and took us to Paddington Green Police Station, which was weird, because the whole area had been cordoned off. Nobody was allowed to come into that police station. And you could see the flash photography going on. People outside, all I saw, soon as we left, came off the plane and went outside, I saw the sirens come on. And somebody was holding a placard with freedom written on there. I said, "Yeah, we're back in the UK now." And then we were taken to Paddington Green Police Station where we spent 48 hours, that we were interrogated about four different times. And that was the first time we actually spoke to our lawyers and they said to us, "Don't worry. Nothing's gonna happen. You're gonna be out of here within," they said "two weeks." That they can't keep you, they can't keep you any longer than two weeks. And we couldn't believe it. And Gareth, my lawyer, said to me, "Any questions they ask you, you're not going to say anything. Don't even say no comment. You just keep your mouth shut." I said, "No, I can't do that," because the last 2 1/2 years, we've been answering every question that's been thrown at us. He said, "No, you just keep your mouth quiet. Don't say anything at all." And that was just strange. And within 48 hours, we were free, walking the streets of London. It was unbelievable that three days earlier we were in maximum security prison. Now we were free to do whatever we want.

Woman: So what did you do?

- Oh, it was like, being locked up all the time and coming out of our cells with the shackles on, we always used to take small steps, and even though we were released, walking the streets, we were still taking them small steps. It took us about two days to get out of that habit and just like walking. We stayed in Gareth's house, and just like, it's just being able to do whatever you want, it just took a little bit longer to get used to it again.

- How did you know about, I just want to go back for a minute. How did you know about John Walker Lindh? How did you hear about him? Was there really that you heard about outside activities while you were in

prison?

- Oh, he was in Sheberghan Prison.

- Right.

- When we were there, but he was kept separate. And I think he was there for about two days and they come and took him. But there was stories going around about an American who was there and that he'd been taken. We didn't know who he was. Then we, remember, I think when we got to Qandahar, there was a lot of soldiers talking about him. That's when we found out his name and what had happened to him. Then slowly, being in Guantanamo, and just getting little bits of information from different people. That's how we learned to his story.

Interviewer: The soldiers told you what was going on?

- Yeah.

Interviewer: Did they tell you about what was going on politically in America too?

- No, they weren't allowed to talk about anything about that.

Interviewer: But they told you about John Walker Lindh.

- There's just little snippets of information. They gave us a magazine once. I don't know what it was. And it had a column about John Walker Lindh. And I happened to mention it to one of the soldiers, and within 20 minutes I was taken out of my cell and the magazine was taken away from me.

Interviewer: And you never met him when you were--

- No, although he was in the same camp, in the same prison, but I think he was there for about two days, but we never actually saw him.

Interviewer: What would you say your opinion of America was before you came to Guantanamo and after you left? And also your opinion of the UK before and after?

- I don't think I really had an opinion on America. It was just, I've never been there. It's just what you see in the movies. That's what you have. I don't think my opinion of America as a country has changed. It's just another place that hopefully one, sometime in the future, I'd love to go there. 'Cause there's a lot of soldiers that we used to talk to and the places that they used to live in, that we would like to see that. But as a country, I've got nothing against America as a country. I've got nothing against American people. I never have. I never will. It's just the government, what they did to me, is what the government did to me, it's not what the people did to me. So I think we used to communicate that with the soldiers, the soldiers were

there. They had a job, they had to do it. They had no choice. So there's no point in holding a grudge against them, because if they didn't do, they'd be in the cell next to us. Well, it's like the officials, what they were telling them to do, which is what I find it hard to forgive them for what they did.

Interviewer: And how about the UK? Did you have any thoughts about the UK?

- I think I have stronger opinions about the UK for not helping us more than I do with America. 'Cause they could have taken us out of there a lot, a lot, a lot earlier than they did. But it was a situation where we'd say to the Americans, "Why are we still here?" And they'd say to us, "Oh, the British government doesn't want you back. That's why you're here." And we asked the Americans, I mean, asked the British why we were still here, and they'd say, "Oh, you're in American custody, and we can't do anything about it." So you can think, who's telling the truth? Who's lying? But I think they, 'cause them, America's number one allies. They could have done something a lot quicker than they did. But for some reason they didn't do anything for us. And since we've been back, they haven't really done anything for us. They said, they came on the news, if you watched the press release before we got released, it said, "Yeah, we'll help them do this. We'll give them, so-and-so will get them houses, we'll give them new lives." But nothing, we haven't had nothing. I think it's like the situation, if someone's guilty of a crime and they get released from prison, they get a hell of a lot more than we do, we ever got.

Interviewer: Did the Brits even talk to you after you were, after those 48 hours? Did you ever see them again, an official somebody?

- To this day, I haven't seen them.

- Can I ask a question?

- Yeah.

Woman: Did you have any physical injuries or physical ailments that resulted from the treatment that you underwent while you were at Guantanamo?

- Being locked up. I think it was from the short shackling. I still get pain in my knees and in my back. And that was probably from sleeping on the metal bunks as well, during night time, it used to get really cold, and you'd have no choice, but to sleep on the metal.

Woman: And has it gotten better over time or not really?

- Not really, no. During the summer it's okay, but during the winter time, it's like arthritis. It just like, it gets really painful.

Interviewer: I only have a couple more questions, and one is, is there anything that you would like to happen now? Not that we can necessarily do anything, but I'm just wondering if--

- No, Obama would have said, if he comes into power, he's going to close Guantanamo within the first hundred days. I don't know how many days it's been, well over 100 now, so what's going on?

Interviewer: Do you think, do you know people still in Guantanamo?

- Yeah, Omar, the Canadian. He's still there. There's a few Saudis still there. And it's just like, there's one British guy, Shaker Aamer, he's still there. You see his family and them probably thinking, why have all these, there's about 13 of us from the UK, have been released and he's still there? And what can you say to 'em? You can't give them any information about what's happening to him and why he's still there.

Interviewer: If you could think about how Guantanamo impacted you, how it affected your life, maybe positively and negatively, do you have any thoughts about that?

- I think it has made me stronger as an individual.

- How so?

- 'Cause it brought me more towards my religion than I was before. It is a situation where they used to say to us, "Denounce your faith in Islam and you'll get released." And instead of that taking you away from Islam, it brought us more closer and we start learning more. So why do they want us to denounce our religion, and they would release us? So that brought us more towards Islam. And we started learning more, started reading the Quran more and learning Arabic, making us more stronger. 'Cause there's one time in Camp X-Ray, I was just like really depressed and said, "This is one of my lowest points." And one of the Arab guys, he's one of the learned scholars. He said to me, "Don't see this place as a prison. See this as a learning point for yourself." It's like you're at school, you're here to learn about Islam. Yeah, and to make the best of it. Although it didn't click in straightaway, him saying that, over a period of time, you say, yeah, he's right, what he said. And I think that that little thing he said to me made a huge impact on me throughout the 2 1/2 years I was there.

Interviewer: Did people really say to you that if you abandoned Islam, they'll release you?

- Yeah. There's interrogators that used to say that to us. There's one, there's another case, there's some guys who were converts to Islam, and one in particular, I can say, David Hicks from Australia, who they said to him "If you become a Christian now, we will release you back to Australia," which you knew was a blatant lie, 'cause that's never gonna happen.

Interviewer: David Hicks told you that or how did you know that?

- David Hicks actually said that to us. He told us.

Interviewer: So you learned something about yourself, and became stronger from. Was there something

really negative that you could look back at what Guantanamo did, impact your life?

- Just seeing the beatings and the mental torture that they were putting a lot of people through. It's hard to forget that. And just speaking to people who had families. Although I weren't married, I didn't have any children at the time, so it was, it weren't that bad for us, but there was people who were like 40, 50 years old who have got six, seven kids, and who's gonna support them? And you talk to them, and you just feel really depressed. And even after we were released, we think, I'm on my own, my family's here. Although I ain't married, I ain't got kids, why have I been released, and he's still there whose kids are still waiting for him?

Interviewer: So you knew a lot of those people and that was hard?

- Yeah.

- Well, I think that was, I think I'm finished unless it's, that was wonderful.

- We're all done? Thank you.

- Thanks so much.

- Not a problem.

- Very appreciated.

Woman: Is there anything that we didn't ask that you think it would be important to say for the documentary?

- I don't know. I can't think of anything off the top of my head.

- You've said a lot.

- Yeah. Well, and thank you very much.

- You're welcome.

- We so appreciate it, so we're done.

Woman: So that we know, so just 'cause we, this is something we haven't like, what were the different levels and what were denied and what were--

- I can't remember what was denied.

- Well, it's more like you wore different uniforms, right? Like an orange or white--

- Oh, no, it wasn't. This was all in Camp Delta, this was.

Interviewer: Oh, so it didn't have anything to do with the uniforms?

- No, everyone was in orange uniform in Camp Delta. It was... if you have soap in your cell, or like toothpaste,

- That was one level?

- If you had... It was level one, I think, you are allowed to keep it in your cell. Level two was, you can have it on request. Level three and four, I don't think you allowed it at all. The only time you'd get soap is when you were taken to the showers outside.

Woman: Okay. And so that would apply to everything, to exercise, to--

- And like, yeah.