

Female: Yeah, we're good.

Interviewer: Okay, we're good. We're ready to go.

Female: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay, okay. Okay, good afternoon. We are very grateful to you for participating in the Witness to Guantanamo Project. We invite you to speak of your experiences at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and we are hoping to collect your story and the story of all the men who have been to Guantanamo over the last seven and a half years. We are creating an archive of the stories that people in America and the world will have a better understanding of what you and the other men experienced. Future generations must know what happened and by telling your story, you are 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 tell us and we'll take a break, and if at any time you say something you'd rather remove, just tell us and we'll remove it. So, we'd like to begin by just some basic information, just to have for the camera, including your name. And some of the details I'll ask is we'll do one on one, so your name?

- My name is Ruhal Ahmed.

Interviewer: Country of origin?

- UK.

Interviewer: Hometown?

- Tipton.

Interviewer: Birth date?

- 11, three 11, 81.

- (chuckles) Age?

- 27.

Interviewer: Nationality?

- British.

Interviewer: Languages?

- English, first language, second language, Bangoli where my mother and father were originally from Bangladesh. Third language Urdu, fourth language, Arabic, and bits and bobs of different dialects of Urdu, Punjabi, and a bit of... My wife speaks a language called Pothwari from Kashmir.

Interviewer: Your religion?

- Islam.

Interviewer: Marital status? You married.

- I'm married.

Interviewer: Yeah.

(Ruhal laughs) With a child?

- Yeah, one daughter.

Interviewer: One daughter, and your education?

- Till high school, GCSE's.

Interviewer: And your place of residence before you were detained.

- Tipton.

Interviewer: And your current place of residence?

- Is Tipton.

Interviewer: Tipton, and the date of arrival to Guantanamo and your departure?

- 14th of February, 2002, departure was 9th of April, 2004, the 9th of the 7th, can't remember.

Interviewer: (chuckles) Okay, so we'd like to begin by asking you to describe how it was with as many details as you can remember from the time you were first arrested, to the time you were brought to Guantanamo.

- Okay, okay. I was first handed over by the Northern Alliance to the American special forces on the 31st of December, 2002. 2001, sorry, in a place called Sheberghan, which is in the North of Afghanistan. When they first arrested me, they strip searched me, and they tied plastic ties around my hand, my wrist and my ankles. And then they put a sand bag over my head, and taped. Put masking tape around the top of the sand bag,

which is on the top of my eyes. And they wrote something on it, like V3, as a number to identify which detainee is who. And they sat me down along the wall amongst many of the detainees then they, after about one hour, they made us march and they threw us onto the back of a truck. And we were driven to the nearest airport, which was about roughly an hour drive. Then we were also put on a plane, probably about 10:00 o'clock at night, that same day. And I was flown to Kandahar, which was a makeshift prison run by the Americans. I stayed there for exactly six weeks in total, so from the 1st of January 2002 to 14th, or 13th, 12, February 2002. During that period, when I first got there, they took us off the plane and they tied ropes around our arms. So, each individual had a rope around their arm, and by the guy, the soldier in front would pull that rope and everyone would have to follow, like in a train kind of direction. And they made us walk around for what seemed to me, they made us walk around in a circle for many hours. The reason I think they did that to make us, disorientate us. At the same time, they had dogs around and there was barking. We still was hooded. And it was nice cause we could see, just if you look down from the hood, we could see down to our neck. We could see it was dark, obviously. And so, we walked around for many hours and the dogs were barking and there was going... Punching us, kicking us, and then they would throw us to the floor, and they would say to us, "Sleep or stay still." Then after a couple of minutes, maybe half an hour, they would get you up, and make you walk around in a circle again. And that continued to happen for maybe, four or five hours. After that, they took us to this place. They took the ropes out of our arms, they made us kneel on our knees and obviously, our hands were tied behind our back with them plastic ties, our ankles were also tied with plastic ties. Sand bag over the head and we had to stay kneeling, like in that position, in a kneeling position on gravel. I think it was about two hours I had to stay in the position. Then they came, two soldiers, they lifted me, physically lifted me. Lifted me up, they dragged me to a tent where I was thrown to the floor, face down first. And I think they got a Stanley knife, they cut through my clothes, stripped me naked again. Took my hood off and they done a cavity search on me. They took me to another tent where photographs were taken. My DNA was also taken, a swab from my mouth. Also, they took a sample, a few strands of my beard hair, and took photos, and fingerprints, I think. And then eventually, they took me to it's like a barn, similar type look, it was like a metal hanger, which was divided off with barbed wire to make cells.

Interviewer: Mm.

- And in each cell, there was about, I think, 10 people per cell. And they threw me into the cell, still naked, then they gave me some clothes to wear, which were Pakistani clothes. The Pakistani traditional clothes, they gave us that. So, I wore that and I went to sleep. They told me to sleep. They gave me a blanket, which was kind of like A fleecy type blanket. I went to sleep for the night. I was not allowed, I was told basically if I tried to move, or tried to do anything stupid, then I would have get shot because they had, on the left and the right they had two tower guards, who were watching down. We was not allowed to communicate or talk. So, the night passed, and the next morning, I was given a number. I was also given a wristband on the first day when I came. My number was 102. They call my number in the morning and I was taken out from the... From my cell, and the way the procedure is, when they call your number, you have to lie down on the floor and you have to have your hands on your head. As so, with your fingers interlocked and your legs spread wide on the floor. And two soldiers would run in, sorry, three soldiers would rush in. One would literally drop on top of your shoulders so you couldn't move, the other one would grab your arm. Two of them grabbing one hand each. They take one arm, put it behind you, cuff that one and bring that one down again, and cuff

that. Then they would drag you up, put a sack over your head, and they marched me off to a tent, which was my first interrogation I had with an American soldier. I sat on the floor and he asked me basic questions, what's my name? Date of birth, so-and-so, why I was in Afghanistan, how I was captured. And any contact details if I wanted to tell anybody that I was in that place. He asked me if I wanted to inform anybody, I said, "Inform the home office." And then he said, he said to me that he will speak to me later again. So, then they took me to a different... Instead of taking me back to the hangar, they took me to the tents, which was the... They had tents erected and there was three tents, and it was barb wired off. So, it's like a makeshift prison, if you wanna call it. In each tent they had about 20 detainees sleeping, or staying, but obviously the three tents were within the same boundary. Later on, there was all made single one tent, so 20 people per cage, you can call it. Then they stripped my clothes again and they gave me the blue boiler suit. And then, I stayed there for six weeks. Obviously, in that condition in Guantanamo. Kandahar was a very odd place you can call it because in the day, temperatures will reach, probably 45 to 50 degrees. So, it'd be extremely hot and we had to obviously sit outside, we couldn't sit in the tent. And the flaps of the tent, the canvas on the side were always rolled up. We were not allowed to bring them down because they wanted to see us, keep an eye on us. Even throughout the day, we were not allowed to move. We were not allowed to talk to nobody. Food was given three times a day, but it was a limited amount of food. We had MRE's to eat, which our meal ready to eat military food. And they would literally empty everything out and just give us the main meal. So, you know like you have the main meal, you have a dessert, you have crackers. You have peanut butter, you have a few more side things. Drinks, and so-and-so, but they will take everything out, and to give you the main packet, the actual main dinner. So, as you can imagine, it's not enough for us to eat, but it was enough for us to go on for the next meal. It was just about enough. And we were taken to interrogation on a regular basis, and it was the same method, the way they would take you out. Two, three soldiers come in, one literally jumps on top of you, another two un-cuff you, and they put a sand bag over your head, push you back down. Then they would march you off to your interrogation. Now, interrogation, it would vary on who the interrogator was, in terms of how harsh you would get treated, or how good you get treated. If there's a good treatment, that means you get a chair, they would un-cuff your hands, put it in the front, un-cuff your... Cuff your hands forward, or sometimes, they wouldn't cuff your hands. It depends on the person who was interrogating you. If he was a bad guy, then they would make us sit on the floor and kneel on the floor, with your handcuffs, hands tied behind the back. And there always will be a soldier with a M16, or a nine millimeter pointing towards you while you getting interrogated. So, you're always being interrogated at gunpoint. The interrogation method would always save... Always repetitive, it was always, what's your name? Where you from? Even though you've said about 10 times before, they would always comment and say the same thing. And it seemed to me that never actually, seemed to share the files. Which was quite bizarre, especially when you in that, and if you mean intelligence officer, you would expect to share your information with your colleagues, or whoever they are. But obviously, that wasn't the case. And worst case scenario is, you would get beaten up, physically punch, punching, they would punch you in your nose.

Interviewer: Why would they beat you up?

- Well, main reason is because you're not... They think that you're not being cooperative. You're not cooperating with them. You're not giving them as enough information as they think that you need to give. They think you're lying, or you withheld the information about Bin Laden, or Al-Quada, or the Taliban. And

so-and-so, that was the reason basically why you would get beaten up. (chuckles) It was if they didn't like the way you looked, or if you was cocky, or if you were arrogant in terms of how you reply, how you talk to them. Then that would give them that reason to come and attack you in whatever way they wanted. In total, I thin, in Kandahar, I went to interrogation maybe five times. Four times it was with the Americans, and once with the FBI, three times with the military intelligence. And I think once with the home office, the British home office, there was a guy who came over on the day I was actually flying out. He came to visit me. And the conditions inside the cages, obviously in the daytime, it's extremely hot. In the night, it would be extremely cold. They used to give us... The only good thing they did for us was they gave us enough water. They would actually force us to drink the water, and they used to give us 1.5 liter bottle per meal time. So, in the morning we had to stand in front of the soldier and drink the whole 1.5 liter of water in one go. Otherwise you get punished. So, that's the only good thing they did. So, that we didn't dehydrate. Other than that, they would do random cell search, which is as they call shake down. And where everybody had to go to the back of the tents, and obviously, you kneel down with your hands on your head and on the other side of the barbed wire, they would have two guys with M16's pointed towards you. Because from the other side, from the door, from the main entrance you had about four, or five MP's coming in without any weapons. Because there was about 20 or 60 per cage, so they couldn't take that risk of bringing weapons in just in case someone jumps out and takes the weapon, so and so. So, we had to go out the back, and they would come in, they would do a cell search. They would throw the Quran on many occasions, in the toilet. The total facility was basically, you had a bucket, just a normal steel bucket, and it was open air. And you had to do your business in front of everybody. To urinate, they actually dug a massive... For every cage, or tent you can call, they had dug, obviously before they actually erected this make shift prison, make shift things. They actually dug the ground, and it's like a soak away. When you have an extension, they have a soak away, and the same thing. They had a soak away, and they had like a circle mesh where you urinate in. So, obviously when you urinate, you were taken the thing. You're there and you have female soldiers walking up and down, obviously looking at you. And one, especially when you're urinating, they wanna look, and they would stop. Even the men, they would stop and they would look, and I think they did that to actually humiliate us. It was not because they was being pervs, or they could be, I don't know, but it seemed to me, they were doing it to kind of degrade us. Even when we have to go for a number two, if you can call it. They would actually stand and look at you, and it was very difficult to... When you're on the toilet, it's kind of impossible when you know someone's watching you, it's very hard to relieve yourself. It doesn't come.

Interviewer: Right.

- And instead of getting relief out of it, you get pains because you can't go. And that would be the case that happened throughout six weeks. And we complained about it, and they said, "Well, it's our procedure. We have to see what exactly you are doing." So, if we're taking a wee, and are you gonna watch us? So, it was just something they did to kind of humiliate us basically. We wasn't given any kind of insulation, cause obviously the ground was not... It was not grass, it was just like rubble, you can call it. Like normal turf, it was like bricks, and glass, and so and so. So, obviously, we was not given any kind of insulation mats to put down, or a sheet to put down to sleep on top of. So, we had to sleep on the ground, basically. We was not given no pillows, obviously. As they would say, "It's not boot camp." On many occasions, they would say that, and if you wanted anything they would say it's not boot camp. That was the answer for everything.

They gave us blankets, which was like made of fleece, it was a fleecy blanket. We had about two of them each, but Kandahar was extremely cold cause the water would actually freeze up overnight. That's how cold it was. So, you can just imagine. Temperature was actually dropped below zero. So, it was impossible to sleep in the night because it's too cold, and your feet are freezing, your hands are freezing. You're freezing yourself, cause we had a thin boiler suit, we didn't have no long johns, or any thermal underwear, you can call it. So, it's impossible to sleep in the night and it's impossible to sleep in the day because it's too hot, and we wasn't actually allowed to sleep in the day. Cause they would come throughout the day, every two, three hours, they would come and do something called a headcount, which they would come and they would shout out, "Headcount, headcount," and we all had to run to the front of the tent. And we had to stand in a line, and we had to show them our wristbands with the number, and he would mark off 102 present, 601 is present, and they would call your number and you have to say yes. It's like being in school again, and they would do that every three hours. They would kind of do that, which was kind of ridiculous, because they have shift change three times. So, ideally they need to do it three times because it's a new shift and the shift stays on for eight hours, 24 hours is free. So, I think it was done because to make us more weak and less drowsy. So, we don't... One of the reasons they gave us is like, we don't want you to get strong. The reason we wasn't giving enough food, they didn't want us to have any energy in us, so we don't attack them. They wanted to keep us tired and dehy... Not dehydrated, but very tired and fragile. You know what I mean? They wouldn't allow us to exercise because they said to us, "If you exercise, you can get stronger, and you don't want you-"

Interviewer: They told you that?

- Yeah, we was not allowed to exercise. So, they didn't want us to get strong and overpower them in any way. Even, I mean, if the one guy tries something, they can't afford to take that risk. Even if it's one person, even though we wouldn't get nowhere. (chuckles) Do you know what I mean? (interviewer chuckles) But it's something that they said that we don't want you to get strong so that we was not allowed to do certain things to kill our time, to pass our time. So, that was for the first... That was my six weeks in Guantanamo. I was actually not given any-

Female: I'm just gonna do one thing before, I'm sorry. I'm getting, it's great... We're rolling. Yeah, it's fine.

- So, I stayed there for six weeks and I was never actually given any reason why I was arrested in the first place, or I was handed over by the Northern Alliance to the Americans. And I wasn't actually given any reason whatsoever, why I was being detained.

Interviewer: When you met with the Americans and then you said you met with the Brits. Did the Brits do anything differently from the Americans in terms of the interrogation?

- Well, the actual day I was leaving, just before about maybe 20 minutes before I boarded the plane, the Brit came, and I think he was from the foreign office. And he didn't really say much, he just said that... He took my name and my details, and he said, We will notify your family of your whereabouts. And he just said that... I asked him where am I going because I was in Cuba because some of the soldiers told me that maybe you're

moving over to Cuba, and maybe not. So, when they put me in the orange boiler suit, I kind of had an idea. Even though I never knew, never heard of Cuba in my life, I never knew, never heard of it. So, I thought actually Cuba is probably a state of the United States. (interviewer laughs) That's what I thought, maybe somewhere close by. Obviously, it is close by to Florida, but I never actually knew Cuba. So, the day I was going, just about 20 minutes before I boarded, he came, sat me down, and he just spoke to me. He said, your name and so and so. He said, "I'm from the foreign office, how are you?" Is your health okay?" I said, "Yeah, how do I look? Do I look fine?" And he said, "Well, I have to ask." What a stupid question to ask. I'm tied up like an animal and you're asking me how am I, how am I doing? (chuckles) It's like it's a joke. And he said to me, "Basically, we'll notify your family," and I asked him, "Where am I being taken? Am I going back to the UK?" He said, "I don't know. I can't give you that kind of information." I said, "Well, what did you come for? You shouldn't have even bothered coming. So, basically the day I was taken to Guan, well on the plane. They took me out my cell, they marched me to this tent. They stripped my clothes, and by the time we had... I had long hair at the time, and obviously, my beard had grown. Excuse me, and obviously being in that condition, I mean, prior to being arrested by the Americans, I was obviously imprisoned in Sheboygan for a month. And it was not even not very hygienic. It was very unhygienic and we had head lice and body lice, so everybody had lice in the camp. And so, they stripped me down completely, they shaved my hair, they put the lice kind of medicine on my hair and my armpits, and on my private parts, just to kill all the lice. On my chest, wherever I had hair, really, all over my body. They washed me down with this kind of a watery...

Interviewer: Solution.

- Solution to kill the lice. Then they took me to a different room and they gave me the orange boiler suit, which I wore. They gave me a blue jacket and they put goggles on my eyes. You had ear... And they put a wooly cap as well, and the ear muffs, and they put mittens on my hands as well. Then they cuffed my hands together, and usually the cuffs have slack in it, but they had these like black things they put in the middle, so that you can't actually move your hands. It was like this extra piece that comes with it. So, then obviously a three piece, as they call it, a three-piece suit. So, then a chain goes around your back, padlocked and a chain from here, where your...

Interviewer: A belly chain thing.

- Yeah, a belly chain thing from there, there's like a circle ring.

Interviewer: Ring.

- And another piece goes down to your leg, and then it's like leg irons, like shackles. And they put the gloves on and they put masking tape, no duck tape around the gloves so we can't take our gloves off. Then they took me to a different tent from what I presumed. It was a tent and I had to sit down with my legs crossed for maybe like seven hours. And obviously, it was painful. Sitting there with your legs crossed for ages, and the shackles are kind of digging into your legs, and it's uncomfortable sitting there for so many hours, you can't move. Then about, it was daytime when they took me out my cage, out my tent. Before I boarded the plane, obviously got annoyed, so I was there for many hours. They gave us a piece of bread to eat before,

just before we boarded the plane. Then obviously, we all got up and they put them... They put the rope around our arms again, dragged us, kind of marched us out to the runway. Put us on the plane. I could hear the plane engines were running when we was on the plane. Sat down and they took the ropes off. So, we sat down individually, and I was sitting against the wall of the plane, and I could feel that the other detainees were sitting in a line. And I could kind of make out because the goggles were obviously on, I could see underneath here, and through my nose. So, if I done that kind of thing, I could see the people round me. I could see the soldiers feet and so-and-so. So, I knew that it was all sitting on the wall of the plane. And they tied us down. They padlocked my chain to the floor. So, I couldn't lift my knees up, and I was... I think there was strap around my chest to hold me down to the wall of the plane so I couldn't come forward. Then basically, we set off, we flew off, and obviously on the journey, they offered us peanut butter sandwich, which I could smell, which my mouth was watering, but obviously couldn't eat it. Obviously, I had a mask as well. They gave me a mask and but just in case because they thought people have got TB. So, it doesn't spread. Even though I never had TB, but it was just a precaution that they took. Some of the detainees did have TB, but it was just a precaution. Obviously, I could see through the bridge of my nose, I could see straight down, and they came to my ear. This woman came to my ear and she lifted my ear muffs. And she said to me, "I wanna place a peanut butter sandwich on your hand, so eat it." So, obviously I'm tied down from my chest. My hands are tied here, which I can't lift. I can't even go forward. So, in between my gloves, she puts this peanut butter sandwich and my mouth's watering. (laughs) Cause obviously, I was starving, and the smell of the peanut butter sandwich is like pfft, when you haven't had food for... Decent food, even it's only a peanut butter sandwich, it's not nothing delicious, or exotic you could say. (chuckles) So, obviously, I'm there and I'm looking down, and I'm thinking, how am I supposed to eat that? (chuckles) And I'm there for maybe half an hour trying to eat it. I'm trying everything, coming forward, trying to lift my arms up.

(interviewer laughs) And I'm thinking, damn. Things you have to do to eat your food. So, I'm there and basically, she came to my ear again and she lifted my muffs and she goes, "Don't you wanna eat it?" I said, "Well, how am I supposed to eat it?" (interviewer chuckles) She goes, "What do you mean? With your hands and your mouth." And I thought, there's no point explaining. So, she took the sandwich, threw it in the bin, cause everybody had the sandwiches, and I think, they threw everybody's in the bin because nobody could eat it. Then they came and they put an apple. (interviewer laughs) And I thought, how ridiculous, and how... You guys must be thick, or stupid, or something like that. And I just thought damn, I'm missing out on my apple. I missed out on my peanut butter sandwich, and now I'm missing out. And so, then they took the apple, threw that away obviously. And they gave a glass of water, and I thought, are you having a laugh? Is this supposed to be funny? And there was... I could hear, sometimes because the ear muffs obviously, cause you know with your shoulder, they would move out. So, I could hear things, and they were saying like, "Aren't they eating? No one's eating." And I thought, you stupid idiots, and eventually, obviously before we boarded the plane they gave us food. So, they opened only one arm so we ate a piece of bread, which was about this big. In Afghanistan, you get like a... Do you know what naan bread is?

Interviewer: Yeah.

- Like a pita bread, but it's about this big. It's actually this big, that thick, and that wide. So, it's a huge amount of bread. So, I ate that and obviously, it was okay, do you know what I mean? And they gave us

water, but then we landed somewhere. I dunno where we landed. We landed into... Considering it was February. So, obviously if it was the European countries it would be cold because it'd be snowing, and so on, and so on, but where I landed, it was extremely hot. It was actually very hot, because when we come off the plane to get onto another plane, I don't know if we actually got onto another plane, or if it was like just to make us feel that we were changing planes. We got off, we walked a bit, we went around in a few circles, and we went back on a plane. So, I don't know if it was the same plane, or it was a different plane, but it was extremely hot. And it was actually that hot that, have you actually been to Dubai? Have you been to a Saudi country? Have you been to ever, a hot country, where you get off the plane and you can see like the steam go up? Do you know what I mean? It's you know like water when it evaporates, you can actually see it? That's how it was, it was that hot. So, February that hot, the only country I can think of, it's gotta be in the Gulf, somewhere in the Gulf, it has to be. So, we got onto another plane. Obviously, during that period, when they took us from one plane to another plane, if there was another plane. Obviously we've got a three-piece, we're walking, then they would stop you. And what the soldier would do, there were two of them. One on this shoulder and one on that shoulder holding you. One of them would kick from behind. He would kick the in part, inside of your leg, so you kind of spread your legs across. So, the chain on your feet, the shackles are actually stretched, not got a slack in it, so obviously, it's stretched. And what he does, from behind, he like stamps on it. So, obviously you've got your feet spread apart, the chain there has gone off slack. So, it's like, there's no slack in it. So, you can imagine if someone's from behind smacks it from the middle and yanks you back. The pressure of the cuffs pushes down and it cuts you. And they kept on doing that every time we stopped, and it was like... I don't really cry, do you know what I mean? But that day I cried. (chuckles) Do you know what I mean? I was in tears, man. I couldn't hack the pain because it was cutting my leg, and it was like, agonizing. And what they did, the cuffs, you could either have them loose, or you could have them really, really tight. They had them really, really tight, so obviously, if it's really tight on them, they keep on doing that, the more pain I feel. Do you know what I mean? And obviously, if the cuff actually had slack, then maybe I would feel no pain whatsoever. So, I got to another plane, same method they tied me down, flew. By that time I needed to go to the toilet, and I actually had to go for a number two, and number one. So, I've got there and I'm saying, "Excuse me, excuse me." One guy, I think it was a woman who came over, she opened my... She removed my muffs and she goes, "What do you want?" I said, I need to go to the bathroom. She goes, "Can't you hold it?" I go, "No, I need to go." She goes, "Okay." So, she took the padlock off, got me up, went to the bathroom. She just pulled my pants down, do you know what I mean? I was like, okay. And now she goes, "Go." So, I turned around, sat down, I'm sitting there for maybe half an hour and I could see her feet. I could see her shoes, and I'm thinking like, okay, you can go now, do you know what I mean? Or at least turn around so I can see the heel, you know your heels, but she just stood there, and obviously just looking. And I couldn't relieve myself, and it was actually, I was more in pain than anything. And I was there for maybe half an hour, and at the end, I thought, you know what? Forget it, there's no going. So, I went back, sat back down. She goes, "Did you go?" I said, "No, I couldn't go." She goes, "Why?" I said, "Well, you were standing there." She goes, "Oh, what's wrong with that?" I was thinking, yeah why... In my mind I was thinking, yeah, why don't you sit down, half naked and let me look at you and say, "Go on." See how uncomfortable you find it. And I sat back down after another half an hour, I was in pain, my stomach was hurting. I needed to go really, really desperately now, especially like for a wee, I was dying. I could feel like my bladder, I was about to shoot, it was about to come. I thought, I need to go. And they took me off again, and I just sat there, and it took me another half an hour, but this time I just closed my eyes, just

tried to imagine she's not there. And eventually, I relieved myself. Just done a wee really, I mean, I don't do nothing else, I hold all of it in, but I just done a wee. And I got up, and she'd said to me turnaround, and I thought maybe she wants to put my trousers up. So, I turned around, and she kind of wiped my ass for me, which like, shocked me. I was like, ugh! Don't do that. She goes, "What?" I go, "I haven't done a poop." Do you know what I mean? And it's like, embarrassing. I felt so embarrassed. It's like madness and I thought, yeah, things you gotta do for your job, hey? (chuckles) Just absolutely horrendous, so then I sat back down and obviously, I was thinking, fine, what just happened? I was going over my head what's happened. That's something I gotta tell my family one day when I get home, (chuckle) all my friends. And obviously, I flew, I think it was a day or two, a day and a half. Got to my destination, landed in Guantanamo, obviously, on the other side of the bay. We was marched off individually, and we was thrown onto a truck. On this truck, we was told... It was an open back truck. I could see, I could sense that it's like the truck, the back part it was actually open. You know the military trucks? They have the open back trucks and you can see all the people inside. It was like one of them trucks. We sat down and we was told to sit with our legs crossed, lent forward with our hands on our left knee. So, our hands like that, we had to lean forward, and put it on our left knee. And so, you got your legs crossed. So, we driving, and obviously when you driving it moves, the vehicle moves, bumps and blah, blah, blah. And eventually, it was only like about, from what I remember, I think it was about 10 minutes to dock. I think there's a dock there and you have to cross the channel, or the river, whatever it is. So, we go on this ferry, we drove onto a ferry, and obviously, you're on the sea now. So, the sea moves about with the water. We was told not to move, we couldn't move. Couldn't move a muscle, so every time the sea moved, or the boat moved, it was rocking. So, the guy kicked me in my thigh, like as he's kicking a football,. And he kicked me that hard for about, I would say he must have kicked me about 30 times on that same spot. And again as I... I don't really cry in my life, but that was like I broke down and I couldn't hack the pain. I was in tears, I was like, tears were running. There was like a river. (chuckles) Do you know? And it was that bad, I couldn't... And the thing what it was, the reason I was getting kicked more than anybody, because what happened was, my hands were on my left knee. And you know, like when you're in that state? You forget things, sometimes you kind of just don't pay attention. I brought my hand back to the middle and I sat up straight. A guy goes, comes to my ear, and by that time they took the muffs off. They took our jackets off as well. They got a (indistinct), took our jackets off when we got to Guantanamo, but so, we still had the goggles. No, we had them off soon, all right? They took our wooly caps off. We had a wooly cap, they took that off, put the muffs back on. The guy came, took my muff off, and he said to me, "Put your hands on your left knee." I just instantly went like that, because obviously I understand him. Majority of them, actually, all of them never understood him. So, they was having difficulties telling them what a left knee is and put their hands. So, obviously, when he told me, I moved as he told me. So, he thought, well, hold on, this guy understood me. So, he goes, "Oh, this motherfucker speaks English, and he understands." So, what they did, they got like a chalk, and they wrote on my back, English.

Interviewer: How do you know that the word English was written on your back?

- Because you know like when I was walking, so I could hear some of the soldiers. What has he got English written on his back for? Why has he got English on his back for? And basically, it was telling the other soldiers, this guy speaks English. Not that I was from England. They just thought, they just knew I spoke English. So, when he said to me, "Turn, put your hands on your left knee." I just moved it. He obviously, he

goes, "Oh, this motherfucker speaks English and understands it." And he kicked me every time I moved, every time the boat moved, obviously I was going left and right (chuckles) with the boat rocking. And then he kept on kicking me on my left knee, on my left thigh. And then, when I got off, I couldn't put any pressure on my leg. It was swollen to the extent that I... It was like, black, and when I went to the... When I went to my cage, or when I went to the tent, when they stripped me again, my leg was like swollen, and it was all black, blue and purple. And they said to me, "What happened to your leg?" So, what do you mean what happened to my leg? Why don't you ask your soldier who kicked me about 30 times? That's what happened to my leg. And he goes, "Why did he kick you?" I go, "Ask him, I don't know why he kicked me." I was not moving. I was moving because the boat was moving. I was going along with the boat. Do you know what I mean? And nothing happened about that anyway. So, we got off in the... Then we got off the ferry. We drove into the camp, the gates opened obviously, I could hear the gates open up, padlocks, and blah, blah, chains. We drove in, they dragged us off one by one, and the pictures that was first, I think released of Guantanamo, you know when they got them like detainees who was sitting down with their hands like that with the masks. That's how we was put, and I was there for maybe two hours probably. It was really hot, dehydrating. We was not obviously given any water because we was given water, but we couldn't drink it. So, according to them, we all refused to drink water. (chuckles) So, obviously we was all dehydrating. God, it was extremely hot, dehydrated more. Obviously, when they get off, they kind of... Excuse me, they punch you, kick you, and so on and so, put us down. Then, I think, they was taking everybody one by one individually in a rota, and it was my turn. They took me... First, they took me to the showers. They got a Stanley knife. They cut my clothes off, took my goggles off. Sorry, took my ear muffs off, but left my goggles on. Still had my cuffs on and basically, I was literally naked, and they took me to the shower. And the one guy moved, removed the goggles to a certain extent. He goes, "That's the shower, here's a bar of soap, have a shower." So, he put the goggles back down, he opened the tap of the shower. And obviously, it was like a really powerful shower. It's like I was having a shower, you can call it, but I had a soap in my hands, and my hands were tied. And I said, (chuckles) "Excuse me, can you un-cuff at least one of my hands so I can put soap around me?" Under my armpits and my private parts, and stuff. I need to scrub, and he said, "No." He said, "You should do it with your hands cuffed." I thought, okay, I just threw the soap on the floor and just stood there like a twat, under the cold water. Then they took me back to a tent, it was called the processing tent. Went through the tent and there was a lot of people there, they had like it was generals, and all the military high officials. You could tell like it was... They were all standing there. And I got to the tent, and the one guy goes to me, oh he goes, "Arabic, Urdu, Pashto?" Asking if you speak the language. I said, "No, no." And they all kind of looked at me, like really funny, like what language does he speak? (laughs) Then I was like from some kind of alien, and they said, "You translator?" I said, "No, I speak English." And they were all like, (gasps) "He just spoke English." It's like, yeah, you not the only ones who speak English in this world. (chuckles) Do you know what I mean? So, I'm walking in the tent and they, first of all, they took a swab again of my mouth, took a few photos. They took my fingerprints. They never took any strand of my hair because it was shaven before we got on the plane. Then we was marched to the table, cavity search, moved on. I'm still in the cuffs. Then they gave us a new set of a uniform and the way we we wore them is they took one leg off, one cuff, one leg iron off, put one leg on. Cuffed it back, took the other one off, put the trousers on, cuffed it, and same with the hands. But it was not a full suit, it was actually like trouser and a top, which was orange. And by that time they took my actual goggles off then. So, I got to this other place, the guy sitting on a table with some letters, and he asked me to write a letter to my family. He goes, "Do you wanna write a

letter to your family?" I said, "Yeah, I wouldn't mind to write a letter, but how?" He goes, "With you hands, here's the pen." I said, "Well, my hands are cuffed, how am I supposed to write a letter with my hands cuffed?" And obviously, I was tied like this, so how am I supposed to write a letter? And he said, "Well, you'll have to do it." I was like, I go, "Can I write a letter later on?" And he goes, "Yeah, you're better (indistinct), leave it then." And I think, majority of the detainees, I think all of them, they've actually wrote a letter when they first got in, which is literally impossible. Then they had like a camp rule list on a board and I think, there's like 15, 20 rules, or 10 rules that you had to abide by, and I had to go and read them. And he said, "Read them." He goes, "Do you want me to explain to you?" I go, "Nah, no, I can read them myself." I read it, then I was marched to my... Where I was in the alpha block in Camp X-ray. I was in Camp X-ray, block alpha, it was alpha, charlie basically. Block Alpha, row charlie, six. So, that was my cell I went to. And obviously, the way they take you, you're still cuffed, and what they do, they actually push your head down, so you're walking like that. So, you can't see up because someone's got their hands on the head, cause they don't want you to see the layout of the camp, just in case you plan to escapee. (chuckles) So, I feel like a film. Then we was marched to the... I was taken to my cage, thrown in there. I was made to kneel down at the back of the fence. So, my head, my forehead is pushed against the fence. My hands are cuffed. One guy comes around the back, there's three of them. One's holding me from the shoulder, the other holds me from my elbow, the other, he was un-cuffing one of my cuffs. First of all, I think the un-cuff your leg irons, then they throw the leg irons underneath you. So, you're on your knees, right? Hands like that, on your knees, they un-cuff your leg irons, throw them in the front. The other guy comes from behind, puts his hands behind my legs, picks the cuffs up. So, he's got em in his hand. He un-cuffs one hand, grabs the cuff. Then the other guy grabs your hand, places it on top of your head. He places his hand on top of your hand so you can't move it. Then the other guy goes around, un-cuffs the other hand, takes the hands away, throws them out the door so you don't get hold of the other guys, so you can still use them as a weapon. Then the other guy puts your hands, and he tells you to interlock your fingers and they hold your fingers together, really tight. Then as he's holding you, and he's got you by your... In between your shoulder, pressed against the fence. One leaves, second leaves, and when they got the padlock ready, about to shut the door, he pushes you and exits out. And it's like any small cages, like about three meters by three meters, maybe four by four, something like that. So, it's quite like... It's like a drama scene, I think. (chuckles) The way they do things. Then they locked the door, and I got up, and they told me to come to the front (indistinct). In my cell, there was two buckets, one to drink water. And he told me the order they have to be in. So, you've got a bucket and a bucket. Then you have your slippers. Then you have a toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, and then your canteen to drink water out of. There's a particular order you gotta put em in. In one bucket, there's water to wash, or to drink before you wash. You take the fresh water, put it in the canteen. Then they got a small hand towel, which you can use to put in the canteen like at the top, so nothing goes inside, cause there was no top given. So, we used that as like a stopper, you can call it. The other bucket was to urinate and defecate in really. And obviously, there was no privacy, again, we had to go in front of everybody. And as you have seen, like the cages were made of fence. Like, you know when you go to play tennis? A tennis court, the sides, exactly the same material. Even the roof was built with that. Then on top of that, they had another roof that was built. That was made of a wood, but it was like just putting, for example, building a... It was like building a room with a cage obviously, with metal. Then they have this roof literally the same size of the cage. So, when you it rained obviously, the rain never falls straight does it? It always falls at an angle, depending on which way the wind blows. Sometimes it does fall straight if there's no wind at all, but 99.9%

of the time, it always falls at an angle. So, if the roof is exactly the same size (chuckles) of this cage, and the cage is made of mesh, which is like open air. Obviously, you can get water in your tent. So, I didn't see the purpose of that roof. So, when it rained, it would come straight in your cell, and you would get wet. The only thing was the floor was made of concrete. We was given an insulation mat to sleep on. We was given one sheet, two blankets, like a thin, furry fleecy, kind of type blanket. And we was given two towels to start off with. When we first got there, basically we couldn't talk to nobody. I was more isolated because majority of the people in my block were actually Arabs. So, I couldn't speak Arabic at the time. So, I was kind of more isolated than anybody, even though we was not allowed to talk to nobody, anyway, but later on that ban was lifted. And we was allowed to talk, I couldn't communicate anyway. So, obviously that was basically, and the size was about three by three meters, probably four by four max, five I would say. Square like-

Interviewer: Can I go back to something earlier, before we go into it?

- Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: Did you know if you... When the Americans took you, who was holding you before the Americans took you? Who was holding you?

- The Northern Alliance, general (indistinct).

Interviewer: And do you know if they... Americans paid money for you.

- From what we've heard when we was actually being handed over, who was actually paid, they paid them \$35,000 for a person who spoke English. So, basically the Arabs, and the English speaking, European people had more value than (chuckles) the Afghani and Pakistani's, cause we got... I got paid \$35,000 for me, that was my price. And for the Pakistanis and the Afghanis, they got paid 5,000.

Interviewer: Hmm.

- So...

Interviewer: And when you went to Kandahar, did you ever see a doctor there at all?

- There was medics there, but they was kind of a waste of time.

Interviewer: Why?

- They was there for nothing because some of them, some of the detainees had frostbite. Frostbite on the toes and that could be cured. All they need is antibiotics, and so, and so, and it would sort it out, but they were refused medication whatsoever. So, obviously when you've got frostbite, it gets infected and it goes... Start getting black, and eventually it dies, your toe dies so it has to be amputated. So they, you know-

Interviewer: What did the doctors do? Were the doctors called to that?

- All the doctors did if someone was injured, I mean, heavily injured it's like, heavily injured if they got bullet wounds, or shot bullet wounds, then they... Even then I don't think they treated them. They just poured iodine on top of that wound, and whacked a bit of bandage on it, that's it. Oh, and they gave... They used to always give constipation tablets because (indistinct) cause they make you constipated really bad. So, you don't go to the toilet for like, three, four days (chuckles) sometimes. So, eventually you start getting cramps and stuff. So, they would give you... There's a small, very small tablet, which was quite effective. That's the only thing they would give you, but just to go toilet. (chuckles)

Interviewer: And when you had your interrogations in Kandahar, did you ever get beaten for not answering, or did you get beaten for any... Or any other violence done to you during that time?

- Majority of the time you would get beaten up because you're not talking, or if they thought you're not giving... You're not being truthful, because we always maintained that we was innocent from day one, until we got to Guantanamo. So, we always said like. We went on the trip to Pakistan and so-and-so, and this is how we've got to Afghanistan. And they always said, "No, that what you saying now is just bullshit." In other words, this is what we think you were actually not... They don't say think, this is what you went. So, they actually were putting words in our mouth and saying that we know that you went for that reason. You went to fight for the Taliban because of 9/11 and because of the things that were happening in Iraq. You know all the ban on Saddam Hussein, and all this mumbo jumbo I've never heard of in my life. I never knew Saddam Hussein was under sanctions. I've never heard of Saddam Hussein when I was young anyway. (chuckles) I was not very politically aware before Guantanamo. So, the word sanction made no sense to me. I was like, "Well, what does that mean?" (chuckles) So, they was like giving these reasons. So, you felt as a Muslim, you felt angry to go out, 9/11 happened and there was another attack on a Muslim nation, which is Afghanistan, and you felt obliged to come and help your fellow Muslim. I was like, "I haven't got a clue what you're talking about." So, if you didn't say that, that was the reason that they would beat you, or if they had somebody that they thought, who was also detained with you, they thought that was somebody who they thought that was linked to Al-Qaeda, or who was very valuable to them. And they was in the same tent, and they would expect you to spy, to listen out and to give information in terms of what they're doing, is the plan to escape? Is the plan to kill somebody?

Interviewer: Would they ask you those questions?

- Yeah, and they would say, "We want you to go in and be a spy, just listen out. And if you ever hear anything tell the soldiers that you wanna see the intel, and we'll call you." So, there was a lot of pressure from them in terms of spying over the people, but I always used to say, "First of all, I'm not a spy for you because it's not my..." It's not my job, do you know what I mean? And why should I spy on the person who's being treated the same as me?

Interviewer: Do you think you were treated better since you spoke English?

- In Guantanamo, yeah. In Kandahar also, we was better off obviously, than the Arab because we could understand what's happening, even though we never actually told anybody we was actually, from the UK. Because when you in that kind of situation, you kind of, you wanna use that to your advantage. If you tell everybody you're from the UK, then they don't... They'll start talking in codes, or they'll talk very quietly. So, if you tell them that you don't understand English, and you act like an idiot, they talk about things, they need to move you. And basic things were known to us, like when you watch military films, like they use a 24 hour clock. They used bird as a plane, chow, and stuff like that, you know? Certain words they used to describe certain things. So, obviously we had the understanding, and we used it to our benefit to know what's happening. Who's coming, if more detainees are coming in. So, we just kept quiet, didn't say we spoke English. Only the people who knew we spoke English were a handful of military personnel, and the interrogators, obviously, because we told them we was from the UK. But majority of them, we never told them. So, when they would talk amongst themselves about something that's happened in the camp, we would just look at em like...

Interviewer: And when you say we, who are you talking about?

- Me, Shafiq and Asif, because we was actually put together initially. After two weeks, Asif was segregated from us. He was sent to a different tent.

Interviewer: Why do you think?

- I dunno, it was just random. They would move, every day they would take five, put them out, put 'em to a different tent and bring five from another tent, and just keep on moving around. I think it's to make sure that you don't get to know somebody and start planning, because if you're there for seven months, or a year with the same kind of people all the time. Then you can actually start planning something, but if you actually move us around, 24 hours around the clock, then you can't plan. So, I think it was like military thinking.

Interviewer: So, when you got to Guantanamo, what was your first interrogation like? Was it any different from what happened in Kandahar, or was it-

- It was actually more scary. To me, it seems like from a movie where you would see a person who was being imprisoned, because when I first got into interrogating in Guantanamo, when I walked in, it was a fairly big room. It was made of all, like wood, and they had a massive table in the front. And then they had this huge guy, bald guy, and he was like, not just big, he was built. Like really, really massive dude and he was wearing his vest and he had all his muscles were kind of popping out, which he looked scary, and he had a stubble. And a bald dude, and I thought, shit. (chuckles) I'm in trouble. And they had along the back of the room, they had about 15 to 20 guys sitting, and they looked like officers. Sitting all there around, so they had a table, as me and you are. The guy's there, I'm here, and along that room they had like about 15, 20 guys sitting. And I was like, "What's happening here?" It's like from a film. I had a guy on my right, and a guy on the left with the guns. And one guy obviously standing outside, and he was being very serious cause later on, things became more relaxed for us with the interrogation stuff. But with this guy, he was like, down to

business, very serious, he looked the part. I'm like, oof, I'm in trouble now. And he asked me basic things, "What school did you go to? Where year was you born?" From childhood to now, I had to give him all the names of my family, people I know, people who when I was, I went to school with. Took all my information. I was there for maybe six hours, and all the other guys were kind of, sitting there, but nothing... I mean, I didn't get physically abused, or nothing like that. It was just like, he looked very serious. It was like, you're getting interrogated, basically. And he was just taking notes. That was my very first interrogation, and obviously after that, I was seen by the MI5 the next day.

Interviewer: By what?

- By the MI5.

Interviewer: The MI5 came the next day?

- Yeah, dunno if it was the next day, they came the next day.

Interviewer: And what happened there?

- It was the same thing, it was like, they came and they said, we're basically the MI5. I've obviously heard of the MI5, so I knew what the MI5 was, and there was a guy from the foreign office. He introduced himself, and basically asked me about my welfare, if I'm doing okay. If I am okay because obviously, I had spoken to his colleague before. And he asked me (chuckles) if I'm okay when I was like the way I was. It's the same thing, I was still chained up and he was asking, I said, "Yeah, fine," because to me, I think I realized that even if I say I'm not okay, they'll say, "Okay." So, there's nothing they can do for me. So, there's no point of really complaining, and even though we did complain on many occasions, but after a while you think, it's not worth complaining. It's not actually worth saying anything to them. And then my father actually went through the same thing, date of birth, age, who you know, where you're from, background history basically. And then they went back away for about two hours and they bought me some Macky D's, I had some dinner. Stayed still, stayed in that interrogation room. They came back they said, "Well, we've gone over your story, and we think you've lied. And this is the reason why we think you came to Afghanistan. We have your files that you was part of this group, (indistinct) in the UK, and all the other groups I've never heard of in my life. I was like, who's (indistinct), and who's this group? And they tried to link us with mosques and say, we went on marches and all this madness. I was like, "Nope, I haven't got a clue what you're talking about." And that went on for the two and a half years I was there.

Interviewer: When the MI5, did they seem supportive of you?

- No, they... I mean, we didn't get physically beaten by the MI5, but obviously we got verbal abuse from the MI5.

Interviewer: Was an American always present for the MI5, or were they-

- No, sometimes yes, sometimes no. They would leave them to it, but they always had... They've got another room always... How can I... I think it's like a CCTV room, which they monitor. So, they got cameras and they got people, and they can obviously hear what you're talking about. So, they've all... Even though they're not present in that room, they'll be in the next room that they can hear you, and watch you on the monitor.

Interviewer: When you said that it got better with the interrogations with the Americans over time, why would they get better? What made them better?

- I mean, it got better to a certain extent with certain interrogators. It was like, when I first got there, then I was handed over to this guy, I would only see him. This guy, I should say for, and he was an American intelligence officer. And he was in the military, cause he always used to wear military clothes. I dunno if it was like army, or Navy, or whatever branch he's from. I haven't got a clue, but he was actually quite nice to me, and very friendly every time I seen him, and I seen him for maybe, like seven months. So, every three, four weeks I would go to see him, so I'd see him once a month. I was in total seen him for about seven times, and every time, even from the first time I told him my story. He actually never said to me I was lying. He actually never said that, this is what I think. It seemed to me that he was actually doing his job. He's taking the information and going back, researching what I'm saying, if it's right or wrong. And he's not trying to blame me for something that he hasn't got enough evidence, or any factual evidence against me. So, it seemed quite genuine to me. And he also used to bring me food all the time without fail. He would bring me Macky D's, bring me drinks. He'd bring me pizza's, and this is like the first stage of Guantanamo. A lot of people were going through a lot of shit, I kind of found it quite easy. Also, he would have given me, in my cell, I was probably one of the first detainees, actually probably the first detainee to actually get any kind of reading material. He came and gave me a few books. He gave me "Planet of the Apes." He gave me, "The Flying Dutchman," something like that.

Interviewer: So, why would he give it to you instead of the other Englishman?

- I haven't got a clue. I think, because he was allocated to me. At the beginning, you was allocated a particular guy, who was interrogating you, he's familiar with you. He knows your story. So, I think it's like getting to know the person on an individual basis rather than, you seeing me, then this guy sees me, then this guy sees me. Nobody's got a clue what that was going on. So, I think, at the beginning, that's how they try to do it. But later on when he left, things changed. I never seen one guy second time, it was always changed. So, he was fair and nice to me, I dunno why he was nice to me, but he was cool with me. And he done a lot of things for me, he gave me letters. My family wrote letters to me, and he actually brought the letters to me, and he would come to my... When I went to Guantanamo, I was actually moved when we first went to Camp X-ray, then the Camp Delta was built, it was all transferred there. I actually went to isolation for the first month.

Interviewer: Why is that?

- I haven't got a clue, but obviously, when I went there, I never knew that was isolation. I thought, this is the prison. This is how everybody's in. And all I knew I was actually in India block. They call it I, so they used to

call it India block. But after being in India block for three weeks, one of the guys, one of the guy soldiers I got to know quite well. He asked me, he goes, "Why are you in isolation?" So, this is isolation? I thought this is the normal... This is normal for everybody. He's said, "No, this is isolation. You've been isolated because you've done something wrong. You've either been in trouble, or your interrogator has requested for you to be isolated." So, when I went to see my interrogator next week, or a few days after, I asked him, "So why am I in isolation?" Cause I never knew, cause I don't know if I was in isolation. So, he actually got me out after a month, he got me moved to camp... Which was Camp Delta, which was block C, Charlie block. That's where he got me moved, and that's when I realized, so for one month I've been in isolation, I never had a clue.

Interviewer: And he never explained to you why?

- No. He goes, "I dunno why you're there," but for some reason he goes, "It's not me, but you must have got in trouble." I said, "No, I've never been in trouble. I haven't swore, I haven't spat. I haven't done anything." So, I tried to find out, but obviously, you're on a need to know basis in Guantanamo. So, they tell you what you need to know. So, then obviously, after the month I was moved out.

Interviewer: Did you ever go back to isolation?

- Oh, many times. (chuckles)

Interviewer: Why did you go back other times?

- Once I got sent to isolation for two weeks for singing a song. (laughs)

Interviewer: Can you tell me what that was?

- It was a song that I think, I can't remember who sings it, but it goes... I think actually, 2Pac sings it, and it goes something down the line, bow down when you come in my town, bow down because I'm Westwood bound. Something like that, that song, but really, we'd actually changed some of the words. So, when this female woman, who used to be a sergeant, we used to hate her. Everybody used to hate her. She used to be so bad, So, when she used to walk on our block, on her shift, I used to sing the song, bow down when you come on the block, bow down because I'm a detainee greater than you. (chuckles) And because of that reason, I got sent to isolation. There's more to it, there's more lyrics to it, I've just kind of forgot, it's been so long. And she stood there and listened to me, and she laughed. She goes, "You find that funny?" I said, "I find it very funny." I go, "So, bow down." And then she goes, "All right," she went back, then the guards come to put me in isolation for two weeks. (laughs) So, it was funny.

Interviewer: Did you mind being in isolation?

- To be honest with you, in the beginning, if it's for two weeks, one day, two days, it's fine cause it gives you time to reflect and you're away from everybody. So, you get to contemplate, to chill out, relax, you're away from everybody. You don't hear the screaming. You don't hear the arguments. So, you kind of have your...

You get to reflect on life. So, in one way it's good only for two weeks, probably I would say max, but then another time I was in isolation for about five months, continuous. That was me, there was about four to five, me, Shafiq and Asif was in isolation for a very long period, because during the end of my detention, in 2003 when General Miller came, things had changed. That's when things went worse. We had the stress positions came out, the strobe light, the music, the frequent flyer program where you moved every 15 minutes throughout the clock. You had the sleep deprivation, obviously it was just a single night. Then you had the food deprivation. If you're in isolation, you get a limited amount of food, they would portion your food, and you wouldn't get seconds. Sometimes in other blocks you would actually get seconds, depending on who you were. Not everybody gets seconds, only depending-

Interviewer: What do you mean by who you were?

- If you was a Brit, if you...

Interviewer: If you were a Brit you got a second, but maybe if you were Arab, you didn't?

- Yeah, yeah. No, well, obviously the Brits had more priority, you can say in Guantanamo. You can say that because our treatment wasn't as worse compared to many of them, many people, but at the same time, depending on the individual, how friendly the detainee was. Because I know one Brit that everybody hated him because he was quite upfront, very arrogant. He just spit. He used to throw urine. He would throw feces at MP's. So, obviously they're not gonna like him because of that reason. I never did that kind of thing because I think it's not right to spit on somebody.

Interviewer: What happened to him?

- Well, he was always also in isolation for many... He spent, I think, most of his time over probably one year, six months just in isolation.

Interviewer: Did he get earthed also?

- Yeah, he got earthed many times. I mean, we all got earthed, but I think (chuckles) he got earthed... You can't count the numbers, that's how many times he got earthed. Because anything used to happen, he used to go mad. Any little thing that he used to go berserk, basically, and I was more cool, relaxed, if something happened I thought, this happened. Aint nothing can do behind a cage. I mean, if I was in front of the guy and he did it, then it's a whole different story. I can do something about it, but when you like, a prisoner, there's no point sometimes fighting, or restricting, because they're always gonna win. So, you kind of just go with the flow. So, I used to get along, I was one of the detainees probably, who got on with a lot of guards, you can say. Majority of the guards knew me, Asif and Shafiq. We was actually quite well known throughout the American soldiers. We was known as the Three Kings of Guantanamo.

Interviewer: What does that mean?

- Towards the end of our release, we had more privileges than anybody. We had extra things in our cell that we were not allowed to have. We had a tub of Gatorade, a whole tub of Gatorade in our cell. We used to have six meals instead of three meals. We actually have double portions on six meals. (chuckles) So-

Interviewer: The Guards would give you all this?

- Yeah, we was actually given it because the interrogators wrote that we were allowed to have it, and that was because we was getting released. So, it was like three months before we got out, things changed. Me, Asif and Shafiq, we used to go to watch a film every Sunday without fail for the three months before we left. We used to go to this place called the Love Shack, which is a fairly big room, and they actually take and remove all your shackles. And there would be soldiers sitting there with you. So, we were sitting on the sofa, and the soldiers actually sitting there, and you'd be sitting next to a soldier, which was kind of weird. Do you know what I mean? And they become very friendly with us. We became friendly with them and we would sit down, and even the soldiers would sit down and we would watch TV together. We would listen to the radio. Sometimes they would leave the radio on and we would listen to the radio, and we'd watch TV. We watched quite a few films there. We watched James Bond with Halle Berry, Tomorrow Never Dies, I think that one. We must have watched about six, seven films. I can't remember which ones, but we watched quite a few in Guantanamo.

Interviewer: So, when you were there for five months in isolation, why was that terrible?

- That was because obviously, throughout my detention I was accused of many things. Of being part of... First of all, you start off with you're a member of the Taliban. (indistinct) And slowly, slowly, you move up the ranks. You become a lieutenant, colonel, captain, blah, blah, blah and eventually in the general. (chuckles) Then once they've gone through that phase and they think, well, the Taliban doesn't really mean much to us. We wanna know if you're Al-Qaeda, that's what we wanna get you on. So, then you become like a full soldier for Al-Qaeda, then you slowly move up the ranks again. Until you actually become Bin Laden's best man, right hand man, or left hand man, whatever you call it. So, there was a period in 2003, in I would say, just when General Miller came in. They had a video and they had a photo of a video still photo. And it was the pre-planning of 9/11 in Afghanistan in 2000, in a place called Terp Farms, the film's actually called, Terp Farms. That's the term the Americans use. The footage was actually shown on CNN recently, about a year ago. So, they had this film, and obviously, it's a very bad quality film. They had a still, and they showed me a photo where Mohamed Atta in 2000, was sitting in Bin Laden's office on a podium giving his talk, whatever he was saying, and you got people, loads of people were sitting on the floor. The Taliban's there and there's Arabs there, there's all kind of people there, black, white, you name it, all there. And Mohamed Atta's sitting there, and just behind on the photo, there's like three guys. And one guy was wearing his Adidas fleece top, which was obviously fake. You could tell from a mile away it was fake. In my interrogation, they asked me, in my suitcase, what did I pack?

- I said, "I packed thermals, I packed this and that, socks, blah, blah, blah." I had tracksuit bottom, I had jeans, and then when I said tracksuit bottoms, they asked me, "What type?" I said, "Adidas." So, they pull this photo out, and they said, because I said I was wearing Adidas, they said that this person is me. He didn't

look nothing like me. The guy had a massive beard, he had long hair. When I got to Pakistan in 2001, I was clean shaven. I didn't have a beard, I never had long hair in my life, until after I came off from Guantanamo. So, they accused me of being that person in that photo, they accused other two, say next to the guy, to that particular guy, to be Shafiq and Asif, (chuckles) which didn't look nothing like us. Like even if he gave the photo to my daughter, and she will tell you that it's not her dad. It was that blatant that you could see that these people are not the three guys who are in Guantanamo, but they were like, adamant and they were saying, "No, we know." You had certain detainees in Guantanamo, who kind of said, "Yeah, this guy was in the Taliban training camp, (indistinct)." Because a lot of people were stressed out, or they thought if they grab some people and make things up, they'll get better treatment, do you know what I mean? So, that was another part of the problem. A lot of people were saying that we were there because blah, blah, blah, X amount of reasons, but obviously they weren't there. So, during that period, that lasted for five months, four to five months and we were isolated. We were segregated from each other and we were isolated for that period.

Interviewer: And how did you manage, handle that?

- Obviously, isolation was difficult, it was extremely difficult for the first two weeks. I said, it's kind of, it's all right, but after that it becomes a month, and then two, and then three. It kind of has an effect on you. So, it gradually affects a person, seriously.

Interviewer: Did you know how long you would be there, or was it an ending so you didn't know when they-

- No, we wasn't told how long we'd be there, but it's difficult to cope with because you can't see anybody. You can't hear anybody, and you can't speak to nobody, and you're locked in a room on your own, with your own thoughts, nothing to do, nothing to watch. Maybe if they gave me a TV, I'll be flicking the TV all night long, watching something. At least it keeps the mind occupied. When you got nothing except for four walls, it's difficult. Plus in the day it would be extremely hot because the isolation blocks actually made of four walls, and the floor and its roof is actually made of mesh. Not mesh, metal, like metal sheets. So, they got AC built in, which obviously they're supposed to put on in the daytime so it keeps you cool, but they would turn it off. And obviously, because of the heat, it would get very humid, and it was very hot and humid in Guantanamo. So, obviously you can imagine, like being in that box room, it gets extremely hot. And you start sweating, you can't... I used to be literally naked in my room, just like lay there and just put a towel around me because it would be that hot and you'd be sweating, dripping. You know how you go for a run? (chuckles) Yeah, and you'd be dripping, and you'd have sweat dripping down your nose. That's how you actually be sweating in Guantanamo, just sitting there. So, obviously when you mean like in that isolation room, you're sweating even more. So, it's very difficult to cope with, breathings hard, water's hot, it's difficult. And in the night what they do, because obviously the metal, it gets cold, it gets a bit chilly in the night. They would turn on the AC. So, they will take away all your comfort items. So, you've got no insulation mat to sleep on because the bunk is metal, and the whole floor's metal, everything's metal. So, you gotta sleep on a metal that is cold, and they put the AC on. So, it's even colder. So, you can't sleep. So, in the day you don't have heat, at night, (chuckles) you have cold. So, it was like two extreme conditions they would put you in because you're in isolation, and the food would be limited, and so on and so on.

Interviewer: And would you be interrogated during those five minutes?

- Yeah, they would take you out, and we went into interrogation like every day, without fail. Sometimes, two days, three days. You would not sometimes... I think that's when the harsh treatment started, like with the stressed positions, loud music, strobe light, dogs, beatings that was happening for-

Interviewer: Could you describe some of that, kind of what that was like?

- Well, stressed position is like in your three piece suit, they don't un-cuff your hands. You get a separate pair of cuffs, handcuffs. They would cuff your leg irons to a hook on the floor with a padlock. Make you crouch, force your arms underneath your calves, your knees, basically. So, basically, your legs are like this and you're literally tip toeing. So, your hands and your feet are together and obviously, that's there and you can't actually put your feet flat because the amount of... There's not enough slack in the chains and they would cuff with another set of cuffs, cuff that into the hook. They'd hook it in so you were in that position, that's called the stress position. And sometimes they would leave you there two and a half days, probably three days.

Interviewer: For what purpose?

- Because there was that thought obviously that was bought out, and they wanted us to admit to it and say that we was... We knew about 9/11. So, basically we was getting accused of knowing of 9/11. That was the allegation. So, they wanted you to admit and give names, how you planned it. (chuckles) All this madness and it's something that was beyond and over, I think anybody in Guantanamo. And they want you to admit to that, and basically, you would be there for sometimes 10 minutes, sometimes half an hour, sometimes five hours. It totally depends on who the interrogator was because sometimes they would put you in 10 minutes and they'd say, "Okay, we have to go." They'd let you go. Sometimes they'd say, "Well, I have to go, but I'm gonna leave you in that position for X amount of days, and it's-

Interviewer: Could you describe any other abusive behavior there?

- Well, at the same time they'd have the loud music, which was... I mean, the rooms are very small, and the loud music would be extremely loud. Sometimes when you're in pain, if you actually take your mind off the pain, it kind of eases the pain, but when you have extremely loud music in your face, so loud that you can't even think. Have you ever been to a club and you're there for too long, and you think, damn I need to get out of here. It's kind of doing my head in, and that's the situation you are put in, cause for the first maybe four, or five hours it's just music. But later on, the music turns into a screaming noise, banging and just scratching noises, and all you can hear is instruments, individual instruments banging away. And eventually it doesn't become music anymore, it just becomes horrendously annoying and frustrating.

Interviewer: Do you know what kind of music it was?

- First it was Eminem, they played Eminem to us on the first instance, and then obviously, they realized it wasn't working. (chuckles) So, but obviously, I never knew what the purpose of music was at the time. I kind of find it very odd. I find it very odd when they first played it. And I thought, why are they putting music on? Especially they put Eminem. I thought it was an error, and it was probably for the soldiers. You know, they've got... They listen to it in their spare time and they just pressed it by mistake, and they've gone. But the next time I went in, they actually changed it to heavy metal, rock music, which is obviously much worse. I never classed rock music anyway, it's not music to me. It might be music to some wackos, (chuckles) you can call them, but it was like when you haven't got that kind of taste in the music anyway, it's annoying to hear. But after six hours, or seven hours in a day, it becomes extremely painful to your head, and you feel like your head's gonna explode. You start seeing things, you start hallucinating things, you start hallucinating. The pain becomes unbearable, and I think the psychological part of it is much worse than the physical, because physical you can always recover from physical pain. Bruise, broken arm, you would always heal no matter what, but when you are scared psychologically, once you've gone crazy, it's very rare someone who goes mad that comes back to normality. It's literally, it's a miracle. If it happens, it's a miracle. I've got a friend, I've got a relative who was fine until the age of 20. And all of a sudden he went mad because of drugs and loud music, and to this day, he's like 30 odd now, he's not there. And that's what it does to you. Once the mind is pushed past its limit, you can't come back. There's no jumping over that hurdle and coming back to normality, but obviously if you have a broken arm, broken eye socket, broken nose, it's always going to heal over time. And maybe you'll never realize that you almost broke it. Do you know what I mean? But once you've gone loopy in the head, that's it, and that's what their aim and goal were because I think they got all the treatment and techniques from the... There was an experiment done by an American professor.

Interviewer: Mm, right.

- Right, and obviously, they got them using that same tactics in Guantanamo. They most were using it in (indistinct) and they're using it in all around the world.

Interviewer: So, how long do you think you heard music at any one time? Was it...

- I think it was about two and a half days in that position for two and a half days.

Interviewer: And how do you cope? How did you handle it?

- Well, this is the thing, a lot of people ask me this, asked me this, how did we cope? I think because I was young. I was young, independent, not married, no stress on my shoulders, no burden of family. So, I was an individual on my own, who aint give a shit about nobody. Who aint need to stress about nobody except for (chuckles) my own ass. But for those people who were... If you put yourself in the position, you're old, you're more fragile, you can say. Mentally probably when you reach a certain age, you're more fragile physically, mentally. You have family, you have a wife to worry about, you have kids to worry about. You have a mortgage to worry about. You have all these other things to worry about. Even though you're in prison you're gonna think, how's my wife gonna cope? Who's gonna pay my mortgage? Is my wife coping okay?

Who was gonna pay for my school, children's school tuition and all these other things that you might think about, but I don't think about it cause I don't need to think about it. So, I think because of that reason, I coped easier, and plus, I had two friends who were not only friends from the age of 18 or 19. These friends were from childhood. We went to kindergarten together. So, we've known each other from nappies. (chuckles) Do you know what I mean? So, we've seen each other grow up for so many years, like 20 years. And eventually, when you grow up with somebody who you've known for 20 years. They don't be friends, they be like your brother, or part of the family because when you fall out, it's like you're falling out with your family. You feel the pain like you're going through. And that's how it is, that's how close we are, we're like brothers. So, I had that backing. You can say that when I used to be stressed and I used to come back from interrogation, I could talk to them, I could relate to them. And I think the best thing was just the way we are. We used to make... When I used to be treated in a bad way, I used to get beaten up, they used to laugh. I would be getting earthed and them in the next cell, and them laughing at me cause I'm getting beaten up. And I think that was something that we all did, when Shafiq got beaten up, I used to laugh. I used to find it hilarious. When we, for example, when we first got arrested by the Northern Alliance, obviously Asif was separated from us, and Shafiq and me was together. And the guy had a baton, like a baseball bat. It was about this long and this thick, and he come and whacked Asif's head. He literally smacked him off his head and off his back, and I found it very funny cause the expression of his face when he got hit, and I couldn't stop laughing. So, the guy came and beat me up and then Shafiq was laughing at me. So, I think it's something that we did. I think it was like immature, and probably still today, like I had an accident a few days ago. And the first thing, he came, just by... Off by chance, he was riving past where I smashed just locally and I crashed, and he was coming from shopping. I went to Asda to buy something, and he was going to Asda, but I ain't seen him there. So, I crashed and he drove behind me and he's seen me, seen my van. So, he stopped and he said... He looked at me and he laughed at me. The first thing a person would do is say, are you okay? Do you know what I mean? Are you hurt? He came with a guy and he's like, he took the piss out of me, basically, and he was laughing his head off. And it's something that we still do. It's something that that helped us to cope with many things. So, I would go to... I'll come back drained, physically tired, mentally strained and I would come back and they would say, "He got bummed, didn't he." (interviewer chuckles) (chuckles) Things like this, and what it does actually, it actually kind of forget what's happened to you, and you find it funny. You find what's happened to you even though it's not funny in reality, but you use that time and space to make something very bad, something very funny and very good, and that's how we cope with it. But many of the detainees, they didn't do that because the fact, it was serious for them, do you know what I mean? Because they never knew anybody so close. It was like, they only got to know the person because they were in Guantanamo. So no one would like... I wouldn't say anything bad about it, cause I don't know you. If you fell over, I wouldn't laugh, cause it's rude. Do you know what I mean? I would say, "Are you all right?" I'd be like, concerned for you, I'm concerned. V=But when you my friend, when you really, really close and you fall off and you break your leg, you just laugh. Oh, that's funny, and that's somehow... You yourself, you cut yourself, you broke your leg, even though it's painful because I'm laughing at you. You find it funny. (chuckles) And that's how humans are. And we kind of used that to our advantage. We used to always take the piss when we had the cavity search, it was not nice, it was the most horrible thing that could happen. It was worse at the beatings, for sure, because that's like... (sighs) What I consider, that's like going past the... You're past the boundary, that's the limit. Obviously at that time, it was like very embarrassing, and very humiliating, but later on, we just take the piss out of each other. Then we just say,

"Oh, you got bummed over." (chuckles) Do you know what I mean? And we say things like, instead, you go, "Yeah, you got two fingers, man." Do you know what I mean? Things like this and we used to make something serious into very funny, and that's how we coped. Do you know what I mean? We're immature, even though I'm 27, we're still very immature. And I think that's how we were all from day one. When you go up with somebody, no matter how old you are, when you know that person like so, so close, it's like your wife. I've known her for 13 years now, and everything that we do is like, she might fall over, I might fall over. Once I fell off from stairs, she laughed at me. And usually someone would ask, oh you... And very concerned, but first of all, they laugh at you, then they show their concern, and that's how it is with family. And it's fairly normal, so it's not like weird. It's actually very normal. Something happens with you and your wife probably like, she laughs first, and then she says, you all right though? Do you know what I mean? And that's how it is, and that's how we coped.

Interviewer: Were you aware that that was a way of coping when that happening?

- Yeah, we kind of realized. I mean, you kind of, you come out and you're stressed out, and he takes the piss, and you kind of forget that just literally, five minutes ago you was in that place, going through that shit, the harsh treatment that you was going through. Within five minutes, you kind of forget, and you're back to normal, but for other detainees, completely different. As I say, you know people who were married and people who were more older, even maybe there was actually, majority people who were old, those were all married, they had families. They would come back and they would just not talk to you for days, and they were just like, look depressed, very depressed. And they would just sleep all day, and even if you tried to talk to them they would say like, kind of leave me alone. Do you know what I mean? So, you don't know what to do because you don't know that person personally, you can't take the piss, you can't make a joke about what just happened because to them it's serious. But for us, because we were so young, I mean, I was probably one of the youngest detainees there, I mean, there's obviously younger than me. There's like 13 year olds, but I think, in the adults, I was the youngest. I was 18. I think no one I was 18 at the time. There was all like 20, 21, and so-and-so. So, I think that helped a lot. And also I think, we obviously spoke English and a lot of the detainees couldn't accept the fact. I think, one of the main thing is to cope in situations like Guantanamo, or anywhere if you're ever imprisoned for whatever reason. I think, if you accept the fact that it's part of your fate and it's meant to happen, you can actually move on and live your life in that situation. But many detainees couldn't accept the fact that it was happening to them. They couldn't believe that they'd been arrested and it's happening to them by the Americans. they couldn't believe it. It's like beyond their comprehension, they-

Interviewer: Why could you accept it?

- Because that's the way I am. I've always been like that. I broke my arm, I've had a crash, it's fate. It's meant to happen. If I fall over and die today, or something happens to my daughter. Yeah, I'll be upset, but I have to accept it's fate. There's nothing I can do to prevent it from happening. I'm a Muslim. I believe in my religion and I believe in fate. I believe in destiny. So, from what I've been taught, I believe, God had written the time and day for me to be born. And he's also written my time of death to me to depart from this world. He's also written times, and dates, and places where I wanna break my hand, or break this, break that,

that's gonna happen to me, I'm gonna have hardship in my life. There's a verse in the Quran, for example, when God says, "This life is a test for you to see how faithful and how strong your belief in Islam is. So, for me, it was a test and a trial and I accept it, but some people can't accept it. And I think, when you are in denial of something that's happening to you, that's when it has an effect on a person mentally. When you actually accept it, okay, it's happened to me, even though it shouldn't happen to me, but you know what? It's happened to me, fuck it. That's how you look at it. That's how I always tell people, this is how you gotta look at it. Do you know what I mean? The more quicker you accept your fate and what's happened to you, the more quicker you can move on. Rather than moaning and groaning, oh, why is it happening to me, why? You know, crying about it. Then you feel depressed, you feel down, and it has an effect on you mentally. And I don't wanna be crazy like, cause I was seeing people who's committing suicide. And I thought, I don't wanna put myself in that position. I don't wanna be one day taking my sheet, ripping it, tying it, put it around my neck and hanging. No way. Do you know what I mean? I don't wanna end my life, why should I? Even if I have to live for the rest of my life in prison, I'll live it, but I'm not taking my own life, because that's like you're giving up. You gave up to the Americans and therefore, you show them that they've won, and something I don't wanna do is show them that they was winning. Even though I was a prisoner, but I was a free man mentally, inside me, spiritually, I was free. And I mean, I would come to my cell and we would laugh. And the best thing about it was, the soldiers could not comprehend, or could not believe that we would come back from such a bad treatment, and come back to our cell and laugh. They couldn't believe it. They would say, "How do you do it?" All your freedom has been taken away. This is the worst place on earth, how do you come back and smile? How do you come back and pray? And yet, the soldiers were having problems. Some soldiers were taking their lives. Some soldiers were finding it extremely hard because they was in Guantanamo. They would say to us, they would say, you're in a the prison, and we're in a bigger prison. I mean, how ridiculous does that sound to me? I would laugh. I would say, you joke? I never told you to sign the piece of pretty paper and come to the army. It is out of your own will you've joined the military. Yeah, okay, it might not be your will that you've been sent to Guantanamo, but initially when you sign that paper it means in the time of war, they can send you wherever they want, they can do. So, you signed up knowingly that it can happen. So, now you're crying, and some of them, they would have this... For the military, they had this thing called combat stress team, which is like, the soldiers would actually go every week to this psych dude, and they would talk about their problems.

Interviewer: Really? How do you know that?

- Because they would say to us, they got... We've got this scheme put in place so our soldiers don't feel the pressure. What pressure? For me it's a joke, I mean, it's so ridiculous. And some of them actually went, I mean, one guy shot himself. One American guy shot himself. I think he was-

Interviewer: One guard shot himself?

- Yeah, I don't think he shot himself because he was stressed. He got a Dear John letter.

Interviewer: He got a what?

- A Dear John letter.

Interviewer: A Dear John letter?

- Yeah, basically his wife was having an affair and he was a marine, I think, and he shot himself in his mouth, and he killed himself.

Interviewer: He killed himself?

- He killed himself in Guantanamo.

Interviewer: How do you know this?

- Because the soldiers would come and tell us, they would say... So, there was one soldier, who apparently got... He was so stressed apparently, he just drowned. He swam and swam, and swam, and he took his own life, he just drowned. They couldn't find his body. There's two soldiers I know of who...

Interviewer: Who killed themselves?

- Who killed themselves, that according to the soldiers, the information we got, we don't know if it's true, if it's a fact or nothing, but even if it was, would they make... The army would tell you this to the public, they wouldn't tell you that.

Interviewer: Right.

- They wouldn't tell you, but some of the soldiers would say "This has happened." And we could see the stress. Some of the soldiers would go... There was one soldier we made him cry. He was a Chinese guy. We made him cry.

Interviewer: How?

- What it was, one of the...

- Do we just like...

Interviewer: Just take a break.

- No, just I wanted-

Interviewer: Oh.

- Because she's making... Someone's making a noise.

Interviewer: Okay.

- I just wanna (indistinct) interview.

Interviewer: Okay, okay.

- Let me just see who it is. Shay, is that you?

Shay: Yeah.

Ruhal: Oh, okay. Let me just close the door, so.

Interviewer: So, how you made someone cry.

- What it was, there was this guy who had just been recently released in Qatar. Qatar?

Interviewer: Yeah, Kandahar, he hasn't been released.

- No, no, no, in Qatar.

Female: Qatar.

Interviewer: Oh, in Qatar.

- Qatar, yeah.

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

- He came to the UK in about... His name is Jarula. I dunno if you've interviewed him. Maybe you probably will interview him. He's got a severe case of... You know when you get white patches on your skin? When your pigment dies.

Interviewer: Right.

- He's got that all over his face. He's just been recently released. He came to the UK about six months ago to a (indistinct) event. His name is Jarula. He was next to my... A few doors away from next to me, and he got in trouble. And when you get in trouble, you have to give all your comfort items away. So, what he did, he got peed off, and we had toilets that were actually built within the cell. And then like latrines, you know like the ones you have in the Europe, Eastern countries, like Far East, Pakistan, Bangladesh and stuff. You sit down, you squat and he's old. And what he did, he start flushing his blanket, his towel, his sheet, his cups, his toothpaste. He thought... Cause what he does, he clogs it up. And he's flushing it, and they came and

earthed him, took him out, and one Chinese guy, he got a black bag basically, a bin bag. Put it on his arm and put his hand down the toilet and pull everything out, one by one. So, what they did, everybody who's seen that, they called... They nicknamed him plunger. (interviewer laughs) (chuckles) So, they nicknamed him plunger. So, every time he would come on the cell, or block, and he was a very... No one liked him, he was like arrogant, he was like... He was not one of the good soldiers, basically and they would call him plunger. So, every time we called him, "Plunger, I need a cup." And one day, he tried to cause trouble, like some guys, soldiers would cause trouble on purpose, do you know what I mean? So, he was one of them who would cause trouble. So, we start, everyone started chanting, "Plunger, plunger," for about six hours, man. Every time he walked passed, plunger, plunger, plunger. And then eventually, when he came to dinner time, he gave out dinner that, and while he was collecting the trash, every... Because obviously, you're finished, when we finished our dinner, people used to sing songs and it's like time to chill out for the detainees. Talk and blah, bah, blah, relax, cause it's just before we got to bed. So, we will started saying, "Plunger," for about 15, 20 minutes, while he was collecting the trash. We kept on saying it, and we was chanting, and then the whole camp started chanting this plunger. And it's like from block to block, and you could hear it throughout the actual camp. Plunger, like you could hear it on the other side where the other camps were, even they were saying it. And basically, we used to shout across and say, this one soldier, who's an asshole, we're trying to piss him off. So, the whole camp was then employed. Eventually, he's walking, he's got the black bag. He threw the black bag, just threw it in the air and stamped his feet like he's a baby. He goes, "I've had enough. I can't hack this," and he ran off. He ran off the block, and he went home. He just-

Interviewer: And you never saw him again?

- We seen him again later, about six weeks later. And he started, he cried, he was crying. We got him so annoyed, he got so frustrated, and he started crying. I was like, and even the other soldiers couldn't believe it, that we actually managed to put so much pressure and stress on him that we actually made him cry. They couldn't believe it.

Interviewer: Do you know when that was?

- That was like in 2003, plunger. He was like a Chinese, he looked Chinese, or he was like Cantonese, or something like that. He was a chubby dude, no one liked him, plunger. I think it was in the Pepsi patch, they had patches, like with the military, they have different part... As they stay, they have a different patch, and one is a Pepsi patch. It's the Pepsi symbol.

Interviewer: Really?

- So, we used to call it the Pepsi patch. Then you have one with a cross. Then you have nine, nine, four, I think they were from New York. Then you have Michigan. They had all different like, they had palm tree, and they have different patches. So, we used to identify them by the patches. So, the nine, four, and the Pepsi patch were the worst patch that we had. Then you had the Puerto Ricans were also there.

Interviewer: So, was it easy to communicate with all the others that you were able to do?

- Initially, it was quite difficult for me because I couldn't speak Arabic. So, I found it very difficult. So, obviously I had to start learning to speak Arabic, which I did over the two years. I started learning, and eventually my Arabic became very good. So, I used to be a translator. So, I translate for detainees to the soldiers if there was any problems, so-

Interviewer: The soldiers would ask you to translate for them?

- Yeah, they had translators, but it was more of a headache waiting for the translators because they take... Can take up to an hour to come sometimes. So, if the guy's got serious pains in his stomach and he's trying to explain, it's better rather than waiting for the translator for an hour, so I translated it. So, we learnt Arabic, everybody learnt Arabic, actually, even the Pakistani's and Afghani's. Anybody who was non Arab, they learned Arabic to communicate. And which was quite weird because even though I speak Urdu, Urdu's not the main language I learnt as I was growing up. It was not to do with any of my culture within that. The Pakistanis who were there, who was detained, I could communicate with Urdu, but which was weird because everybody was learning Arabic, we would speak Arabic together. (interviewer chuckles) Which was odd, and we would realize, hold on, why are we speaking Arabic? Then we change to Urdu.

Interviewer: So would you say Arabic was the language of the prison?

- Yeah, it was. It was the language of the prison.

Interviewer: And people were pretty much able to communicate then throughout the prison?

- Yeah, because I mean, for the first maybe six, seven months it was hard, but because everybody was learning it at the same time, and we was all trying, it was very easy. I mean, when you go to college and learn, try and learn language it's hard because you're only learning in college, and when you go out you don't speak it. But obviously, in Guantanamo, you was actually speaking it continuously, and learning new words. And you would try to put it into sentences, and you just listen to him what he says, and how he puts a sentence, cause Arabic is different from English. It's like the English sentence is one way, and they use it the opposite way, so it's like, it's quite-

Interviewer: Did they teach you the language too?

- Yeah.

Interviewer: Would the people teach each other?

- Yeah, I had people, I had a few guys who taught me Arabic because they could speak a small amount of English. So, I learned, I learned too quite a bit. Then, eventually I moved to somebody who spoke quite fluent English. So, and he is actually an Arabic teacher, who teaches languages. So, that was great. So, I

learnt a fair amount of Arabic from him.

Interviewer: I wanna go back to where you said that you had seen some detainees try to commit suicide.

- Uh-huh.

Interviewer: Could you tell me what that was like?

- Well, there was one guy who was extremely depressed, you could say. He was a Saudi national, he was right in front of me, and a very large guy. And he's always on antidepressants, they've put him on that. He was not there, I think, mentally, unless he was just acting. And so, one day he was praying, and he was like... No, he was praying (chuckles) and I was washing up, and then everyone just started praying. I was a bit behind, and I looked over, and all I could see him doing something with his bed sheet. And I looked over carefully and I thought, what's he doing? And I thought... It kind of got me, I thought, what's he doing? And I was watching, and watching, and watching, and eventually he starts ripping the sheet. Cause obviously, the sheet's not... It's like too thick to pull through the mesh. So, he rips it, he ties a knot, feeds it through and you can hear like, going through, tying it. And then he ties it around his neck, he gets on top of the sink, and he jumps off and he's hanging. And he's making a noise. (groans) And then he can't breathe, and me, and Shafiq, and Asif was in one row. It was like an execution, and there it was (indistinct). We was about to pray, we were washing up, and Asif shouts out, "MP, someone's trying to hang himself." MP, we used to call the soldiers MP. And they came rushing down, they actually ran past his cell. (chuckles) They ran past his cell (chuckles) made it to the end of... Cause it's hard to see through the mesh because there's so many mesh, it's hard to see. And of course, it's night, which makes it quite hard to see more. And they ran back, and it was over here, over here, they came back. He opened the door and the guy was like an obese basically, the guy who was hanging. So, he was very, very fat. And I think, there was about three of them, and they were struggling to lift him off. So, he was hanging for a long time, because of his weight, they couldn't flip him and lift him, and get the sheet off. It took them about 10 minutes, and he was nearly out. So, that was one incident, and there's another incident that happened with a normal guy, he tried to kill himself. There was one guy in isolation, who succeeded apparently, but from what we know, his name was Michelle. He was also in the first prison that I was in and was arrested by the Northern Alliance. So, I know him quite well. He was in isolation apparently, and he tried to hang himself, and he actually never died, but his brain was starved of oxygen. So, that has made him a cabbage basically. So, he's paralyzed from...

Interviewer: Did you see him after the-

- Yeah, I've seen him after.

Interviewer: How did you see him afterwards?

- I went to the dentist to get my teeth done, I had a root filling in my tooth. I had pains. And he was actually always... After what happened to him, he was not actually brought back to the camp. He was always actually, handcuffed to the bed, even though he was a cabbage. He was always cuffed, his legs and his

ankles cuffed.

Interviewer: In the medical clinic?

- In the medical clinic.

Interviewer: And you would see him there?

- Yeah, I went there a few times because I had problems in my stomach. I had pains in my stomach, had eye problems, and I had to go see a consultant. And I had a tooth, my tooth was hurting, so I had a root filling done when I was in Guantanamo. So, I saw him because I had to stay there for a couple of hours.

Interviewer: Could you tell us a little bit about when you went to the medical clinic, how they took care of you and what they did?

- (indistinct) to do with the medical clinic, when I had my tooth done, it was great.

Interviewer: It was?

- It was really, really good. The guy was like, bang on. He was a black dude, and he talked about England. And when he came on a trip to the UK with the girls, when he was young, obviously, and he was telling me some stories, which was funny, and he was very nice. He took a long time on my tooth. On one, he took about eight hours and now, I can understand why Americans have so good teeth. So white and so good, so straight. Obviously, Brits have got a bad reputation for their teeth. (laughs) (interviewer chuckles) So, you know?

Interviewer: So, he took good care of you too.

- Yeah, he was there for a long time, and he was taking his time, and he's like cleaned it, and he was really good. And he was being very nice. Other instance-

Interviewer: Have you ever heard of other dentists, of other people not having the same good treatment for dentists?

- No, Shafiq went to the dentist as well, and he's seen the same guy, I think, and he also says that he was great. I went to... I actually went out once out of the camp. They took me out of the camp once completely.

Interviewer: For what?

- I went to another medical center, which was a Navy hospital.

Interviewer: For what purpose?

- I suffer from... I've got impaired sight in both of my eyes. So, I'm partially blind in both eyes. So, I have to have corrective contact lenses to see, glasses don't help cause I have this rare condition in my eyes, which is miss shaping of the... My cornea is misshaped. So, for me to see properly, I have to have these special lenses made according to size of my eyes and the shape. And it's made of plastic, hard plastic. So, they took me there to measure my eyes up and they was gonna give me some contact lenses, but that was just before I left. They gave me like the last three months.

Interviewer: Before that they ignored it?

- Nah, they ignored it, they told me it's not boot camp.

Interviewer: Huh.

- They kept on saying that. It's not boot camp, and that actually made my eye much worse, both my eyes much worse from what it was my vision. I'm actually classed disabled, you can say because of my sight, cause if I take my lenses out, I wouldn't be able to see your face clearly from this distance. I can't see anything.

Interviewer: And what happened with your stomach? How is that-

- I was having some pains in my stomach. It was just like the food poisoning, or something like that. Other times I went to the medical, it was okay, but the doctors... I never had a bad experience with the doctors, to be honest with you.

Interviewer: What? could you mind telling us?

- No, I never had any bad experience.

Interviewer: Oh, you never had a bad experience, oh.

- No, not that I can remember. I mean, they was always cool. (indistinct) was all right, she was a black girl, one was a white girl, one was a white guy, they was all right. The doctors would rarely speak to you, because the commons were doing all the job.

Interviewer: Have you heard of instances where the doctors weren't giving good medical care?

- Yeah, that happened towards the end of when General Miller came in. When the interrogators were interrogate... Interrogators were given the power to control what's happening in the block. So, they would control the medical side also. So, for example, like Omar Caro, the cleaning guy, he wasn't treated of his wounds, and he's got cataracts in one of his eye. He was not treated because he was not giving valid information, or the information they wanted off him. So, because of that reason, the interrogator put a stop

on his medical supplies basically. So, and that-

Interviewer: And you knew, did you know Omar?

- Yeah, Omar was my cell mate. I've actually received letters from Omar since I've got released, and I've sent him letters that he's received letters from. So, we stay in touch. Well< it's been a long time, it's been about a year and a half I haven't received anything. I think they've just totally cut him off cause they've isolated him and so, and so. So, and a few more other guys, they've stopped medical, they-

Interviewer: Did you know anybody who was on a hunger strike, or were you ever on a hunger strike?

- Yeah, I know people who were on hunger, one guy was Mohamed Rajib. He was also our frequent flyer, on the frequent flyer program. He was on medical hunger strike, and they would force feed him through little tubes, or whatever. So, I mean, that goes against their doctors thing, whatever they signed.

Interviewer: Did you ever hear of a whole group of people doing it ever?

- I've heard of it since I've come out of Guantanamo, but not while I was in Guantanamo. Obviously we used to have injections forced, they used to force us to give injections. That's something that was common to everybody.

Interviewer: For what?

- We used to get injections every six to seven months, we'd get injections. Apparently it was for flu vaccination, influenza apparently.

Interviewer: Why do you say apparently, they told you, or-

- They told us every time they would come give you an injection, it's an influenza to protect us from the flu. But I don't know about in America, but in the UK, the only people who are allowed to have actually flu vaccination, is the child of the age of one, and an old aged pensioner, who's over the age of 60. Or if you've got diabetes, severe case of asthma, severe diabetes type two, I think you have to have. Severe type of di... Certain kind of high blood pressure. You have to have a severe case of certain kind of illnesses, and then they will give you influenza. Very rare that I've come across anybody in the UK to have a flu vaccination at the age of 20. (chuckles) Very rare, actually I don't think they've ever gave anybody that, because the human body our metab... The immune system is strong enough to fight it off, but okay, if you wanna give us it once, maybe yeah, I can say, yeah. Every six months you gonna come to me and say it's influenza. It's like, what you talking about? It just makes no sense. Like if you cut your hand with metal, you gonna have your tetanus jab, you're covered for 10 years. Then if you have, I think three in 30 years then you don't need it ever again for the rest of your life. So, I've had three tetanus jabs. So, they said to me I'll never need it again, no matter how many times I cut my hand, whether it's rusty iron, or metal. There's certain things that people have basic knowledge of, even though we're not doctors. (chuckles)

Interviewer: Right. It's something that is common, common knowledge, known to everybody. So, that would be something rare that they would come and force us to have injections every six months, and you would actually get earthed to have these injections.

Interviewer: They would bring you to make... They would earth you-

- No, no, they would come to the cell, and they would ask you to volunteer to have the injections. So, you have to get your hands out and they would just inject you in your shoulder, or wherever, and if you refused it, then they would earth you and they would tie you up basically and then force you to have it.

Interviewer: Mm, did you ever meet with the Red Cross?

- Oh, on many occasions.

Interviewer: How was that? Oh, ready?

Female: Yeah.

- Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay, so could you tell me a little bit about how you met with the Red Cross and if it changed over time, or you know? The first time you met with them.

- The first time met with them, obviously the Red Cross was when I was in actually, in prison by the Northern Alliance. Then I met them in Kandahar. They was no good in both prisons. They was no good, they was a waste of time.

Interviewer: Why?

- Because they wasn't given any power to do anything on behalf of the detainees. Well, okay, they brought us fresh water, and they gave us a bar of soap that we couldn't have a bath with, so it was a waste of money. They bought in... This is obviously in the first prison by the Northern Alliance. They gave the Northern Alliance, the prison guards two truck fulls of flour, plain flour to make bread and dough so we can get some food. But we got bread for about three days, then somebody, one of the prison guards, they robbed the whole truck.

Interviewer: How do you know that?

- Cause we was told by the Red Cross. (laughs)

Interviewer: Really?

- Yeah, they took it because that's (indistinct). You got a massive truck full of flour, it's like, probably two years supply for your family, probably three years supply. I mean, it's not like flour goes off, there's no expiry date. So, he thought that... He got the chance and he thought, yes, this is my chance for getting some bread for the next three years for free. So, obviously that went.

Interviewer: In Kandahar?

- In Kandahar, they didn't do much, they were not allowed to do much. They weren't given much access to us. So, the only thing they gave us is Qurans. (phone rings loudly) (laughs) Sorry about that.

Female: It's okay.

- [Interviewer] Mm-Hmm.

Ruhal: It's probably...

Interviewer: So, the Red Cross at Kandahar?

- The only thing Red Cross in Kandahar did was take complaints and they gave us Qurans, that's about it. They had no other say in anything whatsoever. And the fact that we wrote letters through them, and that's about it. In Guantanamo, they initially for the first month didn't have no impact at all, whatsoever. The only thing they were good for, they would just take you out to a tent, or an integration booth, where there was given access to us, and it was just us and them. And they would bring a lot of food, cookies, and chocolates and stuff. The first time I met them they brought two packs of cookies about this big, probably that big, and there was like, loads in this packet. They had about three packets, and I actually ate all of them. (interviewer chuckles) They had a lot of peanuts in them, pistachios and I went back to my cell half an hour later, I puked up. (laughs) The amount of sugar in me. I got sick, puked it all out. I just thought, damn, couldn't even digest it properly, but it tasted great. Other than that, they really don't have an impact. They did do a bit of things, they increased the food, they changed the food for us. We wrote letters through them. There was more of like mail people, like Royal Mail we have here, postmen, that was the basic job for them.

Interviewer: Did you ever ask them why you were in Guantanamo, or if they could help you?

- No, we asked them, but they said obviously, because it's a serious situation we're not allowed POW's and detainees, kind of, and they haven't got full access. So, they're limited in terms of what they do and also, I think that it was the deal that if they don't go public, then they get limited access.

Interviewer: Were the Americans ever present when the Red Cross was there?

- Initially they used to be present all the time, but later on I think about, I can't give you a timescale, but maybe after a year they would not be there, the Americans would not be there, but obviously, they had body

mics on. Obviously it's because it was known.

Interviewer: Hmm, have you had a look at like the worst experience you had in Guantanamo, would you be able to kind of...

- The worst in terms of treatment, I would say probably the stress position and the music, not the physical side of it, I would say the psychological side of it was probably hard. Other than that, also not knowing of what's happening, and you'll be left in the dark, basically. That was difficult, but as I said, if you kind of accept the fact that this is how it is, then you're gonna cope with it. But I think initially, that was hard not knowing when you're gonna get home, why you've been arrested, why you're being held, why you're being treated in such a way. And especially by Americans, that was hard to comprehend, very hard.

Interviewer: So it sounds like a lot of the people were really nicer to you than...

- I wanna say... I would say probably 5% of the soldiers were good, and they was nice. Majority were assholes and bad, but obviously those people who were nice, we had a lot of things in common with the Americans, many things in common. The way we were brought up, our lifestyle, our eating habits, socializing habits. It's literally the same, there's no difference. The only thing is we live... We got different accents and we live different, we have different housing styles. The houses are laid out different. We drive different cars. We drive normal cars, you drive massive tanks. (chuckles) So, that's the difference. I mean, we had so many things in common so we could talk about films, and some soldier would come and play chess with us.

Interviewer: Really?

- Yeah, one soldier, his name was Parish, his surname was Parish. He would actually open the door of the cage, and he would actually come and sit on our bunk and he would play chess, and checkers with us.

Interviewer: And no one disciplined him for that.

- No, because he was actually the block sergeant. He was actually the block sergeant, so he would do... Obviously people on his team wouldn't obviously cross on it because they would... They was also quite cool, so that was quite normal. There was one... There was two MP's from South California, Carolina.

Interviewer: Oh, South Carolina?

- Carolina, yeah.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

- He was from there. And one was white, MP white, and MP Floyd, right? And he was probably my age, very young. And there was like, there was probably the best soldiers, the nicest people I've met in my entire life. They were so down to earth, it was unbelievable. You couldn't get any better people than these two guys.

They would bring us ice creams, sneak us ice creams, Snickers, Mars, Ben and Jerry's in the night. And when they were doing night shift it was a (indistinct) and get food, and coke. You name, they used to bring it, sneak it underneath their pockets and come and give it to us. I actually had long hair in Guantanamo, I actually grew my hair. So, it was quite long. It was probably like long as probably my shoulder. And obviously, having no shampoo and having no conditioner, you have a lot of knots in your hair. So, I asked for a comb, and I asked for some Pantene shampoo and conditioner, And they actually went out and bought this for me, and gave it to me, and what they did, they have... Every individual has a file, and on this file it tells you what you allowed to have, what the individual is allowed to have. So, what they did, they actually wrote in there, "He's allowed to have a comb, he's allowed to have shampoo and a conditioner." So, the other soldiers would come and say, "Hang on, he's got Pantene, what's happening here?" And they were like the ones who were not so nice, not so friendly, they would be very, very pissed off and angry. The fact that I've got a comb and I got Pantene, and them like, basically we don't get this kind of treatment from the army, so why should he? And I said, well, why don't you go and look at your paperwork, and he would go and say, "He's allowed to have it." (chuckles) (interviewer and female chuckle) So, what they did, they put it into the book. So, I had shampoo and conditioner, and a brush in my cell all the time, and it was great.

Interviewer: Do you know why they did that for you? You know... Just because they're nice people, not everybody's, not every apple's bad. Do you know what I mean? Even though you're in the military, and you're in that situation doesn't mean you're bad. Even though they've joined the military, maybe they didn't really know what they were signing up for, and not everybody wanted to go to Guantanamo and be babysitters for detainees. Majority of the people who we spoke to, who were good, the only reason they actually joined the military was for education, free education. That was the sole purpose of joining the military to be reserve.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

- They didn't know, no one had imagined such a thing like 9/11 to happen. No one could have thought of it, and it was unfortunate that they signed up and then they were sent.

Interviewer: And did they say to you that about that they felt badly that they got-

- Yeah, many of them would say, "We apologize on behalf of our government, what they're doing." We don't agree with it, but I would always say that it's not their place to actually apologize because it's not them directly responsible for our imprisonment. Do you know what I mean? I understand that he has to treat us in a certain way because he signed up to it. If he doesn't abide by his rules that means he's gonna be in prison. And sometimes you have to look at his situation and you have to say, okay, do you know what I mean? Even though you don't wanna do it, but you're forced to do it because you're gonna be imprisoned. You can kind of recover-

Interviewer: Do you know what year that was when was it early on, or was it-

- 2003, about 2003.

Interviewer: And do you... Could you explain how you had exercise first when you were in Camp X-ray, and then later on how it changed?

- Camp X-ray we was not allowed to exercise whatsoever. It was not allowed.

Interviewer: Not allowed.

- No, even when we were going to... When we got to a camp, I mean, for Camp X-ray, we had... They would take us out once a week for a walk, for exercise. And we would walk with actually, our cuffs on, our leg irons on. So, obviously the chain is only a set length. So, you can't even take a full step. You taking, like penguin steps. You can call it, and that's... They would never take them off, so it was pointless actually even going for a walk because it would be more of a strug... It would be more painful to walk in them because they rubbing against your ankles and your skin, and stuff, and make you bleed. (chuckles) And actually going for the walk is like pointless. So, really we would actually kind of refuse, but when we went to Camp Delta, they had a bigger rec area built. Initially, we was not allowed, we was only allowed to walk, but later on, then you was allowed to run. Then next, obviously we was allowed to exercise, but a year down the line then you can exercise, so we used to exercise,

Interviewer: Did you ever move to any other camp besides Camp Delta?

- Nah.

Interviewer: No, so you had enough exercise at Camp Delta to run, you said?

- Well, you had a fairly big space in terms of like...

Interviewer: Was it a caged area?

- Yeah, it was a caged area, but then again, if you're gonna exercise, the floor is made of concrete, extremely hot. You run on bare, with your bare feet, you get blisters. I used to always get blisters. So, really you can't, you only can do certain amounts of running, or a certain speed. So, didn't really get no exercise other than walking in a fast walk, like power walking, you can call it.

Interviewer: And how often would you get exercise?

- First it was like 20 minutes twice a week, then it changed in 2003 it changed when General Miller came in power, it changed. It was all on level program. So, if you level one, you go to exercise every day for half an hour. If you're level two, you get to exercise 20 minutes, three times a week. If you're level three, once a week for 15 minutes. If you're level four, you don't get to exercise.

Interviewer: And how do you determine what level, how do they determine what level you're on?

- Your interrogator determines how cooperative you are with intel, and also your behavior.

Interviewer: Will your level change daily, or weekly, or...

- No, it'll probably change weekly. It depends, sometimes you're level one. Initially we started off to be level three, then to two, then we dropped. I dropped to level four for many months, five months, and then when I got out of isolation when the allegation was dropped. When they obviously realized that it wasn't us cause we had more than enough alibis to say that we were actually in the UK at the time. And they announced, the British government's obviously they was having talks with the Americans. So, they obviously knew that we were getting released. So, I think because that was happening, they knew that we were gonna go home. So, their treatments changed, and then we was put to level one.

Interviewer: So, for a short time you were level one-

- Three months, would say.

Interviewer: Earlier, you mentioned that one of General Miller's changes was he brought dogs in. Did you actually see dogs in Guantanamo?

- Yeah, the dog used to be... They used to walk him up and down the... They call it the (indistinct), and in the blocks you have like a causeway.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

- They would walk the dogs up and down, very rare though, it's very rare, but they would have dogs in the interrogation. When you were in stressed positions, they would bring the dogs in.

Interviewer: Would they be held by the...

- They would be held back, but they wouldn't have the...

Interviewer: Muzzles?

- The muzzle, they wouldn't have that on. So, they were barking literally in your face, where he's got the dog on the leash.

Interviewer: In Guantanamo?

- Yeah, in Guantanamo, in interrogation.

Interviewer: While you were in a stressed position, someone would be holding a dog?

- Yeah, occasionally, that would be for something to like intimidate you.

Interviewer: Do you know if intimidated any of the people?

- (chuckles) It intimidated me. (interviewer chuckles) So, you have a rottweiler barking like right in your face, it's kind of scary. Now, I get scared of dogs walking across the free road. (chuckles) Cause sometimes they're just gonna go mad and start chasing you, so.

Interviewer: Hmm, was there anything else that General Miller introduced that we haven't-

- Long standing, prolonged standing, stressed positions.

Interviewer: Did you have to do prolonged standing?

- Nah, never did that.

Interviewer: But you heard of people who did?

- Yeah.

- Do you remember a situation like that, or people just told you?

- People just told me, yeah. You had prolonged standing, you had stressed position, which was like short shackling, loud music, strobe lights, the dogs, hot and cold with the AC.

Interviewer: And the strobe lights, how long would that go on?

- That'll be on all day long when you meet that-

Interviewer: With the music, or-

- With the music, with the music, so-

Interviewer: In your cell, or in the interrogation room?

- No, in the interrogation, yeah, Nothing would happen to you sitting in your cell.

Interviewer: It'd all be in the interrogation room?

- It'll all be interrogation. The only thing that would happen in your cell is if you get earthed, that's the only thing that happens in your cell.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

- And sometimes you might get beaten up. When you get earthed, you get beaten up.

Interviewer: Did you see anybody get beaten up really badly, and something-

- No, I heard of one guy got beaten up, which I think is already mentioned. Juma from Bahrain was a Saudi now. I've heard of him get beaten up. I've seen detainees get earthed, and physically manhandled to the extent that you think well, you don't need to treat him in that way. I've seen people's heads being flushed in the toilet while they're being earthed.

Interviewer: Oh, while they're being earthed.

- Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: Do you know what caused them to be earthed, some of them?

- Basically, misbehaving, not cooperating with the soldiers on the block. If you didn't give back the spoon after your chow, your food. If you refused medicine, injections, especially. Those reasons if you-

Interviewer: You saw someone's head being flushed down the toilet?

- That was quite common because when they earth you, the actual space is very small to walk. So, when they're earthing you, you always gonna... The toilet areas, they're always there. So, you're always gonna fall in that area because you have the door, which is here, for example, when I'm here. At the back, which is about two and a half meters is a sink, right next to the sink on the floor there's a toilet. So, from the doors to the toilet, there's about two steps, literally two steps. And on the side, the actual length is about two, or three meters. And the width is about also three meters, but the width is shorter because they've got a bunk elevated halfway, which takes a meter. So, really you've got a meter by two and a half meter, three meters. So, you can't really go to the left or right. You only can go back and forth to the door. So, if you're getting earthed, it's a small space. So, when they ram you with a shield, you always gonna fall to the back, and that's what the toilet is. So, when you fall flat either on your back, or on your stomach, your head's always in the toilet, but it's like a stainless steel toilet. And the hole's obviously quite far down where the water is, but there's a button. When you flush it, the water comes, flushes it. What they do, they put your face near the hole, and they flush it. They flush the toilet so the water builds up and it covers all your face, your hair, whatever, and that was something they would do on purpose.

Interviewer: And you've seen that happen?

- Yeah, that happened to me, many people, and they would pepper spray you. Pepper spray would be very common. Before they earth you, they pepper spray you. There's a procedure of earthing. They would ask

you, ask you, ask you, then they would tell the guard commander to come. He would ask you, if you don't listen to him, they called the lieutenant. I think, then he would ask you, or they would call the captain, and he would ask you. And if you don't comply the guard would come out and the lieutenant, or the captain would spray you first, then they would earth you. Five guys got you with riot gear.

Interviewer: And then they take you away?

- Yeah, and do whatever they want.

Interviewer: Could you describe how you found out about that you were gonna go home, how that happened, and-

- We found out initially by guards, soldiers would come and say to us that your names have been released in our news. Some of you guys are gonna go home, and I think they over hear it from the intel people as well, so they talk, and the word spreads.

Interviewer: Do you believe them?

- At first, no, but I think... Cause we was obviously we've been told that we was gonna be released from day one. So, like (chuckles) for two and half years, you're going home next week.

Interviewer: Who was telling you that?

- First of all, we was told actually by the general, General Lennart, who's a marine general. He actually came to me and he said that you will be the first one to go home because you're British, because of the relationship the countries have.

Interviewer: Do you know when he told you that?

- March, probably April, 2002.

Interviewer: Mm, that early.

- Yeah, I was not even there for like, a month and that's what he told me. Because there was the riots that happened, the first hunger strike took place because a soldier kicked the Quran, and I actually was there when it happened. And it was the first riot that took place, and it was a hunger strike, and they was trying to calm it down. There's one guy who spoke very good English, and he was an Arab. So, Lennart would come down and speak to the individual, and he was... Personally, I think, well he was an okay general. He was okay. He came to me and he was talking to me. He gave me a sweet, so usually generals don't actually come and talk to anybody. He was the only general that actually came and spoke to the detainees. And he actually used to hand out sweets, toffees to detainees, which was quite... Well, to me at the time, it looked pretty normal because like to me, I didn't know what a general was. I never knew what a colonel was. I never knew

because military was not part of my upbringing. So, I didn't have a clue. So, he told me that we gonna go home within six weeks of being there. So, then eventually when he left, others came in and every so often, someone would come and say, the interrogator would say, "Oh, you're gonna home, you're gonna home." And after about seven, eight months, I just gave up hope, they're all full of shit. Then the last three months, when things start changing for us, we got level one, films, six meals a day, that kind of gave it away.

Interviewer: And then what happened? How did it finally happen that you were officially told you were going home?

- We was not actually officially told. We was actually isolated for the last week of our... Before we got released.

Interviewer: In isolation?

- Yeah.

Interviewer: Block.

- Yeah.

Interviewer: Why?

- Well, it's just procedure. It's the normal procedure that they do. (chuckles) Everybody who leaves, they have to go through their isolation first. (chuckles) It's like a punishment, last minute punishment before you go home. So, we went to isolation, stayed there for a week. The last day, that night they came, they gave us a new set of clothes, jeans, some slippers, or pumps I think it was, and a T-shirt, and a jacket, or a jumper. Then they took us out, tied us up, normal procedure, took us out. They tried to make us sign some papers before we left, but we refused.

Interviewer: Do you know what the papers said?

- Basically said that we was arrested because we was part of Al-Qaeda and Taliban. And if ever in the future we come to know that you were part... If you are a part or affiliated with any terrorist groups in the world, we have the power to come and arrest you wherever you are in the world. That's what the paper said.

Interviewer: So, when you refused to sign it, what did they say?

- They said that you will spend the rest of your time in Guantanamo. We said, "Fine, that's cool." Cause basically, them saying that we agree, the reason why we was in Guantanamo, and we said, "No, I'd rather stay here." But then a couple hours later we seen the British police, they came, and that was the main giveaway, because all throughout as I said, we've always seen MI5, or the home office, and this time it was actually the police officers came in the police uniform. So, we thought, okay, something's happening. So,

that night we got taken to the... You know them school buses, the American yellow school buses? It was one of them. We got into one of them, then we drove to the airport, which was quite funny. It was hilarious.

Interviewer: Why?

- It was like a movie. It's like being in a military Rambo movie. They got the bus to the runway. You had the plane about 200 meters away from where the bus parked. Then you had like, the plane is for example, here. We're here, right? So, we've gotta walk 200 meters to the plane. All the British police officers are sitting, standing by this plane, and it's an RF plane, a military plane from the UK. And you had on this side of the Americans, all the generals and officials, and probably congressman cause some of them were in their plain uni... Plain clothes, so they could be congressmen, or whoever. And they had from here to there, on this side and on that side, they're soldiers. And they had about one soldier, every three meters. So, a soldier, soldier, soldier, soldier, soldier, soldier, and soldiers across there. And we had to walk in between and they all had the M16's drawn on us. As we was walking, marched by two guys, cuffed up like animals. All the guns were on us and they was moving, and moving, and moving as we was walking to the plane. And I was thinking, how ridiculous is this? This is like, insane. And the British were actually, the cops, the British cops, they even found it funny. They even was taking the piss. When we got on the plane, they go, "That was a drama." That was like a Hollywood movie, We could have just done a shot for Sylvester Stallone's new movie. (interviewer chuckles) It's just madness. It was so bizarre, I thought, how many people do you need to have be there with guns for five guys who's going home? Who are unarmed, who are chained like animals? How many do you really need? I mean, it was just like a stage show, a road show that was put on for the... For the higher ups. You know what I mean? It was like, ridiculous, and I couldn't stop laughing. I got there, we got to the police officer, the British guy, and he read my rights out. He said, basically, we're gonna transfer you back to the UK. If you have any problems, please do let us know. There's refreshments on the board, blah, blah, blah, just being nice to me. And obviously, we've been in a three piece suit, and the police officer goes to both guys, un-cuff him. And they both look at the other, like as if they miss heard something, and the copper, the British guy goes, "Un-cuff him." And they go... Un-cuff him, but why? They go, "Because we're taking over, so un-cuff him." So, they presumed they're gonna put their own cuffs on, so they opened my cuff, and obviously I had to put my hand on my head, interlock my fingers. And they're like, one was holding it really tight, the other one's got my shoulder, squeezing my shoulder, making sure I don't... One's got my collar, holding it as not to move, and then they were squaring off just in case I move or something. They take everything, take all my shackles off and they throw the shackles a bit behind so I don't get reach of it. And then they're waiting for the police officer, the British police officer to cuff me, and they... And they had like an awkward silence of two minutes between looks them exchanging and I'm standing there laughing my head off. Cause I know they're not gonna cuff me, and I had this feeling they're not gonna cuff me. I'm just laughing, I'm just smiling at the police officer. And he's also looking at me thinking, why aren't they letting him go? Why are they holding him like that for? And he's not saying anything, then the guards go, "Aren't you gonna cuff him?"

- No, he goes, "No." He goes, "Why would you cuff him for?" (chuckles) I couldn't stop laughing, and the guy goes, "Oh, so you're not gonna cuff him." So, what they did, one guy moved back, and they both pushed me forward, so I went flying into the police officer. So, just in case I don't turn around, or smack him one, it was

like madness, and the police officer just laughed. And he goes, "Just walk on the plane." So, I walked on the plane. That was my first time I actually walked without any chains, and it felt really hard taking footsteps, it looked very odd. So, I went to the plane, I sat down and it was an RF plane. It was like, all done up because we was being brought home, so they had cameras right in front of us. They had two officers sitting beside me. They had two officers in front of me, and they were just being very friendly. They offered us a lot of food. We had chocolates and crisps, and the foreign office guy was there as well. The guy who used to come quite on a regular basis to come and see us. And what he said to us, "When you get home, make sure you tell the press that the British treated you right." I looked at him for, are you having a laugh? (interviewer chuckles) You must be joking. Well, I go, "What did you do for me for the last two and a half years?" You didn't do jack. You couldn't even increase the food, man. The proportion of the food. If you increased that, I would say you done something. Do you know what I mean? But they didn't do nothing. So, go, "Don't expect any good remarks, or anything good to come out of my mouth about the British government." So, and then basically we (indistinct), soon as we flew over we actually entered the British airspace. That's when they came in and gave, told us, that we was actually being arrested under the British Terrorism Act 2000.

Interviewer: And what happened then?

- They took us to the police station, Paddington Green. They didn't cuff us, or nothing like that. I think that was because of who we were, and they decided that they're not gonna cuff us, or nothing like that. But they said they were gonna have five police officers per detainee. So, they took us to the police station and we just checked in as, you just fill your names, and we were taken to one cell. Taken to a cell, and I was there for about a day. That same night I was interrogated by the MI5. I was given my lawyer. So, for the first time in two and a half years, I was actually given a lawyer, but that lawyer was actually appointed by my father. So, he actually met me in that prison, in Paddington Green. We went to, he basically... We went to a consultation room, spoke, and he basically, don't answer nothing. He goes, "You don't need to speak, just say no comment all the way through." So, I went to interrogation, and they asked me all these questions, name, no comment, no comment, no comment, all that through. Then I went again, second time around, and again I went, "No comment." Took my fingerprints and took some photos and stuff, normal procedure for the police station. And about 36 hours later, they said, "You're free to go."

Interviewer: And that was it?

- And that was it really, yeah.

Interviewer: Did your opinion of the Americans change from the time before you were arrested to when you-

- No, I don't think so, because if my opinion had changed, then I wouldn't have had- (phone rings loudly) (Ruhal chuckles)

Interviewer: You wanna get it? We're almost finished, (indistinct).

Female: She's good.

- She's got it upstairs.

Interviewer: Okay.

- Yeah she'll get it.

Interviewer: Okay.

- Yeah, I think... I don't think my opinion has changed about Americans, American people, because if it had, then it would have changed my opinion while I was in Guantanamo, but obviously I've made good friends in Guantanamo with the American soldiers. So many soldiers were so nice to me. So, my opinion about the people, individuals never changed. Obviously about the government and its policies, especially its foreign policies, obviously I don't feel the way I used to feel before. No, I would love to go to America, even till today. If I had a chance to go to the US, I would love to go, but obviously, I'm on the no fly list. So, I can't actually get a plane to America because I was told by the FBI if I ever try to go to America then I would be arrested and I would be treated much worse than Guantanamo.

Interviewer: When did the FBI tell you that?

- Just before we left, about a week or two before we left. So, yeah, we've not tried to go to America yet. I wouldn't mind to go to America, but if I can get some kind of clearance to say it's okay to go. Because obviously, the new administration's come in, so they may be more lenient, but I doubt it somehow they'll let us in. Because the FBI and the CIA have... Have a bit of an influence over the government as well. So, if they obviously say no, so then the government will say no. But no, the people, no in my opinion it hasn't changed. I still watch American films. (interviewer chuckles) Still go to cinemas and watch Transformers (interviewer chuckles) three, I watched that.

Interviewer: Do you have a different opinion about the British government from before and after?

- Yeah, I do. I mean, obviously being a British... Being born and raised in this country, you feel you're part of this society, and part of this culture. But being in Guantanamo and then we came out, and then the negative feedback that we got from the press, and the government. Until this day they haven't cleared our name. It kind of makes you feel like a second class citizen. Like obviously, we are. No matter how much we try to integrate into society, we will never be the same as John, or Paul Smith. We'll never be the same because first of all, even if I change my name to a white name, I'm still gonna be brown. No matter what happens, no matter how much I try to change myself, just like Michael Jackson. (interviewer laughs) No matter how much he tried to change himself, he was always black. It's the same. No matter how much we try to integrate in society, the government, the people won't let us. We're supposed to be living in the 21st century. That's moving forward and they see... They don't see the difference between color, but the color factor will always remain. Especially the religious barriers will always remain no matter how much we live next to each other. My neighbors a white, but it's just one of them things. Everyone, when things happen like

9/11, everyone always goes, they always withdraw back to their own caves, you can call it. Do you know what I mean? Because that's what they know, and it's just human nature. And we will never be accepted as part of this society fully. I don't think, and I don't... I don't like the British government because they haven't done anything to clear my name, because obviously, I can't get a job for that fact. Cause when I go to get a job and they know who I am, then they obviously know. Employers (indistinct) know what's happened, it's a massive story, and people know, and they've not cleared our names. So, it's hard to get a job because of that reason, because we're still classed as suspected terrorists roaming the streets of UK. And Tony Blair was asked once by a news reporter at a conference they did many years ago, what's happened about... What's happened and what's gonna happen with the detainees from Guantanamo? And he said, "We're still keeping a watch on them." So, that doesn't really say anything good about us to the public, does it? It actually makes people more scary, and more scared of the fact that we still could be a threat to this society. And it was not really fair on us because we can't move on, and we can't have a better life, and we can't support our families in a better way. So, we have to resort to other means of money and whatever, so it is difficult.

Interviewer: Do you think that'll change?

- No, I don't think it'll change. I think the thing with Islamophobia, it's getting worse day by day, it's not actually getting better. And the media actually doesn't help because most of the information they get is wrong, or what they understand of Islam. And to actually understand Islam, you have to actually study it to give your opinion about it. I can't talk about Christianity because I haven't got a clue about it. But why? Because if one Christian fanatic decides to blow up a building in America, I can't blame the whole religion. I have to blame the individual, even though he's motives might be because of religion, but then you have to investigate and educate yourself in actually, what does the religion say about the other people, other people of faith? You have to understand it. You can't just say his motives were based on Islamic principles, or Islamic beliefs, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, cause he could be wrong in his beliefs. It's simple as that, and he could be right, he could be wrong. And what's happening, them judging every Muslim by the actions of a few. It's not fair on people like myself because when I go and travel to countries, on the way back I get stopped, in airports I get stopped, I get detained because my name is Muslim, because I look like a Muslim, I'm brown skinned. People with beards. Once me and my misses, we went to some conference somewhere, and she was stopped because she wears a hijab. So, it's not nice being stopped. You're felt to... You were made to feel that you're like aliens, and you actually (chuckles) made to feel guilty of being brown. Do you know what I mean? You are made to feel bad because you're a Muslim. I don't feel bad because I'm Muslim, but I'm talking about people I know, who are not practicing. Who haven't got a clue about what's happening in the world, and they are being stopped, and it's not fair on them. Because you can't round up, gather up everybody, Asian, or a person who has converted to Islam, and do that to them, it's not right. And this should not be happening in this day and age, it should not be happening.

Interviewer: So, I have two more questions, and then this kind of follows up. One is what impact do you think Guantanamo has had on your life? Was there anything positive that has impacted your life by Guantanamo and what is negative probably?

- I think it's had more of a positive effect on my life. I think it would be the case on majority of people's lives, if I'm correct. There might be some individuals who say, no it was the worst time in my life and there was nothing positive about it, it was all negative. But I can say, hand on my heart, I don't regret any moments of my time in Guantanamo. I don't regret going to Pakistan. I don't regret going to Afghanistan, kept being arrested. I don't regret it at all because as I said before, I believe in my region. I do practice, I try to practice my religion as much as possible, and it was part of my faith. You know it's tests, God tests you in many ways and for me, it was a test. The test is not over because you're tested-

Interviewer: Your whole life.

- Whole life, and maybe that was part of my one fraction of the test, which was Guantanamo. It's made me more of a better person, made me more understandable, understanding about the faith, the cultures, religion, race, color, creed, cast. It's made me understand it. No matter what you are, who you are, humans are humans. Human life is very valuable, very sacred and just because you're a Christian, or I'm a Muslim doesn't make me a better person than the other. What makes a person better is his behavior, his morals, that's what makes a person better, That is the main thing. Also, it's having an effect on me. It's made me grow up, I think, made me more mature quicker than other 27 year olds. I've experienced, I've got more of a life experience than many other... Well, a lot of other 27 year olds. (laughs) So, yeah, I'm quite... The way I was having around the world and I know that the world's not such a nice place as people make out to be. It's all peaceful, it's not.

Interviewer: Mm.

- There's a lot of greed, it's all about money. It's all about gains, personal gains. It's changed my opinion about politicians. Politicians, the more lies or corrupt. The only reason they actually become MP's, or prime ministers, presidents is just because they wanna get a name for themselves. And the main goal of every person who wants to do something is money, better wage, better life. And it's all about money. It's not about giving people their rights. It's never been about that because if it was then (chuckles) it wouldn't be in this state. It's as simple as that, because majority of people in America don't want the war in Iraq. Majority of the people in the UK don't want the soldiers to be in Iraq, but hello? They're still there, and we are the people who actually elect these idiots, Blair and even Obama. Initially when he first came on, he seemed to be good, and it sounded good, but for them, it's a selling point. It's to sell himself. He needs to sell himself to become president. He wants to sell himself to get the votes. Once he's in power, he doesn't give a crap about anybody. All he cares about his money that he's gonna earn. He's gonna think about his future, his pension. How he is gonna make his son or daughter, or his grandson a doctor, or somebody high, in a high elite, in that country. That's what the aims are for those people who are prime ministers, MP's, that's... They don't care about people, the average Joe blogger on the street. They don't care about me and you, and it's the fact of the matter. So, it's made me realize all the things and I know that there's no such thing as democracy throughout this world, there's no such thing. There never has been. Never has been and never will be, and never will succeed.

Interviewer: Would you say, is there something negative that came out of Guantanamo besides what... That

impacted your life significantly.

- No, I don't think nothing negative, but maybe for the Americans because I've become more religious. (interviewer chuckles) I've become more closer to my religion, which was, it has an opposite effect because they tried everything to kind of make us... I mean, I wasn't a practicing person before anyway. I was just a normal guy. (indistinct) I was born as a Muslim obviously, but my family is not religious. I'm the only one in my family who actually prays, well me and my wife, and my younger sister. My mother, my brother, my father, my other brothers, my two other brothers, my extended family. None of them actually pray. None of them actually practice religion to even a small letter. I'm the only one in my whole (chuckles) entire family that I know of. So, I was actually, I went to a Roman Catholic school when I was young. So, that's the kind of upbringing that I've had. I had more of an understanding of Christianity than Islam.

Interviewer: Mm.

- But now, being in Guantanamo, I've become more religious, more practicing, and I actually follow my religion. Anything I do in my life, first of all, I think is it according to Islam?

Interviewer: Mm.

- I think if it's right or wrong, and before I didn't care, I used to do anything, but now I actually think. What does my religion say about this action that I'm gonna take, is it right or wrong? So, in Guantanamo, they tried their best to make us, make people kind of not pray, and not do this, not be religious, basically. But it's had the opposite effect on nearly everybody in Guantanamo who went in as a non-practicing person, or individual who've all came out with beards. Who've all came out to follow Islam to the T.

Interviewer: Hmm.

- So, that's the... I mean, it's positive for me, but for the Americans it's obviously negative. So, that I mean, I don't see any negative side. (sighs) I don't see. I mean, obviously I have pains, my knees hurt because of certain things, and my back hurts from Guantanamo. My eyes deteriorated much worse in Guantanamo. I mean, health wise, yeah, I've had a few problems. That's the only negative things about it. Other than than, obviously I lost the time with my family, the most important thing in life.

Interviewer: Mm, is there something that I didn't ask you that you'd like to talk about, or speak to?

- No, not really. I think that we've covered nearly everything.

Interviewer: Well, it was great. It was a great interview.

- Cool.

Interviewer: I really appreciate it.

- You're welcome.

Interviewer: Thank you. Thank you. So, okay.

Female: Thank you so much.

Interviewer: Thank you.

- You're welcome.

Female: Yeah, it was-

Interviewer: Yeah, it was-

Female: Amazing.

Interviewer: Yeah, amazing talking, no wonder...