

White Flag

A stanky aroma emanated from the bathroom. The smell was unbearable. If we were in a cartoon, toxic green clouds would've floated out from the toilet. These were the infamous Pali bathrooms. Worst of all, I'd have to deal with this for the next four days. People take many things for granted, their beds, their pillow, mattresses. But the most underappreciated of them all is their bathroom.

At Pali, the bathroom in our cabins was the furthest possible point from satisfactory. It was clear from the second we touched foot in our new homes that the bathrooms would be a problem. While other cabins had two or even three, we only had one. This also meant that only people could use the toilet or shower at a time. Wanted to do a number one? Sorry, you had to wait in the ever growing queue of who needed to use the bathroom. And for all you know, the people in front of you could take anywhere from three minutes to three hours!

I knew this would be a problem, but the severity of it didn't show itself until Wednesday night. That day, we had many taxing physical activities, like rope courses and ziplining. Sweat and grime naturally built up, and there was nothing more that I wanted than a nice warm shower. Nevertheless, that was what my cabin mates wanted too. A queue quickly formed, and by some miracle I was dead last. Twelve other people lined up to use one shower, and I was going to be last. Worst of all, each person left their own landmark in the shower. Muddy footprints and dirty sludge were tracked all over the floor, along with layers of used shower water, soaking the floor. It was disgusting. But it would be more disgusting if I went to sleep covered in dirt, so I bit my tongue and prepared to go inside. Then, a nagging horrifying thought stampeded through my mind. I had to trudge through this barren wasteland barefoot, with nothing protecting my precious feet from mixing with the bathroom sludge. That was my breaking point. I could hold on for no longer. I mentally waved my white flag signaling my shameful bathroom defeat. I slowly trudged back to my bunk, towels still in hand, knowing I would be sleeping tonight covered with the oh-so-amazing Pali grime.

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