'Guantanamo Diary' Reveals 'Harrowing' Torture Details

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Despite thousands of redactions, the diary of one of Guantanamo Bay's longest held detainees hit the shelves Tuesday, which describes in grueling detail the years of torture that he suffered while detained in the U.S. military prison.

“Guantanamo Diary” is the personal account of Mauritanian man Mohamedou Ould Slahi, who has been held in Guantanamo Bay since 2002.

“(Redacted) and (redacted) each took one of my sides and started to punch me and smash me against the metal of the truck. One of the guys hit me so that my breath stopped and I was choking. I felt like I was breathing through my ribs,” read part of an excerpt published in advance by Slate magazine.

“Guantanamo Diary” has been described by the New York Times columnist Joe Nocera as “harrowing reading,” but a book that “every American should read.”

“It is hard to read about his torture without feeling a sense of shame,” Nocera wrote.

During the book's 466 pages, Slahi recounts sexual abuse, mock executions, long periods of sleep deprivation and numerous beatings. Slahi says throughout the book that the torture produced little information.

While at first he protested his innocence, eventually Slahi simply told torturers whatever they seemed to want to hear, including “misleading” information.

“Whenever they asked me about somebody in Canada I had some incriminating information about him, even if I didn’t know him. Whenever I thought about the words, “I don’t know …” I got nauseous because I remembered the words of (redacted) “All you have to say, ‘I don’t know, I don’t remember, we’ll f##k you,’ ” or (redacted): “We don’t want to hear your denials anymore!” So I erased the words out of my dictionary,” he wrote.

Slahi is still in Guantanamo Bay, despite a 2010 U.S. court order for his release. The ruling was reversed by a federal appellate court, even though the U.S. military, FBI and CIA have all admitted they cannot link Slahi to any terrorist acts.

He has never been charged with any crime, though U.S. authorities claim he was an al-Qaida recruiter at the time of his arrest.

Slahi has admitted to traveling to Afghanistan to fight alongside the U.S.-backed resistance to the Soviet occupation in the early 1990s.

For a brief period in 1991 he claims to have been a member of al-Qaida, but by early 1992 Slahi maintains he severed all ties with the movement. Slahi's detention began shortly after he voluntarily turned himself in to Mauritanian authorities for questioning in 2001.

He repeatedly cooperated with Mauritanian authorities in a series of questioning sessions in late 2001 until the CIA stepped in and subjected him to extraordinary rendition. First Slahi was sent to Jordan, then Afghanistan, and eventually Guantanamo Bay.

By Tuesday night, his memoirs had already hit Amazon's best seller list.