

The Chronicles of the Mexican Horse Thief – IV Madness

My first day out of rehab, wake up early as is my habit. Pam tells me she shall not discuss religion with me any more. Thank God. I am fired from Dick's bible study as well, can't have an intelligent recovering person in a Christian bible study group, we bring up too many questions on their inconsistency, their hypocrisy, their lack of knowledge of the bible and Jesus' actual words. Oh all sorts of things. The model doesn't like me any more so no real loss. I am tired of their dogma and ignorance, so all is good.

Deirdre calls me, she does this often. Sarah picked me up and we went to an NA meeting in Mitchell's Plain. It was held at a High School. The place had more barbed wire and bars than I see in the average lock up facilities. Some really hard looking people in this group. To hear them talk about fighting the addiction and being so open about their feelings, is unreal. Sarah is a character and a bloody book on her own, we get along okay, but she talks and seldom listens. One day I am locked out of the house, I wait for Pam, the house has never been locked. When I first got here and asked about this I was told, by Pam, that she leaves it open in case her kids come around, she is not scared of burglars as God and Jesus (doesn't she believe they are the same?) look after it. I now get told after asking why it is locked, that she is scared of burglars. Wonder if Jesus and God don't like her any more either? Decided I am pissed off with her. Would have let me stay in Polsmore, William and Carroll were right – she will treat me well only if I fulfill her Christian expectations. I do not accept this type of friendship any more.

I spend a lot of time building up my data. I meet Thys that afternoon, we are going to go to the Ramot Evening. It is quite different from when I was an inmate, you are now a successful outside person in the inmates eyes. What a big misconception that is, I am more fucked up than most of the inmates, maybe a little less than most of the staff. Kim and some of the group were present, and we spoke about Dwight, his chances of staying clean while living in Ides Valley on the bad side of Stellenbosch were remote. It is not that far from Somerset so we made a plan, I would pick him up if I had petrol money, then we would meet at Thys' house about half way to Parow, and all leave from there. Hell, if us fucked up alkies and druggies don't help each other, who will?

Meanwhile Pam was on my case about the amount of time I spent on my computer. I was either capturing data or writing, what the fuck do people want from me? I am not in a bar or drinking and adulterating in some other town. Doing the best I can for right now. I get told Eddie wants to talk to me. He is a man of few words, it does not take long, and I end up feeling like a social misfit and general fuck up. I believed at that time I should be more like "them". So the thing that makes one really, really acceptable is ..money, having lots of it. I kick start Section Eight again, just a big handicap is running a internet based business from internet cafes. I have not got a memory stick and work from a CD-ROM. I cut one and take it to the Mall, it will not read, back "home" re-cut, back to Mall, this cost in time and petrol, plus money for internet café. I also post manuscripts of *The Chronicles of the Mexican Horse Thief*, all over the world.

In Ramot we had to draw as part of some therapy and I surprised myself at how well I can sketch. I had my drawing with me so added all sorts of little animals. It was a sketch of the bush, naturally, the main character and elephant. Deidre called me, she had been drinking and wanted to meet the next day, told her this was a bad idea, she was very angry and lapsed, just like that looty at Lohatla, into Cape Flats speak. Said all sorts of horrible things about my mother. My mother has been dead for years. I last got upset in 1983 about someone insulting my mother. I had finished a long forced march in basic training. The reward for the first 20 back was off time and 5lt of ice-cream, I like ice-cream, so I was the 12th man back. Full mortar kit and all. I was lying on my bed in the barracks when eating my ice-cream when a Section Leader corporal, who incidentally rode on a truck back from Lataba, ordered me to fetch his kit on the parade ground. I said, "Fok jou!" In other words, no. He then got upset and threatened me with all sorts of things. The official side did not work, I was registered as first in so was off duty. He then told me that: my mother was drunk, lying in the gutter, a dog came along and fucked her, and this is where I come from. In Afrikaans. I was pissed off, sensitive subject, my mother being an alcoholic and all. I put my ice-cream and spoon down, stood up in my bed, I am short and he was a big Dutchman, and promptly punched him in the nose. Rather hard, the blood did not come out of his nose, it went back down his throat. Now the bugger was starting to drown. Van Deventer, was his name. Medics took him to the sickbay, and I finished my ice-cream.

Sure enough the MP's arrived and I was escorted, non too gently to the camps DB. I got beaten up a bit and then thrown in a cell. Next morning the MP's made me clean the cell with a toothbrush, the toilet was cleaned last, then they told me I had to clean my teeth, with the same toothbrush. A fight ensued, I lost and they cleaned my teeth. I am 19 years old. Later I go on orders in front of the much feared Colonel. A joke of a court martial was carried out. The lawyer stood there shivering in his boots, Colonel Swanepoole was more powerful than God in that place. He said not a word. The Colonel asked why I had assaulted an officer. I told him what his hand picked officer had said, and if he, the Colonel said that about my mother I would fuck him up too. Lucky Dutchmen worship God, country, rugby and their mothers, not necessarily in that order. He told me to return to my unit. Van Deventer apparently had been airlifted to 1 Military Hospital in Pretoria, but was in a stable condition. He lost his stripe. I learned from this, with the toothbrush story, I had to learn to fight better and then never worry about someone insulting my mother! Back to Deidre, she sort of lost interest in me after that.

Pam told me I am stupid and think I am above the law, shit should tell this woman nothing, because I go to the Mall not the local Internet Café with no car licence. I pointed out ADSL & fact that have account at Mall. I went to Stellenbosch to see some people and mellow out, I did not drink but as these were already friends I was okay. The AA was also a source of escape and I met and hung around with people from there a lot. Business was bad and I could not seem to find a product to market. I tried to get interviews for jobs but no luck. I started hanging out every day with a chap called Dave. He actually lived in a place called Malgas, on the Breede River. He was in Somerset staying with his brother. The most interesting thing we did together was getting an employee of his on a TV show. I had met the man when we went to Malgas a couple of times. He is a bushman, first thing we had in common is we both don't go to doctors for snakebite. George is illiterate

and needless to say, cannot read or write music either. He has a homemade oiltin guitar and music is in his veins.

Dave had a connection that knows Dozi, a popular Afrikaans singer. Dozi was making a TV show about unusual musicians in South Africa. George was pretty unique, an unusual instrument and his own style. We drove through to Malgas to pick him up and then to a beautiful wine farm in the Stellenbosch area, where the show was to be made. Tables groaned with food and drink, a wine cellar was being transformed into a coffee shop set and we watched those people work their own brand of magic. George is worse than I around people, but Dave set him at ease. I personally at this time had never heard of Dozi. Dave mentioned his fame and a song I had heard before about an old ryperd in Afrikaans. I was standing in a doorway when I glimpsed a huge figure just behind me. This was Dozi, he was very friendly and thanked all of us for coming. Another South African celebrity came up, this one I had met in my travels, Valiant Swart. The show was going to be shot while all the celebs sat around on set having supper. I do not watch much TV so Dave pointed out a few "famous" people. Dozi and George were practising and then this Dozi showed what type of man he was. As George had not written any music down, can't, it was all in his head. Dozi called his lawyer and discussed protecting Georges, intellectual property. Good man.

My day in court arrives, I have letters and all ready. I get my turn, the cop is not there, no surprise, they have lost the blood sample, also not really surprised. They just give themselves more time to look for it and postpone the case. I must wait some more. A month later I go back to court. I take a book and some writing material with to keep me busy while I wait. I have to pass through a metal detector to get into the building. I pull out my keys, my Zippo and my Swiss Army knife. The guard mumbles something about the knife, I ignore him and walk in. I sat on the bench outside the court where I had to appear. I decided to sneak a smoke in the toilets, there I found 5 guys also smoking. Just they were not smoking tobacco, they were smoking Tik. They also were completely unperturbed that I was there, so I just lit up a smoke and minded my own business.

I sat on the bench the whole day but failed to hear my name called. At 4pm, when the courts closed I went to find the Clarke of the Court. I told her my case was not called. She looked up the case and showed me a file; it had indeed been called but a no show, from myself, the policemen and also the blood was still missing. It had a big red stamp on it that said the case was dismissed. I asked what this meant. She informed me that it was closed, finished, over. I could have kissed her. So much for the South African justice system, once again.

Apart from that and one or two interesting things with some AA girls, I just maintained. Then one fateful evening, Dave and I were walking along the Gordon's Bay waterfront and I heard someone call, "Hey Mexican Horse Thief!" Those days not many people knew about this Mexican so I knew it was someone that came from the Angola days. It was, but not a soldier, a chap from Froggo's. His name was Eugene and he is extremely tall. We joined him at the table, coffee for me and Dave and Spinners for him. I was not very good mates with Eugene, he was more of Mikes Connection than mine. He then proceeded to tell Dave how we had met. I must admit I only vaguely remember this incident, was absolutely tRalphhed, constantly in those days. I was on leave from Executive Outcomes and was hanging out in Froggo's. I was alone and seems had some

trouble with “wannabe’s”. I mentioned that this happens. Eugene is telling Dave, he knew who I was through Mike but I am not the approachable type so had not joined me. 5 chaps had been giving me lip about my jacket or or something, I told them to piss off or they will get hurt. They found this amusing. I walked up to Eugene and asked him would he watch my back? He agreed and I told the idiots we can go outside. Eugene says he was a bit slow and by the time he got out into the parking lot all 5 guys were already down and bleeding. OK. Like I say don’t really remember that so well. I was a fucking crazy son of a bitch then and people do not expect the incredible ferociousness they encounter, so often it over before they think it has started. It is a hell of a thing and I am sorry about it. I am much better now!

At this stage I was doing some marketing for a Guest House in Gordon’s Bay and when Eugene heard this he told me: His mom was going to Australia for a year and he was moving into her house in... Gordon’s Bay. Done deal, I would pull in. The next day I told Pam and Eddie that I had a new place. I think relief was felt all round.

Packed my dwindling amount of kit and off I went. It is not very far from Somerset West to Gordon’s Bay. I stopped at the bottle store and got a litre of vodka, I opened it and had a slug before I even paid for it. Well, there goes all the counselling at Ramot for a ball of shit. Hell, I really do like fucking alcohol, and when I am sober I bore myself nearly to death. The Mexican was back on his donkey, new mission, new place, new friends. Even though I knew this could come to no good, at least I felt alive!

Found the new spot, a neat little house in a quiet neighbourhood. That would change. We were about 1km from the beach, and the Guest House I was working at was about 3km away, on the side of the mountain. It was mid morning when I arrived, Eugene had very loud music blaring from a Death Metal DVD and was also drinking already. Party!

Some of his mates arrived and we went to a bar further along the coast, some of these Death Metal girls are very sexy, if you can get past the pieced pieces.... I can, I want to, so I will. Eugene is much better than I at picking up women and the first is a woman that lives in the flat next door. Her name is Chantal, she has two kids, one of which lives with her. A little over weight, long brown hair and yes, those big brown eyes I seem to like so much. I in the meantime have met the owner of the Guest House, Hein’s niece. 19 blond, blue eyes and straight from Germany. Again, this is just trouble, but I do not care. I am doing well in the marketing and cash is available. We go out every night to the local bars and clubs, one is called Amsterdam. Here I am surprised to find a musician I last saw years back in Sheila’s, up in Gauteng. The time when I was hanging out with the Spaniard, Maria. She would always ask him to play “Rough Boy” by ZZ Top. I liked his version of “War Pigs.” The German girl could not speak much English so made no musical requests.

Of course things had to get a bit wonky, this is life. Add hard alcohol, wild partying and young women the whole thing just escalates at an alarming rate. Hein was getting seriously pissed off about his niece, and told me to leave her alone. Eugene is more of a talker than a doer and Chantal was a handful. He started to tell me about what she liked to do and get done to her. The whole Death Metal image this boy had was a farce! All the piecing and tattoos looked good, his huge physic was impressive. At heart he was just a mummies boy. Could not believe this shit. Think I am exaggerating? One of the first

complaints he told me was he was woken up by Chantal giving him a BJ. That's right a complaint, gentleman readers. He maintained that he had had sex with her the night before, only once by the sound of it, and sleeping time was sleeping time. Eish! Later he told me of much kinkier stuff but nothing too hectic in my, not so humble opinion. Eventually he told her to duck. He liked the porno on the net more than real life and spent a lot of time there. Hey, every man to his own. On my side, the little German was sent to Stellenbosch and I would go through now and then to visit. I remained on speaking terms with the rather intriguing neighbour as well.

Eugene and I started going out again, without any women with us. Hunting? One night I saw that years ago in Froggo's I had chosen my backup very badly. We were in a bar in Strand, it is right up against the sea and when the tide is in the water is below the side windows! Big sign, "No Jumping out of the windows." A predominantly Afrikaans crowd was in attendance on this particular evening, but hell, some of these Afrikaans meisies are cute. Eugene seemed to like the one in particular and was staring at her, she had 3 okes with her, one obviously the boyfriend. He took exception to this. One thing lead to another and Eugene just left me to it. The term 'dumb Dutchman' is not very polite, and I know a lot of Afrikaners, my friends are anything but dumb. These were, two went swimming, the sign did not mention throwing out the window, and the way they charged left no option but to let them continue, I could have being hurt otherwise! The third lost interest and worried about breathing for a bit. Ironically I found Eugene in the parking lot.

The next jol we went on we were in The Pub With No Name in Somerset West. Here we met a woman I had seen around and spoken to when hanging out with Dave and Sarah. Melony. Attractive and a body to die for, but from day I met her she gave me an itchy feeling and not the one you are thinking about. My instinct is good and I live by it, most of the time. She was with 3, that bloody number, young guys, drunk and in trouble. She had offered the goods and now remembered she was a a young mother and had a responsible job, well that was my immediate assessment on the situation. She saw us and immediately told the young guys we were her body guards. What crap was this, I am not interested, Eugene promptly sits down with them. Melony is then all over him, hands crawling, God I hate this type of woman. I get a drink and sit at the far end of the table. Things are getting hectic, the young bloods are pissed off, spent all their money getting the woman drunk and now this. Eugene is playing knight in shining armour, he will take the lady home, as she cannot now drive and I will follow in her car. Melony is now flirting up a storm with all of them. I get Eugene one side and tell him in no uncertain terms that he is on his own here. He cannot believe this, maintains that if the guys give us shit, I can just handle it. Two things, I do not want to, "handle it." Secondly, more importantly, I can't. All three are young and large, but the one... I know, I know, that I cannot take him. Worse I watched the situation and the people for about an hour, I believe he will do me bad damage. So fuck that! Eugene gets the message and says we will leave, he is talking to the guys, I walk out but Melony follows me. Her and I have harsh words, I tell her exactly what I think about women that get it off making men fight over them. She cries and talks shit, she starts putting her hand all over me! I slap them away, the other guys see this through the large windows, I do not know what they think. She does not give up, she pushes her attractive body against me and her hands roam, I

swear at her and tell her to leave me alone. Eugene comes out and we leave. I swear at Eugene all the way home too. He is very sorry about it.

I stop drinking for a while, I have not been working much and money is now tight. I get a call from Ashley one day. She says she has the money that she owes me for bailing her out of jail a few years back. She was caught buying dagga. As banking fees are so high she will post it to me in a book, from England. I never expected that money back, but I sure could use it now. Meantime Eugene gives me R400 for my binoculars, I buy food and smokes. He is now dating Melony and she comes around a few times. I take to visiting Chantal next door, turns out she is a writer as well. She shows me some of her stuff and some poetry she has written. This is a far cry from the wild stories Eugene told me. Sensitive, well written stuff. Melony comes by one night and her and Eugene are drinking and listening to music. Eugene is doing spadework big time, slow romantic music, the Death Metal that has caused the neighbours to call the cops a few times is gone. Melony comes into my room asking for some shorts to wear, as jeans are uncomfortable and it very hot. I have one pair of very old, torn PT shorts, I lend her these, they are a bit tight, but will do, she has beautiful legs, and well I won't go there.

She lies next to me on the bed, then snuggles closer and asks me if I think she can trust Eugene or is he just out to sleep with her. Her soft breast is on my arm, her leg finds its way across my lap, while she is whispering this in my ear. I do not like this woman. I tell her she has to decide that for her self. Oh, but such physical beauty so close is bad for one's hormones, the brain stops working! I disengage and tell her I am off to supper with Chantal. I do this. Melony sleeps with Eugene. After supper Chantal, all coy and shy?? Gives me something she has written to read later. I still have it. I read it that night, it is a fantasy of hers and could be in a Penthouse magazine, it includes the Mexican Horse Thief, a reasonable amount of spanking and some other stuff.

I get my post from England, an Alcoholics Anonymous magazine called The Grapevine. Every other page has Pound notes stuck between them! Just under 2000 Pounds. I go exchange a few, I buy, you guessed it, vodka. I have a good lunch and wait for Chantal to come home from work. I get a bit waylaid and end up watching music on the beachfront until about 10pm. I arrive at Chantal's place, she is drinking whiskey and dancing by herself. I have some whiskey too. Very pretty girl this, face like an angel, I kiss her and we dance a bit. She asks me to hit her. I say I don't want to. She bites almost through my bottom lip, blood splatters all over my white T-shirt. I slap the side of her head, she spins and falls on the bed. I drink some more whiskey, burns a bit. Chantal in the mean time has removed every stitch of clothing. How the hell do women do that so fast? I remove my bloodstained shirt, drink some more whiskey, fall on the bed. She tries to bite me again, I tell her I shall slap her ass if she does, well she did. I did and so the night went ..out of the blue and into the black. Bang, bang. She is a rather noisy girl and has some surprises for me too. The next morning I have a few more bite marks and my right hand is sore, I see the palm of my hand is actually blue. Chantal is careful when she sits but smiles that angelic smile when she looks at me. I struggle to put this girl and the one from last night together as one person. I get confirmation from Eugene and Melony when they say the goings on could be heard by them next door. Jesus, what the hell have I gotten into this time. Fortunately we drank mainly whiskey last night so I have a bit of vodka left, I drink that for breakfast. We plan to have a braai that afternoon and "the girls" go

and get the food supply, Eugene and I get the booze. Some of Eugene's Death Metal buddies will be pulling in, should be an interesting afternoon. We set up the braai and the salad stuff, drinking copiously all the while. Chantal is as Eugene said, and we sneak off to her place for a bit, nothing too kinky though. When we get back some other people have arrived and the music is pumping. The fire needs to get going so I do that, as is my usual practice with new people I keep quiet and observe, being busy with the fire is a good way to do this. Chantal is with her son and I take time out to check the situation. I get offered coolers and drink some of those too. The discussion is mainly about Slayer a band they all follow. All these people claim not to be Satanists but all facts point to that they are. The Slayer lead singer always stands in a pentagram when singing and sings songs like, "God hates us all." I am not really concerned if they are or are not, I don't join groups and I survived the Christians so a couple of Satanist can KMA. I compare the two groups and if they worked out how similar they are after the bullshit, both groups would be horrified. What is that advise, look for your similarities not your differences? Well, what can I say. Think about it. Both seem fixated on the blood thing, one literally and they others are always drinking it figuratively, which is worse? None, as I say the bloody same. By about 8pm I am getting pretty wasted, lack of sleep and lots of alcohol, Chantal sleeps over at this house, there are people cRalphhing all over the show. We use my room, and she is a very active girl. I eventually get some sleep.

Eugene is already tired of Melony, and they are beginning to fight a lot. Then one day Eugene wakes up very ill, and has some very large balls! Melony brings him some medicine, seems to know too much about this. I take him to the doctor in Strand, end result he has a STD with complications. Oh shit. The evidence points to Melony but we slept with Chantal within days of each other. I ask Chantal if she is ok. She assures me it is not her, I still worry a bit and am happy with each day that passes and I am well. This situation causes the final breakup with Eugene and Melony. Just she won't go! She comes around at all hours of the morning but Eugene locks her out, the cops get called one night as she caused such a scene. Meantime Eugene is picking up women, no girls from a thing called Mixit, this scene is getting weirder and weirder, even for me! One night a very young woman suggests a threesome with me and Eugene, Chantal and I are seeing less of each other at this time. No way am I having a threesome that consists of two guys and a girl! Eugene and I start fighting about that and the fact that the Death Metal is blaring constantly, the cops have being out a few times now, between loud music and the crazy Melony, that still just won't go away. I am eating 20 Grandpa's a day, plus my litre of vodka. I take to hanging out in a pub on the beach, my Pounds are running low and although believe it or not I was still doing the marketing for the Guest House, money burns. Things are getting hazy again, I remember meeting Mempie in town one day, Charmaine called a few times, but it was getting dark man.

I had a final blowout with Eugene, over what? I do not know. End result I chucked my kit into my car and headed towards Stellenbosch. The plan was to hook up with my old neighbour, the perpetual student. He had a new place in Stellenbosch. Campus Square. Sounded good to me. The flat itself was tiny but we had two computers in what was bedroom, and a small area outside in which to braai. It was a similar setup to the other place I had lived in Stellenbosch, Prins Park. Gerard was in a lot of trouble at the Varsity, month and months late for assignments, I found out that he had taken about 4 extra years to get the degree he had! He did not like to wash dishes and they were piled high on the

sink, the counter tops, in the lounge, everywhere. Took two days for me to clean just the kitchen. He would crack a beer at about 10am and then play computer games till lunch, then a major mission to go get food, more beer and DVD's. He had accounts everywhere on his mom's name, she paid for the flat as well. I found out he was adopted and his adopted father was a, now dead, abusive alcoholic. Gerard was 30 something at this time. His mom would call just about every day, and he would tell her he was working hard. After a few weeks I saw he was not working at all. So we sat around, played computer games, watched DVDs and went out to Stones to pick up women. Nice job if you can get it. I was using the internet café and selling data again. Let me introduce the neighbour. I do not know why but this shit always happens, no nice normal neighbour for me. He was a pretty infamous chap. Ian du Toit. The farmer from Cradock that beat a man to death with a pickaxe handle in his farmhouse kitchen, and got away with it. He maintained the three workers had attacked him and it was self defence. The court case and proceedings took so long because he did not just kill the one guy, he made fish paste of him. One of those incredibly strong Afrikaners, and true to stereotype after a few brandies, *moerjuice*, horribly aggressive. I went out with him and Gerard a couple of times and then declined, I can get into trouble all by myself, thank you very much.

This lifestyle went on for a while and I had friends in and around the town from when I last lived there. Like the girl that pronounced her name Wayne. The boozing was killing me and a lot of the time in Stellenbosch was spent in blackout mode. I did get mugged one evening walking back from the shop, sort of remember that. I was in trouble and got hold Dave, he was back on track and had moved back to Malgas. He said he would call me when he could pick me up. Meantime Gerard's mother paid a surprise visit, all the way from Kimberly. Oh, oh. I flew under the radar as best as possible. She left but cancelled the accounts all over town so Gerard, now actually kicked out of the University got a job as a barman at the Stellenbosch backpackers. While waiting on Dave's call this became my hangout. Met some interesting foreigners, drank more and misbehaved in general. Dave did not call me and did not answer my calls but the time to go had come. Gerard had applied for a job in George and I was tired of Stellenbosch.

Karen was talking to me again at this stage and said I should move to Fishhoek, she had a house sitting job for a few months in Kalk Bay. I packed my kit and left Stellenbosch once more. I had no basic plan, no plan at all, but this gypsy is always happy when moving.

I arrived in Kalk Bay, beautiful little town, full of arty type people and the fishing harbour is exquisite. The house Karen was looking after was half way up the mountain and had a stunning view. The reason she was house sitting was to look after the two Dalmatians, not really the house. Karen had another house to look after for the weekend and usually Ben would do this, but since I was around and really had nothing else to do I took the job. The house was in Cape Town owned by a pair of professors, also half way up a mountain, can't remember the name of the suburb. I had to meet the profs so stayed sort of sober, they showed me where the dog food was and all that sort of crap and left. Cool. Now this was a posh place, sort one would see in magazines. Soon as they had left I got out my stash of vodka and Grandpa's went up to the third floor balcony and enjoyed the vista of the whole of Cape Town City and the harbour. I had been told in the AA and such places that one should live in the moment, so I did just that, watching the sun go

done and drinking vodka, soft music in the background. I had three days to enjoy this, was getting paid and would worry about next week, well next week, maybe. The next day I did some shopping, bought huge steak and all the trimmings and enough vodka to kill an elephant. That afternoon I spent in the stylish street cafes drinking cider and vodka. Feeling comfortably numb arrive "home" and fed the dog. I do like animals so don't be so surprised. I cooked up a wonderful meal and took it upstairs and enjoyed the sunset once more. Then got a bit bored and went to the local pub, chatted to some people got drunker and finally went back to my mansion. Next day much of the same just without any food. I left the house well before the profs were due back because by now I was more than comfortably numb and would not have liked to have had to speak to them. Drove back to Kalk Bay. See why I think I have a guardian angel? Made it back with out incident.

Now I had to address the problem of being homeless once again. I could not stay in the house that Karen was house sitting and because they had such a long sit, they had no place of their own. Pretty dumb to sit for 6/8 months and pay rent for another empty spot, no? Then they have another long sit straight after this, so for more than a year they are getting paid to stay somewhere rather than the opposite. I had a few thousand rand left from my data sales so that was not a problem. I had seen a sign in the main road of Fishhoek for accommodation and Karen and I drove there. The place was a run down residential hotel called the Beaufort Hotel. Had a look and it was not too bad at all. For just over a grand a month one could get a room in the back building and breakfast and supper thrown in. The room was not en suite and three rooms shared a bathroom, it also had a TV lounge where tea and coffee was served twice a day. It was close to Kalk Bay and within walking distance of the beach. Done deal, I paid the reception lady for a couple of months up front. There was also an internet café just outside the front door. The dining room was old and a bit jaded and even though it had a bar, that was only open at meal times. Hell, Fishhoek must have other bars? I do remember that it does not have a bottle store, one has to go to Kalk Bay or Muizenberg. I unpacked my kit and then went back to Karen's place. We sort of ignore the whole Simons Town/Stellenbosch thing. We take the dogs to the beach and up the mountain all in all a nice day. I leave to go see what supper will be like in the hotel. The waiter shows me what will become my table, tucked well in one corner, which is fine. I can see two other guests, both older gentlemen and both nod a hello. The one just in front of me is rather older and pissed as a lord, he flirts with the waitress and breaks into song every now and then. This seems to be normal behaviour for him and I really don't mind. His songs are all old World War II songs.

It is a set menu with few choices but that is also fine by me, food is food, just glad to have it. They start with soup and it is homemade, very good pea soup and bread. Then the main meal, which was different each day of the week, but repeated the following week. After that a pudding, usually those power and milk mixed ones. I quite like them, so that is a lot of chow for one sitting. The meal ends with some coffee. Being times when I did not see that much in a fucking week. I have some books from Karen and enjoy the solitude of my own space, with some vodka of course. I set up my computer and muck about till it time for tea in the TV lounge. May as well do a recce. In the lounge is one very old lady and another of about 60 or so. Both greet me and then just drink their tea, don't talk to each other. The old lady asks where I am from and I give a short reply. The TV is on but not very loud so I can hear the speaking but not the words, bad when a

granny of 85 has better hearing than yourself. I decide to go read and drink some more. My first night at the Beaufort Hotel is okay, just in the early hours I get woken by a car going out. I will find out about this late night movement and meet Chris later.

Next morning I try out the breakfast. Consists of cereal and eggs on toast, then coffee. This is the standard breakfast and since I seldom eat breakfast I begin to make it a habit to just take my flask and get it filled with coffee, then sit in the little courtyard and smoke. The courtyard is just outside the corridor that leads to my room on the end. Sandwiched between the main old building and the flat like rooms where I live. It has a cage with a few cockatiel in and a small well kept garden. An obviously gay guy of about 50 comes to feed the birds, he is the chef. His name is Conrad and he is a very friendly sort, we speak about birds and the plants in the garden, I know a little about both so make a new friend. Later we also talk about cooking, which I enjoy. He is one of those gay guys that is quite happy to leave you as a "straight", none of that "if you try it once whadda whadda." Like some of them tend to. As I have said before I like this Cape place, outnumbered by women and a lot of gay guys just to push the odds further in my favour of my getting lucky with a pretty woman. Then the maintenance chap comes out, Jeff. One of those people I never managed to get a handle on, with my intellect or my instinct. A blank wall. Wary of those type of people so him and I do not make friends even though we speak often. I push off and go walk the dogs with Karen, then hit the bottle store for more supplies. After that I go work on my databases till supper.

The next day, sitting smoking, when a lady of about my age comes and says hello, Joyce. I have met her before, she is my mother. I see immediately she is on medicine, anti-depressants. She is in manic happy when we meet and two minutes into the conversation she is telling me about her medicines. I have a soft spot for people with this problem, legal drug addicts, so recovery is impossible, someone wants her to be here and in this state. Later I find out it is her children. She is also living with a fucking psycho that I meet later. His name is Keith and I have met his type a few times. He is away on a contract job right then. She tells me of the bar called Excalibur, just a few blocks from the hotel. I say sure we can go there sometime, then ask about booze mixed with the drugs she is on. I remember well that this combination killed my mother, dead. Just like my mom she pooh poohs the whole idea, she does not drink much. I go to my room and drink some vodka, so as not to think about it. Later that afternoon I go to the Excalibur and Joyce is there, and she is now drugged and drunk. I sit and hold her hand for a while, the manic good mood of the morning is gone and she is melancholy. I hear a bit of her life's story and what is happening to her right now. It makes me sad. I fucking drink some more. Later I walk her back to the hotel, she has cheered up considerably by this time, and as for not drinking that much? She matched me drink for drink. At supper the old soldier is drunk as a skunk as usual, and sprouting some Churchill speeches. He was in the British Navy in the war and seems saw some bad shit. There are a lot of people in the dining room but at this stage I am just watching. The guy that stays in the room next to mine for instance. He never says a word to anyone, goes to work, returns for supper and then straight to his room. I will bet all the money I don't have, a bottle a night man.

So life carries on, I write a bit, walk on the beach and try sell data.

As seems to be my pattern at this stage I stop drinking, get bored and attend some AA meetings in Kalk Bay. I do not relate to AA people any more and make no friends. I do

meet a chap, Hamilton, that wrote the rehab style book, "I Want My Life Back." I also meet the owner of a posh rehab, I think it is called Stepping Stones or something. I do not like this man, I know of him from Dave. He bought a hotel in Kommetjie and turned it into a rehab; BUT he kept the Off Sales and licence so sells booze from same premises?? No man.

I must mention now that I have lost my drivers licence card and my cars licence expired about 3 years back. Never mind. The Kalk Bay AA meeting is on a Friday night. Along that part of the Bay there is only one road and every few km there may be a turn off in between the mountains, but on a whole once on that road you can only travel along it in one direction, sea on the one side and mountain on the other. As you come into Fishhoek there is a traffic light and a road that goes inland, going straight, just past that is a huge police station, one block on is where I live. I come around the corner and see at the lights, must be the whole police force and a road block, and a que of cars waiting to get through. Everyone is being questioned, so not even 50% chance I can slip through. Fuck! I am in a quandary, I know how a proper road block/ambush works. Just where I get a visual of them they should have a "stopper group." This is to catch guys making a quick u-turn. Okay, next best thing, on the beach side is a pavement and a few cars, people taking in the night lights over the sea. I become a tourist. I am 99% sure this will not work, but what other option? I get out the car and casually walk to the small wall, light a smoke and pretend to watch the sea. Out of the corner of my eye I see the two "stopper group" cops approaching. They walk straight up to me and ask what I am doing. I tell them looking at the sea. Then they ask if I have been drinking. I tell them no. One is a lieutenant and he is aggressive, I get asked a few more times if I have been drinking, after about the 4th time I say, "Fuck it man I just came from the AA meeting in Kalk Bay, I have not had a drink!" He then asks why I pulled off. At this stage no bullshit touristy type answer is going to work so I just tell him, "I did not want to go through your road block." He replies, "No shit hey?" Then I tell him that my wallet was stolen and so I do not have a drivers licence with me. He is still convinced I have been drinking and tells me I must come with him to the CO who is at the main road block. It is about 800m on, we leave my car and the two policemen escort me past the que of cars, everyone is staring, hate it. We get to the main section of the block, it is set up in a parking area for the beach visitors. Here I get taken to a lady, she has a lot of "birdshit" on her shoulders, would be a Brigadier in army rank. She also doubts that I have not been drinking, we go through the whole spiel again. She then leaned forward to smell my breath. "Sis man jy rook!" Sis man you smoke is what she said to me. Then she kindly told me not to worry about the absence of my drivers licence card, I must just continue to stay off the booze. Then, also in Afrikaans she told the lieutenant to go and fetch my car. So I had a policeman drive past a long que of cars, through the road block and deliver my unlicensed car to be, he even held the door and closed it after me. What did I do? I drove straight to the Excalibur and had a few vodkas to celebrate my good fortune. This is a Mexican Horse Thief thing, never mind.

Meanwhile I was getting to know some of the people at the hotel. One very interesting chap was now sitting in the TV lounge every day, Richard. I said hello to him and received a very Charlie Mason look, then he continued with his drawing. He had sheaths of paper all done in pastels, all the dark colours and heavily drawn. Physiology 101 would tell you what this indicated. I asked Joyce about him. He too was on heavy medication, apparently he came back from Angola 20 odd years ago, Section Eight. I do

not seek these people out, I just seem to be thrown in with them, my whole life. As time went by I asked if I may look at the drawings, he said not a word just thrust a pile of paper at me. Like I say, scary. I told him they were very nice and spoke about my long time associating with the art world through Gordon. He sort of smiled but no words yet. Then one morning I was having my coffee in the courtyard and he came and sat next to me, he actually said, "Hello." Then just sat there, feet drumming continuously. Joyce walk passed and had a breezy, "Hi" for us. Richard did this every day for a while, nothing more, nothing less.

I met Joyce's boyfriend Keith, I also met a lady that stayed in the main part of the hotel. She would always sit in the main lounge come entrance hall and do crosswords. So far we had just greeted, then one day she asked if I knew an answer to one of the crossword questions. Fortunately I did and that broke the ice a bit. She was comfortable in her finances and stayed in a nice room on the first floor, but seemed to have no friends and a family that did not care. We chatted about books, art and whatnot often after that, her health was not good and she was severely overweight, did not go out the door very often. Her family, children and grandchildren came to see her once the whole time I was there. She was so excited. I still hope to die young enough that this does not happen to me. What the hell am I talking about, my family cares not a shit already! At least I do not get excited when one or two of them do bother to contact me. Never mind.

By now I was drifting in and out of sobriety, as the mood took me. I was seeing less and less of Karen, who had moved into a house in Sun Valley, a suburb of Fishhoek. I was on speaking terms with most of the permanent residents in the hotel and knew the regulars at the Excalibur. Joyce and I often sat together drinking and talking shit. I met a rather plumb lady, her name was Karen, like my sister. She had a boyfriend that was bi-sexual, Anton. He was one of those guys that was also about to "go north" but more on the technical side. She had a very pretty 18 year old daughter. She already was getting slightly over weight and in a few years would look like her mom. So sad. I could see trouble here but carried on regardless.

At the hotel a young woman, with the most amazing green eyes and her much older boyfriend moved into a room a few doors away from mine. Just past the TV lounge and entrance to this part of the place. He was huge and she was half my size. I saw that he did not treat her well at all, often shouting at her right in the dining room. He drove overland trucks for a tour company and was soon on a trip. I spoke to the girl a bit, arty type and full of the love of life. Her name, I kid you not was DJ. Then her boyfriend brought a baby pied crow back from a trip. That sort of broke the ice, I know a bit about rearing baby birds and they did not. The mucho boyfriend was still unfriendly, he was an asshole to everyone in the hotel, not just me. He actually slapped the old WWII guy in the dining room one night for some perceived insult! I was not present, if I had been I would have made him sit, one way or another. Think I would have hit him with one of the solid wood dining room chairs, he was huge, but sit he would.

DJ had procured a cage from Conrad the chef and the crow slept in that at night, in the room with her. Boyfriend was off on a month long trip. During the day the crow would

be free to roam the courtyard, but DJ also took it for walks, it followed like a puppy dog! It could fly but short distances at a time, a metre or two then walking again. We took it to the beach often, the crow seemed to enjoy this. During this time I heard the very sad life story of DJ and why she put up with the boyfriends shit. A tragic tale of being orphaned young, getting into cocaine and all that goes with it. We became good mates as we shared some common history and interests. When she visited her friends in Cape Town I babysat the crow for a few days. Then the residence of the place said the crow was too noisy, it woke up early and did make a racket, and it had to go. DJ and I took it to a bird rehab, and she was heartbroken, cried all the way home. Well, only thing for that was to get some vodka get both of us drunk...

After seen very little of Karen, my sister, she pops up with a very good plan to make a LOT of money. Ben says he can make an inverter system that will kick in and keep the electricity going during the ever increasing blackouts. Hell, with my database of the Hospitality industry we had something here. Guests that are paying a fortune to visit this country are really no interested in Eskom's fuck ups, they want the hot water and aircon. As I am not in the least bit technical I believed Ben could do what he claimed and set about sending mail. I kept a note on the first results we got, they looked like this:

With only one Newsletter, a very simple text only, no embedded pictures, only ECE's website link, the response was as follows. Within two weeks!

News letter was sent to Hospitality data (6000 of) and only 1000 of the other available addresses. (General Businesses)

1. Hundreds of enquiries. Both for inverter systems and solar alternatives.
2. Seventy four quotes sent out totaling well over a 2 million rand.
3. Eleven invoices sent out totaling R158 000.00
4. Five 50% deposits paid into ECE's bank account.

Shit! The hard times were finally over! With the commission Karen said I would be paid I would be smiling all the way to the bank. This was not to be.

The first sign of trouble was the inverters that Ben said I must advertise were not available in this country. When will I learn not to just trust people. Lynne did the EXACT same thing to me. A mad scramble to find inverters ensued, we found some smaller ones and filled in the orders for the portable inverter orders. Spending the money of the deposits for orders we could not fill was worrying me greatly. Karen was full of confidence and said she will make a plan. I got some spending money but not enough to pay my rent. I was beginning to stress about that and this whole business, sooo, I had done my part and decided to go do some serious drinking with the money I had. The barman at Excalibur had a very pretty young girlfriend, he was a good looking chap and flirted outrageously in front of her. I made friends with her quickly enough. I was going to see Karen every now and then to check if they had found the inverters. The people that had ordered and paid a deposit were now asking when would the job get done. Ben and Karen were ducking and diving and drinking too. Ben got some expensive inverters and started making the system up. He blew the things! I stressed even more, by now we had hundreds of orders from that mail. We were looking at a huge amount of money to be made. The profit margin Ben had build in was very good. That is all very well, but he

could not even make the system up as yet, never mind install it. I tried hard not to get pissed off with the situation, but fuck it, he was so cock sure that he could make this thing, now even untechnologically impaired person such as myself could see he was full of shit.

The weeks dragged by, the rent was over overdue and I was getting dribs and drabs of money, which I promptly drank out or spent it on the new young lady. I then got into a fight at the only other bar in Fishhoek and was banned for life. I started hanging out at Excalibur exclusively. Karen, the plump one was there a lot, the barman was becoming suspicious, and I was constantly drunk. The hotel told me to leave and Karen said I should move in with Anton and herself. Sober or drunk, I know trouble when I see it but really saw no other option. Again I packed my kit and moved. Not very far, just a bit inland, about 2km from the hotel. Just after that a database was sold for R3500, Anton made some money and we had a 24/7 week long party. I started smoking marijuana everyday and was not more into Karen's daughter than the barman's girlfriend. While the money lasted and Karen was high she did not mind this. We ran out of booze often after hours and Anton and I went up to the local coloured township and bought booze at the shabeen. Dangerous for two white, drunk guys but what the hell. As the money dwindle the booze we bought became cheaper and we got sick from the crap we were drinking. Karen got mean drink a few times and beat Anton, scratched his face bleeding, he was playing around, with both sexes. One bad night he tried to pick me up, I did the best thing and ducked to see my sister. She was now living in a furnished flat in Longbeach. Some of the inverters, the small ones were now sort of working and Ben was building and selling those. I sent more mail and we got even more orders.

I went back to Karen and we drank for a few more days, then it was my turn to cross the ladies path. We argued about, something, can't really remember and it was pack and move again. My sister Karen said I could not stay with them, as the landlord would not allow it. I slept in my car. At first. During the day it was fine for me to visit, and I sent mail like crazy. The large inverters were making progress, I was told. I met the owner of the flats, a fat little man, Iranian, Greek, or something. I was now fighting with Karen and Ben, constantly about their business procedures. They were spending money on inverters just to blow them up. The deposit money for all the jobs that were coming in. I had very little to no money, I could not afford to eat every day on occasion, but they would only pay me commission on final invoice. They were living quite well on the deposit money too. I got a bit of money, bought some supplies, two books and hit the bush, well what bush you find in the Cape. At Kommatjie there is a nature reserve on the beach. Nice dunes a thick bush. I sneaked past the Cape Nature conservation guards and found a thick piece of bush on a dune that gave me a good view of the beach and sea. I was about 100m from the path that lead to the beach proper. I dug in, as my sleeping bag is a civilian one and bright burgundy I used my British army poncho to cover it. The weather was wonderful and I sat drinking and watched all the people on the beach. I read my book and drank some more, had some snacks, biltong and dry wors. Some days the conservation guys would walk close by but none saw me. One day a group of people had a picnic very close to my hidey hole, they did not spot me either, but I had to keep very still for long periods of time. Then a young woman did, her eyes grew wide and I put my finger to my lips. I liked her, she did not tell anyone what she had seen, just gave a surreptitious glance in my direction for the rest of the day. I thank her for that. I needed supplies every now

and then and did a bit of anti tracking to keep my secret, well secret. I also went to see if Karen and Ben had made any progress in the development of this thing I had sold. I look back on those days on the beach with fondness, I had a beautiful view, no-one knew where I was, I had food and drink and two good books. All good things must come to an end.

Karen thought we could risk me sleeping at the flat. I got sober for a bit and worked on the data. The flat was tiny and with all the inverter stuff crammed in as well there was no place for my stuff. One night our cars were broken into and I lost all my camera equipment. I had some very good stuff, older but good. My 170-500 lens was worth a small fortune. We called the cops and went through the rigmarole of reporting the incident. They gave me shit about the worth of my camera equipment, implying I was trying some insurance fraud trick. I told them to fuck off as I was not insured. My sister calmed the situation down. In general, I still hate cops, one good one in a thousand, maybe. Just to make me more sure of this, I get a phone call a couple of days later and a cop, yes a policeman, wanted to know if I wanted to buy some really cheap photographic equipment. Don't have to be a rocket scientist to work that one out.

I find a flatlet in a suburb of Fishhoek, I pay the deposit and the first months rent. It is not furnished, just a room with a kitchenette and a bathroom. It is in a well kept garden and over looks the Silvermine nature reserve. Problem is I can only occupy in 8 days time. Karen is paranoid about her landlord, with good reason it seems. He too is a drinker. One night there is a bang on the door, I am not drinking but Ben and Karen are. The bang is a policeman's knock, I know about things like this. Karen opens up and sure enough, one male and one female cop. They ask or rather start to ask something when the little round owner charges past them, in a straight line to me. His is very drunk, his punches all miss and he almost falls over. He is calling me a worthless drunken bum, ironic, apart from the police I am the only sober person I can see right then. I dodge the little man till he runs out of steam. One or two ineffectual blows have landed on my head and back. I get that icy calmness that comes over me when trouble erupts. Not so with Ben, Karen, the little man or even the cops. By now the place is crowded, the caretaker and another man have come in the room. The other man is the little rich fucks trouble shooter, I find out later. He is also calm. The little guy gets his energy level up and attacks me again. Hell, I am not too mucho to deny it, I hid behind the lady cop, but was getting blood in my eye. I was going to pop and do one of my ballistic scenes soon. I told the cops that they must stop this little oke as I am getting scared. I was, if I pop it will be fucking ugly. They take it that I am scared of the little oke. I have a quick inspiration, Devine? I doubt it. I tell the cops I want to lay a charge of assault on the little guy. Everyone is shouting, this is a cluster fuck of note. The trouble shooter pulls the little guy out the door. Puts him on a couch in the entrance of the building. He listens, for whatever reason to his man. He comes back in while the cops are trying to convince me NOT to lay a charge, but I am insistent. My sister is still screaming, by now at everyone. Ben is also shouting. I nod at the trouble shooter to step outside, we understand each other. I tell him I know that I should not be sleeping there, but my room will be available only in about 6 days time. He has two or three rooms on the premises that are vacant. The deal, I get one, for free and I drop the idea of laying assault charges. Blackmail? Maybe. The psychologist was right about one thing, I am a survivalist, there are no fucking rules when it gets to this point. He asks if I will sign a piece of paper to this effect. I tell him, "Sure." I go back to

Karen's room, the cops are informed about the deal, they will witness the signing of the paper. This gets done, the little owner is now very happy, he gets keys and shows me my new room, furnished, DSTV and all. Cool. He then tells me he is my best friend etc. etc. The trouble shooter takes him away. He has dealt with this type of bullshit with his boss before.

I move into my new place, I get a hotplate and some chow, set up my computer. I pack some spare clothes in a rectangle on the tiled floor, throw my sleeping bag on top. This will be my bed, for how long I do not know. I have all the commission coming, if, if Ben can get his act together. It will be in the tens of thousands, orders are still coming in. Ben is still blowing small things up. He will get better, at blowing things up I mean. He does the first installation at Kalk Bay Theater, we carry 6 huge batteries, 60kg each in, I leave him to it as I am of little help here. By that afternoon the whole block of Kalk Bay has no power, he blew something big up! I just go back to my room, after buying a shit load of booze. The Kalk Bay fiasco carried on for weeks, I bore myself thinking about all the excuses why Ben could not get this right. He was busy elsewhere and blew two posh wine farm's electric supplies to shit as well. Fuck I just got drunker. I sold a database and did not pay rent, I drank, in my room and at Excalibur. Landie came to pick me up on my birthday and I went to stay in Cape Town with her for a few days, lots of booze and a bit of cocaine, feeling no pain. But I had to go back and face my land lady sooner or later. Karen in the meantime had sorted a silent partner out for them, Manfred, and he set them up in a house in Muizenberg, again her step daughter could move in but I was not welcome. I was pissed off about the fact that my marketing had gotten all the orders, therefore the interest of Karen's new partner. I still believe I had done my fair share of the work and they were reaping the benefits, while fucking the thing up! We fought about this. My landlady was a nice woman and I had to tell her I could pay a bit of the rent but not all. She gave me some time. When that time ran out, Karen came to visit and again no money for what I had done. We had a huge fight and she left in a huff. A little while later I had to move out, but I had no place to go.

Next morning I drove to Muizenberg and bought more vodka, then parked my car on the beachfront and got wasted. The whole day was spent like this, drink, pass out, drink some more. That night had the Mountainmen Security firm on my case, a few bucks and they fucked off. Always about the money. I had enough the next day to buy one more bottle of vodka, then spent the day the same as the day before. Tried to drink myself to death, did not work. Drove about for a while and my car ran out of petrol as I got back to my spot.

Next day, run out of booze and had no plan what so ever, not a cent to my name and about 5 smokes. There is a Christian Radio station in Muizenberg, I went in and asked may I please, please use the phone. A resounding no! I asked again telling them I am in so much trouble I am suicidal. Fuck off is what I got. Do not speak to me about Christianity, the Ark compounded my now hatred for the modern Christian. I make no apology for that statement. I decided to go to my sworn enemy, the police and ask could I make one phone call. Just got the "blank look of Africa" from the duty sergeant. Well, here at least I expected it. Tried to convince the bugger to lock me up for a while, as then I could get sobered up. Can't get arrested when you want to, ironic. Then my alcohol saturated brain remembered that one can make reverse charge calls. Hallelujah. Did that at a call box near my car. Karen came but with an ultimatum, she would book me into the

Ark or cut me loose. Shit, I had visited my uncle Neal in the Ark in Durban. It looked BAD. To make matters worse it was a Christian run place. Danielle in the fucking lions den. What choice did I have? I don't know as by now the need for more alcohol was taking over and an equally strong will to survive. I agreed. Women are organized creatures, Karen had the whole thing signed and sealed a day ago. She painted a pretty picture of how they help and even find one work. I was about 4 years sober when I visited Neal. I am a drunkard not a simpleton. But go I had to.

Karen calls The Ark to see if I can bring my computer along, they say that will be fine. She tells me that she has called the whole family about her fucked up "little" brother, the night before. I see the empty brandy bottle and the big, also empty bottle of Old Brown Sherry. Oh, oh. My sister drunk, it is not pretty. Vincent told her basically to piss off, I am a big boy and should look after myself. No surprise there. My father and her had an argument and she brought up how he use to beat me, again. He got pissed of and put the phone down. Then, a good one, don't piss on Karen's battery when she has had a few dops. She contacted every listed South African Jehovah's Witness organization, The Bethel and the Elders council, , who know who else? Then proceeded to give them a breakdown of what the "wonderful Elder, Brother Bisset" had done to his first family, us. It was mostly true what she said, but I am sure she added the dramatics as well. Fucking crazy, this sister of mine.

I will put down the information that is in the arks pamphlet, you can decide what you think when you have read a day by day account of what I saw once in there, stone cold sober.

The Ark

City Of Refuge Church

Men's Home

Orientation Manual

Our Vision

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
Because he hath anointed me
To preach to the poor;
He hath sent me to heal the broken hearted,
To preach deliverance to the captives,
And recovering the sight to the blind,
To set at liberty them that are bruised,
To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

Luke 4:17,18.

Our mission is to glorify God in all that we do and to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ through caring and providing for the "least" among us, the destitute, the indigent, the physically and spiritually ill, the hopelessly addicted and the unwanted.

Introduction to Men's Home

Our purpose is to provide Christian-based care/rehabilitation to men in need (addicts, the destitute, aged, etc.) with the mission of the church to glorify Jesus Christ in all that we do and to take part in the great commission.

We provide assistance, through rehabilitation, to residence –

With addictions (sustenance-abuse, anger, etc.)

By creating a platform to acquire hard-skills for the labour/ entrepreneur market

By providing Christian-based personal and family counseling

By encouraging them to personally take time, searching the scriptures and to apply God's Kingdom rules, so that they experience the healing process and have that life of abundance and peace as promised by God.

Our Christian-based life-skill program consists of various courses that deal with spiritual and emotional restoration in areas of denial, anger, rejection, bitterness, etc. All life-skill training is incorporated into daily living chores in so providing for practical reality-based therapy.

1 John 1:7

Conditions of Entry

Dear Friend

We welcome you to The Ark City of Refuge Church in the most precious name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

The purpose of this ministry is:

- 1) Promoting the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 2) Providing temporary shelter for the homeless, food and drink for the hungry and thirsty, clothing for the unclothed and spiritual guidance according to scripture for all those that desire it.

We are NOT a place of permanent residence for the unemployed.

The following terms and conditions of entry apply to all who apply to reside in the Church.

- a) Every person will be required to complete the Orientation Courses (50 Day Bible Course and Agape Foundation Course) after which your progress will be reviewed and you will then be required to enter a program according to your need, i.e. drug/alcohol, related problems, life-skills, hard skills etc.
- b) You may not partake of alcohol nor any narcotic drugs including non prescription tablets, on these premises.
- c) You will be denied access to these premises should you display any evidence of having taken any of the substances described in b) above or you will be summarily expelled from this Church should you partake of them on these premises.
- d) You may only smoke cigarettes or tobacco in designated areas.

e) You may not engage in employment of any kind until the completion of the Orientation Courses after which you may obtain a 30 day pass to seek employment on a daily basis. If successful in obtaining employment within that 30-day window, you will be given an additional period of 30 days to find alternative accommodation. During your employment you will be required to contribute 30% of your income to the Ministry. (Copy of pay slip required) If you are unsuccessful in obtaining employment within the 30 day window you will be required to meet with the Re-evaluation Committee to discuss your future e.g. extension of the 30 days window, life-skill training and or hard skills training. After each 30 day window period you will be required to submit a new application for residency to the Church. Your continued stay will be subject to approval from Management.

f) Persons receiving pensions/grants are required to pay 30% and persons receiving child grants are required to pay 10% to facilitate their stay in the Ministry.

g) You may not engage in violent behavior nor may you use foul language towards any person in the ministry.

h) You shall respect the authority of the Pastors and Staff of this Church. Failure to do so will result in your summery expulsion.

i) You must hand in any firearms, other weapons on entry.

j) You must hand in any medication(Schedule 3 and above) to be kept in the dispensary, which will be issued under supervision.

k) You will be required to perform certain duties within the ministry as designated by the Section Heads.

l) You may not enter into a relationship nor have an affair with any resident during your residency.

m) Your stay is temporary and you may from time to time be moved from one place or section of accommodation in order to facilitate the efficient running of the Church.

n) If in the opinion of the Management Board you have reached a stage where you are considered to be able to continue with your life elsewhere you will be given a notice period of 30 days in which to find alternative accommodation.

- o) YOU ARE REQUIRED TO ATTEND ALL CHURCH SERVICES AND MEETINGS!

Finally, we wish you all the grace and goodness of our Lord Jesus Christ during your stay with us. May HE restore you and guide you as you strive to be healed spiritually and physically.

I ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I UNDERSTAND THE CONTENTS OF EACH CLAUSE AND I UNDERTAKE TO ABIDE BY THESE RULES. I ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT ANY BREACH WILL RESULT IN MY BEING GIVEN 24 HOURS NOTICE TO LEAVE THE MINISTRY.

SIGNED – RESIDENT _____ DATE _____

SIGNED- MEN'S HOME PASTOR _____ DATE _____

WITNESS 1 _____ DATE _____

WITNESS 2 _____ DATE _____

More rules followed mainly about Church rules, I will mention them as we go along.

Karen and her step daughter take me to The Ark. It is based here 5 Old Faure Road Eersteriver Cape Town Western Cape. Sort of between Somerset West and Stellenbosch. I remember giving an inmate a lift from the Somerset AA meeting back here when staying with Pam and Eddie. Ironically enough that same guy, Vincent, will be my Section Head for the first month. The place is an old Reformatory, it is dilapidated and ugly. We go to the office, located on one side of a quad. In the quad some guys are doing their washing in the stainless steel sinks. I notice the taps have bent nails for handles, the drainage pipes are missing and water just pours to the ground before some of it finding its way to the drain. Other guys are washing cups and plates. Some look up at the new arrival, most do not, they just concentrate on the job at hand. This is fucking unusual, more so because my sister is a very pretty woman. I see Vincent, he has put on a lot of weight since we last saw each other. I get my sign in papers. You read them. Would you like to sign that shit? The chap in charge is rather young, his name is Shawn. I did not want to sign but really had no choice. My one thought was, how will I get out of here. That thought remained strong, every single day. I moved my kit into a dorm. These were located on the opposite side of the quad from the office. I had a view of the entrance and the guard house by the gate. One had to sign in and out of this place, one pedestrian gate and the huge double gate for cars, I learned that a lot of trucks came and went from here. Next to the guard house was a beautiful little dam, then some open land. Past that were huge piles of fallen trees, truck loads arrived when we got there. Guys were chopping them up and piling wood everywhere. So that was my view. In the dorm, double bunks. I put my stuff down and the computer on the floor. And so I meet Theo. Executive Outcomes had Graham Cook, The Ark has Theo. Crazy, Charlie Manson eyes, shaved head with a very large dent and a full beard. He is just like Graham, he helps me when no one else is. Then he asks can we pirate CD's on the computer, we can make a lot of money. I see my sister off and while still outside a Pastor comes up to me and warns me to be careful of Theo. I get into the dorm and a room mate repeats the warning. I reserve my judgement, so far he is the only chap that bothered to help me and be friendly and welcoming in this rather scary place. I have a top bunk at the end of the dorm, below me is a coloured guy called Tony, he looks sneaky, instinct also telling me something. At the opposite end of the room, near the door is a wooden room, Vincent lives in there. The closest bed has a guy called Johan, he is a sludge brain. The alcohol has reduced him into a grown up baby, sometimes functional but mainly, somewhere else. I unpack my bag finding a few "illegal" things in my kit. 6 hydro-shock bullets and an empty vodka bottle, I hand them in at the office. Spend the rest of the day watching, as is my habit in new surroundings. I go to the toilets, bad. Really bad. The stalls have shit smeared on the walls, I find out later why this is. You will be surprised. The basin taps are also bend nail for handles type. There is a huge hole in the wall where some toilet stalls were suppose to be. The rain has come in an the floor has puddles of water everywhere. The showers are locked off, with a huge, badly made iron bar gate. I look through the gate, which is padlocked. Also bad. Then I get told my computer is to be locked away in the storeroom.

I get paper work for this, as once before, my mother stayed in a Christian Centre in Kensington. I am not sure what exactly happened, I do know for a fact that my mother “lost” all her worldly possessions that the preacher had said he would store for her. I may finish my Pre-Mexican story one day, the full story is in there.

Supper time comes and I have no plate or eating utensils. The Pastor and Shawn both told me I would get these. I have not seen either of them the whole day. Theo, makes a plan. If I had no plate, no food. No cup, no tea. The kitchen has a serving hatch that is in a corridor at the top end of the quad, on the office side. We line up and I get a better idea of how many people are actually in this huge camp. They different kinds of people is astonishing to me. From guys that look like what one thinks a homeless person should look like, down to youngsters that should be having a job somewhere, not in this bleak place. A lot have lost it, and have dull, lifeless eyes, that scares me, others are Jesus addicts and act like they are high on drugs. Happy, happy, happy, Jesus loves you! Yeah right. To my surprise the food is not bad at all, and a lot of it. We get tea, no milk but a lot of sugar. Theo and I sit on his bed, diagonally opposite mine, but the bottom bunk. We go outside for a smoke, here men that have not even greeted me, are my mates and want cigarettes. Theo just looks at them and they have places to go all of a sudden. Theo has become my teacher in one more of the strange schools I have attended. The showers are unlocked in the morning and the evening, so shower, compulsory church service and hit my bunk.

The morning starts with general cleaning of the place. One chap in the dorm is responsible for sweeping and another gets to mop. The rest are suppose to clean the corridors, sweep and mop. Just like as in the army, most of the guys are... gone. Theo is a work horse, he will sweep and the take over with the mop as well. He is thin like me, and has all these horrible demons tattooed on his skinny frame. By now I have learned that Theo spent 25 years in jail. He happened to kill a few men when he was young and in some gang. Nice. The dent in his head. I got this story from him and later the owner of The Ark, also a fucking hard man confirmed this. Theo and Pastor Greg ran together as kids, that is why he is still allowed in The Ark. When Theo got out of jail he came here, Greg a former inmate here, had married the original founder of The Ark's daughter, years later he is the main man. So Theo is in here, he gets drunk and drugged up, the Management Board tell him to leave. He does not feel inclined to do so. As there are many hard men in the place the Board gets a few, armed with baseball bats to go and convince skinny little Theo he should go. This was a bad plan, Theo is as crazy as he looks. He grabbed a baseball bat from one of them, asked them if they think he is fucking scared of them. He the breaks the bat over his own head! Hence the big dent. After doing that, blood pouring down his face he climbs into the hard men, one or two go down and the rest run like hell. He chases them. Someone had the presence of mind to call Greg. Greg calms Theo down and says he can stay. Theo and a few others go to hospital for a bit. No wonder the Mexican Horse Thief is left alone in this hard place! Theo decided on day one I was his best friend. Jesus. Should I be glad or terrified?

Breakfast: Que up, a prayer and dry Wheatbix and sweet black tea. Pour the tea on the dry biscuits, Theo has sugar and coffee. We have a kettle in the room, so make a cup and go for a smoke. I still have a stash of them. I learn from my new master that the tradable commodities in this place are, cigarettes, tobacco, coffee and sugar. I can operate in hard

army camps but this place is different. Theo is a good teacher, I am hopefully a good student.

Theo and I go chop wood. Another revelation. Pastor Greg owns a tree felling company, that is where all this shit is coming from. Good bloody deal, homeless people for no wage, fell trees, then the trees are brought here, more homeless people, me, chop them up. The big chunks are sold as firewood in the coloured township where The Ark is based. The smaller bits are put in one of those shredder machines and other homeless guys make compost. That is sold in the larney suburbs, by other homeless guys. Clever bliksem this Greg oke. He has whole business that pays not a single wage. Collects from charity and churches to feed and house his "staff". I file this information for future reference. Meantime I chop wood and get fit and strong. While chopping wood Karen calls me and tells me that she can't visit on the weekend, no money. I do not want to think about the inverters and how close we all became to financial wealth. I just chop fucking wood. Some goes to an antique boiler, they don't even have hot water bills here. The main Pastor here in men's camp is a huge man with a wooden leg. His name is Ralph and he starts the chain saw by holding it in front of him and jerking his arms wide. Impressive. Very strong man, and like all the Pastors here he must have a dubious history. He has a flatlet attached to the dorm and his mother lives with him. He is a non sense type of chap. We have little to say to each other though. There is an older coloured guy that is always at the trees, he works tirelessly, does more than double the work any of the younger guys do, he too speaks very little.

We do the line up for lunch. A piece of fruit and a glass of cool drink, the mix up kind. Vincent tells us that the Coffee shop will be open tonight. Coffee shop!?! You can get a cup of filter coffee and a piece of cake if... you watch a Christian video. I find out that Woolworths donates a lot of cake to this place. I talk to another guy, Ebriham. He comes with Theo and I to chop wood. I find out that the first week I do not have to work or do the 50 Days Bible Study yet. Eat and attend church twice a day. It rains and we all go back to our dorms. Theo and I make coffee and smoke. Theo is also doing his thing and we get more supplies, I do not ask what he is up to. Better that way, if questioned I cannot tell the "rank" anything. We no supper, no donations today we are told. Later after church Vincent tells us the coffee shop is open. Shit, more than one Woolworths is supplying cake here! We each get huge helpings of cake and a big mug of strong filter coffee. The video machine has problems so we are spared more Christian indoctrination. My new friend, Ebriham, slyly pulls out a piece of cloth from under his shirt. His hero, Bin Laden is printed on the cloth. Hmmm. Seems all the Jesus stuff is not working on some of the guys.

Later in the dorm there is trouble with Tony and Theo. Tony is a thief, I say it not lightly, I have seen him stealing salt and sugar from a very sick old man in the dorm. He does this when everyone is sleeping, but somehow when ever he is up to his shit I wake up. He knows I know and I often catch him staring at me with beady little eyes. Wonder what he is thinking? He is right to be worried, I am too new in this place so do and say nothing for now. The Pastors? Hell, I have seen and smelt two, so far smoking dope. I file all of this. Theo get accused of stealing from a guy I call Bible Boy. Ricardo. He too steals from the old man. I trust a puff adder more than this guy. Sean, the sort of enforcer of the camp, not with fists but scripture and God on his side, comes in and Theo gets accused of the

theft. I make out for Theo by now, he would not steal from fellow inmates, armed robbery and a murder or two? Sure. But it is a matter of honour not to steal from others in this place. Tony is the one that told Sean it was Theo doing the stealing! Theo knows about Tony's nocturnal activities, he wakes up when things are amiss. We have spoken about it too. Like me he does not tell the Pastors a thing, not even now. Theo gets blood in his eye, this is VERY scary. Again like Graham Cook he seems to listen to me. I tell him, "Despacio, let's go have a smoke." Sean is left to sort out the shit. He just leaves shortly after, nothing accomplished. Tony makes a show of getting a knife from Ebriham and putting it under his pillow. Great. I have moved to a bottom bunk and sleep right next to Tony. He and I have had words about his encroachment into my space. I sleep with one eye open.

The next two days are tense but the routine goes on, lots of bloody wood chopping and church, little food. I seem to stay fit even without exercise and now my arms are getting stringy and hard. I also volunteer to stoke the boiler in the late afternoon, dirty hard work, but I am left alone in the backyard while doing this. Sometimes guys come and have a joint, but we just pay each other no mind. Sean finds me here and also tells me to stay away from Theo. That night in the coffee shop he gives me some cigarettes. I thank him.

The men's camp has an old age home on it, this is where Theo is disappearing to every now and then. The old guys are mainly infirm, bed ridden or almost. A very, very sad place. Pray, if you are the praying sort that you die before ending up in a place like that. Most have some sort of tiny pension and Theo is the man that, for a small fee, buys there "luxuries" at the local shop. The coffee and sugar is what gets seen, but I think he gets them a bit of alcohol and maybe some dope. I go to the local little shop, Theo has his shopping list and gets his clients stuff. He has a bit of cash so we get coffee and smokes, some to trade and some to use. Tobacco is a good trading item, can get stolen food from the chefs. Shitty food, never. The Pastors, there are about 10 of them, get the good food that is donated to The Ark. I have smelt the steaks cooking, drifting from the windows of their rooms. I thought in my naivety they bought this with their own money. Another lesson learned and filed. So, need a good chow, procure some Boxer tobacco and a sheet or two of telephone directory pages and Bob's your uncle. The paper is a very good trade. I have a telephone book in the boot of my car, here it is worth a small fortune. I make plans to get some of this paper. Theo also knows that if he is sick he gets taken to the clinic, he has some other scheme there and for such a tough bastard is sick often. Karen calls me and tells me I have the commission for a small job in my bank. I am still not allowed to just waltz out and have to wait for the week end before I can get out for the amount of time needed to walk to the bank. My little trip to the local shop was not strictly kosher but the gate guard is an old soldier and did not see me leave. Theo wants me to get sick, quickly, as next to the clinic is a cash card. I tell him I fucking hate going to the doctor and will not go see one just for some coffee money. No way, we wait for Saturday when I will be allowed out. He is pissed off. He gets over it.

That night having coffee and cake, along with a dose of Jesus, I think about Johan, the sludge brain guy. Guys are obliged, ordered to take care of him, take him to the shower and get his food on the bad days. He sometimes makes it to the food line, speaks to no one and gets back to the dorm okay. Most times not. I think that somewhere inside that fucked up shell must still be a little bit of a normal person that would also like a piece of

cake? I tell the chap behind the counter why I want an extra helping of cake, funny enough, no argument he just gave it to me. I took it to Johan and even though he is pretty hard to understand he looked pleased. I went back to the coffee shop and thought about this. Both Shawn and the Bible Boy were in our dorm. How come is it that the bad assed Mexican Horse Thief seems to have better *Christian* values, and human compassion than the Christians themselves? I think maybe Jesus dislikes these modern Christians as much as me. Then the next night Johan walks in by himself! He has never come in here before apparently. He says nothing, gets his coffee and cake and sits with Theo and I, He really smells bad, but what the hell, he is human too. He does this every night there after and on days when he is more coherent we actually have a conversation. He has a sad tale to tell and was also up in Angola as a young man. Now no one give a shit about him. He still talks to no one else. See what a small act of kindness can bring? Again I think about this place The Ark and their mission statement, even more I think about how much I dislike Christianity.

I eventually was forced to become a temporary gate guard. Tony is a permanent gate guard. It consisted of 12 hours sitting in the little guard house, opening the gate for the constant income of Greg's tree felling trucks, signing guys in and out that had day jobs and chasing the gangsters away from the gates. They had mates inside and also wanted to sell inmates TIK and women. We alternated each week with night duty and day duty. If you had night duty the following day you were off. Just still had to go to church.

In the early hours of the morning Theo went to the toilet, here he had some sort of fit and passed out. When he was found he was accused of using TIK. This by Tony and Ebriham. He was taken for a test and he demanded that so must Ebriham. He came back negative while Ebriham was positive and got kicked out, the scaly Tony avoided any trouble as usual. The rest of the day was as normal as it got in this place. Tony is what we use to call "kak sleg" in the army. Shit bad is a direct translation. Work to be done, nowhere to be seen, always late and most of the time found sleeping on his bed. He then messed with the wrong area, church.

He had the habit of coming to the service late, every time. Now considering that we had two a day in the week and up to six on the weekend, that is a lot of times to be late. One of the pastors had had enough and chased him away. When the service was finished a stout cripple guy that had a room with his wife and kid across the way from my dorm came into the room, plus the never seen before house mother, I kid you not. Big performance. He, the cripple guy is some sort of head Pastor, he gave Tony the what for what and Tony swore at him as only a coloured from the Cape Flats could. He told Tony to pack his stuff he was out, only down side to that is I would have to do Tony's duty that night and it was my day off. It was one of those miserable windy rainy days I have come to hate here in the Cape. Then Theo got a job out of town for a few days. The church gets this work for inmates and they get a bit of money, but 30% has to be given back to The Ark. We pack some kit, divide our tobacco stash, Theo rolls the most professional looking home rolls I have ever seen. I suppose that 25 years in the Big House has something to do with that. With Theo gone I must roll my own smoke, what a bloody joke. It just falls to pieces. I make a deal with another ex-con, he rolls me smokes I give him tobacco. Why struggle? At lunch, all food is chucked into a huge electric pot and cooked all day, never mind the combination, we get told, "The pot is slow." We get

custard and a half a loaf of bread, no tea. I have a tea bag or two and some sugar so a good chow all in all. That slow pot was worth waiting for. It is a beef stew that is delicious. Plenty rice and tea to end off with. Church service is different as well. A Baptised Group from Cape Town are here with all there instruments. A few people walk out during the service, even a Pastor or two. Seems Baptist style preaching is not acceptable here. Crazy these Christians, do they or do they not follow the same God/Gods? Beats the hell out of me. Nothing happens about Tony, so I do not do duty. I am glad, as I want to get fit chopping wood all day. Therapeutic too. I smash huge chunks of wood with a large axe, I think about certain peoples heads as the wood splits in two. Would not tell that to any psychologist!

So time for coffee. I find out that the coffee shop is closed on orders of Pastor Ralph. Why? Last night Johan had pissed himself and wet the seat he was on. Apparently Ralph's mother had made the covers for those seats and now he was highly pissed off. Pun intended. So now I hear I am in shit for encouraging Johan. Shit. Shit. Shit. They whole camp is angry at me. I will not accept this, I get blood in my eye. These Christians are really too much, the man has serious mental problems, he did not do it out of disrespect to some ones old lady! I calm down and think about this. No, I will not go ballistic, I will defend my position on being kind to Johan, politely, I will do the 50 Days and by then hopefully I will get enough commission from ECE to make some other plan, but leave this place I will. I also see a change in the attitude of some of the people now that Theo is not around. Tony gives me two sweets, a tall chap gives me half a snackwich he had mad, and Ricardo, the Bible Boy, gave me a cigarette, he does not smoke. A copy of the Rules and Regulations in English is on my bed. I don't really know or care what to think about this.

The next day is a public holiday. I miss church or devotion I believe they call it and have a hot shower, but first I, got a yard broom and scrubbed the shit of all the toilet stalls, cleaned all the toilets and scrubbed the floors of both the toilets and the showers. Figured I needed a shower more than I needed another Jesus infusion. No breakfast or teatime, I had some Wheatbix stashed and had that with hot water, had run out of sugar. My tobacco was also finished. I see that Theo operates much better than I in this place, I had better learn fast. At lunch time I woke Johan up, as someone has to or he just sleeps past mealtimes and is hungry later. Opps. He woke up in psycho mood. I had been told about this but not seen it yet. He screamed, "WHAT!" Then swore at me in Afrikaans. The tall coloured guy walked past and Johan started calling him a kaffir. I do not need this shit, us white boys are out numbered badly here and so far I had seen no racism. We left Johan in the dorm and went to collect lunch. It was cold meat and salad, I got a large piece of tongue amongst my cold meat. Not my favourite but I was hungry, it tasted a bit funny but as I have only eaten it once or twice before, thought that how it tastes. I have a strong system about an hour later I had bad stomach ache and was in need of the now much cleaner toilet. Hour after that I was fine.

It was also my first therapy. I got a lecture on the Trinity, a new version. These guys have a different angle on the subject. Then got questioned about my childhood. 45 minutes of Bible pounding and 15 about little Wayne. Okay. Survived that. Back at the dorm Theo is back. I am glad to see him, he is the only really honest guy I have met, and he could organise. This he did and we snuck out to the local little shop, now I was a gate guard as

well it was a simple matter. I thought about that and saw a way to procure goods! If I let the guys sneak out for a quickie with the gangsters whores, I would ask for something in return, smokes, tobacco, money, whatever. From both the gangster and the inmate. Hell, think I am getting the hang of this place. I shall get a permanent job on the gate. We bought ice suckers, smokes and chocolate, some biscuits and a pie each. Then real milk! I owed Theo big time for this one. We went back to the dorm and had coffee with that real milk, later I used it and had a Wheatbix snack with sugar too. Life was good.

This is officially day one of my AGAPE school. I doubt seriously if I shall learn much in this classroom, the one just outside the classroom door has much more to teach. The school is held in the coffee shop, which is still closed, I idly wonder where all the cakes go now the homeless no longer receive them. I fill in a register and get a sheath of papers. Schooling consists of getting these papers and coping them into a note book that is supplied. The guy that hands out the papers and sees we register is called Dave, he has been in The Ark for decades. He moved to Cape Town when The Ark in Durban closed down. I ask him if he knows my uncle Neil. He does but has no idea where Neil is now. I read through the papers, brief summery is, we have come to know Jesus, how he loves us, looks after us and therefore we owe tithes to the church. We are to get tested on this later and marked, this is the most important part of The Ark's mission, as you would have read in the leaflet. The pages I read explain how since we came to know Jesus in The Ark we are morally obliged, even if we move out and attend another church, to pay our tithes here at The Ark, forever! There is a true and false question about this in the "exams" we write. Stone cold fact. I file this information as well. Plus the maths, get work, must pay 30% to The Ark, then 10% Church tax. That means you give 40% of your income to The Ark. If they were straight out with the deal I would not be so offended. The bit that really gets me is how they try hook that 10% for life. All the services and the indoctrination makes more sense now. I saw this brainwashing first with the Jehovah's Witness's then in the SADF. I must wonder, with the tree felling business, the good food that the homeless do not see unless we buy it on the black market, what other not so bloody kosher things are these buggers up to? I have been here only a short while and decide to keep my eyes open, just for the intellectual exercise.

I am not on guard duty so I get drain duty. The old age home section of the camp has some problems. Then another guy came up to me and asked if I remember him. I do too. He was in a small homeless shelter in Simons Town, I first saw him with my mate Steward working as a car guard at Boulders. He was fine but then when in the Two and Six and drunk he was very obnoxious, I hit him the one night! I was also pretty drunk, but still. I said to him now I was sorry. He said how he knows what the demon drink made him like and it was okay. He had found Jesus and was happy now. I went on cleaning the old guys drains out, they were all very grateful, the place was a stinking mess, had been like that for weeks. Filthy job but I enjoyed helping the old guys, like I say you don't want to end up here when you old. Cancel that, you don't want to end up here, period. I finally met the IT guy in the now open again coffee shop. He had been a photo journalist for the Pretoria News and was about the same age as I. He sees a lot and knew a lot about The Ark. We compared observations and had very much the same conclusions. He had been in the place for a year already but had just landed a job in Muizenberg and would leave soon. Theo is acting weird, even for him, up to some skulduggery no doubt. The next morning he left me 4 smokes and some tobacco telling me cryptically he would see

me later. Tony asked for a drag and I foolishly gave him one, he pissed me off by smoking the thing hot, trying to finish half the smoke in one drag. When will I learn that some people are just not civilized? Today I am an electrician, we are to install new outside lights. I do not like messing about with electricity at the best of times now I am about to do so, in the rain with a bunch of alcohol induced brain damaged homeless guys. Talk about living on the edge. Mark's song has to be changed a bit. "We all gonna die, we all gonna die, most probably today!" Sounds good. We don't and the new lights actually work. Praise the Lord and all that. There is a small mouse in the dorm, he likes my boots and sits on them looking at me.

By now I am surviving on about 4 cigarettes a day, hell at this rate I may even break the habit. Karen called and said they may have the money to come and see me. I will not hold my breath. She tells me Ben has almost got the inverter thing sorted out and soon he will be able to do all the jobs I got him. Again I will not hold my breath. He seems to be able to do the small inverter jobs but the big ones, most orders and huge sums of money involved he just fucks up all the time. I did ask before they even got the new "partner" why does he not get a qualified electrical guy in on the deal? He was highly offended and that is one of the reasons I am sitting in The Ark right now!

I was sitting and having a smoke and a quiet cup of coffee, minding my own business, when an inmate came and told me I had a visitor. Shit! It is my old man. He is sitting in the little waiting room come visitors lounge in the Bible Counselling section of the office side of the quad. I do not need this. He is his normal mucho/loud mouthed self. He is here because of what Karen had told what he calls his "colleagues", she had called people in his congregation as well, I find out. He then starts telling me he did not rip my mother off in the divorce, he always did the best for "us kids" etc. etc. He is seeking absolution! Did it when I was living in Kempton Park and I told him the past was the past. This time I will not. I tell him you will have to live with it. He says "But what Karen is saying is not true!" I tell him that unfortunately most of it is, look where his only begotten son is sitting. He has nothing to say to that and reverts into talking about guns. I swear, strange but true. He then puts in that okay he did punch me out, but only once. I say nothing. I ask him has he any money, I need smokes. Just to piss him off so he will go away. Surprise he gives me R50 – for smokes. I have to smile. Just then Theo, whom I have told him ALL about, walks in. The very first thing after the introduction my father says to Theo is, "If this guy misbehaves you have my permission to hit him, I am his father." I get up and walk out. That is the last time I have seen or spoken to the man, and I hope never to see or hear from him again. He has pushed my limits of forgiveness many times but giving a convicted murderer his blessing on beating me. No fuck it man! I leave him with Theo, they have a lot in common actually. He leaves when he sees I will not be back. I go to the shop and get smokes and supplies for Theo and I. I gave some stuff to the guys that had helped me out when I had nothing, sweets, a cigarette or a bit of sugar and coffee. This is how it worked here, if you did not play by the rules you were soon ostracised and alone.

Next day Theo and I went to the Eesterivier shopping centre. We the only white guys in the whole place. On the way Karen called and asked what I needed as they would come visit later. This was good as the money expected had not been cleared in my account. The Jehovah's Witnesses were out and I chatted up one very pretty young woman. Believe me

I know that these girls are just dying to run with the wolves. We strolled back to The Ark and dodged the dogs along the way, dogs are terribly racist! I saw that in the black villages in Namibia years back, so these dogs don't like Theo and I. Karen arrived with Rachel at about 1pm, she had very little money but bought me some stuff, including some chilli sauce and a whole slab of chocolate. Ben would never come to a place like this, even to visit. After they left I went to do the boiler thing, I love fire. I then added chilli to the food we got, as I say everything is tossed in a huge pot and cooked for hours, so taste is, I don't know how to describe the taste. Hell, it filled you up, and that was good enough. Later sitting in the dorm and Vincent called me. My immediate thought was, "What shit am I in now?" Turns out he had a packet of sugar, a box of Romany Creams and a bottle of lime cordial for me. This was for my volunteer work in the boiler room. There are stores full of goodies like this, for the privileged only. I put this on my bed, I still have no locker, in this den of thieves that are not even Mexican! I chatted to one of the guys at the top of the dorm. I am a bit deaf, as I have mentioned, but have quick eyes, I see Tony steal my box of Romany Creams! I walk towards him, he has no time to put it in his locker so he quickly pushes it under his bed. I say to Theo, "Hey, you got our biscuits?" I have his attention. Then push Tony out of the way and retrieve the box from under his bed. He tries to make out that he was making a joke. I then tell him exactly, but exactly what I then of him. He does the darker shaded South Africans favourite ploy. He calls me a racist. I give him my standard reply to this crap. "I do not give a fuck what colour you are, black, white, pink or green, you are a thieving piece of shit." I then make it clear, one more incident and he will leave The Ark in one of the hearses that periodically arrive at the old age part of the camp. He is a fool and does not believe me. Theo just watches with those bright blue eyes of his. Theo and I go for a smoke. We always say, "Lets go left." That was newbies don't know we are going for a smoke. If they do it is inevitable that they follow you out and try cage one off you.

I was sitting minding my own business when the main man of the whole shebang, Pastor Greg came up to me. You can see his past in his walk, his talk and in his eyes. A hard man. He wanted to know about my computer. I told him about that and the data, and I know that The Ark pays people as well, so I would market his Church if he wanted. He said he would get back to me. The other pass time for bored homeless guys was to accuse each other of taking drugs and report this to the Pastors. Today it was Tony's turn to be accused. I hoped it was true because things were not getting better between us and soon I would have to put my money where my mouth is so to speak. This could get me kicked out, and I had no where to go. That night it was one of the younger guys birthday and Vincent organized a shit load of apple tarts for our dorm, from the special storeroom no doubt. Life went on, I stood guard sometimes but mainly chopped wood, all day. Pastor Ralph came and kakked on me saying that I could not get any work in the computer room until I had finished my 50 Days Bible Study. Mainly he is just pissed off that I actually had spoken to Greg. Petty, petty people.

Someone had told Pastor Dino, short tough little ex-gangster that I do not pull my weight on the morning clean up detail, so he gave me what for. This was un true and I was surprised how many guys jumped in to defend me. He no the less said he would be keeping an eye on me. Huh. I had by now organized a locker and had my "valuables", extra Wheatbix, sugar, coffee and tobacco, safely locked up. This stash was for the days when the camp was told that there was no food. I say told because by now I have done a

recon and sneaked into the special storeroom. No I did not steal the Christian's food. It had enough food in it to feed a small army, and very well. There was a huge freezer full of meat, thousands of boxes of biscuits, eggs, hell like a small super market. This was all donated to the shelter, but only the Pastors partake. After the 50 Days Bible Study one can take a further course and become a Pastor as well, most do not want to, either are actually Muslim or agnostic. These perks serve as a bribe to increase the congregation. I need to get my stash increased and I join up for guard duty permanently. I will be able to put my plan into action better this way. I already know which gangster is which, some are wannabes and one has to be careful with whom one plans to do business with. No, I am not going to deal in drugs. I will let guys that have not got permission to leave the premises a gap and let them out the gate. What they do for a couple of hours is their business. They must give me something in return, money, tobacco, coffee, whatever I can trade with. The gangsters will also give me a kick back, that will be just money. It is not quite that simple, there are three guards on duty at a time, two always at the gate. I need to organise a manageable guard to do duty with, either scared of me, or better my best mate Theo. The only guy that would be a problem here is Tony, everyone else is shit scared of Theo. I just have to sweetening the deal for the other guard a bit, get him involved, that way if he pimps me he pimps himself. I start putting this plan on the ground, hell some of us homeless, jobless people are very busy people. That special woman Charmaine called, she would come and see me or put some money in my account. I had no smokes or tobacco so it was a long day. I had guard duty next day from 5.30am until 9.30pm. Long shifts here in The Ark, but, this meant no cleaning and better yet, no Devotion services! I had a short meeting with the local gang leader, Samuel Teras. Bad assed mother. We made our deal. Some old inmates were with him and they stand outside the gate and smoke pot.

I get to guard duty early next evening, I must start at 9.30pm, this gets me the privilege of signing in a hearse at 9.10pm. It is written in red ink and reads, 'SAPD reg BPYB enters The Ark to confirm death at B1 of Melakuda Diwatana.' Go well mate, you are better out of it than living here. I will catch him on the other side. I liked most of the old guys. The stories they had! The hearse left at 10.40am.

I have a council session at 4pm. These are nothing but another Bible pounding. For once I just leave the debate, agree with everything but do stand my ground that I feel no Jesus, or anyone else for that matter entering my heart. As I walk out Pastor Arthur, the one that Tony had a set to with, kaks on me about being by the boiler room after 5pm. I tell him to piss off, part of the guard duty is to "rove." I was roving. He out right accuses me of smoking dope. I am seriously peeved at this. I have smelt both meat and the sweet smell of marijuana coming from his room, so he must be worried that I have seen the Pastors smoking behind the boiler. This adds more proof to my theory, no fact, that the modern Christian and hypocrisy fit very well in the same sentence. Meanwhile Theo gets into a deal with Tony. Theo has some transformers that he broke up and got the copper wire out. Tony said he would sell it for the best price, he ended up giving Theo R10. Had to calm Theo down and convince him that Tony was not worth going back to jail for.

Back to night shift guard duty. I find a guy with his kit sleeping on the floor. Ask the guard coming off duty what the fuck is this? Other than guards no one is suppose to be in the guard house, not even off duty guards. He tell me that the guy's name is Victor, he

arrived too late to get the paper work done for admittance. The reason he is not sleeping outside the gate, like some guys have, is that he is in BIG shit with one of the gangs and they want to shoot him. Great, we are not armed, on knobkerrie is all we have. No one came for him that night.

Karen calls and says that she will stop by on her way to their new partner, Manfred, who lives in Somerset West. I don't want to think about that and just say, ok. When she arrived she had some stuff for me. 1 packet of cigarettes, 10 Grandpa's, a chocolate slab, a 2lt Coke and a packet of tobacco. The Coke and chocolate were great! Theo and I get busy. We divide the tobacco into little piles, enough to roll two smokes. I have procured sheets of Telephone Directory paper a while back. Karen forgot to bring my whole book as I had requested. Never mind. Then we get some bank baggies, in these we put the tobacco, two pieces of paper and two matches. We sell that off for R2 each. We keep a little tobacco for ourselves. Why the matches? The guys use it to tamp down the tobacco in the rolled cigarettes. We do some very good business and buy proper cigarettes for ourselves, and some coffee. 5.30am I have a huge fight with Tony. He must go on duty, turns the main lights on and make enough noise to wake every one up. I seriously dislike this man. Theo and I make coffee and go smoke, we get back and Tony is still messing around, he is 30 minutes late for duty already, kak sleg. He decides to continue the argument and starts pushing me around. I keep my cool, just tell him it is not a good idea to push on me, quietly, no foul language or anything. Charmaine would know that this is a bad sign. Vincent comes out of his little cubicle. He takes Tony to task. Tony tells him I was preventing him from leaving, blocking the doorway, that is why he pushed me. We are at the fucking far end of the dorm. The door is right by Vincent's cubicle! The day did not get better. I was now in a bad mood and had an argument with Shawn. I quoted some scriptures at him about his decidedly un-Christian like behaviour a few nights ago in the coffee shop. He cannot give a reply and storms off. Rest of the day I tried to just stay away from everyone. Theo was upset too. He was out with the tree felling truck and it arrived back after supper, he is pissed off I did not keep him supper. He does not wait to find out that they had been keep supper, it was in the kitchen. I was glad when the lights went out. Shit day.

5am. Guard duty. Get some coffee and as I still cannot roll a decent cigarette a young guy, Jerome, rolls us a couple. Later a chap by the name of Keith, tells me that the other Wayne will be taking over from me I am no longer to be a gate guard. I ask on who's instructions? Shawn. Of course. Wayne has only one eye and is cripple. The new chap, Vincent and I get on well and him and I discuss a few things. Like why the other gang wants to shoot him. He sold them guns, but thing is took the money but did not deliver. Well, then they can't shoot you I tell him. Nope, they have other guns. OK. He also tells me he found a Pastor wanking in the shower. Just another day in The Ark man. I give a gangster some water at the gate, there is no clean water available for a distance outside and people walk far, then stop and I always give them water, no matter who they are. Time goes on, Greg comes screaming up the short road to the gate in the tree truck, as is his habit. If you do not open it fast enough I think he will just drive through it. I get it open in ample time. Some one on the back dressed in overalls, is screaming at me to close the gate, close the gate. Is he fucking stupid? I ignore him and Greg charges through and on to the dumping place. The guy in the overalls walks back to the entrance gate. He then tells me I am a stupid White man and how all Whites have no brains etc. I

just looked at him. He is a coloured, he storms off out the gate. I find out he is the second in command of the whole of The Ark, Pastor Lazarus. These Christians are really making me think about Islam, or something, anything would be better than what they are. I am thinking that if this Lazarus fucks with me too much I wonder if he too will be able to raise from the dead? Nah, Jesus does not seem to be any where near this place. If he is looking, he would do what is the shortest verse in the Bible again. "Jesus wept." My second bad day is far from done. I have been reported to the Management. For what? I was giving a known gangster food through the gate. This is prohibited in the guard house rules, stuck up on the wall. I get called into the office. I tell the powers that be that I did not give any food to the guy, I gave him water, he was thirsty from walking far. They say that I should not have done that either. I question this and their Christian attitude, the Samaritans were basically enemies of the Jews, yes? Again they have no real answer. I tell them the day that I have free water and refuse to give some to any creature will never come. I walk out, never heard about that shit again. Or the cripple Wayne taking over guard duty. Then Theo comes up with a feasible way of making some money, but he needs my Section Eight bank account to do it. It never has any money in it so I am not worried about anyone stealing from it, but his idea is very illegal. So far no matter how much shit I am in, I have managed not to become a thief. I tell him I will not use my "clean" bank account for this idea. He is seriously pissed off, tries to convince me, telling me we can be out of this shit hole within two weeks, have our own place and a lot of money. I desperately want to get out of here but just can't make that jump. Become a wanton criminal, steal from good people, I would not enjoy the luxury it would bring. Call me strange but that is just the way I am.

Theo does not talk to me for days, just stares at me with those fucking scary blue eyes. Victor and I get on well, as I have said, I have some money in my account from Charmaine and must walk to the Eersteriver shops to draw money. There are few secrets in this place and a few guys are keen to walk with, a whitey is not that safe in this area. They will walk with me and the unspoken agreement with us white boys is we give them something in return for the escort. I have two guys keen to go with, but the Victor says he will come too. I had to laugh. No volunteers, all of sudden everyone had some urgent business that they had forgotten about. You remember? Victor is on a hit list, if the gang does see him on the street they will not politely shoot just Victor. Anyone with him will be fair game and even if that were not true, I watched footage on the news with the Cape gangsters shooting it out. They shoot very badly, so shoot a lot to get the intended target. Child in time sort of thing, "If you have not been hit by flying lead, you had better close your eyes.... And wait for the ricochet." Bang, bang. Victor and I walk the few km to the shop. I put my cut off cammo jacket on that has an Angolan flash on the lapel. We make it to the shops and get money and supplies fine. On the way back we pick up shit. Nope, not gangsters, cops. A white guy and a coloured, conclusion: up to no good, most likely drugs! Victor and myself are no strangers to "position." And we did not learn it from watching TV. The cops find nothing and the fact that we are from The Ark counts in our favour, we are free to go. We get back and I am slightly disappointed nothing happened.

The next day I am at the gate and am surprised to see Victor walking up with his kit bag. He just says he is leaving, nothing else. I open the small gate and he walks out. I do not write anything in the incident book, he may come back and won't need the hassle. A few minutes latter the phone rings in the guard house. It is Johanna, Pastor Arthur's wife. She

asks me if Victor has AWOLed. No point in lying, she knows already, someone has pimped him. I fill in the book. Greg came and asked my for my surname, his wife, Hailey, was in charge of the admin of The Ark. Her mom was the founder, I believe. That night the school kids have a fight in the coffee shop. Yes, we have homeless school children in this God forsaken place. That is more sad than I can say.

Pastor Arthur and his wife Johanna, in case I forgot to mention this, she is the House Mother, came to sit in the guard room. Technically this is a breach of the rules. As I have nothing to say to either of them it is bloody awkward. I wonder what they want here. I do not have to wonder very long. They are waiting for one of the Old Age guys to come in from an excursion to the shop. Since I am a dumb homeless person, they are not shy to conduct their conversation with the old guy in front of me. They to were homeless once. Anyway, the whole problem is that this old guy had set up a little business of selling cigarettes in the Old Age section of the camp. I know that Arthur and Johanna sell cigarettes as well, I have bought from them. As well as "luxury" food. I don't have to tell you where that comes from. I hear them telling him that this is "illegal" and he has to stop, immediately! He whines about the stock he has just bought. Tough shit. OK, heard about Jewish mafia, think the Catholics are tied up with the original Mafia, but, holy cow, the Born Again Mafia? They eventually take pity on him and buy his stock. Once that is done I have the guard house to myself, smoke and watch some yellow billed ducks on the pond. I file this new information. Meanwhile Theo has enrolled in the Read and Write program for illiterate adults, he is on his own pluck, I know he can read and write. I just don't bother to ask, he drives me nuts sometimes. I start moving Tony's shit out of my way, he has now encroached into my space so badly that I cannot even get to my bed. He gets all excited. Theo interrupts to complain Tony ripped him off on the price of two cigarettes, by 20c. That gets nowhere and he is back on my case for touching his stuff. I mention that he is really encroaching on my space here, politely. He calls me a cunt and then that old Cape coloured favourite, "Jou ma's se poes." He carried on for a while. I just told him that he really does not know what he is fucking with. Vincent heard this and came out of his little cubicle. He and Tony have a go at each other. More Pastors arrive and the upshot is Tony will be transferred to the main Ark. It is about 5 km along the road and huge. Men, women, families, a Theological school the works. About 1000 people in that place, but I had heard the food is worse than what we get here. I have to now stand guard duty in Tony's place. Double shift. This guy never seems to come off second best, pisses me off no end.

I am still doing the 50 Days, get off guard duty for a couple of house for that, you had better believe it. My "counselling" with Shawn is on my, what? favourite is not the word, topic THE TRINITY. Nothing else is discussed here. I do not argue with these people any more, there is no point. I am standing having a smoke and Greg is there, he stares at me for a long time. He is a very mean looking mother. He then just says, "I have not forgotten." I reply, "From what I have heard about you, I am sure you haven't." End of conversation. He is taking about the IT thing, I hope. This was my day off and I went that afternoon and did the boiler, chopped and carried wood, stoked the fire, for a couple of hours. Peaceful. Later Vincent gave me a packet of donuts for my trouble. He is a fair man, one of the few in a management position here that is. That night there was a non Christian video on in the Coffee Shop, lots of coffee and cake. I had smokes so was content with the moment. The results from the 50 Days test were out, I got 98%, Theo,

who claims he cannot read and write, gets 100%. He is bragging about that and I say to him that if I could organize like he could in this place so would I get 100%. He is very pissed off. Our partnership is getting very strained. I won't do stuff that is criminal on the outside but don't care to break any of the rules in The Ark. He calls me a hypocrite. Also I am getting about as much goods and money as him, with my gate deal. Plus Charmaine had a parcel couriered in with some of the items I asked for, and I made little tobacco baggies and had cash from that. He then got "sick" and spent a few days in bed. Whatever.

There is another guy in The Ark, Christo, one of those people that the moment I met him, I got that spitty taste in my mouth. Just like Charmaine's guru, so long ago. He proves he is a bit off when he is constantly wanking in the shower, while the other guys are there! I later learn he has a court case coming up, he is accused of raping a 90 something year old woman. Eish, the company I am with. He too is a very religious person, always going on about how much Jesus loves us and can quote the Bible chapter and verse. If this Christian god is around, I ponder on why the hell he would put me in this place?

The other thing that is a bit worrying is about a third of the guys in here have TB. I wonder if sharing a smoke with them, which I often do, is infectious. Problem with guard duty, one has way too much time to think. Karen calls, she has been on the Bisset's case again, on my behalf. I get told that Vincent says that I am fine and uses Niel as an example, after all he says Niel has been in The Ark for years and he is fine. Again, I am the only one to know Niel has been missing again for at least 4 years. I tell Karen this. Eddie and Pam tell her the Ark is way too far from them to come and visit. This is not true, I used to give Vincent a lift from the AA meeting and it took a few minutes, 15 or 20, to get here. She has also contacted people from my mother's side of the family. My cousin, Vaughn, has a construction company in Mozambique and perhaps I could go and work for him. He has to speak to his dad about it. He is the same age as Karen but does nothing without consulting his dad first. In the meantime I must just do what I can to survive this lovely place.

Standing guard I share one of my precious smokes with a young guy, Jerome. Tony arrives and takes my cigarette from him, I tell Tony to give it to me. He ignores me and smokes it hot. I cannot just fuck this guy up, as you see he always comes out on top, I will be kicked out for the small pleasure of beating the shit out of him. I tell him to get out of the guard house, he refuses and starts making some tea, we have a kettle in the room. Jerome calls Shawn on the phone. Shawn arrives, I tell him that I have had enough of Tony, and sooner or later I will kill him, if that what it takes to get him out of my face. I am not joking, during all the time I have to think, one of the things I think about is that. Lot of very poisonous plants growing around here, I am on good terms with Samuel Teras, the main gang leader of this part of Easter Rivier, could ask him to cull Tony when Tony goes to the shop. I could also do it, I know of a secret gate at the very back of The Ark, could use that, cut through the Port Jackson unseen and slit his throat on the path that we use to take a short cut to the shops, I have my Puma Bowie knife hidden in my kit bag. The Management has a meeting on the matter. Shane comes into our dorm that evening and tells Tony he is to move to the main Ark. Tony says he will not. He gets told that if he does not agree to this he must pack his stuff and be off The Ark's premises

within 24 hours. He leaves and comes back later with a typed document to this effect. I am happy about this.

With Tony gone I have no enemies in this camp, get along with most of the guys and avoid the Born Again tribe. My ideas about a Higher Power have changed much since those early days in the AA. I have come to dislike this Christian God, more than when I was a kid. I also see that the people that shout the most about following this religion are very, very dangerous. If you do not agree with them they turn on you like a pack of rabid dogs. They also are dangerous by the fact that they seem always be in positions of secular power, controlling and forcing their philosophy on the less fortunate. 90% of the men's camp's inmates do not give a fuck about Jesus, but pretend so they can get food or shelter, but this fits in well with the whole Christian thing. Are we not taught Jesus tell us if we do not follow Him and accept him, we will be condemned to everlasting Hell and damnation? Some fear and need are taught by the master himself, the Pastors here have learned this lesson well.

Life in The Ark goes on, Theo has his wobbly ever now and then, Bible school is done and we sometime get good food and sometimes get none. I have made friends with a young guy that has arrived recently, he has the same attitude as me, everyday spent here is one too many. I hear his story. Jaco is only 26 years old but has some hard jail time behind him already. He tells me he was drunk, going home after a jol in Kempton Park. As he crossed the railway bridge on the way to catch a late train some guys tried to mug him. I know this area, bad place. One of the would be muggers ends up dead. He gets jail time. In there he learned carpentry and now does that here, and very well. Jaco and Theo have a serious set to a little while later. This is what happened.

One guy left The Ark without the paper work and as the rules demand he was not welcome back. One of the things I did as a guard was to monitor the packing AWOL inmates stuff. He happened to be in my dorm, so it was Vincent that packed up his stuff. I used the old army trick of a knife and fork to break his rather large lock on his locker. Impressed the criminal element in the place no end. I then took all the kit to the guard house, if and when he showed up I would hand it to him, he was not to even enter the premises. If he did not show up the kit was put in another storeroom, which is another story, that storeroom is. He did arrive and I gave him his kit, he opened it and took out what he needed and said the rest we can share with the other inmates. He asked if I wanted a wallet that was in his kit, I had logged it when it was taken from the locker. I said I don't need it and Jerome took it. That night after Devotions the shit hit the fan. Theo wanted to kill Jac with a carpet knife for calling me a thief. He had seen Jerome nice new wallet and it just happened to be his stolen one! He asked Jerome where he had got it and Jerome replied, "Wayne gave it to me." So now Jaco wanted to have a serious discussion with me, and was telling people that I had stolen his wallet, chaos. Jerome was trying to explain and no-one was listening, Theo heard and was going ballistic, looking for Jaco with the carpet knife. Lucky the old reformatory is large and a maze so they had not met up yet. I was called from the guard house to come and control Theo. I found Jaco first and heard the story. I explained and asked him to come to the guard house to read the report on what I found in that AWOL guy's locker. Fortunately, I write, so the wallet did not just say, "One wallet." I put in a description of said wallet. Jaco was okay with that, we sort of knew who the thief was and he was not around anymore. We both set off

to find Theo. Calmed him down. Jaco found his sim card in the wallets little pocket, he proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that it was his, all the people, his mom's and all. He had mentioned these people to me before.

Now, one of those things I expect no one to believe. Over the past few weeks the old guy that chops wood and works in the back everyday. He says little but one day he just brought me a lot of cigarettes. He did this a few times, and he did not smoke himself? Then when his family, lots of them and regularly, come to visit in posh cars, he gives me some of the food they bring him. He still says very little. The Ark is like what I see prison is in the movies, you don't ask too many personal questions, guy wants you to know his history, he will tell you. One day when some of his family are there he calls me over and introduces me to them. They are very friendly and give me smokes and food. When they left I asked him why he does not live with his family. He tells me he gets lonely and he likes The Ark. I think that perhaps the truth is he is like me and unwanted, but then why do they visit so often? A week or so later his son comes but forgets to bring some things that had been asked for. He gives his son a cash card to go to the shop. Later that day he comes to me and asks me to check the bank slip for him, he is short sighted and his glasses were broken, he was waiting for The Ark to take him to get a replacement. I check out his slip. I do a double take, the man has more than R 600 000.00 in his account! This is impossible! I check again to see if I am mis-reading this, I was wrong. The fucking slip is R6 million and something, I check this a few times. I am right, the old guy is rich. It is not logical but does answer why he gets so many visits from his family.

I heard many tales from the people living in The Ark, but those are their stories and I won't tell them here, it would be great to go back and compile a whole book of those peoples stories. Maybe one day I will.

Then things changed, again. Johanna walked into the dorm and told me to pack my stuff, I was going to the main Ark. Just that and walked out. Now I was not keen to go, I had been here a month or so and was just getting myself organized. What with my little deal at the gate with Samuel, and a couple of other things that got me smokes I was not keen to leave, unless it was out of the place completely. I found Shawn and asked what was the deal. Apparently they had a lot of trouble with gangs at the main Ark, one of the gate guards had been shot and another stabbed, I was to go and replace one of them Lovely. Never mine that, Tony was also a guard there, now that was a problem. I had no say in the matter, read the terms of entry. I packed my kit and got my computer from the storeroom. I asked Theo what the place looked like and he gave me some basic information, the worst news was he repeated often how bad the food was. Late afternoon Pastor Arthur took me through in his bakkie. We turned right at the main road and drove a few km, then on the opposite side of the road to the Men's Camp we turned in. On my right I saw a sports field behind a very high wire fence, on the left were some shacks and then a concrete pre-cast wall. Behind that was The Ark. A private 4 way stop, to the left a gate and a large guard house, the field was also part of The Ark and that was the entrance for inmates. On the left a locked gate and buildings behind that. Straight on another gate and one guard, the an office block. A huge sign told me the Kentucky Fried Chicken was a proud sponsor of The Ark. We stopped at the office and I was told to take my kit in. Women man the desk. While Pastor Arthur is fucking around outside a chap brings a trolley, loads my kit on it and disappears down a corridor. The ladies are busy and I just

watch this whole scene quietly. They then ask what I want, very politely. I tell them I have been transferred here, whole manner changes immediately. So does mine. Quid quo pro, sort of. I ask where the hell did that oke go with my stuff? I cannot look like a homeless bum, he is the store man and thought that it was donations for The Ark, so carted it off. I quickly follow the corridor he went down, ignoring the woman that is shouting that that area is out of bounds. I find the storeman. By now you know what I think of storemen, this one is no different. He is already going through my kit, and his greedy little eyes are bright with anticipation. He is working how much he will get for some of the stuff he plans to take for himself before he logs what came in. When I tell him it is my kit, he actually starts to argue about it! I tell him in no uncertain terms what will happen to him if he does not get his grubby little paws off my stuff. He scuttles away, to the far end of the storeroom. I retrieve my kit and check that nothing is missing. Fucking jam-stealer.

I get escorted to the security guys quarters. It is on the far left of the premises, away from the main buildings, I think this place was a High school long ago. A large piece of open ground the what looks like a barn, the barn is my new home. It is in a dilapidated state, jerry rigged with corrugated iron for walls where the huge doors use to be. There is no one about. I walk in the normal size door. On my right. A table, a stove, a washing machine and a sink. The rest of the room is jamb packed with mainly wire lockers, all filled with clothes and food, biscuits, and stuff. 12 beds. One has a guitar on it. My escort shows me my bed, I am glad we have beds and not double bunks here. He leaves, I throw my kit on the bed and go look around outside. I find a chemical toilet, and it is relatively clean! That is a bonus. There are some neat washing lines and a small dividing wall, I see a very neat garden and some chairs and a table. There is a building attached to the rear of the barn, wondering past that I find a lot of rabbit cages under large eucalyptus trees. I file that for future reference and am glad I did. Moving past that I find a bunch of shipping containers. I see one is open and check it out. It is a shoe repair shop! I speak to the guy inside, one of the permanent Ark inmates. He is happy to live here and repair shoes. The other occupied container is a craft shop run by a lady equivalent of the guy I just met. She has all sorts of home crafted stuff the inmates make. Who these people sell to is beyond me. I wonder on.

The rear fence is not far from the containers, but to the left is something interesting. A very, very clean townhouse looking complex, with a large hall, all surrounded by a well kept garden. There are a lot of young people here. I speak to one and find out this is a Ministry School. The difference between this area and any of what I see is glaring. Painted all white and, clean. The students are all well dressed and clean too! No White or Black people, only Cape Coloured. Some fine looking young women amongst them too. I move on going right. Another dormitory, what is strange id the huge barred gate across the entrance, locked. Behind that I see a quad and dorms. There are only young women visible. I have to laugh, the are the Biblical students, I see by the way they are dressed. One is a very pretty blonde. Rodriguez comes to mind. "Madness passed me by, she smiled, "Hi." I nodded....." Some of the young women are curious and come to the gate, we are talking when a mean looking old lady comes out and shouts at them, then tells me I have no business here. I wonder off, walking towards the main entrance now I pass the little neat garden and have made a full circle. I go on to the main buildings, this was a

huge school. I find another hall and a laundry room, but not the showers I was looking for. Enough recon for today, time to meet my new colleagues.

Two people take attract my attention, one is a dark man, he looks like a character, not a overdone Rastafarian, a posh one, he is the guitar player. I met him at the other camp, Dirk, he is from Mauritius. He left that camp only days after I arrived and was Theo's mate. The other is an older White guy, skinner than me. I see Tony is not here. One guy I know from the Men's Camp is there so he fills me in a bit. I will get a locker tomorrow. I find an electrical socket at the back of the room. Get a table and set up my computer. This gets a lot of unwanted attention. One guy in particular, obese Afrikaner, and... used to be a policeman. Great. My old enemy Tony comes in the room, beady little eyes everywhere. He has come to see Dirk. When he leaves I ask Dirk, loudly, why he is friends with a thief. He just shrugs it off. The rest of the guys all look at me, I say nothing. There is also a new guy, Gavin, he arrived yesterday.

The main Pastor here is Errol, he is a dead ringer for that guy in the Windhoek ads. Gavin and I are summoned to his office. He is obviously a former inmate as well. These Born Again's are not the typical one you find in the outside world, swear like troopers. He welcomes us and then tells us he will personally fuck us up if we make trouble. OK. Gavin is put in Maintenance and sent on his way. I get informed of the gang situation here. I ask if we get a gun. Negative, baseball bats. Not happy about that, the gangsters can just shoot from the other side of the gate and we are helpless. I ask about this. Pastor Errol gives me that, "Jesus will look after us", shit. I try be polite and do not ask where Jesus was when the other guard got shot, dead. Then I get a breakdown of internal problems; drugs sold and used on the premises, booze coming in and even been made here. Biggest worry is the amount of sex going on. Ah, the big gate at the woman's Ministry's quarters. 99.9% of the women here are bloody ugly, so he won't have problems with me fornicating around! Maybe that blonde? There is no mention of counselling or even that all important 50 Bible Study. I am here because of my background, to sort out the gang problem. How I am to do that with a few baseball bats, a Rastafarian that has a gamey leg, a fat ex-policemen and a couple of other washed out broken men is a mystery to me. I do not ask, I know the answer I will get, "God will show me the way", or some such bullshit. I am dismissed and Pastor Errol seems pleased that the situation is now in control. Oh, Lord. High on drugs or high on Jesus, no different, creates delusional whatyoumacallits. If any shooting starts and I am in the open I must just make sure the fat cop is with me. Two of me could hide behind him!

Having no connections here and having run out of cigarettes and tobacco, I suffer a bit. Back in the barn I open the kitchen cupboard and find a shit load of filter coffee! Packets and packets of the stuff. Never saw this much coffee outside of a shop. Apparently we get 4 packets a week, the guards that is. I must get some of this to Theo. I get my first meal in the main camp, eish! I have eaten some bad food in various armies but this stuff? I do not know what it is, stewed what? With rice. I am hungry and just shovel it in, after that drink strong black coffee to get the taste out of my mouth. One of the guys give me a cigarette, for which I am extremely grateful. I spend the rest of the evening writing more for Chronicles II. I also get my duty roster, I will stand guard with Martin, the fat ex-policeman, good and bad, and Dirk. We start at 3.30am both have gypos from that horrible supper so I stand guard alone while they are in the toilets. This Mexican Horse

Thief is tougher than that, stomach is fine. The guard house is made of three shipping containers and all joined together with corrugated iron and wood. Windows have been build in. One container is at right a right angle to the others, it serves as the office, so has a desk, telephone and three chairs in it. I am wondering if the steel in a container will stop a 9mm bullet, the preferred calibre of Cape gangsters, hope I don't have to find out the hard way. I am almost sure it will. The other two containers are joined to this with a shack like structure. One is a little kitchen and the other a holding cell with 3 beds and bars on the windows.

The skinner than me guy is in charge of the guards here, Louis. He has been in The Ark for more than 15 years, and every day he says, "I will be getting out of here soon." Wonder how many years he has said that for. He comes and hangs around the guard room most days and is a bit of a legend here. The one story he tells me is when he caught and then got bitten by a large Cape Cobra. After being bitten he took the snake, in his hands, back to the barn and lay on his bed. Obviously no one would go near him. Then he says when he was getting drowsy, the neurotoxic venom does that, he wobbled to the fence and threw it over. He knew as well as I that when he fell asleep there was a very good chance that he would not awake, ever. This snake is responsible for about 80% of the deaths from snake bite in South Africa. He says he was tired of his life and did not care. Someone had called Pastor Errol and he got an ambulance to come get Louis.

Jaco comes on the one weekend to visit me, he has some smokes for me, and as I helped him out at the Men's Camp he now gives me a packet. I have not had smokes for a while, and I am happy about that. Most nights I just write, the Chronicles and some other shit, keeps me busy and I don't think about smoking. We walk up to the Eeste Rivier shopping centre, this is about halfway between the two camps and a km or two up. There is no money from ECE in my account, I have not heard from Karen in some time, neither Charmaine. Jaco goes on his way and me on mine. It was nice to see a mate.

At this stage I have done a full recce of the place. There are a series of quads and corridors leading to other quads, a warren, I find the moonshiner's, but do not drink with them, nor do I smoke dope with Dirk. Do that and one will become numb to the ugliness of this place and be like the guys I see shuffling around, dead, but walking, no hope in their eyes. I have no plan yet but staying here is not an option, I have no airtime on my phone and no one calls me. Bit alone in the world. Never mind, something will come up, or I will think of something. They are divided up into groups, single men, women, young unmarried mothers and family units. Part of the guard duty is to roam, so I roam. All the Pastors scams that are in the Men's Camp are here as well, just on a larger scale. I help one of the Pastors carry a piece of furniture into his living quarters, he and his family live as well as any couple in Sandton, best of the best. Preach poverty and ... well lets leave it. I get into the unmarried quarters one night. A young drug addict has climbed the fence to see one of the women. He is seen or the woman herself calls for help, he has done this before. Pastor Errol instructs me to catch him and immediately handcuff him to myself, he is a slippery bugger. I get hold of him and he tries to get away, I kick his feet from under him and jump on him, he is only a little taller than me but very skinny, a Tik addict. Once he is up again, he bites me some gangster shit, with the normal, for Cape Coloured that is, "Jou ma's se poes!" I give a solid slap to the side of the head. He falls down again and I handcuff his hands behind his back. I am not chaining myself to this

prick. I frisk him and find a folding knife and a “bubble”. This is the name I believe of the small glass pipe they smoke the Tik in. I march him back to the guard house and handcuff his right hand to a hook welded on the side of the office container. Martin wants to beat him, typical South African police mentality. I tell this will not happen. Martin calls me a “kaffir boetie”. This is an Afrikaans insult meaning I am a lover of Black people. Shit, this okes a coloured. Martin is all mouth, he is afraid of me and just blusters a bit and then makes coffee. The “prisoner” then asks Martin if the coffee is for him. I tell him I will not protect him from the Boer if he makes shit like that, he swears at me again, all this is in Afrikaans. I slap his head sideways. Martin laughs and makes more comments about me loving black people, but what now. I am starting to get blood in my eye with both of them, Dirk comes in from somewhere and gives me a smoke, I go outside to smoke. A while later the police come pick the guy up. This is a change indeed, normally I get the handcuffs and the slaps.

By now I am getting to know Pastor Errol better, I actually like a Pastor in The Ark! He is a straight forward guy and apart from that initial speech he never rams the Bible down my throat, we actually have *conversations* about religion. This is the very first time I have experienced this. Normally I find Christians talk at or down to you or just outright argue. He listens as well, and I tell him why I refuse to follow his way of life, I mention the things that I have experienced and seen people in this faith do and how they act. Again he does not give the standard answers and excuses I have heard so often. He just says that it is very sad that I have seen only this side of his faith. I ask him is there any other. He just smiled.

When not on guard duty I was compelled to attend church, this was held in a huge hall. The most interesting part was that the Ministry women were allowed to attend this general service. They were dressed to the nines for this occasion, but escorted in and first to be allowed to go out. No one was to leave until they were safely escorted back behind the gate. I am told that the main Ark has about a thousand people, these services had a few hundred in attendance. The services were mainly, same old, same old. Often people would start shouting out and shaking, I believe many others think that they are special because the Holy Spirit has entered them. The most amusing thing I saw, because I watch people very carefully, was one of the Pastors, he started shouting, “I love you Jesus, Thank you Jesus” etc. When he saw, fuck I watched him checking through narrow but not closed eyes. I was watching this guy for a reason, he is one of those people that make me itch. He now got zapped by the Holy Spirit and was shaking and carrying on. People around were praising him and the Lord at the same time. A bit later another chap followed the process and the attention of the hysterical mass was diverted. My guy continues for a bit, peeps to see what’s up and then looks at his fucking watch. Gotcha, fucking phoney piece of shit. He must have felt my stare and looked directly at me, I winked. Got laugh at these people or I will cry.

I manage to gypo most of the compulsory Bible studies and church, then one day get cornered by Pastor Errol. He has received my 50 Days papers from the Men’s Camp. I have many days to go, shit. He says I can do it at the Ministry School and I presume it will be at that clean little place I saw on my first day here. No. He takes me to the big iron bar gate where the “decent” ladies are locked up, and old bag lets us in. Cool, if you have to study the Bible why not with a bunch of young women? I get a lot of attention, these

women do not even go to the kitchen to get food, their food is brought in, this is like a Nunnery, or what ever they call it. For the next few weeks, much to the old bags disgust, I come here for an hour or two a day. We have to study, as the old bag is watching and there are tests at the end of each week. I have no problem with that but some of the girls are not that well acquainted with the Good Book as I. The old bag softens a bit when she sees I am knowledgeable about it, she starts to leave us to study by ourselves. I get spoiled by the girls, they bring me all sorts of stuff to eat, women always want to feed me. The Mexican's luck is changing.

I have noticed two beehives under the Eucalyptus trees between the barn and the fence. I am craving sweet stuff and go have a closer look. The tops are sealed shut with beeswax, these hives have not been looked at for years. I try make a smoke machine, bees get drowsy from smoke. As a kid a friend of mine had an apery and we use to go and collect wild beehives for his boxes. Pretty simple, smoke them, find the queen, grab her, not grab is wrong. If you hurt her you will most likely die, all the bees will sting you. So gentle take her and put her in a bee box, the holes are too small for her to get out but the bees can get in. When you have her sometimes your whole body is covered 20cm thick with bees. We did this in overall with elastic on the cuffs, no masks. See I was always a bit crazy. The most stings I ever got at once was 5. Seems I mostly get along with all sorts of animals.

Anyway, I could not find anything to make a smoke machine with and decided to just get on with it, I could taste that damn honey already. The other guards and some homeless people were watching this lot, no volunteers to help though. I had to break the wax sealing the lid, this took too long and I was stung a couple of times, I got the lid off only to find the removable trays were also waxed in. By this stage the bees were really pissed off and after a few more stings I decided to pull out and come back much later when they had calmed down. No brain, no pain. That's me, the stings burned for a few minutes and the nothing, just small red dots. I went back later and hacked through the wax, receiving a few more stings and had to pull back again, till the bees settled. I had cut through one side of the wax holding the tray. Man, this honey was going to be good. I did two more missions and finally had the tray out and free of bees. I took it into our little kitchen and cut some honey comb out. Fuck it! It had watery stuff and not a drop of honey, all my efforts were wasted.

Guard duty had its interesting moments. Samuel's turf was not extended to here, this gang leader was very hostile towards The Ark and the inmates. From what I could gather he was an inmate once. I have done my recce around the area when I go to the shops I watch everything. I think this guys gang is not much better than the gangs we had at school, they are all very poor, that shows he is not as in control as the Pastors believe. He has a boss, somewhere and all his profit is most probably shared, rather unfairly, with this other unseen guy. The business with The Ark and the dead guard is personal. I have chased him from the gate a few times. He makes a lot of racist remarks about White people, but he leaves every time. One problem, he has a gun, I don't. One day he just walks in through the gate as a car comes in. Dirk and I are there. The rest of his ragtag gang stayed back. I was hoping being a poor gang he was the only one with a gun, I had seen it once under his shirt, the rest nothing. Dirk is a bit cripple and a musician and the ex-cop is with his wife and kids, no choice, I have to deal with this. The other Christians

and homeless people are scared of him, not Pastor Errol, but he too is not here. The little shit tells me he is coming in to see his girlfriend and I cannot stop him. I ask him politely to wait outside, just tell me the girls name and I will fetch her. My mothers private parts get discussed, this is a Cape thing. I get close as possible to him and tell him to get the fuck off of the property. He moves his hands, I head butt his nose as hard as I can. He goes down, blood spurting from his nose. I kick him with my army boot for good measure, then quickly try find a gun. Shit he has not even got a knife. What fucking kind of gangster is this!? I kick his retreating butt right out the gate and lock it. His gang is long gone. Dirk is laughing, so am I. Nerves. I was worried about repercussions, I needn't have. Never saw the guy again. Guardian Angel, still with me.

In this camp I still have no real friends, because Dirk, Martin and I are together on shift, they are my only constant company. Martin is a racist and accuses Dirk of stealing the sugar in the guard house, this is not true. I have observed Martin stealing it himself! I stay out of it. I prefer it when Martin is away from the guard house and Dirk and I can talk. Dirk is a jazz musician and a poet. Martin has a wife and two kids living in the family section of The Ark. They are all as fat as he is. I watch over the next few days, Martin's wife works in the kitchen, she is as big a thief as he is. I grow to dislike Martin intensely, he is very easy to dislike. Here is one reason why I say this. Karen phoned and told me, Manfred the new partner had taken over the financial part of her company, so now I would not get even 1/10 of the agreed on commission for the work my emailing brought in. Ben has finally sort of got the inverters working. There goes my ONLY plan to get my arse out of The Ark. Shit. Manfred has paid some of this greatly reduced money into my account. A few hundred Rand, instead of a few thousand. There is little I can do about this, I have to just accept it. Getting pissed off will accomplish nothing. It will at least buy me some food and smokes. The food here is horrendous, and for a guy like me to say that, you must know. Normally it is chicken based, the Kentucky connection, and any vegetables donated, well the shitty stuff anyway, is put in the same type of pot as the Men's Camp. Here it cooks from 6am until 5pm. Mush. Served with rice, every single day. No herbs or spices at all. The very worst was when they cooked fish and chicken all together! Aaarr. Don't want to think about it, even now. The little bit of money that I now have I plan to buy chilli, hot chilli, dump that on everything should be ok. The day I went to the shop I decided to buy stuff for an English breakfast, I could not afford to feed all the guards so would make Louis, Dirk and Martin a good chow at the guard house. I did this, but Martin said he would eat later, he was off to the shop, as I had gone shopping while suppose to be on duty, what can I say. The rest of us each had a meal, bacon an egg and toast. Louis said he had not had an English breakfast since he arrived in The Ark. That is 16 bloody years. I still had bread and after Martin was done would have a couple of eggs as well, this would be my breakfast for the next two days. This was not to be, while I was roving, near the big iron gate, no doubt, Martin came back and ate the lot. I was pissed off about that.

The other way we made life a bit better is we got some speakers and made a plug that would work with my computers, now us homeless guys could watch DVD's, plenty pirate copies in the camp as it was a thriving business of one of the Pastors. He would buy a DVD, cut copies and his homeless connection would sell them in the township. No comment. This messed up my writing though, as the guys wanted to watch DVD all the time, so late night writing became my habit. We had coffee and managed to get some

snacks now and then. One night Martin brought meat, don't ask, no not the rabbits, but I did steal the rabbits food and made a nice green salad. Sure Louis had not seen salad for years either. A while later I get a call from Karen, another big job has gone through, even with the reduced commission I get over R2000.00 I try not think about what could have been and say thanks. I then went to the shop and all the guards had a good chow for a change, still stole the rabbits food and made a huge green salad. Rabbits and Pastors get very got very good chow. Life was a bit better but I wanted out of here, I called Karen and asked about the Mozambique thing with my cousin. She called a few days later and said she would pick me up on the weekend. I told Errol about this and he said he thinks I should stay in The Ark a bit longer. I disagree this gypsy doesn't like it here.

Karen picks me up, we go back to the house that Manfred is paying for. Ben is drunk and he is not a nice drunk. Why is he drinking so much, the inverters have all popped again, the money is paid and now he cannot refund or find the problem to fix it. Manfred is also paying them a salary, the house is full of food and drink. It is hired out as a fully furnished place so nice furniture and huge TV. Karen insists on having a TV in her bedroom and they have that too. I am less pissed off about the fact that they got this due to my marketing and databases. I am best out of it. I believe that when Manfred finally realizes what he has bought into the whole thing will crash. I will be in Mozambique. I find out Vaughn has a construction company, I know jack shit about construction. I will deal with whatever, when I get there. I will have to catch a plane to Johannesburg, Vaughn's mother-in-law is dropping her other daughter off at the airport, we can time it right and she will give me a lift to Malalane. Vaughn has a house there, the mom-in-law and his step kid live here. Vaughn will then pick me up and I will go to Maputo, capital of Mozambique with him. Well that is the plan. I go with Karen to the shops in my car, it will stay here for now. I get a Steers Burger and 2lt of ice cream. I have to hang around until Wednesday, I have my ticket and have sorted out what I will take with. My computer must come, but I leave the screen, my books and photo albums are too heavy for air travel. Karen and I speak about Jaco and she decides that she will hire him. Just like that. She calls The Ark, gets hold of him and arranges that he starts work on Wednesday. Don't ask me! Jaco arrives just as I am about to leave.

We get to the airport and I have to pay extra for my luggage, which is still too heavy. This uses up most of my cash. I sneak my Swiss Army knife on board the plane. Why. Because I can and I am the Mexican Horse Thief, just a little bit naughty, and no, I am not going to tell you how to do it! I have no idea what the lady looks like, Karen did not get her name or cell number, the airport in Johannesburg is huge so I don't know how I will find her either. Never mind. Will make a plan when I get there. I am happy, as I always am when going somewhere. Bloody gypsy.

