

A FRIENDLY WARNING:

This book contains fictional stories of faith gone astray. These stories may be extremely offensive to people of strong belief. These are tales of faith being misused to control and destroy. It also features a number of sad souls driven crazy by it. This book is in no way an attack on sane religions or the people who follow them. It is an attack on the many abuses of religion, and the dangers of blind faith.

If you are strongly religious, the stories in this book may be too extreme for you. It would be best to stop right here.

If you are afraid of separation of church and state ending, the religious right, America becoming a theocracy, or crazy fanatics, then you may safely proceed.

YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED

© 2016 BY JAYMES SHORE ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

INTRODUCTION

A little faith may help some people through the long dark night, and into the light. Sometimes, faith leads people into the darkest places imaginable (depending on how dark your imagination is). Any sinister action can be justified in the name of God. It doesn't matter if your God is real, imaginary, or something in-between.

You are about to read (or about to delete) samples from my short story collections: "The All You Can Eat Apocalypse", and "God's Not Coming, So Save yourself". Both anthologies warn of the dangers of an American theocracy, and the terrors of corrupted faith. I have also included a new story, which will be featured in the upcoming third book from the series. In these stories, religious conviction only leads to madness and death. This book is in no way an attack on people of good faith, or the God or God's they worship (despite all the nasty deeds they did). These are cautionary tales of dangers of blind faith, and the people who misuse it for their own ends.

If you are entertained or horrified sufficiently by these stories, then

please check out my other books. If you find these tales overly disturbing, then pray a bit, because that always works.

THE ALL YOU CAN DRINK APOCALYPSE #2

"Can I have a Bloody Kara?" asked Zachary Mangano, an average middle age man with a buzz cut.

It was a rather simple request, but not one that would be fulfilled in this lifetime, or any other.

"What the hell is that?" screamed bartender Bruno Jones.

"Vodka, beet juice, pineapple juice, Tabasco, and some other stuff," replied Zachary.

Bruno was twelve hours into a sixteen-hour shift, and not in a prime mood, or prime shape. He exceeded four hundred pounds. His long gray beard and hair had not been groomed this decade (and possibly not the previous one either). Bruno said, "That is the worst idea I have ever heard of a drink, and I've heard plenty. I don't even have any beet juice. Why the hell would someone put that in a drink?"

Zachary sighed, then said, "Ok, then make it a beer. Do you have any Juno Vesta?"

"Never heard of it," replied the increasingly unpleasant bartender.

Zachary sighed, "I'll take whichever one is your best." Zachary downed his first beer, then stared blankly ahead.

Bruno serviced his clientele, as he gradually transitioned from unpleasant, to downright rude.

"Can I have a frozen strawberry margarita?" asked an overly thin and effeminate man.

"I'm not using the God damn blender. I don't feel like cleaning that God damn thing

out. How about a whiskey sour? It's almost the same thing?"

The man sighed, then said, "OK, never argue with the man making your drinks."

Jim Jones entered the establishment midway through Bruno's performance. He said with a laugh, "You are one lazy bastard, Bruno." Jim resembled a thinner and slightly better-groomed version of Bruno.

Bruno screamed, "Try doing my job. You only sell coffee and pastries, and get to sit on your ass the entire day."

Jim replied, "Yeah, and I freeze in the winter, and burn all summer." Jim sat down on his personal stool.

Bruno asked, "The usual?"

Jim replied, "The usual."

"Did you work that thing out with the wife?"

"Yeah, but not completely. She's gonna let me go bowling on Saturday, but I still have to go to church Sunday morning."

"Ouch, that's gonna hurt."

"I'll be completely sedated since I'm drinking till three. Won't feel a thing."

"I won't be home till after three myself, but I'll be sober. I have to work Saturday night."

"You chose this career field, so don't complain."

Bruno plopped Jim's drink on the counter with a grunt, then moved on to his next victim.

The sports broadcast on the TV was interrupted by a news alert. This resulted in screams and boos from the bar crowd intent on watching "the game."

The rather anorexic blonde newswoman reported, "We interrupt this broadcast for an important news alert. The terrorist group Amud has attacked the Syrian capital. It has only been three months since Amud bombed Penn station. They only inflicted minor damage to the railroad, but the bomb severely damaged some surrounding buildings, killing several dozen people. America is once again at a high state of alert. US troops are on their way overseas, and the president will be issuing a statement momentarily."

Bruno screamed, "Damn Arabs. If they were all Christians, this would never happen."

"If they were all Jewish, this would never happen," said a man near the rear of the bar.

"The problem is you guys, and all the banks you own," screamed a bald Aryan man.

"If I owned a bank, would I be drinking here?" asked the man in the rear of the bar.

"It's those damn foreigners. They keep coming in illegally. They all hate America, and they are all terrorists. We should put them all in camps, just like Senator McDonald suggested," screamed a hairy man. He drank from a beer mug the size of a suitcase.

Bruno called out, "All of those Muslims are terrorists, everyone. I wish I could go back in time, and kill their so-called prophet. That would fix the problem for good."

Zachary broke into hysterics. It was his first actual human reaction, since arriving at the bar.

"What's so funny? A friend of mine died in the last attack. He died because of those monsters!" screamed Bruno.

Zachary took another sip of his drink, then replied, "It's what you said about going back in time, and killing their prophet."

Bruno raised a fist, and shouted, "What's so funny about that? Their beliefs led to this coming war. Don't forget New York, France, Germany, Florida, and that petting zoo in Idaho."

Zachary laughed again, "No, it's not the horror, though I remember different horrors and different victims. I'm with you on all of that hating the enemy stuff. It's that bit about going back and killing their prophet."

"What's so bad about that?" shouted Bruno.

Zachary replied, "It's because I already did so, and more." Zachary rubbed the silver sword neckless hanging around his neck. He kissed it, then broke into tears.

"What the hell are you talking about," asked Bruno, as he refilled several beers.

"I did it, I really did. I went back in time, and took out their prophet, and ours."

Bruno dropped his scowl, and broke into a laugh, "That's a good one."

Jim called out, "Bruno, you really know how to attract the crazy ones."

Zachary said, "I'm not crazy. I was a soldier in a very special branch of the army. At least I once was. Fill me up, and I'll give you my story. I can't tell it sober. Have one on me yourself, because you won't believe it sober."

On the TV, the anchorwoman added, "We go to a breaking alert. We now have reliable evidence that a terror attack is imminent in New York City. Officials deny the

reports, but still warn people to be diligent." The broadcast continued, as a number of patrons exited the bar in haste. Some of them failed to settle their checks. Bruno attempted to chase the freeloaders but was a bit too slow. He put up his hands and returned to work.

"I don't own the place, and the owner is a dick. Who cares?" said Bruno. He refilled Zachary's drink, and mumbled, "What's this nonsense about time travel?"

Before Zachary had a chance to continue, two men entered the bar. To Bruno's horror, they appeared somewhat Middle Eastern.

"Get out you damn sand rats," screamed Bruno, as he pointed a fat finger.

The men glanced at each other. One of the them asked, "Are you talking to us?"

Bruno replied, "No, the other two Arabs. I mean you two. We are at a state of war with your kind. You are not welcome here."

One of the "Arabic" men replied, "Really? When did America declare war on India?"

"You're all the same. Get out," screamed Bruno.

The first man said, "Come on, let's go. The other place is cheaper anyway." The two walked out. Bruno kept them in his gaze. One of the men raised a hand, preparing to give the finger. He decided against it.

Zachary sipped a little of his new drink. He reached into his wallet and plopped a wad of worn cash on the bar. Zachary screamed, "Free drinks for everyone. It's to me, all you can drink."

There was a muffled cheer from the eight remaining patrons. Bruno brought out several large pitchers of beer, then returned his attention to Zachary.

"Thanks, that will make up for the lost revenue, and keep the boss off my back. You have now earned my undivided attention," said Bruno.

Zachary sighed, then continued, "As I said, I work for the military. Four months ago, we got our time travel device working. Took some doing, and cost a few dozen lives. It wasn't easy getting the kinks out. We did not achieve the results we hoped for. We could only go back around one to three thousand years, no sooner. We were looking for a way to tweak the past, so evils could be prevented from ever occurring."

A very small man attempted to sneak out of the bar.

"Alex, where do you think you're going," screamed Bruno.

"Home," replied Alex.

Bruno leaned forward, which was easier than getting off the stool. He screamed, "What about your tab?"

Alex shrugged, and said, "You said the drinks were on the new guy."

Bruno spat, "That's for all the drinks after the announcement. You still have to pay for the four beers you had before that."

Alex threw a wad of cash on the counter, "Damn thief."

Bruno turned back to Zachary, and said, "Sorry about that. Please, go on."

Zachary continued, "We hoped to go back in time, and wipe out all of the terrorist leaders before they formed their groups. That was not possible since the earliest we could go back was around a thousand years. Our leaders debated for months. We came up with three hundred things we could try. People talked and talked about what to change. As usual, indecision won the day." Zachary took a good gulp of beer, then

signaled for a refill. Bruno complied.

Outside, a man was running around with a placard indicating, "The end is now. Repent to the Lord." The man screamed some incoherent nonsense.

After that distraction had concluded, Zachary continued, "Then came the end of the world. The big bad finally hit New York City, bam, done. I was actually on Long Island at the time, Brookhaven to be precise. That's where the lab is. I was safely underground, as the bombs went off. Some religious nuts in the middle east thought their God was right. Our crazy religious leaders thought our God was right. The president, who is also a religious nut, attacked back. He claimed 'God is on our side, and will help us defeat the terrorists.' He launched a nuke counter attack, and off we went." Zachary banged his beer on the counter, to emphasize his point. A glob of beer poured over the sides of the cracked beer mug. It resembled a mushroom cloud. Zachary finished his beer, then continued, "Everyone was waiting for their particular savior to show, but none of them made an appearance. Maybe they had something better to do." Zachary pointed to his once again empty glass, and Bruno promptly refilled it. Zachary downed half the drink, then said, "We did the only thing we could. We sent someone back to kill the ancestors of the leaders. It accomplished nothing, except preventing chylos from being invented. Shame, I really liked that dish. Nice and spicy. The leaders were simply replaced by other people. Only the names changed. The time travel process is not perfect. Every poor soul came back a bit older. We couldn't aim precisely, so we delivered the volunteers prior to each event. The return visit always brought people back a little early, so everyone had to wait for their other selves to leave."

The entire bar tuned into Zachary's story. Every mouth was either wide open or taking in some alcoholic beverage.

Bruno laughed, "Hell of a story. Do you have any proof?"

"How about some more beer for us in the cheap seats?" asked the spokesman for the remaining customers.

Bruno glanced at Zachary, who shrugged and said, "I did promise free drinks for everyone."

The beer flowed.

Jim asked, "What about me?"

Bruno replied, "You said you were going on a diet."

"Not when there's free beer," said Jim.

The news report continued, with more unpleasantness. Bruno grabbed the remote and shut the thing off.

"Want to hear the rest?" asked Zachary.

"Sure, I love funny tall tales. Being a bartender, I've heard many a yarn. You are in the top ten, so far. The grand prize winner is still the guy who became a woman, then switched back again, along with his wife," said Bruno, as he returned to his stool.

Zachary said, "I knew there was only one way to end this. I had to stop both religions. I was completely insane at the time. Otherwise, I would have never even considered doing this. My wife and children were dead, my country was destroyed, and the world was ending. I did not care. I blamed both my God and their's for this mess. The Messiah promised to save us at the end, and bring the righteous up into heaven. It

never happened. The end came, and nobody was saved." Zachary kissed his sword neckless and cried like a woman. After a moment, he regained some composure, drank some more, then continued, "While our leaders tried to find a way to survive, I took matters into my hands. I went through the time device myself and without permission. After arriving, I took some time to learn the local language and attempted to blend in. I waited six years, then finally found the Messiah from Nazareth. He was very young, and just beginning to preach. I killed him. I used a sword so that it would be consistent. I waited three days, but there was no resurrection, which I thought was a bit odd at the time. At the prearranged time, the device sent me directly to the Arab prophet. I had to wait nine years, during which time I learned the language, and blended in the best I could. I finally found and killed him as well."

Bruno laughed, "So that's it? You spent years of your life in the past, and accomplished nothing?"

Zachary laughed, "Yes, that's true, I wiped out both religious icons, but it changed nothing, well at least nothing that matters to the world."

Bruno asked, "So, what has changed, other than some food?"

Zachary downed his beer, and said, "Most of the changes were small. Some different movies, TV shows, and music. A few countries in the middle east have different territory or names, that sort of thing. There was a great TV show called 'Universe and Time Chronicles.' I really loved that show, but it never got made in this timeline. If we survive this, I'm getting into the entertainment business, and making it myself."

Bruno asked, "Not that I believe any of this, but what about Jesus? You said you

killed him, but he is still our savior." He pulled out his own cross and displayed it to Zachary.

Zachary cried a bit. He overcame the outburst, looked Bruno in the eye, and said, "I killed our savior Otho, and the Arab prophet Amna."

"Who the hell are they?" asked Bruno.

Zachary removed his silver sword chain and placed it on the bar top for Bruno to study. He said, "Otho was a man of peace and decency. He claimed to be the son of God. He preached that all men are brothers. He was killed by the Romans with a sword, after protesting Roman aggression and intolerance. He arose three days later, and became our Savior."

The patrons of the bar began to mumble and grumble. A couple studied their own crosses. One guy went through his Bible, looking the information up. An odd bald man gave Zachary the finger, then left the establishment. Bruno developed a slight jitter.

Zachary continued, "Like all of Otho's followers, I wear a sword around my neck, in the same way, you wear a cross. This reminds us of his sacrifice. This never occurred, because I killed him before he had a chance to do any of those great things. Amna was the middle eastern prophet, and very similar to the replacement that you know of. I killed them both. I murdered two beloved religious icons, hoping it would bring peace to the world."

"You're talking nonsense," screamed Bruno. Zachary pointed to his empty beer glass. Bruno ignored the request.

"Believe what you want to believe," said Zachary. He pointed to the sword neckless

laying on the bar top. He took out a book from his pocket and placed it next to the neckless.

Bruno looked the book over, and laughed, "This is all made up. You're a nut job. This is kinda like the New Testament, but it's not."

Zachary said, "You won't think I'm crazy in a few minutes. I came back to my time around a year before I left. Unfortunately, it was after the latest New York City incident. I didn't even land in the lab. Instead, I arrived naked in a woman's restroom during a break at a religious revival. Now, that is a very funny and long story, which will have to wait for another time, if there is one. For an entire year, I had to stay out of my own way and kept a low profile. I go back for the first time in a few days. At least the version of me still here will. I would go and stop me if it wouldn't rupture all of the space-time. At least that's what they said during my training." Zachary pointed at his empty glass. Bruno acquiesced and refilled it.

The Jewish guy in the rear said, "I could have told you that Jesus wasn't the messiah."

A bearded man stood up and screamed, "How dare you spew such blasphemies. Jesus is our savior. Always was, always will be." The man walked over to Zachary, as his friend attempted to stop him. The man continued, "I'm gonna belt you for what you said about Jesus, in his name."

The man grabbed at Zachary but regretted it instantly. Zachary took hold of the man's arm and performed a minor combat move. Zachary never got out of his chair or broke a sweat. He simply bent the man's arm till it snapped. The man screamed, then

fled the bar. He looked back at Zachary, and said, "You're one screwed up bastard, and you'll end up in hell for what you said." The man exited the establishment. He moaned in pain, despite having six beers in his system.

Bruno said, "Total crap, but it's a good tale. If the world doesn't blow up, you should write a book about it."

Zachary took a gulp, then said, "You want proof? You'll have it in a few minutes. The terrorists are about to launch a massive EMP device. It will knock out the power grid and all communications across the East coast. Both the President and the terrorist leaders will take this as a holy sign. Everything falls apart minutes later."

"When exactly is this event going to occur?" asked Bruno.

Zachary looked up at the beer promotion clock, and said, "Two minutes. You see, killing both saviors accomplished nothing. My old world had its redeemers. This world has different ones. Maybe they are both false, or maybe some higher power just sent replacements? Hell if I know. The end is near, so pray to whatever or whoever you want to pray to. Not that they'll listen. They didn't last time."

"Nonsense," said Bruno.

Jim said, "Hey Bruno, give me another beer before the power goes out."

The entire bar glanced between Zachary and the beer promo bar clock.

The moment came.

Bruno said, "Nothing happened, I told you..."

The lights went out, and so did the smartphones. Outside, the city went dark. Every eye fixed on Zachary.

Zachary asked, "Last round?"

A bit more drinking followed as Zachary cried like a baby or at least a very small child.

Bruno took out his cross and stared at it for a while.

Jim called out, "Have faith, Bruno. We don't know if any of this is true."

"I've given you the evidence. I know the future because I was already there."

"I refuse to believe any of this," screamed Jim.

"Refuse all you want. That won't change the facts. I told you precisely when the power and communications were going out. I have shown you my alternate Bible and my sword chain. If you want further proof, you'll have it in ten minutes, when the first bombs fall," replied Zachary, as he finished his beer. After a pause, Zachary got up, and said, "I'm going down to the subway. It's the safest place to be, but not by much." Zachary turned to Bruno, and said, "Thanks for the beers, and good luck." He plopped another two hundred on the bar.

Bruno got up with some difficulty and politely grabbed Zachary on the arm. He asked, "You're not pulling something on us; right? This is all real?"

Zachary looked Bruno in the eye, as tears formed in his. He said, "It is very real. I wish I could say that I'm joking. I wish this was all a bar room stunt. It's not. How could I have predicted the power and communications failure? I know what's coming next, and it's not pretty."

Several women on the street ran past the bar screaming, as the sounds of car accidents and glass shattering could be heard in the background.

Zachary continued, "You hear it. It's the end of civilization. The bombs will fall in a few minutes, and that will be that." He politely disengaged Bruno's hand, and said, "I'm truly sorry to have burdened you with all of this. I just needed to get it off my chest, before I met my fate." He put a hand on Bruno's shoulder, and said, "Like I said, the subway tunnels are your best bet. Good luck." Zachary nodded, then left the bar.

"How bout another round?" asked a guy in the back.

"That's it, we're closed," replied Bruno.

Some moans followed as the customers departed for their fate.

Jim remained seated on his stool. He began to cry. Bruno poured a drink for Jim and himself (from the top shelf), and sat down. The two glanced at each other, then downed their drinks. Bruno refilled both glasses with more of the expensive stuff.

Jim cried, "So this is real? It's all real?"

Bruno took off his cross, then threw it somewhere behind the bar. It managed to find one of the spaces between the wooden floor and fell into to the basement below.

Bruno cried, "Lies, all lies. How could I have been such a fool? A lifetime of faith for nothing. Countless Sunday mornings wasted. For what? We are lost. We are so damn lost. Jesus was a fraud, and were all doomed."

Jim said, "I hate to agree with you, but it sure looks that way. I guess I've to spend a lifetime praying to the wrong damn God. I missed all those fishing trips for nothing."

Bruno got up and walked behind the bar. He pulled out a small revolver.

"What's that for?" asked Jim.

Bruno cried a moment, then said, "It's for me. The damn world is about to end, and there is no savior coming. I'm checking out now before those damn bombs go off."

Bruno put the gun into his mouth.

"I'll go after you," said Jim, as he observed more panic and mayhem outside.

Bruno put his finger on the trigger. Jim looked away, then down to the bar top. He noticed that Zachary left his holy necklace behind. Jim studied it, as Bruno prepared to meet his fate.

Jim held up the sword necklace, and said, "Bruno, you might want to look at this before you pull the trigger."

Bruno reluctantly put the gun down, then took the neckless from Jim. He said, "Damn thing is made out of plastic."

Jim said, "I know where it's from. Odeon's bar uses them in all their drinks. These are manufactured exclusively for them. I should have recognized this earlier, but I guess I was too distracted."

"Since when do you go to other bars?" asked Bruno.

Jim ignored the question, and said, "Give it a smell."

Bruno took a sniff, and said, "It has a bit of an olive odor about it."

Jim said, "Take a closer look."

Bruno looked the object over. On the rear of the plastic sword was a small indented print indicating, "Made exclusively for Odeon's bar and grill by King's stone plastics." There was also a smaller one with "made in China" on it.

Bruno said, "What the hell?" Bruno turned his attention to the pile of money Zachary left on the bar. He said, "God damn it. This is all counterfeit."

Jim looked it over, then said, "It's Hollywood money, the fake stuff they use in movies and TV. It's worthless unless you want to make a movie or TV show." Jim looked over Zachary's Bible, which was also left on the bar top. Jim studied it a moment later, then said, "This isn't a Bible. It's a book on the things that were allegedly left out of the real Bible. I saw a documentary on it."

Then, the power came back on.

The TV returned as well. A reporter was in the middle of a story, "...And it is confirmed that the East Coast power outage has nothing to do with today's events in the Middle East. A man identified as Zachary Mangano set off timed explosives on eight transformers and nine cell towers." A photo ID came up on the screen.

"Holy mother of crap! That's the time travel asshole," screamed Bruno.

Jim screamed even louder, "Then everything the bastard said was a lie!" Jim looked down at the bar floor, and said, "You better find that cross. Your ex-wife will kill you if she finds out you lost it."

The newscast continued, "Mr. Mangano had been employed as a repair technician for the Edsel Power company for twenty-eight years, till he was laid off last year as part of the companies profit increasing measures. We go now to Kelly Jackas, who is with Leo Pasqual, a longtime friend of Zachary Mangano."

The scene cut to a shot of a disheveled and unshaven man. The perfect reporter asked, "You told me that you're a friend of Zachary Mangano, and claimed he was

acting very odd recently. Can you describe this to our viewers?"

The man said, "Zachary's been acting very odd for a couple of years. He was depressed after he lost his job. He told me that he got a new one in a government lab. He was not bad for a while, then he started talking about the end of the world, and how he was going to stop it. Haven't seen him in a while." After a brief pause, he said, "Hi mom."

The scene cut back to the newsroom. The anchor said, "Power has been restored to most of the affected area, and crews expect everyone back up within the hour. Mr. Mangano is still at large, and authorities fear he will hit again. In other news, the situation in the Middle East is easing, and the President is due to speak any minute. Now we go to sports. Today the..."

Bruno screamed, "We had the terrorist right here all the time, and he wasn't even an Arab."

Jim screamed, "I'm a Goddamn idiot loser. It didn't take much for me to lose my faith and believe that lying idiot. Why did he do it?"

Bruno shrugged, "He wanted to screw with someone, or maybe his mind snapped, and he believed all that crap himself."

Bruno and Jim held the bar for support, as they broke into tears.

"I'm gonna have one hell of a confession this week," said Bruno.

"Dear Jesus, please forgive me for this sin," prayed Jim.

"My boss is going to fire me. I gave away two hundred dollars worth of beer, and four shots of his \$900 a bottle liquor," cried Bruno.

A new customer entered the bar, stared at the two crying men, and asked, "Are you open?"

TERRENCE'S ARK

"The Earth is only 6000 years old. It's a fact, and you can take it to the bank," said Pastor Kent Fredrick, as he pointed to the exhibit's Earth model. The planet mock-up was fully formed by God, and ready to go. All of the continents were in their current location, though they were difficult to detect in the darkness. The Pastor continued, as the model began to change. "As you can see in this representation, the Earth was formed by God, and it was in darkness. God created the light and moved his spirit over it. Then, he created the sun and the moon. He made man and woman, then the heavens. It all here to see, right out of the Bible."

The globe became brighter, and the green Earth could be seen in all of its glory.

"I thought the Earth was flat?" said a man in the rear. He was ignored, for the most part.

"You can see it right here son. The Sun revolves around the Earth," came a voice from the side.

The Pastor said, "I don't understand why some people question any of this, or believe in any of that evolution nonsense. Creation by God is a fact, and all the evidence is right before us."

The Pastor led his congregation along to the next exhibit. Several other intrigued museum visitors followed the great man. The Pastor was rather frail and walked with a bit of shuffle. He nearly fell several times. His entourage politely followed along.

The next magnificent exhibit in this museum featured a happy cave couple petting a

dinosaur. The couple wore perfect designer fur, which discreetly covered up every offensive area. This included the belly button. The cave couple was clean, and relatively well groomed, though the man's beard was slightly long. They were white; naturally. So were Adam and Eve, featured in a display down the hall.

The Pastor said, "As you can clearly see, man and woman lived alongside the dinosaurs. It's as clear as the nose on my face."

The crowd was clearly awed by the exhibit.

"So, this is how things were in olden times," said a woman with an eye patch. She was momentarily startled by the giant flying dinosaur animatronic. The thing came down and landed next to the caveman. The cave man robot came to life, and gently pet the dinosaur. The dinosaur emitted a purring sound, then flew off again. The woman with the eye patch said, "I don't know why some people think dinosaurs were scary. You can see how well that got along with people."

The Pastor led his flock to the another exhibit. He said, "You can see the proof right here. Evolution is absolutely false."

The plaque on the display read, "Evolution is scientifically impossible." The giant sign proclaimed: "There is overwhelming evidence that evolution is false. There is a lack of transitional fossils. Lack of a missing link. Carbon dating is wrong and fails to show anything older than 6000 years. Nobody has ever observed macroevolution take place. If evolution were happening right now, there would be millions of creatures with partially developed organs. Evolutionists simply cannot explain why our planet can support life. If humans are millions of years old, then where are all the bodies? DNA is a code.

Therefore, it had to be designed by someone. God created animals, insects, and plants with the ability to adapt to different environments. Radioactive dating isn't reliable because it yields different results every time." The presentation also debunked the big bang theory, "You can't get something from nothing."

After taking in the enlightenment of the presentation, the Pastor led his flock into the exhibit which revealed the true origin of the species; Genesis.

The Smith family followed the Pastor's group for a few minutes, as they took in the man's comprehensive knowledge of history and science. John and Mary Smith were the personifications of the perfect Christian couple. They both possessed blonde hair, which was always perfect. Their ten-year-old son David shared their good looks. They ceased following the Preacher because their son found something even more interesting.

David Smith cried out, "Look, they have a dinosaur petting zoo."

That was it, David was off. A moment later, he went to pet a small animatronic dinosaur. The creature made purring sounds, just like a cat. A much larger dinosaur proceeded to lick him. The Raptors were David's favorite. One of them ran up to him, then rubbed against his side. Part of the Raptor's neck was damaged, and the wires underneath were exposed. David failed to notice or didn't care.

"Mom, dad, I love this place," screamed little David.

John and Mary smiled on, as their son had the time of his life. John pulled out the museum's guidebook. The cover featured the warm greeting, "Welcome to the Ark of Love and Hope Museum of Creation. The lies of evolution are revealed here, as well as the true story of God's creation."

John said, "I'd love to see the exhibit for Noah's ark."

"Sounds swell," said Mary.

The family made their way over to the ark exhibit. The attraction was mobbed, so they had to wait a few minutes. The exhibit covered every aspect of ark history. As with all the exhibits, the animatronics were first rate. Animals traveled on logs through the ocean, as they made their way over to the ark. The caption under it read, "Animals from all over the world traveled on logs so they could reach the ark, and safety. Two from each species were summoned for the mission."

The family studied the exhibit for over an hour. They were mesmerized by the animatronic animals journey to the ark. Two by two, the animals entered. After a while, the flood waters came and began to lift the ark up. Some stragglers arrived on log rafts. The two bear representatives were the final animals to enter the ark. They secured the hatch behind them. The rain intensified, and powerful waves struck the ark. The raft containing the two unicorns arrived. They banged furiously at the hatch, but it was too late. The water grew higher and capsized the unicorns. The water moved the ark along, as it sailed for about a minute. The water gradually dissipated, and the ark landed on dry ground. The hatch opened, and all the animals politely exited the vehicle. Noah stepped out, and said, "Now we begin again." A few seconds later, the exhibit reset and started from the beginning.

David said, "This is so amazing. I wish I could see the ark for real."

A voice came from behind the family, "Maybe you can son."

The family turned. A late middle-aged man stood before them. He was rather tall and

thin, with a full head of gray hair.

"I'm Terrence J. Laurence, the founder of this museum," said the man before them.

The Smith family stood spellbound, as they marveled at the great man.

David said, "Really, you made all of this all yourself?"

Terrence laughed, as he replied, "No, only God could accomplish anything that divine himself. I had the help of many volunteers, as well as God himself." Terrence bent down, and faced David. He looked the little boy in the eye, and said, "When I was your age, I faced a major dilemma. The government teachers taught me that evolution created us, and not God."

"That's silly, everyone knows God created us," said David.

Terrence rubbed David's hair, and said, "I see your parents taught you well. I wasn't that lucky. My parents wanted me to learn the government based nonsense so I could get ahead in life. I got ahead just fine without it. I am very wealthy, and I owe everything to God."

Mary finally emerged from her awe induced catatonia, and said, "David, Mr. Laurence is the man who designed all of those Bible toys you love. He's the one who wrote that best-selling book proving Darwin wrong, and he produced the movie version. He's the most amazing Christian on Earth."

Terrence put up a hand, and said, "You flatter me too much madam. God guided me the whole way. He took this pathetic sinner, and turned him into his holy messenger."

Mary cried out, "But you built all of this. This is the most amazing place I have ever seen. This illustrates everything in your book, and how God is the only creator."

Mary pointed to piece of radioactive dating equipment. The device was hooked up to a Bible. The display indicated, "The object is_ years old." The date kept changing. It showed the Bible as being Five thousand years old, then twenty years old, then two hundred thirty years old, then one million years old, then five years old. It continued to give a different age every time. The sign above the exhibit indicated, "All dating methods show a different age every time. Trust the Lord, and not science."

John said, "This place is so educational. I never knew that the dinosaurs were all vegetarians. I always wondered why they didn't eat people."

Mary said, "I never knew weeds started after the garden of Eden. I could spend a lifetime getting smarter in here."

Terrence waved his arms and pointed at his handiwork. He said, "These facts are all about us. The socialist Democrats, Liberals, and Atheists forced evolution and all of that false science on us all."

David asked Terrence, "Can I have your autograph?"

"Sure you can son," replied Terrence. He took out a picture of himself from his suit pocket and signed it.

David cried, "Wow. I can't believe this."

John said, "Well, I think we've taken up enough of Mr. Laurence's time, and we still have a lot to see."

Terrence erected an enormous smile, and said, "You know, I do have a new exhibit that only my inner circle have seen. It's a full-size replica of the original Noah's ark." He put a hand on David's shoulder, and said, "I can show you if your parents will permit

me." He gave the couple a voucher, and said, "Please have lunch in our Creation Restaurant on me. I'll look after David, and give you a chance to relax."

"Oh, that is just too much. You've already been so generous with your time," said Mary.

Terrence waved a hand, and said, "Please, you're helping me out. I want to get a child's perspective of this exhibit. Please, enjoy the free lunch. We have two-pound lobsters in the restaurant. Order anything you want, free of charge. It's just my way of thanking you for David's help."

John shook Terrence's hand, and said, "Thank you, sir. You're as generous as everyone says."

Terrence said, "Enjoy your lunch. David and I will meet you there in an hour, I'll have the chef whip up some special kids food for David." He put a firm hand on David's shoulder and smiled at the boy.

John and Mary enjoyed \$80 worth of free lobster while reading the Leviticus quotes on the tablecloth. All of the staff were dressed as angels, though some of the tattoos destroyed the illusion. Every table had a water pitcher with a miniature ark floating on the top. Animatronic dinosaurs walked in between the tables. The ceiling consisted of a series of monitors and featured moving heavenly clouds. From time to time, an angel could be seen flying.

"I wish we had a place like this around us," said David's mom.

Terrence led David through the secret behind the scenes tour of the inner workings of the museum. David was a bit dismayed when he saw the control set up for the dinosaurs. Terrence ushered David out the rear door, and into the backyard. The exterior was a bit unkept. Old discarded wood and other garbage littered the enormous space, which was at least twenty acres in size. One object lay in the middle of this mess: A giant ark. This was an exact duplicate of the Biblical ark that Noah piloted. There were some modern supports, keeping the boat up and in place. Two walkways led to the main deck, and several walkways ran into the side of the ship. These side walkways were considerably long and ran all the way over to a private area behind the museum.

"Is this the original ark?" asked David.

Terrence laughed, and replied, "No, don't be silly. The original Ark was buried in Turkey, but that Muslim government won't allow us access to it." Terrence brought David closer to the object. He said, "This is a brand new Ark. I had a vision last year. It showed me proof that another flood is coming this very month. That so-called global warming was just God setting everything up. " Terrence put his arms to the heavens and closed his eyes. He screamed, "God confirmed all of this to me, while I was semi-conscious during a dental procedure."

David said, "Wow. So, who is going to be saved this time?"

Terrence replied, "Like the original Ark, I can only bring my family. Since I'm a bachelor, I'll be bringing just my Sister's family and myself." He looked down at David, and said, "I could make an exception to that."

David smiled, and said, "God would save my family? That would be so awesome. The kids in school will be so jealous." David stared at the Ark for a bit, then asked, "What about the animals?"

Terrence replied, "They are all in my private zoo, a short distance from here. I have two of every major species. Obviously, I can't bring every variation. Just two of each type. God will sort it all out later."

Terrence led the boy up a long walkway, and onto the ark. David ran all over the top deck for several minutes, as he screamed with joy.

"Want to see the inside?" asked Terrence.

"Boy, would I ever," replied David.

Terrence walked David through the interior of the ark. There was a small residential area consisting of several rooms and a kitchen. Everything was constructed of wood, and very rustic. Even the beds were wooden. There were no decorations, or amenities, except for twelve crosses.

Terrence showed David numerous empty animal stalls.

"These larger rooms are for the cows, horses, and elephants. I'll be ready to go the moment God starts the flood up again," said Terrence. He rubbed the boy's hair, and said, "I think it's time we got you back to your parents."

David's parents were enjoying an expensive baked Alaska dessert when they noticed Terrence entering the restaurant alone.

Terrence was disheveled, and blood poured from his forehead. He screamed, "Help; somebody help me."

Several security guards came to Terrence's aid, as he collapsed onto the floor.

Terrence looked to David's parents, and said, "I'm sorry, I'm just so sorry."

David's mother screamed.

An hour later, a detective was questioning Terrence, "Ok, let me get this straight. You were returning to the museum, after showing the boy your boat. Then, two Mexicans struck you, and ran off with the kid."

Terrence cried, "Yes, dear Lord. One of them grabbed the boy. I tried to fight him off, but he struck me into unconscious with a wooden board. When I awoke, they were gone. They took the boy, and they robbed me. My wallet and gold cross are gone."

"How do you know they were Mexicans?" asked the detective.

"Because they were speaking Mexican," replied Terrence.

The detective asked, "Don't you have some kind of surveillance equipment here?"

Terrence cried, "This is a holy place. I saw no need." He looked up to the giant cross occupying the center of the restaurant, and said, "This is another sign that the end is near: The loss of an innocent child."

The entire room broke into tears, except the detective.

"Would you be able to describe your attackers to a police sketch artist?" asked the detective.

"I'll try, but honestly, they all look the same," said Terrence.

The boy's parents paused their grief and approached Terrence. "It wasn't your fault. I thank you for trying," said the boy's father.

Terrence attempted to smile, then went back into tears.

Two weeks later:

Terrence imparted his wisdom to the eager audience before him, "...And these photos are the proof that Noah's ark was real. As you can see, the rocks are clearly in the shape of the ark's front. Those rocks on the side are the support beams. These are clearly the fossil remains of the ark. If Atheists can claim their fossils show the truth, so can I. Now, if you look over here, you can see the sonar taken over the site. It clearly shows rows of metal, and the nails used to hold the ship together. This is undoubtedly the remains of the ark. Unfortunately, the Turkish government will not let us dig. The fact is: Scientists never want to uncover the truth."

A woman in the rear asked, "When is your real life size ark going to be open to the public?" Her face was red and cracked. She had obviously been in the sun a little too long.

Terrence smiled at the lady. It made her year. He said, "It's going to take a little time. We have to find a way to get all of the animals on the ark every day, so everything is authentic, and then get them off, so they can run free at night."

The woman in the rear said, "I can't wait. It sounds heavenly." She proceeded to itch

her peeling skin.

Among the gathered, were a group of Hasidic Jews. One of them said, "Your Ark presentation is amazing sir. It is accurate in every way. Thank you for acknowledging our mutual heritage."

"Thank you. I strive for accuracy in every detail. We all follow the same God in the end. I hope my work can bring people together again," said Terrence.

"You are a true messenger of God," said the Jewish man, as the group wandered into the Genesis section.

Terrence said, "I must go now. Jen will take you through the rest of the exhibits. Thank you for your time, and thank you for coming to my museum." He smiled and waved before retreating. The crowd provided a round of applause.

David's parents were standing by the door of Terrence's office.

David's dad said, "Sorry to trouble you Mr. Laurence, but it's the two week anniversary of David's disappearance."

Terrence said, "I'm so sorry. I haven't had a good night's sleep since it happened. Is there anything else I can do?" He rubbed the still healing wound to his head for dramatic effect.

David's father said, "We were hoping you could pray with us."

Terrence replied, "Yes, certainly."

The three prayed a while. It accomplished nothing.

After the praying concluded, David handed the couple a coupon, and said, "Why

don't you go to the cafeteria, and have a good meal. It's the least I can do,"

David's mother said, "Oh bless you. Thank you so much for all you have done already. We really appreciate you going on TV for us, and posting the reward money."

"I still feel like it was my fault. I'll continue to do whatever I can," said Terrence.

Outside, a storm began to rage.

Terrence said, "Better hurry with your lunch. It's going to be a nasty storm tonight."

David's father said, "They think it might turn into a hurricane."

Terrence owned both the museum and the two residential houses next to it. He lived in one house, and his sister's family in the other one. Both homes were considerably upscale.

That night, Terrence had some difficulty sleeping. The visits from the police didn't help.

"Officer, we are just fine here. God will protect us," said Terrence.

The rain-weary officer said, "What if he chooses not to help you? You're in a Low-lying area here. This whole complex can go under water in less than an hour. Once that main road floods, you'll have no way out of here."

Terrence displayed a blank expression. He said, "Officer, I have an ark in the backyard. I'm not worried about flooding."

"No way," said the officer.

"Go check for yourself, if you don't believe me," said Terrence.

The officer wandered into the backyard of the museum. Five minutes later, Terrence

returned.

"Jesus Christ, you weren't kidding. You do have an ark," said the officer.

The police finally left Terrence in peace.

An hour later, a giant bolt of lightning interrupted Terrence's sleep. He stirred, then sat up. A large older man with a beard stood at the end of his bed.

A voice called out in the dark, "Terrence, you are God's chosen, Just as I was."

"Noah, is that you?" asked Terrence.

"Yes, I have returned to give you a message from God. You have built the ark to God's exact specifications and gathered two of every animal group. You did mess up on the ferrets, but I think God will forgive that. Your decedents will just have to settle for house cats."

"Is this storm the second flood?" asked Terrence.

"It saddens me to tell you, but this is the second flood. Man's sins have angered God once again. It is now time to get your family onto the ark, along with those animals. God is only sparing your family because they and you are the only one's worthy."

Terrence awoke upon hearing the next round of thunder.

"How did I fall back asleep? Where is Noah?" asked Terrance, to the empty room. He reached for the bed light. It failed to operate, and the ten commandments clock by his bed was out. "When did the power go out?" he asked the darkness.

Terrence threw on some clothes, then bolted out of the house. The storm raged on, as it became a full-fledged hurricane. The main road was now completely flooded, and the water was rising to a dangerous level. Terrence ran to his sister's house and banged

furiously at the front door.

Terrence's son in law Mathew opened the door, and said, "Terrence, it's very late. What's wrong?"

Terrence said, as he caught his breath, "We have to go right now."

"Go where?" asked Mathew.

Terrence replied, "Noah came to me in a vision. He told me that this was no normal storm. This is it. This is a world-wide storm, and it will bring the second great flood. There is little time, so get the family moving."

Mathew looked to the sky, and said, "Thank you for choosing our family Lord."

Terrence's daughter Lynn came to the door, "What is it, dad?"

Terrence repeated the tale, and added, "We must get the animals onto the ark, and get our food onto it."

Terrence's seventeen-year-old niece Cindy came to the door. She wore a tee-shirt promoting some hard rock band and torn pajama bottoms. She screamed, "Uncle Terrence is a senile old goat. It's only a hurricane, and it caused a power outage. I did suggest that we evacuate, as the police advised us to do. Like always, nobody in this family ever listens to me."

Terrence said, "Sweetie, it's the end of the world, but we are saved."

"I'll only be saved when I go to college and get away from this screwed up family for good," replied Cindy.

Mathew called out, "Larry, get your ass out of bed. Your uncle is here, and he said it's time to get onto the ark."

Fifteen-year-old Larry came out of his room half dazed. He was rather unkept, and his nighttime pimples were particularly pronounced. Larry wore a nightshirt with Jesus on it. He asked, "Can't we wait until morning?"

"Not if we want to be saved," said Terrence.

Over the next two hours, the family loaded the ark. The water level continued to rise and began to flood both the museum and the family homes.

Cindy called out, "This is all bull."

"The only bull here is the one I am trying to get on this boat. Stop your nonsense, and join in. You are part of this family, and part of the saved. Act like it," said her father Mathew.

The family loaded the remainder of the animals. Every animal habitat in the zoo had its own wooden path, which led directly to holding area for each particular species type. Terrence opened the all of the holding zones by a battery powered remote, which opened the battery powered gates. Some loud and unpleasant sounds followed, which persuaded the animals down the path. After a group of animals reached their proper home, Terrence, Mathew, and Larry secured the side of the ark, locking the animals in.

The family was drenched, as the storm raged. Water was now flooding all of the buildings on the property.

"You're gonna have some water damage to your museum," said Cindy.

"You think?" replied brother Larry.

Terrence put his arms to the rain-filled sky, and screamed, "Thank you, dear Lord.

You chose our family to save, above all others. We are good Christians, and we will make you proud." He turned to his family, and said, "It is time. Everyone onto the ark."

The family stood on the bridge section of the ark and watched the rain intensify. An odd sound filled the air. The family strained to see the source.

"Here it comes. God's hand is about to bring the second great flood," said Terrence.

A moment later, there was a sudden wave of water from the West. In an instant, the museum and both houses were completely under water.

"Damn it. I knew I should have brought more of my clothes," said Cindy.

Not long after that, the ark began to rise, as the water level increased. By daybreak, the ark was freely floating. Water covered the horizon as far as anyone could see.

"Noah and God were right. Praise them. We've been spared the second great flood," said Terrence.

"Holy crap, we could have died in there. Next time, listen to me when I suggest we evacuate," said Cindy. After a moment, she asked, "There are a lot of boats in the world. Why don't we see any?"

Terrence replied, "The ark has holy properties. God has sunk every other boat."

Cindy said, "That was dumb." She pulled her smartphone out, then called out, "I have no signal."

"You never will again. All of those evils are behind us now," said Terrence.

"I hope my boyfriend Kevin made it to safety," said Cindy.

Terrence put a hand on her shoulder, and said, "I'm sorry dear, but everyone you

have ever known is dead, except for your family."

Cindy pushed her uncle's hand off of her and gasped a cry. Lynn attempted to provide comfort. Cindy pushed her away.

"Kevin can't be dead, and I can't be stuck with just you. I was counting the days till I left for college, and got away from the insanity. Now, if you're somehow right, I'm stuck with you forever," cried Cindy.

Terrence said, "Your boyfriend is now in heaven. Maybe he is better off than us, maybe not. We have a great adventure ahead. We get to rebuild an entire world."

"I miss the old one already. I'll never get to see part three of the 'Vampire adventures in love'. I wish I knew how it was going to end," said Cindy.

Larry joined in on the crying, followed by both parents.

Night fell, and the family retired to their private bedrooms.

Cindy called out to the empty room, "Jesus Christ, why didn't that idiot bring some mattresses and pillows?"

The next day, the family stared out into the vast body of water and prayed.

The following day's lunch consisted of the last of the fresh food. It was all dry crap from here on out.

"Thank you again dear God," said Terrence, before digging into his meal.

Cindy raised a hand, and asked, "A stupid question: How are the animals going to

eat?"

Terrence said, "They don't need to. God will provide for them. Even after we leave the Ark, he will continue to do so, until the populations have grown enough for them to hunt normally. After we reach dry land, he will provide some fruits and vegetables, until we can grow our own. We can't eat any meat until the animal population renews."

"Shouldn't we be protected the same way the animals are? Why do we still need to eat?" asked Cindy.

"It doesn't work like that. As humans, we have to keep doing for ourselves," said Terrence.

Brother Larry said, "Stop asking Uncle Terrence so many questions, he's doing the best he can."

"He and God saved us, sweetie. You must have some faith," said mother, Lynn.

Cindy ate some of her food, then grimaced at the taste of it. She said, "Just one last question for today. What are we going to do when the water settles, and we get back on land?"

Terrence smiled, and said, "That is God's main plan. Once before the world was destroyed by flood, and purified by water. He has done so again. We are chosen. We will have to repopulate the Earth."

Cindy looked about, winced, then asked, "How are we going to do that? It's just us unless some other people survived. I would say mom and dad could do it, but mom had a hysterectomy last year."

Her mother grimaced at that.

Terrence shook his head, and said, "There are no other saved people. We are it; period."

Cindy asked, "Then how are we going to procreate without out other people?"

Terrence pointed to the two siblings.

Cindy said, "I get that. We both must get married, and have families on our own. We would still need other people to do that."

Terrence said, "You both have someone you can procreate with."

Cindy looked around, and asked, "Who? Do you have some other people around that I don't know about?"

Terrence pointed at the two siblings again. Larry turned white, while Cindy turned red.

"No God damn way!" screamed Cindy.

"Watch your language. The Lord just saved you because of your purity," said Lynn.

Cindy screamed, "I won't watch my God damn language. Let God strike me dead here and now. I would die before I had sex with my own brother. Don't you people have any decency?"

Larry glanced about in a confused state. He said, "You are joking, right?"

Terrence said, "We cannot question God's will. If you don't mate, the human race will die. If you refuse your brother, there is always your father or me."

Cindy's father Mathew fell out of his chair. He landed with a slight cracking sound, and a moan.

Cindy screamed, "You're all mad. I'm done here." She bolted out of the common

area and headed for the main deck of the ark.

Terrence said, "Just give her a little time. She'll come around in the end. We need to re-read the part of the Bible dealing with the original Ark. All of our answers are there."

Larry remained still. A blank expression was plastered on his face. He said, "I always dreamed of doing it with some girl at school, but none of them would even look at me. But my sister? I can't stand the bitch. I agree with her for the first time ever. That is just gross."

"I need a drink," said Mathew, as he lost his balance, then fell again.

Terrence said, "That's what they did in the Biblical times. Incest was common then. Unfortunately, it has to become common again."

"Won't that cause all kind of birth defects and stuff?" asked Larry.

Terrence replied, "Not when you have the Lord to protect you. You have to ignore all that false science knowledge they taught you in that heathen school."

Mathew finally managed to re-seat himself. He whispered to his wife, "We have to talk about your dad. Can we do it somewhere in private?"

Lynn replied in a normal tone of voice, "We have no secrets from anyone anymore. It is just our family left, and we have to do God's will. We must repopulate the Earth, and soon."

Mathew said, "I would give my soul for just one drink."

Cindy wandered into the depths of the Ark. She lowered herself to the ground and cried. Her sobs were interrupted by an ear-splitting bang. She glanced into the barred

cage window of the pen next to her. Two elephants were in a state of agitation. They rammed the walls of the pen several times. Cindy glanced into the lion's cage and received a bit of a scare. Upon seeing her, the lion leaped for the door repeatedly. The door almost came off the hinge. Cindy raced for the main deck. Every animal in the ark seemed to be screaming, banging or crying. A shriek rose from the monkey area. Cindy's curiosity got the better of her, and she glanced in. Some of the monkeys were chomping on each other. The rest stayed against the wall and screamed. Cindy passed the area where small animals stored. A squeal came from one of them. Cindy looked down and witnessed a hamster mother eating her children. The screams and bangs from all of the ark's animals filled Cindy's ears, as she reached the upper deck.

The family was listening to Terrence's recitation of the original ark story, only to be abruptly interrupted by Cindy's violent arrival.

"Jesus Christ, we are in big trouble," screamed Cindy.

"Don't take the Lord's name in vain. He just saved us all," shouted Lynn.

Cindy shook her head, and said, "Screw that. Do you have any idea what's going on down below?"

Terrence replied, "The animals are being looked over by God, and awaiting their return to the wild."

Cindy screamed, "Your private little zoo is starving to death, and some of the animals are eating each other."

Terrence said, "Impossible, God would not allow that. They are most likely just procreating, as you should now be doing."

"Nobody here is procreating with me, especially pimple puss," screamed Cindy.

Larry looked to the ceiling, as he unconsciously rubbed at some red spots on his face. Mathew began to vomit. Lynn continued reading the Bible as if this was just a normal day.

Terrence said, "Look, young lady, you have no choice. You are to be the mother of a new race of humans. It is the will of God himself." He grabbed Cindy and dragged her kicking and screaming over to her brother. He screamed, "You two will procreate, and right now. We need to repopulate the Earth as soon as possible. Just like Noah's family did in ancient times. Larry, take her to the procreation room in the rear of the common area."

Cindy said, "I thought that was an exercise room. I always knew you were out to lunch uncle Terrence, I just never knew how much." She glanced at the rest of the family, then snarled at her brother. She said, "You are all sick. I'm not even sure if this is really the end of the world. If we had just evacuated, none of this might have happened." Cindy broke free of Terrence's grip and ran onto the main deck. The family followed close behind.

"Sweetie, this is God's will. Please, let's talk about this," said Lynn.

"Screw yourselves, because you're not screwing me," screamed Cindy.

"You must listen to God," shouted Terrence.

"If God is watching, then he can stop me," said Cindy, as she climbed over the side of the ark, and leaped off.

Mathew and Lynn ran to the side and looked into the water below. Cindy was gone.

"Holy crap! Why didn't God stop this?" asked Terrence.

Mathew screamed, "What's the point of this you old bat? Our daughter is dead, and she took the future of the human race with her."

Terrence stormed out of the room and wandered down into the deepest part of the Ark. Terrence entered a small empty room on the bottom level. He moved some boxes of food, revealing a cutout in the wall. Terrence pulled a tool from his pocket and opened a small section of the wall. Inside, was David Smith, the child allegedly kidnapped by Mexicans. He was tied to a chair and gagged. Terrence released the boy.

"Where are my mom and dad? Why do you tie me up, and only feed me once day?" called little David.

Terrence smiled at the boy, and said, "I am sorry, but the second great flood is upon us. Everyone is dead, except those of us saved by God. You were rescued, so just relax. I'm holding you here for your own good." He handed the David some form of dry food. The boy wolfed it down. The floor was covered with David's bodily releases.

"What the hell is going on here?" screamed Mathew. Unbeknownst to Terrence, Mathew had silently followed Terrence on his journey through the Ark. Mathew was now standing at the entrance of the tiny room. Mathew asked, "Terrence, what the hell is this boy doing on the ark?" After a moment, recognition came to Mathew. He said, "That's David what's his name. The kid who disappeared from the museum. You're the one who took him. Why? God damn sick bastard. You set up a big campaign to find the boy, while you had him all along. Cindy was right about you. God, I wish I had listened to her."

Stone faced, Terrence said, "The world has come to an end, and everything was taking away from me. I am entitled to one last pleasure."

Mathew shook his head, and screamed, "You sick bastard. First you let my daughter die, then this. I'm gonna make you pay."

Mathew attacked Terrence with his bare fists. After receiving several blows, Terrence reached to the ground and picked up a left overboard from the ship's construction. He struck Mathew with it repeatedly. Mathew fell to the ground, as blood flowed from his battered head. From the amount of blood, Terrence deduced that Mathew was dead. He dragged the body over to one of the garbage disposal hatches. With great difficulty, he lifted the body and dumped it out of the Ark. He cleaned up the blood, as David cried.

Terrence turned to David, and said, "God has chosen. He wanted this to happen. If he didn't, he would have stopped me."

"What about my parents? You promised me they would be saved," said David.

"Sorry, but there was no time. It's just four of us left now. We are all that remain of the human race. God took my niece for a reason: He wants the human race to end. We cannot question his wisdom."

David broke into tears, and said, "I want my mom and dad."

Terrence ignored this. He touched the boy on the head, and said, "You are the only pleasure left for me now. I just wish I had a little girl as well." He moved his hand down David's neck and continued traveling down the boy's front. Terrence said, "Don't worry son. You'll get used to it. You might even enjoy it over time."

Terrence went to touch the boy in a sensitive area. Things did not go as planned.

David issued some form of a martial arts move and knocked Terrence into the far wall of the room.

"My parents sent me to school so I could fight off bad people. You're a bad man," said David, as he positioned himself for the next attack.

Terrence made another leap for the David. This time, the results were worse. Terrence was thrown against the wall once again, only harder. Several of his teeth were knocked out of his mouth. Terrence picked up the bloodied board he killed Mathew with and attempted to strike the boy. David evaded the attack, then issued a kick to Terrence's back. The man fell face down on the deck and broke his nose. David readied himself for another attack. Terrence decided to flee instead. He ran from the boy as fast as he could. Terrence ran up the levels of the ark till he came upon another obstacle. His daughter Lynn and nephew Larry blocked the way.

Lynn said, "We have to talk dad. Where's Mathew?"

The talk never occurred. Something broke through the wall. To everyone's detriment, it turned out to be the two gorillas, and they were not in a pleasant mood. After screaming at the humans, they broke the inner wall of the ark. A heard of various animals stormed out. The gorillas ran off, but the remainder of Terrence's family were not that lucky. In an instant, Lynn and Larry were trampled to death.

Terrence fled from the slaughtered remains of his family. The sound of multiple escaping animals could be heard in the background. David bolted past Terrence, and away from the animals.

Terrence ran for his life. He screamed, "Dear Lord, why have you done this. Why

have you abandoned me?"

One of the cage doors broke open, and the two wolves leaped out. They took one look at Terrence and growled. Terrence ran for his life, as the wolves ran for their meal. The wolves won.

"Dear Lord why? Was it because I brought that boy abroad? Well, it wasn't my fault, you made me this way."

Those were his last intelligible words. Terrence provided some substance to the hungry animals, as his existence came to an end.

David made his way to the top of the ship. He climbed over the side and jumped into the water. The ark no longer contained any living humans. Its soul inhabitants were the remaining animals, who continued to devour each other.

After a bit of time, the ark struck a giant cross sticking out of the water. It was the top of Terrence's museum. The ark's side was torn open. Moments later, it sank. Most of the surviving animals drowned.

Cindy floated on some debris. She noticed a small boy trying to swim in the distance. Cindy put her hands in the water and moved her makeshift lifeboat over to the kid. She pulled the boy up and brought him aboard.

"I'm David Smith. That crazy museum guy tried to touch me in a funny way," said the boy.

"Where and when did that happen?" asked Cindy.

"I was locked up on his ark. He stuck some kind of needle in my neck, and it knocked me out. Then he tied me up. He got me by surprise, so I couldn't hit him like I did to get away. I heard your voice on the ark, but I couldn't talk because he put a rag in my mouth," said David.

"I didn't even know you were aboard. Jesus Christ, my uncle is one sick bastard," said Cindy. She thought a moment, then added, "Why the hell was he in such a rush for me to do it with my brother. He could have just waited eight years and..." She realized what she was about to say, then stopped.

David finished the thought, "...And wait for me. My buddy, Charles told me all about that sex stuff, and how babies come. I guess God didn't want to wait that long." The conversation brought a smile to David's face.

"Or that sick bastard wanted you all to himself," said Cindy. She observed the nature of David's smile, and said, "Christ, now you have a crush on me. Can this day get any worse?"

A few hours later, the rain and flooding subsided. The two made land fall and walked till they found other survivors.

Upon seeing the others, Cindy screamed, "I knew that old bat was wrong. Thank God I didn't listen to that ass. I would have been in therapy for the rest of my life, and maybe the next one as well."

The group wandered for a while, then followed some signs leading to a rescue station.

"What happened to you?" asked the nurse.

"You would never believe me if I told you," said Cindy, as she broke into tears.

A familiar voice called out, "Cindy, is that you?"

Cindy turned, then smiled. Her boyfriend Kevin was being treated by another nurse.

Cindy bolted from her nurse mid-treatment and jumped into Kevin's arms.

"At last, someone I can procreate with," whispered Cindy.

Kevin laughed, "I'm glad to see you too."

A nurse looked David over. The boy was brave, but some tears got past his control.

"Don't worry. We found your parents. They are here in the rescue center, and on their way," said the nurse.

A couple of minutes later, David's parents flew into the room.

"David!" screamed both parents.

"I knew I would see you again," cried David.

David's dad asked, "What happened to you? They said you were abducted."

David replied, "Mr. Laurence locked me up. He tried to touch me, but I didn't let him."

David's mom said, "No, not Mr. Laurence. He's one of the most devout Christians in the world. He wouldn't do such a thing."

David's dad said, "We have to investigate this. We can't just throw the man to the wolves."

The family embraced in a circle and stayed that way for close to an hour.

The radio at the rescue station played a news story, "...This massive storm led to the breaking of Bush dam. All of this resulted in a biblical amount of water. This is one of the worst floods in US history. On a lighter note, some rescue helicopters reported seeing the ark from the Bible crashed into the Ark of Love and Hope Museum of Creation. You can't make this stuff up. Rescue workers continue their efforts in the area. The President has declared Lincoln County a disaster area, clearing the way for federal aid. From all over, donations are pouring in..."

ABE'S BRIS

"Esther won't say who the father is. She just cries whenever I bring it up," whispered Aunt Ginger.

Aunt Molly whispered back, "I think I met him. She dated this odd guy for a few months. There was something very different about him. He was just, well, different. He was definitely not Jewish."

Ginger whispered, "Not Jewish?" After a pause, she asked, "In what way was he different?"

"I can't put my finger on it. Something just didn't sit right with me. Esther never really dated much, so nobody questioned anything. They were just glad she was dating. That was until they found out that he wasn't Jewish," whispered Molly.

"I can't believe that Esther would date someone who wasn't Jewish. The shame could destroy the family," whispered Ginger.

Molly glanced around, waited till cousin Jerry passed by, then whispered, "He most certainly was not Jewish. I talked to him about food. He had no idea what a bagel or knish was. Worse than that, he came along that time the whole family went to the tenth avenue deli. You weren't there, you had bronchitis, for a change. The guy ordered ham and swiss with bacon and mayo on white bread and a glass of milk. I have never been more embarrassed in my life. You should have seen the expressions on Rose and David's faces. They were mortified. She finally broke up with the guy a month later. I don't know of anyone else who could be the father. She did say something about being

tired of waiting for Mr. Right to come along, and that this was her last chance to have a child."

Ginger shook her head, as she whispered, "I can't get it around my head. I just can't believe this could happen."

Molly pointed at Abe, the infant laying in the cradle, and said, "The kid has a slightly greenish completion, just like that guy she was dating."

The apartment door bell rang. This startled great-aunt Bathsheba, who in turn spilled her entire cup of tea. It landed on the expensive throw blanket from Israel. David, Esther's father, opened the door and ushered the Mohel into the apartment.

"Hello everyone, I'm Murray the Mohel, at your service," said the Mohel.

David shook the man's hand and led him into the apartment. Murray was somewhere between fifty and eighty. He possessed a long white beard and all black clothing.

David, called out, "Everyone, we're ready to begin."

Ginger and Molly exchanged smiles and nods. They sat in the first row. They should have known better.

Young Abe was happily on his throne and surrounded by a mob of well-wishers. Abe enjoyed all of the attention, the first he had received in his short life. He was unaware of the terror awaiting him.

The Mohel addressed the gathered, "Hello everyone. I'm Murray the Mohel, and today I will be circumcising Abe Gottlieb. I put a pile of business cards on the table next

to the front door. If anyone needs my service, take a card. Call me in the next two months, and I'll give you a ten percent discount."

Murray opened his antique suitcase and removed the tools of his trade. David glanced at them and winced. A few minutes later, the assembled friends and family were praying in Hebrew.

Molly whispered to Ginger, "Those cookies on the table don't look so good. I think he got them at that new giant supermarket, instead of Cohen's Bakery. David is really cheapening out lately."

The prayers were interrupted by the apartments rather annoying doorbell. David opened the door, as the gathered looked on. A slender eight foot tall man stood in the doorway. His skin color was slightly dark, and a little bit on the green side. The man's eyes were unnaturally bright blue. His nose and ears were long and angled in an odd upward way. His hands were bent, as if arthritic.

"Is it my imagination, or are there six fingers on each of his hands?" whispered Ginger, to Molly.

David raised a hand and preventing the man from entering the apartment.

Esther joined her father at the door, and said, "Kallaly, what are you doing here? I asked you to stay away."

Kallaly waved at Esther, and said in an odd sing-song accent, "Esther, I'm Father to this child. Please heed me. You can't go through with this ritual."

Esther broke into tears, and said, "I told you to leave us alone. Why won't you listen? You know it didn't work out between us, it couldn't. You're not Jewish. I told you I would

have this child without you. I want nothing from you, no child support or anything.

Please, Just leave us in peace."

Kallaly vibrated a bit as if he were experiencing a seizure. He replied, "But I am not like you. You don't understand what will occur if you go through with this, what the ramifications..." He paused a moment, till he found the word. "What the ramifications will be."

Esther screamed, "When we were dating, I asked if you would convert for me, and become a Jew. You said, 'I follow Olliumo's followings, and it would mean my death if I changed.' I don't even know who the hell Ollimuo is. I went to the library and looked him up. There is nothing about him anywhere. It was wrong for me ever to date someone who wasn't Jewish, much less do what we did. Just go, and let me bring my baby up Jewish."

Kallaly vibrated some more, then said, "You don't understand. If you do what you are planning to do today, there will be serious consequences. I am the boys' father, and I know..."

David interrupted, "I want you to leave. You have no right spoiling this day for my family. If you had converted and married my daughter, it would be different. Now leave. You're not wanted here."

"You do not understand. What you want to do will anger Olimuo, and bring pain and suffering to you all," said Kallaly.

David pointed a finger screamed, "You're goyim. You can't understand what it is to be a Jew, but your son will. For the last time, leave."

"No, you don't understand. You must be attentive to my words."

David walked past Kallaly, and banged on the door of the apartment across the hall. The door opened, revealing a rather hefty and hairy man in a white undershirt.

"Ted, sorry to trouble you, but I have a little problem here," said David. He whispered a while, while he pointed at his unwanted visitor.

Esther pleaded, "Please, just leave. I beg you."

"But you don't interpret what I am saying," replied Kallaly.

"No, you don't understand. This boy is being raised Jewish, not Olimuo."

Ted grabbed Kallaly by the arm and pulled him from the doorway. Kallaly resisted.

Ted said, in his best deep voice, "Kallaly, or whatever your name is, I'm a New York City cop. You are going to leave these people alone."

"I am the father. I have rights. I also am here to present warning to all. This ritual cannot go ahead," said Kallaly, as he vibrated some more.

Ted grabbed harder and dragged Kallaly down the hall. He said, "I don't care who you are. If you want some rights with the kid, hire a lawyer. For now, you're leaving. If you don't, all I have to do is make one call, and my friends will find a nice cell for you."

Kallaly vibrated, as Ted led him away.

David hugged his daughter and cleared her tearful eyes.

"This is what happens when you date someone who isn't Jewish," whispered Ginger.

The Mohel glanced at his watch and sighed. He said, "If all the commotion is over, let's get this going. I have another bris at three."

Ted returned alone. He said, "I escorted him outside. Give me a scream if he comes back."

"Thanks, Ted, I owe you one," said David.

"you still owe my ex for the catering order. Enjoy your gathering," said Ted, as he returned to his apartment.

With the distraction over, the prayers started up again in Hebrew. David grabbed the baby in his arms, and the Mohel began his work. Several people looked away. Ginger and Molly smiled, as they moved in closer.

The Mohel was a completely relaxed. He was a true master of the art.

"I performed the bris on Dale Rocket, the big rockstar. He denies it, but I never forget a customer. I once did a Bris at the white house. A senator from New Jersey wanted it done someplace special. I've worked on cruise ships, taxi cabs, million dollar homes. I even did one on a beach. This is my calling, and I take it seriously," said the Mohel, as he pointed at the child. His hand had a slight shake.

"Maybe they should have found someone a little younger," whispered Ginger, to Molly.

The Mohel made his cut, removing little Able's foreskin. The Event did not proceed as one would expect. Blood surged out of the altered body part and splattered Molly and Ginger's white outfits with an absurd amount of blood. They screamed, almost surpassing little Abe's in volume. Blood splattered all over David's pants. Blood splattered the pictures of David's late parents. Blood splattered the poster of Israel. Blood splattered the Mohel. Blood splattered the carpet.

"Strange, that's never happened before," said the Mohel, above the overlapping

screams. He deposited the amputated foreskin on a metal plate, then wiped the blood off of his face and glasses. Murray was about to treat the appendage when another unexpected event occurred.

The little piece of skin started to vibrate on its own. It did just a little movement at first, then began to vibrate more intensely. The entire table shook, until the Mohel's suitcase fell, scattering its contents on the floor. The Mohel returned the items to their proper place, then secured in the case. He treated young Abe, as he attempted to ignore the vibrating object on the table. Abe was crying, as one might expect. David's eyes were glued to the vibrating object on the table, and not his grandson. Molly and Ginger were drenched in blood. The blood finally ceased flowing from Abe's wound, though a little blood was still spilling out. The Mohel finished up his work, then placed David back on his throne.

The vibrating foreskin turned even more frantic. An instant later the table collapsed under the movement.

"What the hell is wrong with his foreskin?" cried Ginger, as she wiped the blood from her face.

Rose slapped the Mohel, and screamed, "What did you do to my grandson?"

The Mohel replied, "Your grandson is not entirely Jewish, I can tell you that. I've done thousands and thousands of these rituals, and never once did this happen."

Esther broke into tears, as she screamed at her parents, "No, he was not Jewish. I loved him, but you wouldn't let me marry him because of that. I should have never listened to you."

Rose attempted to comfort Esther, "Honey, you know how much tradition means to our family. Marrying outside of your faith is unspeakable. You need to be with your own kind."

Esther replied, "He's a good man, and didn't deserve the treatment he received from this family. I miss him so much. I don't care anymore. I'm gonna get back together with him."

"But he isn't Jewish!" screamed Rose.

"I don't care," replied Esther.

David gripped little Abe, who was still crying. He said, "Esther, for God's sake. This baby will be Jewish. It's bad enough that the father was a Goyim. Don't make it worse. This baby needs to be brought up by his own kind."

"But I love him, Daddy," cried Esther.

"In ten years you'll thank me when you're married to a nice Jewish guy," said David.

In all the excitement, the foreskin was mostly ignored. Only the Mohel was giving it any attention. That changed an instant later. The thing vibrated some more, then leaped into the air, and ricocheted from wall to wall. When it smashed a mirror, all of the gathered became aware of the peril. The thing struck Murray the Mohel. Murray fell to the ground with a scream and a thud. The foreskin popped out of the wound, along with a splatter of blood, then bounced off the walls, going faster and faster.

"What the hell is that? Are we under attack here?" screamed Molly.

"It must be those new German neighbors. I told you they hated Jews," screamed Rose.

The foreskin smashed every picture on the wall. It broke a series of biblical figurines. Rose was not pleased. Ginger narrowly avoided being hit, but still managed to cut herself on some broken glass on the floor.

Molly said, "I told you not to wear those shoes to a Bris."

The thing continued to crash about, as it emitted an odd sound. At first it was a hum, but it soon became an inhuman scream.

The Mohel screamed, "The thing has a life of its own. Why didn't you tell me the father wasn't Jewish? I can't do my work properly if I don't have all the facts."

The foreskin increased its speed and sound. All of the paintings and mirrors had been demolished, so the thing began to destroy the wall itself. The Mohel tried to grab the foreskin but failed. It embedded itself in his good shoulder, before flying out again with another burst of blood.

"What do we do?" screamed Molly.

"Call Rabbi Mauser," screamed Ginger.

The thing continued its rampage. It hit the front door, smashing it open.

Ted overheard the ruckus and came out of his apartment. He noticed the object flying around the place. He muttered, "What the hell? I'm getting my gun."

The thing stuck Ted and propelled him across the hallway. Kallaly broke his flight. Ted lowered himself to the ground, as he entered through a mild state of shock.

Kallaly entered the apartment. All eyes shifted to him, and the thing bouncing from wall to wall.

"It's him, the father. It's all his fault," said Ginger.

Kallaly put his hands together and emitted some odd high pitched chanting sounds. The foreskin began to slow its movements. Kallaly increased the volume of his voice. The foreskin fell to the floor. It was still vibrating slightly. Kallaly bent down and retrieved it. He chanted some more, and the vibrations stopped. Kallaly brought the foreskin over to his crying and bleeding son and placed it over the prior attachment point. Kallaly's hand glowed slightly, as did the foreskin. He proceeded to chant some more. Gradually, the foreskin reattached itself to Abe's manhood. The bleeding stopped, as did the child's crying. Kallaly kissed his son on the forehead, then walked over to the front door.

"What the hell just happened?" asked Molly.

Kallaly said, "I'll leave you in pieces now...I mean in peace now. Esther has my number sequence. You might want to communicate me so that I can give you a little advice on my non-Jewish heritage, and what boy will require. Puberty will be more troublesome than today's incident. I don't recommend you cut him again. The results would be more severe next time."

"Wait, don't go," said Esther.

Kallaly smiled, as Esther ran over and hugged him.

"I was wrong to listen to my parents. I still love you, and want you to be part of our son's life," said Esther.

"I still love you too. I have really missed you these many lunar cycles," said Kallaly.

David gently rubbed his grandson. He took a moment to study his daughter, and the man she was loves. David moaned, then said, "The hell with tradition." He walked over to Kallaly, and said, "I was wrong, I admit that. I guess I was so involved in honoring my

heritage, that I almost forgot what is most important in life. I want my daughter to be happy, and I want my grandson to have his father."

"But he's not Jewish," cried Rose.

"He's a good man, and he loves his son, and our daughter," replied David.

Esther and Kallaly kissed. When that is over, they walked over and hugged their child.

"What about the kid? Are they going to raise him Jewish?" asked Rose.

"I hope so, but we also have to honor his father," replied David.

Ginger looked at the blood on her dress, then glance at the damaged apartment. She said to Molly, "This is why Jews should only be with Jews."

Molly shook her head, and replied, "No, this is why people should stay out of other peoples business. Love is what matters." She cried a moment, then added, "I once dated a guy who wasn't Jewish. I broke it off because I wanted Jewish children. I still miss him, and breaking up with him is my biggest regret in life."

Kallaly and Esther picked up their child and kissed again.

Ted got over his little shock, stood up, and quietly returned to his apartment.

Murray the Mohel put out a hand, and asked, "Do you have my check?"

"For what?" asked David.

"For performing the circumcision," replied Murray.

David said, "I didn't work. The foreskin is still attached to my grandson. Why should I pay you?"

TWO HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-NINE STONES FOR RAY KRAFT

The alarm shrill brought moans and agony. On any other day, Ray Kraft would just smash the big button on the top several more times, silencing its annoying squeals. The damn thing was over a decade old, and still had the old style phone adapter. If it were any other day, he might just lay there and take the alarm as a suggestion. This was not any other day. This was Sunday.

Ray was not alone. Beside him lay the love of his life, Janet Lerner. She opened her lovely blue eyes and smiled. This was followed by a pleasant kiss. Janet was the perfect woman, at least in Ray's eyes. She was petite, kind, gentle, and a brunette. Her only imperfection was the small scar below her right eye, a gift from her husband, Lenny. There was a more recent present on her chin.

Ray made breakfast: imitation pancakes, imitation bacon, and imitation scrambled eggs. After that, it was time for church. Unfortunately, they could not go together today; or ever.

Ray confirmed the coast was clear, then exited the house with Janet. She broke into tears, and said, "We shouldn't have to sneak around like criminals. I have a mind just to walk into church with you, hand in hand."

Ray whispered, "Maybe we could five years ago. You know the crap that would rain down on us now."

Janet cried, "If I knew divorce would be outlawed, I never would have married Lenny

in the first place. I was insecure, and he was great in the beginning. Now, I would do anything to be free of that damn monster."

Ray took her hand, and said, "We don't live in that world anymore. We live in one a bit less kind." Ray almost kissed her; then he remembered they were outside. A quick glance confirmed a potential witness.

Mrs. Schmitt was walking her rather annoying, ugly, and loud dog. She called out, "Hurry Moses, mommy has to go to church." The woman was still in her bathrobe, which was worn and ripped. Her rather unattractive face possessed a brand new giant red mark across it. Either she walked into something, or she displeased her husband in some way. These days, almost every woman had one of those red marks on her face at one at some point. Moses had a mark as well but on his butt. Ray surmised Mr. Schmitt was having a less than stellar day.

Ray discreetly grabbed Janet's hand, and they bolted for her car. A giant bush now blocked Mrs. Schmitt's view.

Ray released Janet's hand. He smiled at her, and said, "We could be together. Take my offer, and escape with me to Free Canada. They can grant you an amnesty divorce. Remember, my friend Tony lives up there."

She replied, "I'm not ready to leave my faith or the country I love."

She waved, then headed home. Ray returned inside and got ready himself.

Ray was a pretty average guy, in most ways. He was starting to get a slight gut. Janet had offered to cook for him so that he could lose some weight. He told her that would be too dangerous.

Janet arrived home. Inside, husband Lenny was standing and waiting for her. Lenny was over six feet tall, with balding brown hair, a short beard, and a long ponytail. Lenny possessed bulging round eyes, which were the most memorable feature on his face. He smiled, as Janet entered the living room.

"How was your mom?" asked Lenny.

"She's getting better. She sends you her love. I may have to stay with her again next Saturday. She's getting there," replied Janet.

Lenny smiled, as he said, "Really, it seems you left your phone here yesterday. It rang in the middle of the night, and I answered it. Your mom had to go to the hospital last night. She was having some breathing problems. They said she was resting comfortably."

Janet hesitated a few seconds, then replied, "I know, I was there with her. I just didn't want to upset our Sunday."

Lenny grabbed her in his arms, "You are the love of my life, I would never want you to hold any bad news back. That's what marriage is all about, being there for each other."

Lenny smiled some more. It did not match his bulging eyes, which transmitted something resembling rage.

"Let's go to church dear. You don't want to be late, and face punishment," said Lenny.

People poured into the Holly Hand of God and Jesus Church. They ran as if their lives depended on being punctual. Church Policeman Richard Hinder was performing his Sunday duty, which he has diligently performed for the last four years. He checked off names on his list, as each church member entered. After the flow had ended, he called into his radio.

"This is officer Hinder. Jack Abrams, ID jabrams3144322, is not at church this morning. Issue an arrest warrant for him and his wife."

Officer Hinder noticed a car coming around the corner. It had been traveling at high velocity as it neared the church, then slowed slightly as it entered the lot. The car almost crashed into another one, as it skidded into the last spot in the lot. The car's late middle aged occupants made a mad dash for the church. Jack Abrams was overweight and sweating profusely. He had also forgotten to zip up his fly. His wife Sandy was out of breath and missed some spots on her make up. It gave her the appearance of a comic book villain. They flew past Officer Hinder, giving him a nervous wave. He returned the wave. The couple ran inside the church, then gasped for air.

Officer Hinder spoke into his radio again, "Cancel that arrest warrant. The Abrams family are here; just."

After rechecking his list, Officer Hinder locked all the doors, securing the congregation inside. He was the guardian and protector of these people during the service. He stood at attention, with a gun in each hand. After the service was concluded, he would join the other Church Police for a private mass.

The church was rather average. It did have one pleasant and unique addition, a stained glass skylight. It was donated by a local businessman, in exchange for forgiveness. The man accidentally wore a shirt made of two different types of thread. Lucky, the church let him make amends. The congregation loved the skylight. It brightened up the church and was beautiful to look at. Unfortunately, a major storm last week resulted in a water leak. The Jesus statue below the skylight sustained significant water damage. The damn thing warped. This resulted in Jesus coming free from the cross. His arms were now outstretched, and he was bent into an impossible, and very scary position. There was also the smell of mildew perfuming the air.

The pews were filled, and everyone was ready. Ray sat in the last row. Janet sat with her husband, about half way up. Ray tried not to stare at her, but he couldn't help it. His eyes kept wandering between Janet, and the bizarrely bent and disfigured Jesus statue.

Father Francis entered and took his place at the pew. The Father was forty-three years old, thin, and around five feet tall. He was in the process of getting some hair transplants. The church health insurance plan was the best money could buy.

The service began with twenty minutes of prayer. This was followed up with one of the Father's long-winded sermons.

"...And that is why we must always follow the Lord's guidance without question." The Father put down his Bible, then said with a smile, "I know a few of you are not happy to be here. There have been more than a few confessional complaints about mandatory

church attendance. Don't worry. I won't turn you in. I don't need the money."

This was intended as a joke. Nobody laughed.

The Father continued, "When the government made Sunday church attendance mandatory, a lot of folks were upset. What you don't understand, is how it has helped everyone. Crime is down. Sickness is down, alcohol and drug use is down. America is now the country it should be. This is due to our commitment to God, and the holy day. We must also thank the great Reverend Paul John Rogers, who made much of this possible. Now, let's turn to..."

Ray read some subversive material at the public library last year. Back then, you could just go on the computer. Now, they forced you to sign in.

Fact: Crime was only down on Sundays because everyone was at church. Even homeless people were brought to church shelters on Sundays. It was not pleasant for them. Just one giant unheated and non-air-conditioned warehouse. There were no seats and only a projected Bible. Fact: Alcohol and drug use was only down on Sundays, it was actually higher the rest of the week. Fact: Sickness was only down on Sundays. People don't go to the hospital or see a doctor till Monday. Fact: The economy keeps getting worse. Fact: Church donations have increased ten thousand percent, since attendance, and donations became mandatory. At the same time, programs for helping the poor have been cut sixty-two percent.

The service went on for an eternally. Finally, it was time for the first break.

The congregation wandered around the lobby. There was a long line at the snack bar and gift shop (which was the only store open on Sunday. If you ran out of milk or sugar on a Sunday, this was the only place you can go). Some of the smokers in the group tried the front door, hoping in vain that it might be unlocked.

Ray received visits from some of his friends.

Eric Jones came over and shook Ray's hand. They had worked together for seven years until Eric left for a better job opportunity. He had promised to find Eric something at his new company, but never got around to it.

"How are you doing buddy? Long time, no see," said Eric.

"Just fine Eric," replied Ray.

"Let's get together soon," said Eric.

"You free on Tuesday?" asked Ray.

Eric replied, "Good for me. We can go back to the steak place." A smile was glued to his face.

"Sounds good," said Ray. He hated that steak place.

Next, came Steven and Jody Krantz. They were the personification of a perfect Christian couple. Both were in their mid-thirties, with perfect blond hair, blue eyes, and a big smile. They had three perfect kids, who all shared their good looks.

"How's it going?" asked Steven.

"Just fine," replied Ray. He wondered why everyone asked that same stupid question. Then, a dim memory dawned, and Ray acted fast. He directed his gaze to

Jody, and said, "Loved that pie you made. Best I ever had."

He actually took one bite, then dumped the rest in the trash. Jody could not bake to save her life or immortal soul.

Jody smiled, and promised, "I'll make you another one for next Sunday."

"I can't wait," lied Ray.

Ray's next visitor was with Richard Sutter, an Eighty something retire. Ray was there during Richard's darkest hour. Richard lost his wife, right after having a major operation. Ray stopped by three days a week and helped him with whatever he needed. Richard claimed Ray was a bigger help than his own son.

"How you doing my boy?" asked Richard, as he put his arms around Ray. "Come by, and I'll make you some of that famous chili that you love."

"I will Rich. How's the bad leg doing?" asked Ray.

"Oh, I get by," said Richard, as he attempted to cover up his pain.

Ray looked down and noticed that Richard was having some difficulty standing.

"Want me to stop by, and help you with anything before chili day?" asked Ray.

Richard smiled brightly, "That would be great. There are a couple of things that need doing around the house. I can't manage any more."

Ray nodded, and said, "OK, I'll stop by one night this week."

Richard gave Ray another good hug, and said, "I don't know how I could get by without you my boy. God bless you. God bless you."

His next visitor was Father Francis himself. He firmly shook Ray's hand, and said, "Good to see you. Thanks for coming to Ray" (as if he had any choice in the matter).

Father Francis touched his back, then continued, "That chair your company donated is heavenly. No more back problems," He waved goodbye and went off to visit some more of his flock.

Then came Ann-Marie Coulter, the Church Librarian. She had a rather big crush on Ray and made it very apparent. It was almost to the point of being a stalker. Several churchgoers were pushing Ray to ask her out. None of them could have known that Ray loved someone else. Ann-Marie was attractive, but his heart belonged to Janet.

"Hi Ray, you look well. Jesus has shined on you," said Ann-Marie. She proceeded to check him out, from top to bottom.

Ray gave a phony smile, and said, "Good to see you again. I Just want to grab a muffin, before the service starts again."

Ann-Marie put a hand on his shoulder, and said, "We could get one together tomorrow if you want."

Ray could barely hold up his smile, as he responded with a lie, "Maybe another time. I'm meeting a friend after work."

Ann-Marie replied, "Sure, I understand. Maybe another day this week?"

"I'll get back to you on that," said Ray.

Ray was munching on a holy muffin when he glimpsed Janet, and her husband, Lenny. He looked the other way. A fact of life: Whenever you try not to stare at something, you always do. He noticed that Lenny was smiling at him. He returned the smile. Lenny approached Ray, with Janet in hand. Ray wanted to avoid this meeting,

but it was now impossible.

Lenny offered his hand. Ray was apprehensive but took it.

"Hello Ray, good to see you again," said Lenny

"Good to see you. Thanks again for buying those chairs," said Ray.

Lenny replied while keeping his hold on Ray's hand, "Yes, you sold us sixty-six new chairs. It's not my company. I just manage it for the corporation. I did talk my superiors into buying your chairs, but I am not happy with that decision. They are made like crap. Three of them broke already."

"Sorry to hear that Lenny. I'll tell my people to get them fixed or replaced for you on Monday," said Ray, while trying to avoid any expression.

Lenny laughed, as he put his left hand on Ray's shoulder, while his other hand was still gripping Ray's in a shake.

Lenny moved in a bit too close and glared at Ray with his bulging eyes.

"There are some things you can't fix Ray, like a break in trust," said Lenny.

Ray replied, "Don't worry, I can fix your chair problem. Like I said, I'll take care of it first thing Monday morning."

Lenny kept his gaze on Ray, as he ceased blinking. He kept a tight grip on Ray's hand and shoulder. Lenny's bloodshot eyes were bulging worse than ever. To Ray, they appeared ready to pop out of their sockets and attack him.

After a long pause, Lenny said, "I am not talking about a few chairs Ray. I am talking about my wife, and what you two have been doing."

Ray's face transitioned through a wide assortment of colors. He discretely tried to

pull out of Lenny's grip, but could not. Janet just stared up at Ray, her perfect eyes and mouth wide open.

Lenny laughed, as he released his grip. He put his arms up, then waved them about.

"You think I'm stupid? I've known for months," said Lenny.

Lenny remained silent for an agonizing twenty-second. His eyes remained fixed on Ray.

Lenny continued, "I broke into your house Ray, and planted some cameras about." After another uncomfortable pause, Lenny said, "Don't worry, it will be quite a show. It'll bring down the house, and you'll both rock and roll."

Lenny patted Ray on the shoulder, then headed for the snack area.

With Lenny gone, Ray and Janet looked to each other. They both wore grimaces of terror.

"What's he planning?" asked Ray.

Janet shook her head, and replied, "I don't know, but this is all your fault."

"How is it my fault?"

"You led me on, and we only did it in your house. You should have known he'd put up cameras."

"How?"

"I don't know. You just should have."

Lenny observed the love birds from a distance and smiled. He lifted his cup of imitation orange juice and toasted it like fine wine.

Jim Glass, the owner of Jim's Glass (some people just have perfect names),

interrupted Ray's panic moment. Ray was one of those men still graced with a full head of gray hair at seventy.

"Ray, we love the new chairs. A few of my people had back problems, but praise Jesus, they're cured because of your chairs," said Jim. He rubbed a hand over the bad part of his back, and then put his hands together in prayer.

Ray attempted to appear natural and relaxed. It was not easy. He said, "I'm glad you like the chairs. I'll catch up with you later. We just have to light some candles before the service starts up."

Ray led Janet over to the front door and tried it. Locked, of course. They headed for the school section of the building.

"He's going to kill us," said Janet, breaking into tears.

"He is about to do something, and I don't want to be locked in with him when he tries it," said Ray.

They entered a classroom and checked the windows. There were bars on every one of them. What else would a classroom have? Ray glanced at a student's drawing. It featured a very happy cartoon shrimp. Under it lay the caption, "You can't eat me. The Lord has said so. He has other rules as well. Read your Bible and Ten Commandants today."

The two tried several other doors and windows but meet with no success. One of the locked doors had a picture of a smiling Earth on it. Under it lay the words, "I am only a six thousand years old." Another door had a picture of a monkey. "I'm sorry to say, but we are not related," was written under the picture.

"Let's ask Father Francis for help, and forgiveness," suggested Janet, her expression was one of completed naive innocence.

"We can't trust him. Divorce and affairs are very illegal in America. We could be stoned for it. We can't take a chance. The only thing we can do, is ride this thing out," said Ray.

She looked at him with her pretty and sad eyes, and asked, "What about Reverend Rogers? We could make the trip to see him. Maybe he'd understand."

Ray shook his head, "No, I don't think he would help us. I saw him on TV last week talking about how marriage has to be for life. Nobody will help us. We have to go back into church, and work this out after we get out."

He gave her a kiss. It would be their last.

The bells rang, indicating the break was over. Ray and Janet made their return. Ray sat in the same seat. Janet sat far away from both Ray and her husband.

Father Francis continued the service. He talked awhile, preached awhile, and then continued his long-winded speeches.

Ray had the appropriate reading material in his hand, but he was not following along. His eyes were glued on the back of Lenny's head. Lenny turned around Every few minutes and smiled at him.

"Trapped like a rat in a cage," whispered Ray.

He must have been louder than he planned because the kid next to him gave him a strange look.

The Father continued preaching, "But I must say, Love and pray for your enemies, and for those who persecute you."

Lenny rather enjoyed that oldie. He turned around and gave Ray a wave.

Ray fidgeted on the uncomfortable bench. It might as well have been a bed of nails. An overweight woman sat on one side of him, a fat child on the other. Something far worse than claustrophobia sank in. Ray become aware of some changes to his environment. His two neighbors were closing the distance between them and were almost touching of him. The pews were gradually moving closer together. They kept getting tighter and began touching his knees. Pain erupted, as the pews crushed his legs. He needed to get up, but that was not permitted. He glanced up and observed the ceiling descending. It was right above him, and getting closer to his head. He glanced at some of his neighbors. They all seemed reasonably comfortable. He could feel the sweat dripping all over. Looking down, he could see his white church shirt was covered in perspiration. Ray directed his eyes to the front of the church, hoping it would provide some comfort. What he saw was anything but comforting.

The warped Jesus statue was bending, and its posture went from the impossible to the absurd. The statue's arms pointed right at Ray. Jesus opened his eyes and stared at him. Jesus seemed to be mouthing some words at him. He began hearing real sounds coming out. He could swear Jesus said, "Sinner."

None of this was real, and Ray knew it. This was a panic attack, clear and simple.

The woman next to him did inch herself away. Maybe it was the smell.

The congregation contentedly sang a hymn. He was the only one not joining in. He did not recall when the singing began. The priest was preaching again. When did that happen? Time was moving in a very odd way for him.

"You shalt not commit adultery, you shalt not kill, you shalt not steal or covet," preached the Priest.

Lenny pointed directly at Ray, but nobody seemed to notice. True hate read in Lenny's bulging eyes. They had a red glow about them. Ray didn't know if they were bloodshot, his imagination, or something else.

"You OK? You don't look too well," whispered the woman next to him.

"Not really, I need to get up," said Ray.

The woman smiled, "We have another break coming in a little while. Just try to hold out a drop longer."

More praying, more singing, and more claustrophobia followed. Ray also needed to go to the restroom.

The Priest relaxed his stance, and announced, "We have reached the three-quarter point in today's service. Before we take another break, I would like to take a moment to show you something beautiful. The children have put together a little video about Noah's Ark, which is a perfect story for children. They spent a lot of time on this, so please give it your full attention. It is available for purchase in the gift shop. The proceeds are going

to some much-needed renovations to the Bishop's house."

The priest signaled to someone behind the pew. The congregation smiled, as the lights were dimmed. The picture of the Virgin Mary lifted, revealing a large video screen.

Ray noticed some kids waving their arms about. Obviously, this was their handy work, and they couldn't wait for their moment of fame. Noah's Ark was such a happy and uplifting story.

The advertised film did not appear on the screen. There was no Noah's Ark, and no children. What came up next would shock the room, and terrify Ray and Janet.

The video featured Ray sitting at his laptop computer. It was on a small desk in his bedroom. Ray punched out some numbers, then stopped.

"God damn it! What the hell is wrong with this God damn thing? The math was right a minute ago. What the God damn hell happened to it?" said the video version of Ray.

The congregation was not happy. Several people around Ray gave him dirty looks. The woman next to him pushed against the other people on the bench and inched herself away from the monster.

The scene on the video dissolved to a different shot of Ray on the computer. The date stamp on the screen indicated that he was working on a Sunday. The image zoomed in to confirm sales figures on the screen. Ray apparently worked on a Sunday. Another dissolve, and another sin.

Ray was talking to someone on the phone, and waving his arms around. He was also in his underwear. He said, "This God Damn Republican President is a joke. I hate the bastard, and I'll tell you this. In the unlikely event that there's a God, he would not be

on his side."

The image dissolved again, and Ray was on his computer for a change. He was logged onto a Free Canada website for asking psychic questions.

There was a giant mumbling in the crowd. The priest was glaring and pointing at Ray.

Then came the money shot.

The video abruptly cut to Ray and Janet having sex. The moaning was rather intense.

The Priest fell into a chair. The young people watched, but not for long. Their parents cupped their young and impressionable eyes. The old people screamed.

The video dissolved into a series of shots of Ray and Janet having sex. The date stamps revealed that this was not a one-time event.

Finally, the show was over. The video shut off, and the picture of the Virgin Mary descended back into place.

Lenny gave Ray the thumbs up.

Sixty-Four-year-old Patty Patterson asked, "What did that have to do with Noah's Ark?"

The crowd stood up and advanced on Ray's position. He leaped up and bolted for the front door. Once there, he made another token attempt at opening it. The sound

from the crowd was deafening.

Father Francis puts up his arms, and screamed, "Silence, we shall do this by church law."

Father Francis made the sign of the cross several times, as he made his way to the front of the church. He banged on the front door in a particular pattern. The door unlocked, and Church Policeman Richard Hinder entered the church. He re-locked the door behind him.

"What is the problem Father?" asked the officer.

Father Francis could hardly speak, "Evil, the Devil, is in this church." The Father pointed at the two love birds, but could not speak. Sweat dripped from his not so mighty brow.

The officer put a hand on the priest's shoulder, and said, "Calm down Father. Just tell me what happened."

Father Francis recited the events of the video. The officer scowled at Ray. You would think Hitler was in the church.

"We have to do a stoning, and right away," said the Priest. He looked directly at Ray, and mouthed, "Evil."

Ray pleaded to the group, "This is going a bit far. A little while ago you were all coming up to me, and shaking my hand. I'm the same guy. You know what this is all about, you're not stupid people. Janet needs to get a divorce, and you won't allow it. Her husband is a bastard, and he beats her all the time. She is entitled to some happiness in her life."

Janet lowered her head in shame.

Lenny said, "I never hit my wife. Honey, how could you lie like that? How can you do this to me? I have always loved you and treated you well. This is how you repay me?"

The Priest walked over to Ray, as the rest of the congregation stepped back. The Church Policeman put his arms together and waited.

The Priest announced, "Ray Kraft, you are guilty of several capital crimes: Taking the Lords name in vain, blaspheming, contacting witches and wizards, breaking the Sabbath, cursing the President, and most importantly, adultery."

Janet tried to make a run for it, not that there was a place to run to. She was grabbed by two men.

The Priest turned his attention to Janet, "Woman, you are guilty of adultery, just like your lover. You will, therefore, share his fate."

The congregation all added "Amen." They prayed awhile, then gradually morphed into an angry mob.

The Priest turned his gaze to Lenny, and said, "I am sorry that you found out about your wife's indiscretions this way dear friend. My condolences for what will happen next."

Lenny put up his hands, and said, "Well, it's better I found out now. I understand that we must not question God or his commandments. I just want to let whoever shot this footage know that I have no grudge against them. They were just doing God's will."

Lenny looked over to his wife. A well acted single tear ran down his cheek. He said, "I'm sorry my love, but if I have to choose between you and God, I would have to pick God."

Father Francis took control of the situation. He moved to the front and signaled for the gathered to bring the two perpetrators closer together.

"You can't do this to us. Is this what God would want? Is this what Jesus would do?" cried Ray, his face now drenched in sweat. The claustrophobia made a brief return visit. Ray felt as if thousands were pinning him in.

"God demands you be stoned to death for what you did, you abomination!" screamed Richard Sutter.

Richard was the man Ray visited three times a week and helped nurse back to health. Richard claimed Ray was a better help than his son. Richard was the man who just invited Ray over for chili. This same man raised his fists in Ray's direction and spat at him.

"You're a spawn of Lucifer, and I can't wait to stone you," said Richard.

"Ray, we're good friends. You just invited me over for Chili. You just asked me to come over and help you out. Nothing has changed," pleaded Ray.

Richard pointed a shaking hand, and screamed, "Everything has changed. You have cursed the Lord and disobeyed his holiest laws. I looked at you like son, but you were just a deceiver. You're a spawn of Satan, sent to tempt me. That's why you tried so hard. You wanted to get my trust so that you could steal my soul." Richard coughed, then began to fall. A couple of churchgoers caught him just in time and helped him to the nearest chair. Richard glared at Ray one last time, and spat, "May you rot in hell, where you belong."

The congregation said in unison, "Evil, Evil, Evil, Evil."

Ray tried to ignore this, and pleaded with the crowd, "Janet deserves a divorce. Stone me if you want, but let her go."

The group booed him.

Janet was not so kind. She said, "He led me into temptation. Stone him, and let me go back to my husband."

Ray rolled his eyes, and said, "You've got to be kidding me?"

"Stone the monster!" came the duel sounds of Steven and Jody Krantz. The woman who made him that terrible apple pie, and the man he helped with a fence installation, were pointing at him with hate.

"Too bad we can only stone both of you once," said Jody.

Their kids hissed as well. They stood by the couple's legs, like three gargoyles.

Ray's good friend Eric Jones joined the fray, "You've never been any good. Stoning is too easy for you."

He presumed that offer to go to the steak place was rescinded. At least something good came out of this.

Next, came a hissing sound from the woman who had been sitting next to him. She had been concerned that he didn't look good. Now, she wanted him dead.

Then came his stalker, Ann-Marie. She ran over to Ray at flank speed. Was she going to help him, or kiss him goodbye? Neither answer turned out to be correct. Ann-Marie slapped him hard across the face, and screamed, "How dare you lead me on, while you were fornicating in sin. You are a demon, and I hate you."

So much for his stalker.

At the gift shop, a man was inquiring if Ray's video was available for purchase.

The Priest opened a cabinet next to the front door. Inside were a few hundred stones. Two hundred and eighty-nine to be precise. That was the revised inventory number written on the inside of the cabinet.

"We must clean our house in the eyes of the lord," said the Priest.

One by one, people grabbed stones. There were not enough to go around, so some people were disappointed. Ray happened to glance at the stones of the people closest to him. They were perfectly round, and had a company logo on it, "McMurphy Stone Company-The Only Thing To Get Stoned With." The other side of the stones had, "We are endorsed by the Reverend Paul John Rogers" printed on it.

The Priest raised up his arms to the sky, and screamed, "These two have been found guilty of capital crimes, and must be stoned. It is so written in the Bible. Lord have mercy on their miserable souls."

He pulled out a form in the cabinet, filled it out, and signed it. He handed it over to Church Policeman Richard Hinder. The officer looked it over and signed it. He gave a copy to the Priest and kept the other for himself.

"Let the stoning commence," said the Father.

The crowd backed up and created a good amount of space for the stoning. Ray

positioned himself next to the front door. Janet stayed a few feet away from him. The Priest threw the first stone, but it completely missed Ray. Instead, the Priest accidentally took out a porcelain statue of the Virgin Mary. He was not pleased.

One by one, the gathered threw stones. One hit Janet and opened a gash on her forehead. The next hit Ray in the stomach. He winced in pain. Jim Glass threw a stone toward Ray but missed. Ironically, Jim Glass shattered a glass sculpture of Jesus. Another rock hit Ray on the arm, opening a painful wound. The next one hit Janet in the breast. These stones were small by design. They did gradual damage because there is no fun in a fast stoning.

Janet looked at her husband with sad eyes, and pleaded, "Please forgive me, honey. I want to go back to you."

Lenny responded by throwing a stone at her. It hit her in the mouth and took out a tooth.

Ray tried the front door again, hoping in vain that it would somehow open. He did find something of interest. Several of the stones damaged to the old door. This gave Ray an idea.

Several angry kids (the ones who's video was interrupted) threw a whole pile of stones. Ray jumped out of the way just in time. The stones struck the front door repeatedly and put a good crack in it. Ray looked up and smiled.

Another salvo of rocks came around. Janet took a few more hits to the face, while Ray took a couple to the gut. Ray forced himself up and stayed close to the door. When another large rock spray erupted, Ray ducked again. The door took more hits and

cracked all the way through. Daylight could now be seen through it.

Janet fell to the ground. As the congregation re-aimed, she pulled out her smartphone.

"I recorded this to prove that Ray was beating me, but it shows something else," said Janet, as she tried to smile through her bleeding mouth.

Only the first couple of rows of the crowd could observe the video, but everyone heard the sound. This paused the rain of stones for the moment. The video on the phone displayed Lenny beating Janet. The phone camera had been left running on a table and recorded Lenny without his knowledge. Nobody seemed to care that Janet was being beaten. After all, Lenny was her husband. They did become perturbed by what Lenny uttered next in the video.

"God damn bitch. You have no appreciation of me. I have to work seven days a week just to pay the God damn bills here, and I then I have to come home to your God damn crap," was blurted out by the on camera Lenny.

Lenny smiled at the crowd. He put his hands up, and said, "That's not me, she faked the thing. I would never take the Lords name in vain, or work on Sunday."

Then, something else was revealed. The video version of Lenny pointed, and said, "Don't go complaining again to your church friends. Those asshole Christian morons don't have a clue. I only go there because I have. So don't let those losers or their fake God into our business."

The gathered glared at the real life, Lenny.

"Holy crap," was all Lenny could manage.

Lenny was circled and dragged to the side.

Ray took advantage of the time Janet's video gave him. He pushed the damaged door of the church with all his might. A shooting pain developed in his shoulder. He ignored it and kept trying. He banged on it as hard as he could, as more agonizing pain erupted. After a few more body slams, the door cracked open. It actually broke in two, with the locked part still intact.

The congregation, Priest, and Church Policeman were focused on Lenny. They were not expecting the sound of breaking wood. Ray grabbed Janet, and the two ran out of the church, and into the parking lot. Lenny jumped up and attempted his escape. Ray and Janet made it to the safety of Ray's car. It was a good thing he had gotten there early and found a close spot. Ray pulled out as fast and floored the engine. Lenny made it outside but didn't get very far. The congregation caught up with him.

Ray looked through his rear view mirror. Behind him were two groups of stoners. The first group threw rocks at his car. A lucky hit put a crack in the rear window. A few tense seconds later, he was out of range. The remaining rocks fell harmlessly to the ground, except for one that took out a bird.

The second group was stoning Lenny. Ray saw Lenny going down hard, as the stones kept flying. A pretty red fountain of Lenny's blood sprayed up. It appeared that Janet no longer needed to worry about getting a divorced.

"Thank God you saved us," said Janet, giving him a big hug.

Ray ignored it, and her. He continued to drive out of town, and onto the main

highway. He assessed the damage to himself and Janet. It was mostly deep cuts and bruises. Janet would need some dental work for that tooth.

"It's almost twelve. Some churches end early, so they won't question us being on the road. I just have to avoid the Church Police, and make it across the border," said Ray. He looked down at the gas gauge. Half a tank was just about enough. Janet pulled at his arm. He pushed it away. Ray continued, "I know a way to sneak across the border. Did it for years, to make better time."

Janet smiled, as she asked, "So, we can be together?"

Ray looked at her in an unpleasant way. He replied, "I don't think so, not after your little performance. I'll get you safety to Free Canada. Then we're done."

She cried, "I understand." After a little pause, she added, "Thank you for saving me."

Ray shrugged, as he said, "It was the Christian thing to do."

ALSO AVAILABLE

