

# Caution; Smoking may lead to Bank Robbery

(The True Trials and Tribulations of a Jewish Bank Robber)



**Jamie Lebish**





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**Author:**

Jamie Lebish\*

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This is an attempt at bringing other people in the world up to date on what I have personally seen, done and experienced in the years of my so called adult life.

Frankly, my childhood was the reason being. I'm not sure why so many situations went astray. Whether or not, the television, neighborhood, persuasion or just pure boredom led to some of the more outrageous activities. Injuries, accidents or other misconstrued accounts of pre-adolescent malice and other post or pre-determined situations where the cause of the children in our family, specifically Scott, Johanna and I.

I can be absolutely sure about one thing, the relationship between my father and mother was absolutely out of control. From the moments of my earliest childhood memories, I can remember horrific screaming, implied violence and other assorted memories.

That all withstanding, I still had an exceptionally unique childhood. Generally I wish to screen out all those memories that enabled me instinctive convalescent behavior. I suppose that my younger brother (Scott) and I were in cahoots since we knew what we were even up to. The reason I am trying to explore my childhood for you have the reasons to which I can start to explain my fucked up adult life.

One thing I remember very clearly is the widespread use of prescription drugs and alcohol. Diet pills were frequently used, if not for dieting, then for the rush they must have delivered in the form of speed. I also have vague memories of our neighbor, Dave and his friends experimenting with model airplane glue sniffing. Why is or was this form of self deprecation so popular. Now the one thing I know for a fact is the over-abundance of alcohol abuse in our family. Dad being a Jazz musician, among other incredible talents really enjoyed boozy. A couple cocktails before dinner, you know how that goes. I do recall being aware of many jazz and booze parties at home or at other people's houses and all during this period my mother was attempting to raise us, keep her act together, and graduate from college. How was this all done?

Well, I have a possible reason 1 being the work ethic of the 40's and 50's era like no other. Your life is to get up as early as possible, get to the place of your employment, toil at it, get home or to the bar, get loaded have dinner and go to sleep. For the next day, day

after day, no fun pleases! Even vacations used to suck, bad food, rotten transportation (when are we going to get there, sit down and shut up).

I always preferred fucking off as much as possible. Oh yeah, I can work too. Far back as I can remember as a Kid, I worked at my father's animal hospital. For some kind of punishment I presume. My father would make us clean out 30 or 40 cages a day, covered in dog-shit. Get bitten, be subjected to numerous euphemisms and really mean cats and horribly gross operations. You see, all of these mitigating factors, were the prime: cause of my search. That's what I'll call it for now "THE SEARCH". The search for truth, (my truth), the search for fear, hope, and the de-regulation of normal life, and the search for the ultimate buzz!

That's what it really boiled down to. As a pre-pubescent I wanted to get high. Couldn't do it legally do we'd steal cigarettes, cigars, beer, wine and whatever. Go to family functions and half way through I'd be so fucking drunk my head would spin, and vomiting would usually occur. I guess chronologically I was 13 when this started. That is until I found the pot. It was a dream in reality. Life was manageable with Weed.

At about this time my father was making some serious money. How I know this? We moved from our first home, a modest ranch in the woods, to a 37 room mansion in Greens Farms, located on the hill 114 mile from the ocean. The house included 9 bathrooms, many wings, a library, and an Art gallery. Maids quarters, a guest house, a butler's pantry, breakfast nook, 9 acres of almost movable lawn, tennis court and of course, THE SHED. That was ours, Scott and I, our place for serious fucking around. Located down across the back lawn, and nestled far enough through the trees as so no-one, at least that we knew of, had any idea of what events were taking place.

The Shed is where I experienced my first sexual encounter. With an older girl who really liked acid. She was probably tripping in the shed that day when as I was about to get my rubber on but couldn't figure the damn thing out (without knowing you had to be hard to get it on). Katie was waiting for me on the second floor. Which was set up for these exact purposes by me and Scott (you know, like, bedding, rustic curtains, beer bottles, bong, pipes, and a purple pyramid hookah with 4 hoses coming off it, scared the

shit out of ya'). The loft was accessible by ladder, probably for hay, when it was designed. But, we rather enjoyed setting up the shed for the ultimate hang. We of course had lots of friends hanging our including the neighbors.

At about 14 years of age, Robin Trower, Jimi Hendrix, and Ten years after being my musical addiction. We, Scott and I, started a band and rehearsed in the upper level of the indoor gymnasium, at the house designed by the German architect by the name of Bauhaus. Supposedly we and a few other American families experienced living in the ocean going vessels on land. Lots of curves, multi-leveled sections, it looked like a fucking ocean liner on the top of a hill painted off-green, whatever.

So life continued, as I mentioned, we were musicians, and still are musicians first and foremost. As we get along in the story things will become much clearer about the connection between music and drugs, drugs and music. We were at the time the better of the lackluster group of young republican and democrat friends (or so we thought), as far as what? Music and Fun. Many parties occurred on short notice when the rents stepped out. Remembering those wild nights at the Bauhaus, exploring the effects of Pot, LSD, Hash, Liquor, girls and cocaine. Oh, didn't I mention that yet, at about the age of 15 I was introduced to my angelic friend, or so I thought (cocaine).

Thanks to our neighbors from down the hill. They were from Grosse Point, MI. They came to Westport armed with new words, new sayings, Ideas, music, and of course illegal substances. Jim, the oldest was my nemesis. He had the best hair in the city. Always looked cool had the coolest car, and had great drugs. Cindy his sister was my age, and to this day I haven't seen or talked to her since we were in love during our college years (If you read this, I still think about you). I still think about all the incredible girls, women and sluts along the way. I never had much of a problem getting girls. My first real girlfriend was at the tender age of 5 or 6 Debbie, I loved her more than life itself, she was beautiful and at the time being Jewish was a plus. She slept over fairly regularly, exploring every inch of each other. Debbie was mine, and I was of her for years it seemed.

Kissing was my main thing. I love to kiss, and still do. I guess that kissing is the most romantic area of sex that I enjoy the most. Don't get me wrong, I enjoy all phases of sex, but I still love kissing and hugging the most. But we'll get into sex a little later. Although now that I think about it..... girls were my life, and still are. I have two girls of my own, from a previous marriage. Currently they are full of life, gorgeous, growing, and they don't even know who or where I am anymore.

## Drugs

Drugs took my girls; Drugs took my last relationship away. My last relationship was pure love. And during one month of sobriety, in between all the madness we produced a son. And, up until now I have seen him twice. -DRUGS- Kelly, I still breathe her, every day. Almost three years have passed, and still have not been with another. I will always love her (no matter what bullshit occurred during those years), with all my heart and soul, and probably most of all for the inspiration she gave me into song writing. That's right. Kelly, she inspired me to write some of the most brilliant

melodies and lyrics that I could have ever done. She did it.

Music connected my life, and now I haven't played my guitar or sang in almost a year. Think about that. Music was and is what I did. I grew up with it. I'm not saying that I was the best, because there is no best, only different. Yes, there are better technicians. There is, and always will be. It took me a long time to realize that. But I know where I stand. And do realize that there could be an audience out there that would like my stuff, I don't even own a guitar, no less anything else. But the music is still there. Better than ever, stronger than love, more powerful than anything, except God. He gave me this gift, or curse, depending on how you look at it. But now I can't use it. You know what's funny, you can take the music from the man, but you can't take the man from the music. Right now, as I write this, I am locked up in County Jail awaiting sentencing for Bank Robbery. How did things get so bad?..... DRUGS.

I can and will beat this demon from within, and re-capture my life. Not as I once had it, but totally new, different, awesome. I just have to keep my new found faith, love, and understanding of my higher power. The one thing that seems to keep me going is... The Lord. Or, whomever you would wish to call him, or her. He is there, I know it now, and call out for his understanding, love, compassion and strength. Al Right enough of the God stuffs (just a quick note. In the Jewish religion, you cannot actually write GOD. You must write it as G\_d. So if anyone is offended, I am sorry. But I find this particular law to be outdated. So please forgive me).

Let's get back to the teen years if I may. Sometimes (most of the time), when I was growing up, I wanted to escape. Not just physically, but mentally as well. Inside my mind would fill with fear, and I would, and did, explore the world of drugs, to the point of near death many times over.

I know a man who probably knows me better than I know myself we first met when I was a young boy, trying to overcome some very bizarre thoughts, nightmares and reality. Most people would call him a doctor of psychology, I called him my friend. Stuart, I miss you, I also lied to you, right' in front of you, during some of our many sessions along the way, I know that you know.

He never said anything to get me over anything, but he would imply, or simply cross his legs in a certain manner. Or he would give me a certain look, which made me feel like a fool. A fucking fool, who wouldn't learn, didn't learn, listen or do anything. I just kept getting higher. I was totally high towards the end of our sessions. I was a train wreck. Waiting to happen and he knew it all. He never said he did, but in later discussions, let's just say, he implied.

Heroin is my truly worst enemy and my vital lover during those years. I can't even begin to explain this.

Note to self; (Here stuck in this place, awaiting my fate that would be decided by people who couldn't give a flying fuck if I were alive or dead (paperwork). It is at this moment that I feel totally and absolutely alone).

## Mine Accident

I consider this time of my adult life to be the most crucial

turning point. This was perhaps the crux of many things to come. My new found lover Heroin extinguished my real lover, Kelly, my friends, my parents, my music and my children.

Before the accident, life was going well. I had a relatively good relationship with just about everyone. I had returned the year before from a successful tour of Europe, with my band 'Fairfield Station', Paid by the Department of Defense. The Armed forces booked my band over to play for the troops and Officers' clubs in Germany, Holland, England and Wales. We made good money to boot (ha ha). At the time right before my car crash, I was what some would call a 'weekend warrior'. You know I got high once and a while during the week, and let loose on the weekends. In N.A., they call that's a functioning addict'. As in people that can waste away without a major incident. That was until March 18, 1994. I was delivering flowers at the time, driving a Toyota Van (the kind with the engine in the middle).

It was the day after St. Patrick's Day, and I'm quite sure that 3/4 of the world were hung over, and un-able to do much. Maybe get to work and function on a yes and no basis only. I, myself, was not, and never was a big drinker. I just didn't like the taste unless there was cocaine around. That's when I had to have a big half gallon size bottle of Jack Daniels to keep from getting too tweaked. Let's put it this way. By the end of those nights, or mornings, depending on your outlook, I called my bottle 'Mother'. I was a sick fucking wasted. And I actually thought this activity was fun.

To get back to the point, a Mercedes crossed the center divider line while going around a sharp corner and it was lights out. I came too briefly, there was blood everywhere.

Then I must have passed out again. The next thing I remember was someone using a big, noisy tool to extricate me from the van. The Jaws of Life and that day my friend, I was thanking the person that invented that tool. Thank you. Then I was unconscious once more. The next thing I remembered was being in the ambulance, and then I was out again. Then, extreme pain as the nurses, were trying to remove pieces of the dashboard from my right knee. All I remember was screaming in pain. I do remember those wonderful ladies that worked with me at Daybreak Nurseries, standing by me, and holding my hand. Thank you. And right before I passed out I saw Kelly standing by me. Thank you as well. You were all extremely human that day, and I'll never forget it.

I wound up finally going to 2 different hospitals, and 5 surgeries including, a very complex facial reconstruction. A small metal plate in my left temple, and a new cheekbone grafted from rib cartilage. All of this was coinciding with my relationship with Kelly, which ultimately led to a myriad of financial and mental health issues (Cheeks and Ribs, It sounds like something off of a menu or a song).

During the few months after my last surgery (While in the hospital for my last and longest facial surgery, they put me on a morphine drip. That was fucking heaven. No pain and a new sleepy fun world. Then after a few days they put me on other opiates). At the time, I was living in Kelly's trailer, trying to re operate. Things started getting ugly, and after a fight she kicked me out. Crutches and my bags, I finally made it home through

a snowstorm to my trailer (At the time I was living in the same trailer park as Kelly, just around the block from her). At my house all I could do was lay there in pain, and becoming more and more dependent on painkillers. And we all know how addictive they can be. I wanted more. I needed anything I could get.

I had met Kelly there, at the Westport Trailer park. It was totally hidden from view, so that Westporters' could never see it. But they knew it was there all the same. The White trash of Westport, Connecticut (What's that word they use for military intelligence), oxymoron. It just didn't make sense. Westport is basically the Beverly Hills on the east, with their, own hidden away poor folks.

So as the medication decreased, the pain increased. It was right about then when I was introduced to my new full time lover, and best friend, Heroine. Hi, how are you? It worked great for the pain at first, basically on the weekends. Then maybe twice a week and the weekends. Combined with some major crack smoking, it mixed in for a cocktail of disaster. As my habit grew, so did the lies, the bullshit, and my life started circling down to a living fucking hell in a handcart. The alluring part of Heroin is simple, and almost in escapable. So hard to explain. It feels like all of life's pleasures rolled up into one easy sniff worry free, pain free, emotion free, relationship free. That is a dope fiend. A person who no longer gives a fuck.

## **My High School Years**

In 16, it was decided that I was either too difficult or not normal. Therefore, my 'parents' imposed me to a private day School in Stamford, CT called The King School. The King School was primarily for the rich and rewarded Gentiles of Fairfield County, (the bedroom community of Manhattan), headed for Yale, Harvard etc., I was not at all pleased there. I did not identify, get along with, or even try to make it work.

My time at King School in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade lasted about five months. During which time I had the pleasure of meeting some people that I would have ever met. The Sweets of Darien, CT had a son that was in my grade. He and I became close friends and amazingly enough they also live in a Bauhaus. The only difference being that he drove a Mercedes Benz to school. Whereas I got a ride to school with my math teacher who lived down the road from me in Westport. I didn't have a car yet. The primary reason that we got on so well with each other was that we had similar tastes in music. And we both loved to smoke weed. And, of course Chris is at the stature he was in, only got better. We used wherever and whatever opportunity came up which was basically every day.

I have these distinct memories that arise by being 16 again, at Chris's house, up in his room. A parachute hanging above and the Doobie brothers' 'Eukia' was blasting from his Bang and Olafson stereo. Pot smoke filled the room. These are rich and inviting memories at this particular second, sitting in solitary confinement. I could easily re-visit, I can almost smell the incense, and see the flicker of candlelight, closing my eyes, I put myself there, to escape the horrors awaiting me each day closer to my sentencing.

It's just a memory. I feel that these writings are all I have left. My life was lived, and then it stopped. Now, do we really need to go over the reason that my life did come to a halt. Before I mention

the word I wish to say that I really have no good left in my future as it looks from here. I only know that I will forever remember what put me here, and most of all, the hurt that I gave to my children, my parents, my friends and finally me.....DRUGS (Thought tangent).

My free life stopped ticking at the Budget Inn, in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida at exactly 7:33 pm EST. Just before I walked out to meet him, I took the biggest hit of crack that I have ever done. Talk about paranoid? Handcuffed, and thrown in the back of a sweltering hot police cruiser. Answering benign questions of who, what, where and why.

This is what I want to know. How could all of my vast experience and superior knowledge, (joke=laugh) lead me to this present prediction here and now. Drugs are my friends. I finally crossed that oh so fine line to complete insanity and utter insanity.

We (the officer and myself) arrived at the Ft. Lauderdale police Department, where I was initially thrown into a cage, not un-like an animal. This cage was pre-intake I learned from a lady/man, amongst drunks puking on themselves, crack dealers and me. At that moment the door slammed shut and my free life did not exist.

I finally did the deed that would lock me down, and force me into sobriety. This is not how I intended my years of abuse, near suicides, and needles to get me. Yet, as they say in N.A. Drugs will take you to three places eventually; Jails, Institution, and death. I have now visited 2 out of 3. That's including countless rehabs, detox on my own, voluntarily. No Go.

Other detoxes connected with institutions, and a 67 day stint at military style re-heab in up-state Connecticut called, The Connecticut Valley Hospital, (CVH). This was a voluntary locked down unit, attached to a Mental Hospital, of which all may be closed due to funding (And those politicians actually believe this is an effective solution for the WAR ON DRUGS). I liked being straight and in control of my life so much that I wound up staying 22 extra days. I would like to thank the wonderful staff that puts up with an insane amount of bullshit each day. They treated me with respect, and for that, Thanks.

Am I crazy, Am I mentally gone. Am I so incased by this disease that it put me in the same area of jail that I share with 5 Iraqis, 7 child molesters, 4 rapists, snitches and fags.

One thing that I have learned in jail, I guess they're more like rules. Is; don't explain yourself or your case with anyone. Stay the fuck out of everybody's way, unless addressed by someone. There are people here who enjoy this life. Oh yeah, No bills, No wife. Three squares a day, rec., time once a day, playing cards, bullshit chatter and 8 hours of sleep, with the lights on. You know, one of my best friends, Jay K once told me, "You'll go to jail someday, you are just like me". Jay also continued, and you will wind up in jail. Locked down, confronting int., mal and external demons every moment". I have to say that, at the time, those words scared the shit out of me. I knew it as well. I have always known that I would go to prison. Npt., for bodily harm on someone, God forbid, but for some reason, I knew.

Even asleep, my dreams in jail have been the most dramatic, brilliant, (In terms of light and shadow), Technicolor, luscious and the most rememberable I have ever had. Sweet smells and visions of summer nights on the southern California coast around 1954. Picture one of those beautifully shot movies of that era. Sort of a dream like quality, and to me during this particular dream, it was like I was there, on the set. The dream took place on a movie set back in the 50's, and it was real to me.

Waking from dreams like that one was a stinging bite of reality, realizing I was in Lock down at The Miami Federal Detention Center Unit 7 East. 118 inmates packed into a small day room. There were 3 Televisions but you couldn't hear them unless you purchased a radio and headset for \$49.50.

Everyone spoke Spanish, mostly from Columbia or Cuba. One thing I do remember hearing was that they say it's easy to get in here. But, a mother... Fuck to get back out. Unless you were really rich and smart or stupid enough to try to escape. They called this place a sewer-max. Because it is impossible to escape, if that was what you had on your mind.

These days Federal lock-up is so high-tech, so many unmarked doorways, endless hallways leading nowhere.

I couldn't be bold enough to think it, smart enough to do it and dumb enough to try. Patience is the only key.

### **Tangenting back over to the school**

Do you, remember High School? Usually spent at 1 school. Going to football games, occasionally skipping class, lots of homework, and a party atmosphere on most weekends. You know, spin the bottle or getting your braces locked together while kissing so passionately with your first sweetheart, that sometimes dry humping would occur, while your friends' parents were gone for the weekend.

Well, I sort of wish that my High school years had been more like what I just described (although the braces thing really happened with Debbie). Let's just say a 'normal' life during those years. Although now that I'm thinking about it, maybe it was an experience far from normal and also one that I could never forget.

Let's see... ..I left off talking about the 5 months I had at that privileged posh day school in North Stamford. Connecticut, (I hated that place). Ok. On the 5<sup>th</sup> month mark things started to go so very wrong. On purpose, of course. I figured, why not fuck it all up. Was it more of the search?

I got suspended a few times, and then finally expelled from one of the most celebrated brat schools in the world. So what? Oh yeah, I did get punished, the Darien Animal Hospital. I was the shit cleaner boy, for the rest of the school year. That was absolutely miserable. Two wards filled with cats that would sooner scratch your eyes out, then come out of their cage. And those dogs were so big and mean, we needed this 5 foot long pole, with a hoop that tightens at the end of it. And some of these animals were so sick or stupid; they would shit all over the cage, and spread it all over themselves, and everything else that would come into contact with it. That was like working in a vicious shit factory. I decided

at that point that school was definitely an option I could live with. It was during this period in time that my parents were not only at each other's throat, they were actively taking this rage out on us, in a big way. Which in turn, Scott and I took our frustrations out by doing some bad things. One instance that led to a major breakthrough in our behavior was when our dad found a big bag of weed in our room. This caused him to lose his fucking mind. First, he took the weed to the Police station, to have us arrested. Instead, he was almost charged with possession for even having the weed on him. THAT WAS IT, THEY HAVE TO GO!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Scott and I could hear my Dads' car racing up the long, steep driveway to the Bauhaus. Fear and panic hit us both. It was as if the driveway made his art get amplified and the sound and feat rose into a monster. We were summoned into the library. (Oh No!), there was trouble a brewing.

I'm not really sure (let's say hazy air, I can't re-call your honor), how the turn of events unfolded. By the end of our 'talk', we were forced into an ultimatum. Put simply, it was either separate military academies, or jail. What's up with that! Scott and I were, as you might put it, stunned and blown away. We calmly told us 'dad' (long before that point in time we hated our parents as much as they hated each other), we would go upstairs for a while, and give it some thought. (Perhaps we were attorneys in our past lives. It was a brilliant stalling strategy nonetheless). This did make sense to him at the time as well, (cocktail?) When we got upstairs, and shut the door we went directly into para teen-military mode. We instantly agreed not even think about 'those' choices. So we made up our own move.

Since Scott and I both had some camping experience, we then collected our backpacks, clothes, food, music, and any other scrap of material that we needed to survive in the wilderness of Fairfield County. And, that was that. We were running away. To live in the woods or something. We had no plan. By that time of our decision, it was after 9pm. It was pitch black by the time we packed and crawled out of our second story window, and ran like hell. No way were they going to win. It was us against them, and since their hatred for each other was so great, so was the turn of events that came as a result of it.

For one reason or another, we ended up meeting our friends Rich Barton. He was also a bad boy. We wound up at a party full of girls, beer, music and weed, and of course, the angel in white. We had a great time, got totally messed. By the time the party was winding down it was around 4 am. Scott and I along with Rich decided to find a place to camp. We wound up driving all around until we found a spot in the next town over. It was just getting to be sunrise at the field of gold. As the sun rose we started walking our stuff through this magical golden field. We walked for a while until we found a patch of trees, hiding in tall weeds. We put down camp.

The next morning, or should I say later that morning, we awoke. All of us with new meanings to the words, Hangovers, panic, and yet true joy. Joy of being on our own. Away, from the family that hated us. Although seasonally it was November, it was cold. And, it was starting to rain. What next? Let's go shopping!!!

Back in those simpler days my father had charged at all the local stores in town (I don't know, maybe they trusted each other back then before DUI's and 2 charge cards, Diners Club and American Express).

So, we bought wood, nails, plastic sheeting, food and more camping supplies. We trudded all of that shit back from Richs' car, in the rain and we built a lean to (for non woodsmen that is a small shack, with a back, 2 sides and an outcropping leaning roof, so rain water would flow to the back). We built a nice fire right in front of the line so we were warm and protected from the elements. And of course the plastic sheeting went over the whole deal so it was waterproof and wind proof.

It was cool, skipping school, partying in our own house, parent free. As a day or two went by, more friends had found out about our spot, and the partying became rampant. All day weed smoking, Beer and Old Number 7, Jack Daniels or whatever was around. Nevertheless, it was cold. We lasted about 4 or 5 days before our camp was ripped up and ripped off, after we had gone out for something to eat. The lean to be destroyed by un-known assailants (probably the landowners). This had left Scott and I in a major quandary.

We called upon two brothers, also musicians, also twins Bill and Bob (Drums and Keys, respectively). They took us to their house. It was warm, we decided to call our parents and begin negotiations to return home. We figured half of the Police force was looking for us anyway. However, we did not budge from our positions. No bargaining. We would return home if things were just as before. Ya! Right, so they said, but we did go home. Returning to school as the new found folk heroes of our time. According to kid history, not many kids actually went as far as us. But we did it, and we won, or did we? Things at that point were never the same. I believe that Dad was seeing other women and their break-up wasn't far away. The thought came to him that separating us would be the thing to do.

It was during the rest of the school year and summer that I was trying to get myself adjusted to the fact that my parents did make decisions about Scott and myself, Lonely, hard decisions that were based on need and separation of the dynamic duo.

Scott and I were so very close in age that it was like having a twin, but not really. In a way, because I was the oldest chronologically, I had to break our parents in, sort of speak. This in the long run made things easier for Scott, Johanna and little Pete. I spent a lot of that summer trying to bond with Pete when I could. He was 12 years younger than I. Therefore, we mainly ride bikes and stuff. I never got a chance to see my brother or sister grow up because I have been always away. Being, I guess, no I'm actually quite sure that I was the black sheep.

That was during the summer before I went to another private, this time at boarding school in Stowe, Vermont. Stowe Prep, the perfect place to hide little rich kids. It really was a wonderful place to be. There were 70 some boys and girls living together in a converted oversized barn house, one mile from the best skiing on the East Coast. And as luck would have it, Jim S. My neighbor from

down the hill from the Bauhaus, was now attending college about an hour away outside of Montpelier, Vermont, Goddard College in Plainfield, (some called it God College). At Goddard there was no grading system, no real rules. It was alternative education through the powers of music and LSD, Purple Microdot to be exact. He sold it to me and I brought it back to Stowe school. That got me on the board of student directors pretty damn quick.

Oh, here's a thought as I write and wait for the media cart at Cumberland County Jail.

Methadone withdrawal. Do you have any idea what that feels like? I know some of you do. I'm quite sure others couldn't even guess, kicking a 90mg habit. On the run after robbing a bank, panic stricken and getting more sick by the minute. After the robbery I was able (\$) to procure a 100mg bottle from a source in town. Where do I cop next? Fear races within me. These, are the desperate thoughts that consumed my mind.

I eventually hopped in a limo to the nearest city in which to cope. Lowell, Massachusetts, was roaming the streets at first light, looking for a fix, DRUGS...AHHH. What can you do? It is so super fucked-up that now, reality is a nightmare. And the nightmares have become reality, physically, mentally, emotionally. Just ask any dope fiend, that's kicked.

And, the most fucked-up part of it all, is that I really had the chance to kick. Sort of like finally Jeopardy, without one. Idiologically, I reasoned before all of this illegal belligerence started. I knew that I had him locked up, put down..., and start my life again, at age 40. What a bitch. And not just Methadone, But I had to stop everything. In jail there are no second chances, until you make it to the gate. That meant crack, booze, weed, cocaine, and everything else I ingested to forget the fight.

How could I feel good ever again. How will I have fun again. How will I ever get used to life on life's terms? DRUGS.

In a holding cell in Ft. Lauderdale is puking and shitting my old life out through any orifice that could be used as an exit, for demons. On the floor of a 6x9 cell with 7 other assholes. Most of which hate crackers. (That would be white folk). Finally, after 18 hours later, (no water, can't eat). I get transported to the Broward County Jail. So overcrowded, and ridiculously under-staffed by the most insensitive stuck-up belligerent "stuff". FUCK THIS, I need to get high. Going on 2 full days dope sick, lying on cement floors, waiting to wait on waiting.

Eighteen more hours go by. They took us to the changing room and we all changed into orange jump suits, and I was sent upstairs to the jungle unit. (That's what they called it!) All black, but not nice black. Cracker-hater, black. Also a few Cuban or Columbian. White man cop-killers, Rapists and of course, child molesters. Hi! How are you doing now?

Let's change the subject.

God, give me hope, for I have truly fucked things up! Send me to the dreams I live in-between the hours of 10pm and 6am.

Take me where reality is dreaming.

If only for a little while..... Until next time

Love,

Jamie xxxooo

To everyone, that believes, or hears

Note to mom; I really don't know what to say about this endeavor so far. I told you that this may shock or disturb you, but I have to get it out and you asked to hear it. Please let me know if it is too hard to handle. I have a lot more and it needs to be written.

There are many sides of my existence of being. So far my personal views on situations, that has taken place past and present. Now I think I'll begin to explore just a scosh deeper into life itself.

At this point we all know something about have rotten my life has become. And the circumstances surrounding my arrest. To date I'm still waiting to be formally sentenced. It could be anywhere from 2 to 4 years. I'll simply have to take what I can get. Learn new existence's, new plans, on which I can devote the rest of my life to my children, Sierra, Kristen and Jack. My music and probably a love interest. It always seems impossible any more to feel that feeling that we all need, Love. I haven't been touched or looked at in 3 years. The Longest by far that I've ever gone. It seems farther than ever.

I realize that I am not a "writer" per se. But I had the knack for writing down thoughts at the time if inception. Therefore, if I could write any faster, I would probably remember more.

The trouble with life is time. I always had a thing for them. What time is it? Am I late, early. I haven't spent enough time doing anything productive in so long. DRUGS!. I feel that this time will endeavor me to get a grip.

I truly hope that it's not too late to get close to my kids, parents, old friends, and my music. I loved music since I remember. I recall melodies as far back as 3 and 4, still give me goosebumps.

Having gotten a gift so unique and wonderful, why have I still not had the chance to let others hear my songs. I offer my soul through my music, but, so far I've been cut off I'm not talking about the "rock star" life. I would be happy to support my family. What really turns my loss is having someone driving along in the middle of Utah or Germany or Boston or anywhere singing the melody saying the lyrics, and get their own pleasure out of the pleasure I get from writing. Example; "Sapphire Blue" written for the feelings I had for Kelly at the time. It goes like this:

### **Sapphire Blue**

When I start to think, I'm thinking of you

The feelings of true love arrive, in Sapphire Blue

Taken the time to believe in my mind that it's you

Blue, Blue, Blue, Sapphire Blue

In my dreams at night, you're always there  
The sultry smell of love, hangs in the air

As the children sleep, we lie awake  
Blue, Blue, Blue Sapphire Blue

Crossing my mind, I get this feeling sometime  
Deep from my soul, from a place we all know  
You know the color is the bluest of them all  
You know that color is Sapphire Sapphire Blue

Blue, Blue, Blue Sapphire Blue

-----Words and music c 1994 by Jamie Lebish

I am truly a romantic idiot, don't you agree. You will. One thing is without hearing the melody, it really doesn't make sense. I am starving to sing and play at this moment and I believe that my voice is strong enough now, instead of letting someone else sing them The pleasure is all mine and yours.

### **Stowe School (The Beef)**

As I said, there were some very interesting things about the people, the surroundings, services, etc. at Stowe prep. We were lucky enough to have at our disposal a 50 watt radio station located in the basement of the school. That intrigued me from the instant I got there. Imagine the possibilities of this.

Mountain Free Radio Stowe 93.5 FM. The station was run by wild, out of control private high school "students", and since the range was only about 5 miles, we didn't actually adhere to FCC regulations. Crazy John was the guy who I remember as the head "DJ" there. Long blond hair, pumping with testosterone, humility and every possible substance that he could ingest and plenty of it. John was the CEO of Stowe Prep at the time. He, at points would conduct on air productions that would boggle the mind. Another insane fucker was Maurice from Mississippi. He was the most wild and unruly of the board. Then there was Whit, the senator from Ohio's son. I spent 2 months in the woods with Whit living in a Urit and doing yoga, that was an excellent time to be alive. My closest compadre at the time was Jordy Brown. Both he and his 2 brothers Scott and Eric were also going to Stowe. Jordy and I connected on a lot of different levels, including the fact that we were both raised in Westport CT. On the Ferry lane to be exact. Their mom was named Gwen and their stepfather was Mr. Peter Funk, this was and is a whole nother story.

There is so much detail I want to get into. When is it too much, when is it not enough. I suppose I'll find out when I get some feedback. We had a little business at Stowe. Jordy and I and Lynn from Montreal handled all the LSD supply to all of the 70 odd students and some faculty.

We would hitch hiker or acquire mode transportation down to Goddard College, pick up enough for everyone, turn around and head back to Stowe. We turned our room into a temporary office, with a line out the door down the hall and around to the stairs. Lynn handled the finances, Jordy kept watch, and let in and out, and I handled the product. Truly a wonderful business. Except, we were dealing with LSD. A mind altering chemical that causes intense phases of alternate reality's , hallucinations, strychnine stomach cramps and a type of speed that keeps this all coming at you in plateaus if consciousness for twelve to fourteen hours. Now imagine what this would be like when close to 70 people were in it together. A Frightening scenario indeed.

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We would hitch hike or acquire mode transportation down to Goddard College, pick up enough dope for everyone, turn around and head back to Stowe. We turned our room into a temporary office, with a line out the door down the hall and around to the stairs. Lynn handled the finances, Jordy kept watch, and let in and out, and I handled the product. Truly a wonderful business, except we were dealing with LSD. A mind altering chemical that causes intense phases of alternate realities, hallucinations, strychnine stomach cramps and a type of speed that keeps this all coming at you in the plateaus of consciousness for twelve to fourteen hours. Now imagine what this would be like when close to 70 people were in it together. A Frightening scenario indeed among the totally idiotic things that occurred, which was my fault, without thinking twice was, giving this substance to younger students radically changing their life clock forever.

Stowe's buildings and surrounding structures were totally unique to me. Behind the main dorms was a huge geodesic dome, you know or maybe you don't. These were constructed with large wooden triangles, when it is complete it looks like a large semi-sphere. There was another structure like that, except much smaller called a Urit. It had a wood stove with some storage and quite livable even in those Mountain winters.

We all stayed in there as often as we could to "Get away" from the world. Back up in the hills behind Stowe were other such abodes, tents, lean to's, so everyone had their space. Then there was Wallow Hallow. Magic occurred when the name was mentioned.

Wallow Hallow came to being when some friends my brother and some other very cool people attended the Goddard Spring Fest in Plainfield, Vermont. They opened up an entire dorm for all of the "visitors". And we used it. Let me see if I can recall, if I can the collection of burn-out victims that we shared life with. Besides myself there was Jordy, Lynn (my office staff), the Hulk, Lee Bisher from N.J., George and Phillip from across the hall (good loyal customers), Cindy, Jim's sister Scott who hitchhiked from Connecticut for the weekend. All there for non-stop tripping on LSD from the moment we got there included were laughing, eating and drinking and a lot of weed smoking.

Wallow weekend. Unimaginable for the most part and hard to remember now because of the amount of drugs pumping through my body. But I know this for sure, we all probably had one of the best weekend of our natural lives. This took place around 1976 but we were definitely hold outs from the 60's era. Life was good.

Music was a huge part of Stowe's evening and weekend life. This is where I met Steve alias Biff B a great and unique guitar player. We spent a lot of time together with the rest of the gang Jamming non-stop on Traffic "Low spark of high heeled boys", among other great songs in the dome. The following year it turns out, I was asked not to return for fear of total anarchy. But Scott was allowed in my place. This was where he met our friends Adam from NYC. Eventually this connection would lead me to live in NYC and get into probably the best band I had the pleasure of playing with, High Tide Fusion. Incredible material, great musicians and we almost got signed. But that's another story; I recall one such song I wrote called Mrs. Brewster. Inspired by our housekeeper in CT, more of that later.

Well, because of that memorable weekend we named our new, authentic Indian Tee-Pee and surrounding area Wallow Hallow. Made authentically from hand shaved birch trees, hand sewn canvas, and working smoke flaps. Jordy and Lee and I along with a couple of other guys lived there on and off for the remainder of the school year. Stowe prep was ruled by the students call SG student government. Smoking in class, swearing and no real grading system. Henceforth, when the majority ruled that was it. One by one people were dropping like flies.

I enjoyed most of the people there and some I kept in touch with. Among those was Andy B. He put on one of the most memorable party's that following summer. Our band played there hundreds of really ripped teenagers, Andy committed suicide the following year. I miss all of you guys. How many of us are there left. How many made it? How many lost it or died doing it.

It seems as though we breeze through our existence. It is inevitable that people die. Some very close people have died that I knew during my life. If you were to ask me right now, here on this day, whom at, of all the people I've seen leave this earth. Over just about anyone that I miss the most, it would have to be my Nanny Janet, my maternal grandmother.

I had a special kind of love for her and her for me and everyone else in her family. She was always there. You could always count on her for anything Love, understanding, compassion, money, transportation, a place to crash at. Whatever was hers was yours. She had been married and divorced or widowed five times over her life. When she was young, she was beautiful.

Even my earliest days that we spent at her apartment in the Bronx, along with Papa-eggy my grandfather she was great to us. I really don't remember him too well though. They lived on Grand Concourse, which since has become a very hostile place now. It's very hard to describe her or the feelings I had for her in words, (maybe you could help me on this one mom? She was your mother and all). One thing I will mention was her complete lack of driving prowess. She could not back the car up in the driveway. Many crashes later, I or someone else had ultimately done it for her. And then point the direction of the highway.

When she passed away, mom, Erin, Peter and I went down to Miami for the funeral. What an ordeal. We stayed at the Miami Beach Sheraton, which was an excellent hotel. Right on the beach we had a great time, except for the funeral itself The other side of our family was there whom we are not fond of Sandy the dentist was on the cell phone though-out the service (Horrible). It was not only a somber event, but just plain weird. Is this how family acts in a crisis, I don't think so. Anyhow, I loved her dearly and we'll all miss her forever.

By the time I was a senior in high school, I dropped out. Having to attend a public High school was something I couldn't, wouldn't and did not deal with well. By that time I was very much used to the alternative it was destined not to be. During my short tenure I met a girl, her name was Laura, and once again I was thinking from the waist down. She was very pretty and we got along quite well. So I quit school, got a job, and I left my home to live with her. Laura lived in a modest home on Turkey Hill and I was in love so everything was cool (one thing is I have a track record of failed relationships) so I moved in with her and her mom whom was a nice woman, she was a Connecticut State Toll booth collector. As her 2<sup>nd</sup> husband Dom was also a toll collector. Her grandmother lived there also, and she was full of piss and vinegar. Literally, the reason I say that is because one time I happened to be home and he and the grandmother were arguing and before He knew anything she through a jar of pee right in his face. She meant that shit. We lived in Laura's deceased brother's room. He accidentally shot himself in the head the year before, so Laura had the room to herself we slept directly under the bullet hole which was never fixed. WOW! This is just one fond memory, but the sex was incredible.

Yup, at that point my dick was completely running my life. It happens to all males at some point. Major life decisions are made through the little guy. During my senior year I was employed by the very contractor that built most of the houses on Cedar Point and I worked with Dave. He was a simple man with simple needs. He taught me a lot of things in the building business. I actually wound up liking that type of work and wound up doing it off and on during life.

I just couldn't get used to the part about getting up at six am and working in subzero environment. Not for me, although I did it anyway. I wound up breaking up with Laura a few months later (what a shock) and I moved back home to push living comparatively. I decided that I needed my Diploma to get into music school. I was interested in attending Berklee college of Music. During the previous summer Scott attended Berklee so that's how I got the idea.

As Scott Decided to go to Berklee it was a decision that did not come lightly. It was coinciding with his girlfriend at the times plan to attend Harvard summer school. That would be Margot, probably the most beautiful girl in Westport at the time. During the previous school year was perhaps the most tumultuous. I need to go on before I can go back so I'll save this section for when my head is clearer. All I can say now is that we eventually switched girlfriends during my "senior year". Anyway, onward and upward.

During that summer, our family moved to the waterfront. It

was a nice house, built by an idiot. What I mean to say is that the builder (the very one I worked for) cut corners on everything he did. At our house the corners he decided on meant that during storms my mom would have to put pots or some kind of containers all over the house to catch the leaks coming from the walls and ceilings. 1 Seaspray Road was our new address.

There were some great times in that house, located on an island off the coast of Westport called Cedar Point, very exclusive for the most part, at least at the first impression. To get to the island one had to drive over a little one way wooden bridge to get there. This area was extremely superfluous during storms. When larger storms or Hurricanes or Northeasters would occur you could not get on or off the island for any reason, which reminds me of a particular event that happened the first year we were living there.

During the Christmas period, actually it was Christmas Eve, at the time I was -seeing a very cute girl (what a surprise), that had the same first name as me exempt we called her Jamie chick so as not to get us confused. So it's Christmas Eve, usually a very Holy time of year, but in High school with a very strong libido things didn't always go as planned. The weather was frightful as well. I picked Jamie up earlier in the evening to go out for a couple and see some friends. As the evening went on and we continued our quest for teenage mind awareness, we headed back to my folks place for a while. By the time we arrived at the island the storm was taking on a whole new fervor. Flooding would occur. We had our way with each other in my tiny room and we proceeded to fall asleep. At about 3 A.M. she was the first to wake up and she was really freaking out. Remember we were just kids on the Holy day out way too late. Well, Jamie demanded that I take her home that minute. As we left the driveway in Dad's trusty Ford Granada, it seemed as though the water was lapping over the hood of the car. The island was completely flooded over. We made it about two streets over and the Granada died stranding us there. Water was now coming through the windows, very frightening, very cold. Then a still unknown person or savior came over to the car in a boat and proceeded to row us back to the house. Remember this was winter in Connecticut, and we were frozen solid. For some odd reason I was standing on the bow of our savior pointing ahead towards my house, feeling very much like George Washington crossing the mighty Delaware. A few hours later sunrise, then came the moment of truth. 2 hours later I had the pleasure of waking up my father with the good news. "Dad, " I said. "I had a girl over last night who is still here, downstairs to be exact, and last night I tried to take her home. We took your car and got stuck in the flood and your car has been flooded with salt water totaling the car on Christmas morning". God! What a disaster. And I still had to borrow my mother's car to drive her home at this point I pretty much assumed that we would never see each other again at least sexually. Everyone was mad, Dad, Mom, her parents who also had a lot of local clout and a huge house, clout having to do with their way of forcing me to not see their daughter ever again. Jamie's older sister at the time was dating the lead guitarist from the band Wishbone Ash. At that time they were playing the bigger shows and had one or two top 10 hits.

During this time in the mid-seventies, Rock and roll from England was the sound or so they said. I can't remember the songs

now, although they tell me they rocked. The interesting note in this story was that on my visits to Jamie's House, she took me into her sister's room which was a temporary housing area for her boyfriend's guitar collection which was like walking into a fantasy room for me. Whammo! I have never seen so many guitars in one room. For one person this was excellent, another reason for me to continue my quest to mega stardom as I perceived it at the time. Really though my music never felt more important than right then. This was truly an inspiration and she was too. I miss her as well.

I really, truly have so many more details and stories concerning this; many others that it is impossible when to know what are enough and when to expand. It also is hard to remember some of these times, possibly selective memory, which is not unlike the art of selective hearing, which is an art only acquired by years of marriage. How much do you really need to hear and how much do I really want to divulge. During certain points in everyone's life that are lives shall we say life's little indiscretions do we need to discuss it. I don't think so. The purpose of this effort to give you an idea of 1) For me to release some or all of my inner demons. 2) Try to instill the reader how not to run your own life.

Jimi Hendrix wrote "Are you Experienced", well, I guess I took that as a personal message, as I mentioned, "The Search". All of my life I have and do see as an experience of some sort or another to learn from, Good, bad, Rich, poor, healthy, or hurt, in love, or pain, Life deals the cards. I somehow believe that I was dealt the losing hand, but I think that it is just a temporary thing. I do, though believe that most of my life for whatever reasons I would do again, for unknown reasons. I have gotten the opportunity to meet and know so many people in so many situations from all over this wonderful world. Seen it, been there, done that. Let's continue, shall we?

We all know about the experience. It is what shapes us into the beings we are now are growing into. No matter what age, color, gender, we all experience. I guess I took that thought a little too seriously, but again all these writings are experiencing about truth, the truth of the world, on how fucked up things are, and how wonderful they can become. Mostly we cannot choose happiness. It comes to those who deserve it or earn it.

I'm getting a thought about the summer after my first year at Berklee College of Music. A drummer that I was fairly close with at school, Scott Daggett was his name, flew me out to Indianapolis to start a band and tour. Yeah, right. This was when I met Nedra and her daughter Kaiya and the start of my wake up call. Some pretty fucked-up memories are about to ensue.

It was the summer of 78' and I was just fresh from my first year at Berklee. This was not going to be an ordinary summer. A few days after I got home to Westport, I received a call from Scott D. He was calling me in regards to our tentative plans we made at school. He informed me that a plane ticket and a place to stay were in the bag. So I packed up my shirt and headed for the Great Midwest, Indianapolis to be exact. At the time I had never been to the area, so I had no idea what to expect. I arrived at the airport to find Scott and Nedra there waiting for me, so far so good.

He then informed me that I was staying with them and

her daughter at her condo on the north side of town. As I said already, Nedra was his girlfriend. She was also involved with the Indianapolis underground. It turns out that she's a high priced call-girl (of which I did not know about for some time), Scott and her were heavily into shooting Cocaine, ounces and ounces of pure pharmaceutical pink cocaine, all day all night, in front of the child for day after day, no sleeping no eating. They would retire to their room and would leave a huge pile for me every night. At first it was a dream and it quickly turned into a total fucking nightmare. About 2 weeks after I got there, or so I thought, I really had no idea how much actual time had gone by. Scott and Nedra had a huge fight, (what a shock). And the next thing I knew, Scott left for Chicago and never returned. No band, no tour no money, nothing. I was left there to fend for myself, a 19 year old cocaine addicted loser. After about a month or so, we started getting close while her daughter was growing more and more despondent. At that point we decided to sell all of her worldly possessions, including 2 cars, a house full of furniture and her condo. We held on to her brand new Triumph Spitfire convertible. Her parents were given responsibility for her daughter and we headed west. For the trip we brought a few essentials. Including, 2 ounces of cocaine, ten thousand in cash, and for fun at 38, special under the seat and various forms of diseases festering in our bodies. Among them were Hepatitis and gonorrhea for starters. That's enough for now. Heading towards the west coast Nedra and I got through Iowa and Kansas with no problems. This was my first trip by car across the country and I was in total awe of what I had seen so far. The landscape and sky seemed to go on forever. To stay awake driving the ultimate sports car across miles of absolutely nothing we did bring a large contingent of white crosses. We stopped in Lawrence, Kansas and eat at the first natural food restaurant that I had ever been to; I believe the name was Cornucopia. We were allowed in just as you are. No shoes, whatever. Leaving Kansas we came to the great Rocky Mountains. An incredible wall of mountains rising up from the vast plains. A truly amazing sight. We went through Denver and decided to visit Boulder. Another natural food restaurant and then we found a nightclub called the Blue Room. At this point I was exposed to the waste properly.

Now, being exposed to the west doesn't mean anything except to the person being exposed. Everyone sees things through their own eyes. So, what you go through is what you are, get it? It may also have underlying aspects in the level of drugs and alcohol pumping through your system at the time. At that time in Boulder we were running very low on our stash and it was time to re-up. On to Vail, one of the nicest drives considering my state of mind, etc. Vail, Colorado is a valley nestled in the heart of the Rockies overlooking the Gore range to the north. I had a friend living in Vail at the time and why not invade and ruin his life as fast as possible. He wound up procuring our life blood and more spikes for the lady. This was the start of his spiral down towards his own hell. Having later endured subsequent arrests and a short stay in the fed system he managed to eventually get his life together far beyond expectations. I'm proud of him and someday I would like to tell him in person.

Leaving Vail filled up with gas, drugs and impending doom, we set sail in the spitfire for the new world. We drove down the backside of the Rockies into Greenriver, Utah. Pretty much set up for speeding because there is no way to go slow enough (Maybe 40 miles of very steep grade down across the Colorado, Utah border.) The reason I mention Greenriver is to warn other drivers to either slow down before it (either direction), or, go another route because the local police will fuck with you. We got pulled over and we forced to follow the "officer" into the bustling community of 3000 to the Justice of the peaces house on the outskirts of town. It turns out that the "judge" was indisposed at the time, according to his lovely wife. So we placed a call over to the card game that the judge was at and he passed sentence over the phone. The legal system at its finest. The final verdict was \$200 for bail or the weekend in jail. I asked him over the phone if I could have my girlfriend stay with me in jail so we wouldn't have to pay the fine but to no avail. Luckily still if they had searched us or the car we would have spent a lot more time with them then we wanted. Initially, when we were pulled over we were dressed all in black with driving gloves and a Beret that must have scared the shit out of them. Well the decision was easy and we paid the fine and headed out into the blackness of the Utah frontier. Just a warning to folks passing through keeps going unless you want to spend some time in the Twilight zone. Driving through Utah whacked out our minds at the time was like no other. The landscape is just like the moon. No towns or gas stations sometimes for 100 miles no trees, nothing. One thing we liked to do for recreation was to shoot at the road signs at 80 miles per hour. I got pretty good at it after a while. 0 Occasionally we would pull over for target shooting in the desert only to be amazed at the total silence. The gun sounded like a pop out there, very strange.

By the time we arrived in Las Vegas having been through hundreds of miles of nothing and managing to have sex while I was driving the spitfire was something the manufactures would have been proud of. Also, on a more somber note, we had some medical problems that were in desperate need of attention.

As you may or may not know during the 70's Las Vegas was not like it is today. Doctors of just about any type did not seem to be around their offices during the day. The golf course was where they were located. The need for medical attention was at a must need basis. By that time my "Sexual disease" was a real concern. Lest me not go into details except saying sex and relieving myself was pretty much impossible. So, the term maracas is used. Use your imagination. As medical treatment was put on hold as we left Vegas and headed for the great city of L.A.. First time for me, god, what a place, it was Crowded, smoky, glitzy, phony, etc., we were in contact with a friend of mine from Conn. That was staying in his mom's house in the Hollywood hills, off Laurel Canyon Blvd. Mike Kopko. They lived just up the street from Frank Zappa's ranch.

Just to remind the reader that this entire time we were consuming huge amounts of blow. She was still shooting. So as it is and always will be DRUGS is definably not the answer. Because we don't ask the question we assume to medicate the problem. OK. We did do a few fun things while we were there. I went out

trick or treating as a hooker around the neighborhood, much to the chagrin of my mate who stayed home and got so loaded that we got a visit later that evening from the LAPD, for a domestic violence call. She was beating me up, but I did not press charges. The next day we were asked to accompany Mike's mom to the Paramount lot, where she was employed as Nichelle Nicols' (Star Trek's lieutenant Ohura) personal secretary. There was a softball game taking place between the new TV show Taxi and the cast and crew of the first Star Trek movie, just starting production. I got to meet Captain Scotty Kirk, Chekov, Tony Danza, Judd Hirsh, Danny Devito, among a few. After the game a lot of them came over to. Where we were staying for an afternoon party. A few dabs were going around, but in general it was my first time among those people and I was somewhat starstruck (what a shock). A great time was had by all. The next day Nedra had left before we got up, and once again I was left broke and addicted in a foreign land. This theme is not a rare occurrence during my life.

Mike and I henceforth decided to hitch up to Santa Cruz to visit some other friends from back east. We got picked up by a very disturbed Iranian that was leaving LA after almost shooting his girlfriend for fucking around. There was an Uzi in the trunk. Yikes! Although he turned out to be a very nice guy, got us dinner and took us as far as Salinas, where he gave us some money for our trip. Thanks un-named man. That turned out to be a 9 hour trip to there.

Santa Cruz turned out to be one of the most beautiful places I had ever seen. Outside of town there are secondary redwoods that are the tallest fucking trees I had ever seen. We wound up meeting some friends at the UCSC campus and we led into the woods to a campsite, really incredibly beautiful. The air smelled so fresh and pure I felt better than I have felt in a long time. At one point I called my nanny to help me out for a ticket home, but at the last minute Nedra had found me somehow and we were happily reunited again. We decided at that point to head east again after traveling for a long time with virtually no contact with our families. One positive note; we managed to get drug free for the moment and we were healthy and alive, ready for the trip east. Now it was time to consume vast amounts of speed and drive like the bejesus, onward.

Heading east along Interstate 80, we were able to go over the Sierra's through Donner Pass, a name evoked from a party of pioneers that got stuck on the summit in the middle of winter, and had to eat each other to stay alive. Thankfully, none of that would occur today on through Reno and the Nevada high desert. By this time I was awake for 36 hours and starting to eat speed at a faster pace. When we crossed the Utah Border I was in an oral hallucination, quite possibly the most intense and real thing to happen to me as of late. I was literally hearing and sensing friends from past and present right there in the spitfire. It was time to pull over. After some much needed sleep we continued on east, presumably to go on with life's little quirks.

At this point in the story you and I are both wondering, why? Why do we need to intake vast amounts of drugs to get by? The answer I have at the moment is far too complicated, but I'll give it

a shot. Throughout this tale are fairly detailed story's, all of which occurred with or involved drugs of one kind or another. This is called a catalyst. The search needed a catalyst or something or some form of addiction to use, take away or overcome. Literally in my search was for the ultimate high.

As I mentioned before, I am a musician. Throughout my career as one I have had a series if highs and a series of lows. That is the business of music. The business end of music is very confusing and often times there are no rules. There is not a tried and true method for success. Well, the hit song but, if and when you do write that hit there is no way to assure getting it to the "right people". Who are the right people? I don't know. There are music attorney's and for twenty-five hundred to five thousand dollars they will "handle or shop" your song. From past history and from many other musicians this usually is the wrong way. They often make a few calls, do lunch with their buddies, spend your money and have you fuck right off. This is music? I still don't understand it to this day.

### **My Musical Background**

As since I was a small child, I always had the itch or calling or whatever for music. So did my brother Scott. As small as 5, I remember getting little toy guitars and drums and pretending to play, otherwise known as air guitars with a guitar. We were at that point, either gifted or cursed from that point on. The curse and the gift of music is the passion of the thing, far too good a thing to not do it. It was most definitely my first addiction and I'm sure not my last.

There is not another feeling in this world to compare to the ultimate solo buzz you get when standing on stage or in your house or in front of 100,000 people or 1. When you take off into the music you don't even realize that you're standing or breathing. It's like passionate, beautiful lovemaking X 100. This is the only way I can describe the passion involved in making music, breathing music, living music. There is no other. It's purely love, God to thought to hand to fingertip to sound. That's where it's from, improvisation, what a concept.

As I reached 8 or 9 or so, my parents started me on piano and guitar lessons. My new teacher was named Mr. Williams, truly an asshole of a man, a big burly guy with a flattop haircut and enough body hair to start a wig factory. I started to realize his totally uncouth behavior during my lessons while at the piano going up the C scale or whatever, a wrong note whoops crack his pencil would whack my knuckle's. Ouch, what a brutal way to learn music. At 10 or so I started classical guitar lessons at the Westport School of Music. I had a nicer teacher. A woman teacher who puts up with my bullshit and not practicing enough. I lasted about 2 years, finally playing a recital at the Pequot library recital hall, barely making it through, sweating bullets. I was scared shitless.

Through my early teens I switched my musical learning to Rock and roll. I got a little amplifier and my first real electric guitar, an Epiphone semi acoustic, (no f holes). I would eventually sell that guitar like all the others I have owned and enjoyed, including Fender Stratocasters, Telecasters. Gibson Les Paul, Peavey Tele

copy. Numerous Classical guitars, several steel strings, and a few bosses. They are all gone now, to the biggest retail outlet in the sky.

As we (Scott and I) started getting older and playing more we actually were becoming pretty good players. In the 6<sup>th</sup> grade at age 13, I played my first paying gig at the Coleytown Jr. High School dance. There were 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders there. What pressure. We had a lighting guy and a few roadies on salary, things were pretty cool. Fog machines, blinking colored lights, disco ball and other excellent visual effects. Our biggest song at the time was "Bangladesh" by George Harrison. Also, we did a stirring rendition of "I'm your Captain" by Grand Funk Railroad. A show-stopper, obviously we were way too young to drive, so our parents drove us to the gig, a major source of embarrassment. At that time I was dating a girl named Tina.

During school hours we would sneak out the gym door around with a particular rock in the woods, but still within school property, where such intimate meetings would generally occur. We would kiss for what seemed like days. Real kissing, deep, long kisses that stop all perception of time as we knew about True romance, or at least as much as any 7<sup>th</sup> grader knew of Real love, or so I thought at the time, whatever the case it was wonderful. Now, as I look back at those innocent times, things were so damn easy. Yeah, we had tough times, I'm not sure if they were even comparable to say people in places like Harlem or North Memphis, but it's all relative I suppose.

Music was the guiding force for me and our little pack of friends. We were grooving' and it certainly was a popular past time, because everyone wanted to be a rock star. So did I, but I guess it's different now, much different now. I'm almost 40, Fuck. But I have retained and crafted my musical wisdom. At one point very soon I will have one more chance, and then you'll see what it is that I'm talking about. Maybe this time that I have self-imposed on myself is for that very reason. When I get to it is where I am going, I'll have virtually unlimited practice time to refine and hone my guitarmanSHIP, including the mastering of jazz.

## Hitting the Road

This moment in time was another major player in life's little game. Understand this much, I always wanted and dreamed to be a professional musician, and I got the chance to go on the road. It turns out that a mutual friend Brad Biggers was involved with a sleazy small time management outfit located in Long Island City, NY. This guy was a true sleaze ball. He had the costumes made for the band right on the premises by refugee workers or a sweatshop of one kind or another. Stan hooked us up. Or so we thought. We were "given" the opportunity to back up one of the original Drifter's ("Under the Boardwalk"). Don Thomas was the man's name. Stan the man had found Don is working at the Bronx Zoo, picking up the elephant shit for a living. I guess he had a pretty bad drinking problem to boot. So, here we were Scott, 17, Myself, 18 Kip Reed and Brad rehearsing at the Biggers estate in Weston, CT with a drunken Drifter and Toni, our lesbian back-up singer. OK. After long arduous painstaking rehearsals we packed up Brad's new (used) custom van and headed for Ithaca, NY. We played the

Map room at the Sheraton, Oh yeah, the big time. From there being the ages, we were, we were obviously too young to know any better anyway. We were then thrust into the city of Buffalo in the suburb called Tonawanda and then again at the Sheraton, during Christmas week. This was our first Christmas away from home and depression set in slowly playing at night to "Green eye's" as Brad magically called them (Candles not people), we performed some of the finest of the 70's had to offer, "Boogie, Oogie, Oogie" and "Disco Inferno" to name a few. We covered the best of it all. Literally, there were 2 or 3 people in the audience. Brad I have a personal message for you. I don't and didn't forget nor will I ever, and someday I will prove it to you.

In a way this writing or whatever is an excellent opportunity to clean the soul. Even if I do skip around a lot, if I may, I would like to shift gears for a moment. I'll go back to when I was a child, so hang tight.

The advent of Jazz came early in the lavish home. My dad was and still is a great musician and jazz pianist. He could also, among other things, read an entire issue of Scientific American in the bathroom in one sitting, sort of speak. Besides being a licensed pharmacist and toxicologist for Revlon (way too busy for his own good), over the years dad was fortunate enough to be able to jam with some pretty intense people, some of the greatest players of all time, that being inevitably leading the next generation to be sparked to life through music. My dad was and is pretty awesome, not to put my mother down in any way, she deserves her own section for her accomplishments.

We rarely even saw my father because of his work at the Darien Animal Hospital. This job in itself was a seven day a week deal, including many late night emergency runs driven down 1-95 at the speed of light. Playing in his band the Jazz Doctors and of course, fighting with his wife, my mother took up the rest of the allotted time available. I can count on my right hand the times we tossed a baseball around while I was growing up, so sad in some ways, although it did keep the contact with him and my mother to a minimum.

At times he would take us into recording sessions and we met and listened and watched. Dad also took us to Friar Tucks, one of the clubs he gigged at in Norwalk that had jazz on Wednesdays one of the nights I remember clearly was particularly unreal. We guy to meet the bass player whom we recognized from Edgar Winter's band, White Trash. At the time that was one of our favorite bands and we were thrilled. He was an idol at the time. Also in the lineup that night was Gerry Mulligan the greatest baritone saxophone player in the world, bar none. He passed away a couple of years ago. That night seemed to last forever. It turns out years later that the same building turned into a rock and blue room called CD's. Some of my best years of playing and hanging out occurred there. CD's were a whole entity in itself. Musicians from every walk of life happened in. Chris and Dan were the owners and friends and great guys in general. And they truly had a great love for music. There are some highlights I would like to share about those times, but I am now getting a thought of one night at one of my dad's gigs that would be just the type of memory that would end up in a men's magazine.

Scott and I were living in the house on the Sea Spray road at the time we met our dad one night at the old jazz haunt known at the time as Damion's Restaurant, by the railroad station in Westport. The Jazz Doctors were doing their thing on a typical Wednesday night. For some reason we felt extra good that evening, having smoked up a fatty on the way to the gig. We called it a gig because we would usually get a chance to sit in on Bass and drums, respectively. That is if the doctor's got roused up enough on Dewar's and Water or whatever they were consuming in massive quantities. During those years, roughly 1974, there was still a huge booze quotient. Everybody drank, young, old, rich, poor and back then if you happened to get pulled over on the way home, the officer would most likely give you a lift home. This was right before they invented DWI's. Anyway, Scott and I lived in the same room downstairs; it was our den of inequity or the equivalent of the shed. Getting stoned was no problem so we smoked one up. Got ready for the evening and proceeded on our long trek down into Saugatuck, parked with no major hassle. Damion's was Rockin', the place was jam packed full of recent divorcee's, not so recent divorcee's, just separated, or on the verge of separation that night, So many women here, no girls. These were women, expensive women. Perfect hair, perfect nails, just perfect or so they thought. The upper crust of civilization was staring us in the face at Damion's Restaurant.

Scott and I were kind of celebrities at the time because of dad. He was ripping it up on the piano that night, work-in up a sweat and a thirst as well. Cocktails were a flowing'. Scott and I because of whatever had the run of the bar despite our tender age, so drinks were procured. He had a Rum and Coke to start, and I enjoyed I believe Southern Comfort, up. For the following round we settled into import beer. A few of our friends slipped in and it was a full-fledged party. At the other end of the dimly lit very smoky dining room was a vision from heaven. As if all time had stopped for a second and angels sang. She was there. The woman that blew everyone else out of the water, at that half drunk in stoned moment. Shoulder length peroxide bonding, fairly large breasts' and a perfect body. But she was a tad older than us. She appeared to be having a lot of fun , but she noticed us staring at her. We froze like a deer in headlights. She got up out of her chair and headed in our general direction. Oh my god!. This was a good thing. As she sauntered over we managed a slight smile, but at the same time blushing like crazy. She was all women, then we asked her to sit down at our table, and we immediately ordered another round. She then engaged us in small talk and every few seconds Scott would look over at me and I at him. This was incredible, what next? Well, Scott got a chance to sit in on the drums.

The Jazz Doctors (all instruments were played by doctors). Dad, Dr. of Veterinary Medicine, on Piano, Jim Gillespie, Dr. of Psychology on Bass, Jack Allen, Dr. of Linguistics, on drums. Also a variety of other site in players would make their way into the spot. Carl archer, Trumpet, Don Elliot, Flugelhorn. Brad Terry, Clarinet. Just to name a few. Later, after the unfortunate demises of Jim and Jack, John Cutrone was on drums and Rick Petrone on Bass. Jack Allen was certainly one of the most original of the crew. He would have us constantly cracking up. To watch him play the drums with his eyes closed a light blue leisure suit with a turtleneck and a gold

chain of a lion, and a cigarette hanging out of his ear, and at least two cocktails precariously perched on his bass drum along with an ashtray full to the brim. He was doing, the thing.

Scott got up to play and left me sitting there alone with this woman. I guess it was at this point of the evening that she was suggesting something. I invited her to go outside to puff a fatty which she did. When we returned Scott was waiting at the table wondering what the hell was going on. She then asked if she could see the beach we were talking about earlier. So we both jumped out of our chairs and left Damion's for a new adventure. We drove in her Camaro (a well known car in Westport), to a private beach not 3 blocks from home. We hopped out of the car to a view and a feeling of pure fantasy. If you could call it that, this was a perfect night, the waves were slapping peacefully on the shore, the moon was big and full as it could ever get. A slight offshore breeze and a major buzz, it seems that just about every good experience is at some point clouded or enhanced, depending on how you look at it, with drugs or alcohol. I would endeavor to say at that moment it was definitely enhanced. From this she called us over to sit next to her. The next thing I remember was Scott and I both were getting involved with her, Kissing her, Feeling her. This was probably a fantasy for her as much as us. The bit at the same time I was starting to feel very awkward. Getting very personal along with your brother, I don't know, but it sort of made my skin crawl. So what next, I suggested that we go back to our house and at that point Scott and she proceeded into the bedroom, and I gracefully bowed out. No shit! But after that night I had the pleasure of making love, her a few times during the day at her house. Later I found out that she was involved with many other men, including one I couldn't even fathom. Later... It also turns out that she was 15 years, our elder and also quite married! Yikes!!!!

My earliest recollections of my musical background started with the Beatles. From the moment we heard this music that was the moment we decided our destiny as musicians. The fact of picking out our instruments was very easy. We just fell into it. As young as 4 or 5 we knew what we were going to do for the rest of our lives. OK, so this puts a new look on things. Because #1, we had to learn how to play these instruments, and #2, become old enough to play out. At about the year 1966 The Monkees came out with their first album and TV show, and their hits that included "Last train to Clarksville", among others, which again knocked us out. These sounds from that period changed us and every single human being listening to contemporary music then. I received my first electric guitar at the age of 5. Scott was barely 3 or 4 when he walked downstairs Christmas morning to a new little toy drum set complete with Palm trees painted on the front of the bass drum. Awesome!!! The only problem with our destiny was that during our earlier school years we already knew what we were going to do for the rest of our lives, when we grew up. Isn't that the constant? During your childhood didn't you hear, "What are you going to do when you grow up?"

### **The Night of the Break In**

During our teenage years Scott and I believed whole heartedly that we were the slickest, the worst little cowpokes in town. Needless to say our testosterone levels were off the scale. There

are moments of bravery that only the foolhardy would attempt. Hence, Scott and I got a tip the last time we were at a friend of our parents house. It seems as though these people were very cool and very rich. The kid (no name), whose parents owned the house happened to mention in passing to us that his parents smoked weed. And, even better, he knew where they kept their secret stash. Oh yeah, what an idiot. He then takes us into his living room, walks up to the coffee table and reaches his hand sort of underneath, all of a sudden a secret drawer came out of the end. "Whala" he said. In the drawer there was a huge bag of Gold, Columbian, papers, pipes, coke mirrors, straws and so forth. We then absconded with a couple of joints worth and so the better. Little does this kid realize, but in our ultimate wisdom we proceeded to case the place out. Starting with an entrance point, dogs, alarms, etc., OK, so we head home and we decide that the kid should never have shown us what he did, oh well.

About two weeks later, my parents were having a little "get together". But we all know that it was another excuse to get lit, drunk, ripped looped, doped-up, cocked, inebriated, unsober, alcoholically stimulated, unruly, half in the bag, in the bag, unconscious, fuddled, mellow, cut, boozy, fou, fresh, merry, elevated, squiffy, plastered, befuddled, sozzled, flustered, disguised, groggy, beery, top-heavy, potvaliant, glorious, whittled, screwed, tight, primed, oiled, corned, raddled, sewed up, lushy, nappy, muddled, muzzy, maudlin, crapulous, dead blind drunk, half seas over, three sheets in the wind, under the table, blind to the world, one over the eight, to mention a few.

We realized much to our surprise, that our friend and his parents also over for the festivities. Could this have been any better? They were sort of older hippies left over from the Beat Scene. Jack Kerouac types. Of which I truly envy. It seemed like those days offered a really great time to be alive. Before the streets were taken over by Street gangs, drug-dealers, and way overzealous policemen. Not to mention all the other problems our society created in the post atomic age.

So at this point Scott and I figured that now was a good time for our next mission. 1) Transportation. This part was a major hassle because we were still not old enough to drive, legally anyways. During these pre-driving years we incorporated our farm tractor for trips to the store, and friendly visits around town. Unfortunately the garage was blocked by other cars whose owners were currently in no position to drive, for sure. We then decided to take advantage of the situation. The beat sceners came to the party in their old VW bug parked down the hill. Yes, the keys were in the ignition. So we promptly got in and drove their car away. More or less grand theft auto, for the moment anyway and about to commit our second felony of the day, breaking and entering, not very intelligent, but none the less satisfactory for the moment.

## Lines

*"Was that fold for the lambskin soft virtue's repose, Where the weary and earth-stricken lay down their woes, --When the fountain and the leaflet are frozen and sere, And the 1nountains more friendless, --their home is not here?"*

It was a very short drive to their house, which was located maybe a half mile from our house. We proceeded to park right in the driveway, like we owned the place. Since we had cased out the situation, we headed for the side door, less conspicuous, a sliding glass door that was left unlocked for us I guess. Yeah. Upon realizing that the house was empty and no wild animals around, we entered. Quickly and stealthily we crept over to the infamous coffee table.

Feeling around, we hit the secret button. There it was a huge bag of the killer weed. We were not unlike kids in our own secret toy store. Both giggling and nervous, we grabbed the bag and took off through the slider, remembering to close it and got back in the car. The whole mission so far was time wise, about 5 minutes in, so far. We managed to drive back home with no surprises and parked in the same spot, leaving everything the same as how we left it before. To no-one's avail, we appeared to be home free. Stashed in the crotch, the weed and we made a bee-line to the shed. Where we met up with our friendly neighbors, and proceeded to get as stoned as anyone could ever be.

The downfall to this tale is that #1 Yes, it is all true. And, #2 we couldn't possibly fathom at the time that this act was not only wrong but, a crime as well. As I review these past memories it occurs to me quite possible that the people that we hurt along the way deserve not only an apology, but in some small way have learned something along the lines of Socialistic Bad behavior. So here goes. To all the people or places or things, I humbly apologize for my actions, if not for the constant thoughts of getting high all the time, most of this behavior would have been avoided. Well, I feel much better now, I will continue.

## My Earliest Memories; the Florida Affair- Mission Miami

In the early 1960's the hip thing for young suburbanites do for vacation was head of the Caribbean, preferably in Barbados. Very near the South American coast by Venezuela. This is where mom and dad were ultimately headed. The first leg of the journey was to get rid of the boys, (Scott and I).

This act of abandonment was so they would have an uninhibited 10 days of mega-cocktails and sex (it's very difficult to, to even think of your parents sweating it out, am I wrong?). We were left in Miami in the capable hands of Jack and Sylvia, our paternal grandparents, bad idea. First of all their social schedules did not permit children in the picture. Furthermore, the situation is that they are 2 wild children from the woods whom run amok and pretty much do anything they fucking feel like. OK, what to do. The immediate response was, take them to the pool, children love pools. Can they swim? Who knows! Who cares! Kids love water.

By the end of a couple days Scott and I, waterlogged and sun blistered decided at the tender age of 3 and 4 years old, that, we were bored of this routine. So we headed out for a field trip of downtown Miami. As we wandered the hotel lobby, we asked a kindly old gentleman where the front doors were. As incredibly stupid as it seems he actually led us out of the front doors, and we were then cut loose. Two little kids suddenly thrown into the mix

of a major metropolitan city of which we knew a total of 2 people out of a half a million over-tanned Jewish gray hairs, that really had no business being south of the George Washington Bridge. It was as if we could hear chase music in the background as we wove our way down the streets of Miami Beach.

I think that we were actually lost for a total of a half hour, but in our infinite knowledge, it seemed more like a couple of days. Scott and I did not have shirts or shoes on so we couldn't have gotten very far. About 1 and 1/2 block from the hotel we were questioned by a policeman who decided that he would return the fugitives to the proper venue. He then asked us where we lived and we told him Connecticut. This however was not amusing to him what so ever. So we have described the hotel to him and in his infinite wisdom he deduced from reasoning, where we were from. Entering the pool area with the policeman in tow, Sylvia and Jack had to stop their card game to thank the officer and reprimand us for leaving in the first place. I assume we wouldn't have left if we were being watched by someone who gave a damn. So goes our first Florida experience. Sun blistered arms are extremely painful.

It is my professional opinion that that I took it as word, that being a good musician, one had to get high. To be a great musician, you had to live high. A credo of sorts. So as I approached my ensuing life as a musician, I of course had to learn to get high and stay high. At one point or another music would not become the most important thing in my life, drugs would. Eventually I am becoming a homeless, heroin junkie living from minute to minute on the streets of Seattle. This was of course one of my lowest points. Right before suicide or complete loss of my mental capacity, (This entire area will be explored in depth), that little of which I had left.

Another important point I would like to bring up is this. How in the hell was I supposed to be the positive influence of my younger siblings. I was totally the wrong candidate for that task. By the time my younger brother Pete was old enough to know anything, I was pretty much gone. So, consequently he turned out to be an excellent young man of high moral fiber. A person who got a real college education and pursued goals that was not only logical, but fun. This again, perhaps was another ugly reminder to me along the way that I had turned out to be a fucking scum bag with no morals or values past my own selfish ways. To think that I decided to marry and have kids, I'll never know. Although, my two girls are anyone's idea of a dream walking, no thanks to me.

Today, locked up in prison with time seeming endless, perhaps days from the fate of my sentencing. I can't help but wander off, even with John Irving as my companion, talking incessantly about Owen's views of the world. I can't help thinking of my high school years in Stowe and especially of Wallow Hollow. I always found a comfort of sorts there. Kind of like a calling now saying come back, live here, build another tee-pee, or a house.- Come back to the place that made you happy. And, I was happy there. I envision my return to the Hollow. Oddly enough, the first place I lived as a small baby was a place called Dreamy Hollow. A coincidence, I don't think so.

So, I'm going to go up to Stowe when I get out and see what's

there and I'll climb Mt. Mansfield, which I am supposed to climb every year on my birthday with my best friend of the past, Jeff Sampson. Although we stay in touch and we will climb again. It is the mountain that calls us and we have repeatedly tried to get there or have made the climb in the rain or in my case twice climbing while going through the Jones, much to the distaste of my true friend Jeff, "soon enough my friend, soon enough".

In a way, getting a chance, un-infringed if you may, to put down some words on paper can be very frustrating, but rewarding none the less. Do other writers have trouble going back to previous pages, constantly updating or doubting their work? I suppose my mission is to keep the force. So, that's what I'll do.

I was talking about Jeff Sampson. I also had another Jeff in my life, Jeff Grinnell. When we first met we were unlikely partners, mainly because we were in competing bands at the time. I was in the 5 O' clocks and Jeff, the Pomme Frites. (I wonder if they knew their name in French meant French fries. The year was 1989 or there about. I had been in a nasty divorce a couple of years prior, and I was enjoying myself a little too much I think. Jeff and I were formerly introduced at a gig in Fairfield, CT., called Larry's Diner. We were well into the second set, playing on the balcony overlooking the bar, and we were engaged in a fairly white rendition of some R and B song, that we had no business even attempting. It's funny how so many bands insist on material that is not intended for non-professionals to even attempt, also the color of the skin had something to do with the un-hipness of it all.

At this moment a song of mine comes to mind, and since I have lost all of the original copies, I will try to come to grips with this and one by one, complete my catalog of lyrics.

### **Sapphire Blue**

When I start to think, I'm thinking of you  
The feelings of true love arrive, in Sapphire Blue  
  
Taking the time to believe in my mind that it's you  
Blue, Blue, Blue, Sapphire Blue  
  
In my dreams at night, you're always there  
The sultry smell of love, hangs in the air  
  
As the children sleep, we lie awake  
Blue, Blue, Blue Sapphire Blue  
  
Crossing my mind, I get this feeling sometime  
Deep from my soul, from a place we all know  
You know the color is the bluest of them all  
You know that color is Sapphire Sapphire Blue

Blue, Blue, Blue Sapphire Blue

-----Words and music c 1994 by Jamie Lebish

### **Oh, the Places You'll Go!**

-----By, Dr. Seuss

Congratulations! Today is your day. You're off to great places. You're off and away! You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes. You can steer yourself in any direction you choose. You're on your own. And you know what you know. And YOU are the guy who'll decide where to go.

You'll look up and down streets. Look them over with care. About some you will say, "I don't choose to go there". With your head full of brains and your shoes full of feet, you're too smart to go down any not-so-good street. And you may not find any you want to go down. In that case, of course, you'll head straight out of town.

It's opener there in the wide open air. Out there things can happen and frequently do to people as brainy and footsy as you.

And when things start to happen, don't worry, don't stew; just go right along, you'll start happening too.

### **Oh, The Places You'll Go!**

You'll be on your way up! You'll be seeing great sights! You'll join the high fliers who soar to high heights. You won't lag behind, because you'll have the speed. You'll pass the whole gang and you'll soon take the lead. Wherever you fly, you'll be best of the best. Wherever you go, you will top all the rest.

Except when you *don't*, because sometimes you *won't*.

I'm sorry to say so but, sadly, it's true that Bang-ups and Hang-ups can happen to you. You can get all hung up in a prickly-perch. And your gang will fly on. You'll be left in a Lurch.

You'll come down from the Lurch with an unpleasant bump. And the chances are, then, that you'll be in a Slump. And when you're in a Slump, you're not in for much fun. Unslumping yourself is not easily done.

You will come to a place where the streets are not marked. Some windows are lighted. But mostly they're darker. A place you could sprain both your elbow and chin! Do you dare to stay out? Do you dare to go in? How much can you lose? How much can you win?

And IF you go in, should you turn left or right ... or right-and-three-quarters? Or maybe not quite? Or go around back and sneak in from behind? Simple it's not, I'm afraid you will find, for a mind-make-upper to make up his mind.

You can get so confused that you'll start in to race down long wiggled roads at a break-necking pace and grind on for miles across weirdish wild space, headed, I fear, toward a most useless place.

The Waiting Place.

... for people just waiting. Waiting for a train to go or a bus to come, or a plane to go or the mail to come, or the rain to go or the phone to ring, or the snow to snow or waiting around for a Yes or No or waiting for their hair to grow. Everyone is just waiting.

Waiting for the fish to bite, or waiting for wind to fly a kite, or waiting around for Friday night, or waiting perhaps for their Uncle Jake or a pot to boil, or a Better Break or a string of pearls, or a pair of pants or a wig with curls, or another chance. Everyone is just waiting.

**NO!**

**That's not for you!**

Somehow you'll escape all that waiting and staying. You'll find the bright places where Boom Bands are playing. With banner flip-flapping once more you'll wide high! Ready for anything under the sky, ready because you're that kind of guy!

Oh, the places you'll go! There is fun to be done! There are points to be scored. There are games to be won. And the magical things you can do with that ball will make you the winning-est winner of all. *Fame!* You'll be famous as famous can be, with the whole wide world watching you win on TV.

Except when they don't.

Because, sometimes, they won't.

I'm afraid that sometimes you'll play lonely games too. Games you can't win 'cause you'll play against you.

*All Alone!*

Whether you like it or not, alone, will be something you'll be quite a lot. And when you're alone, there's a very good chance you'll meet things that scare you right out of your pants. There are some, down the road between hither and yon, that can scare you so much you won't want to go on.

But on you will go though the weather be foul. On you will go through your enemies prow. On you will go though the Hakken-Kraks howl. Onward up many a frightening creek, though your arms may get sore and your sneakers may leak. On and on you will hike. And I know you'll hike far and face up to your problems whatever they are.

You'll get mixed up, of course, as you already know. You'll get mixed up with many strange birds as you go. So be sure when you step, Step with care and great tact and remember that Life's a Great Balancing Act. Just never forget to be dexterous and deft, And never mix up your right foot with your left.

And will you succeed?

Yes! You will, indeed.

(98 and 3/4 percent guaranteed).

**KID, YOU'LL MOVE MOUNTAINS!**

So.....

Be your name Buxbaum or Bixby or Bray or Mordecai Ali Van

Allen O'Shea, you're off to Great Places! Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting.

So..... *Get on your way!*

### **The Untimely Exodus, Part I**

#### **"Put the Baby Down, And Get the Fuck Out of My House" ---- said Kelly year 1996**

These were the words that turned my life, and theirs' upside down. These few incredibly harsh words were the start of my total demise as what was left of a human being at that time.

It was December 1<sup>st</sup>. I fall into emotional, irrational drug crazed depression. Therefore, eventually initiating numerous drug rehabs, detox, loss of all my material items, that I had been surmounting from the start of my fucked-up life that eventually led to my current incarceration.

1993; we had love. It was love the first time I saw her, like they say about love at first sight. I had just recently moved into Westport, Connecticut's only slum. A real, old style trailer park, hidden off of Route 1, arguably one of the richest towns in the world. Oh yes, this was the top. Pah-lease, but then again as a musician/carpenter with two children every weekend it was home. Sierra and Kristen actually loved coming up for our weekends together. They truly enjoyed our time together, and they liked the neighborhood. Lot's of kids and bikes and so forth. Soon after I moved into my trailer, which was not unlike living in a railroad car, without the tracks, the girls introduced me to their newfound friend. She was very cute and a sweet little girl named Star. She lived at the other end of the 'park' with her mom.

At the moment I let that pass, as a brief, "that's nice" sort of statement. She asked me very politely evenly, if she could go over to her house with my girls to play, and I said, "of course". Not knowing that my future for better or for worse was in that abode.

I was extremely busy during that week with my partner Jeff G. We also were playing and writing, and recording music together in our off time.

I had just moved out of a sweet spot, the house being owned by a musician/pianist and a wonderfully joyful woman named Gay Mehegan. Her Husband was a very accomplished pianist and at one time an instructor at The Julliard School of Music in Manhattan. John actually came up with the idea that changed the way modern Jazz was written and understood. It was called the Roman numeral system by changing Chord names that are in the same key, to a Roman numeral. An example would be; if a song was in the key of C major, that would in turn be I major 7, if the next chord was still in the same key, for example D minor 7, he called that II-7. He literally changed the way modern music was written and understood He was brilliant like his wife. My father took countless piano and theory lessons from John. John passed on in the late 70's, I believe, and Gay passed on in the mid 90's of complications from Diabetes. I know their children, and they are also brilliant in their own ways, I miss them both, especially

Gay. She rented me a beautiful apartment above the recording studio. Jeff and I put the studio together and recorded and wrote music, and had a lot of late night parties with people that I cannot mention. But those days were some of the best in my life. The songs that Jeff and I wrote and recorded were really high quality material, and if we weren't married to drugs, we could have done incredible things together. I miss you too Jeff. To this day, those songs have merit, at least in my humble opinion. We'll come back to those days on Weathervane Hill from time to time.

On a Saturday afternoon, back at the trailer park, I took a ride with my girls, saying Hi to my friend Delores, and the cat lady, and all the other nice people that lived behind the walls of shame. At, 1655 Post Road East, as I rode behind the girls we came up to the house that Star's mom and she lived in, according to the girls. As I rode by, I saw the most beautiful woman I had ever seen in my life. It was like time was in slow motion, riding by as she smiled at me. I almost fell off my bicycle, and had to pull over to return the smile, as best I could. "Don't I know you from somewhere?" she said. My tongue was stuck to the roof of my mouth, so words were impossible. My heart was beating out of my chest". I don't know", I started to say.

She went on, "No, but I know you from school or something, My names' Kelly" She said, "My name is Jamie, I live over on the other side in number twenty eight with my girls, Sierra and Kristen." I said. "Oh, they are such beautiful kids, you must be proud". She added. I was so magically woven into every word, that between watching her lips, and the sound of her voice, I swear to God that I was feeling lightheaded and yes, giddy. I would sort of compare it to the first time that 'I dream of Jeannie' came on the television when I was a kid. As I think every other man did at the time as well. That is the only way I can come close to explaining the feeling through written words. I guess if I had an enormous vocabulary, I would still explain it like I did.

It was my turn to talk again. It seemed like an hour went by. All I could come out with was "yeah, I guess so." At that point she started to walk over towards me. Time was in slow motion. Her smile, the way her hair moved as she walked, her beautiful body, I almost fainted away. As she got five feet of me, the electricity between us was quite apparent. Neither she nor I could not doubt that, ask her.

For me, it was definitely love at first sight. She kind of took me in, and I took her in, at one of those moments like a photograph or a movie. When you can rewind any time you like and replay the moment the events over and over in your head.

The sun was shining and everything had a gloss or a glow to it. The day was in fact perfect. A slight breeze, and I was as single as every man would want to be in a situation as magical as that. Because of her stunning beauty, and her velvet like voice, I was not even aware of simple facts like this happening at the moment. As I tried to get back on my bike, un-aware of the slight bit of drool that seemed to be coming out of the corner of my mouth, I thought.

She told me that she and Star would drop by to say hi. I had no words that would make any sense at the moment. I was too caught up in her to care, just pure beauty. That was all I could see. True love was all I could feel. Although I thought I had been in love

many times before. I've never felt anything similar to this, ever.

This was the feeling that only true love brings. The type of love that you would do anything for, and do anything to keep. Psychologically, I believe it was over the top infatuation because logically, love, romantic love is something that is realized and built over time. Bullshit I say. But there is a bad side. You can and most likely lose your mind and everything else, i.e., money, sanity, cars, houses and everything else, and I mean everything. There is nothing that hurts you more, in that way.

The second day we spent together sums it up nicely. I awoke feeling unusually alive. Everything up until then was a fable or something. The kids were up early, and we ate breakfast together the way a family is supposed to do. Not out of a sense of duty. But, out of a sense of love and loyalty for each other, I only wish now that I could still have that or a family.

We spoke on the phone forever, the night before, and we agreed she would bring Star over and see what happens. We gave each other an hour. On my part, to shave, clean up the place, although I am generally neat. As she came in for our second meeting, the feeling was still there, except different, more like this is the way life is taking us. It felt oddly natural. To this day, everyone who knew me told me that they had a way different feeling than I did. I was warned. Even now after all that took place over the years to come since that beautiful time, she said she still loved me as per a couple of months ago. Right before I got locked up. Since then I have written her, but to no avail. There has not been an answer, because we already know the answer. It turned out that she was after 2 things money and a baby. I'm really not sure if she felt a fucking thing, but if she really didn't, she deserves the Oscar for the lifelong achievement award for best actress in a lifelong plot of bullshitting, lies compounded over years of lies and creating such sorrow. It literally took me over three years, and many thoughts of suicide and of course addiction, that in turn put me in this place, where I might get some semblance of sanity and serenity. As they say for chapters gone ary, C'est la vie, Motherfucker.

After our breakup, and a few rehabs later, I was still a mess. I, Senior Stupido, occasionally called her for support, having Nervous Breakdowns and jonesing at locations such as St. Thomas, 'will you take me back'. Fuck was I stupid. Next stop Puerto Rico, 'Are you sure you'll take me, I'm sick and I need you to be there for me'. She played me like a violin. She was, and I was warned, EVIL. Inherently evil. Built in from years of polishing her act as Beauty queen to the Fucking Devil itself. It was all the same. I called from a farm rehab in the foothills near Riverside, California, Pumping Quarters into a pay phone, with Rod Serling on the switchboard, happily connecting me to the homed one. It was all the same. I was driving Miss daisy in my head. I did not get it. The walls I had built, stone by stone, to cover the Jamie wall. We all know the wall we build, some are so high that relationships are forever lost, and life goes on alone forever. Fuck that. At that moment, in my vast empty head cavity, my perfect long tall wall had been crumbled down by deception. There wasn't a pebble in sight. I was all done. That which I had was what I had. I had been had. Or so the story goes.

To my friends she was referred to as Kelly the Witch. To my family, they had no names to describe the insanity that came about

during our extremely stormy two and one half year romance. (Do you know what horse blinders are?) Wedding bells were to sound twice. Once about six months after we met, then I got into my car accident. We had the place picked out. Nice place, on the water. Goddam, I could never go through with it. I knew it. All she knew was, what was written on her life wrecking script. Sent overnight from Lucifer, the producer of that project.

Which reminds me of Kathy and how once again, how I got fucked (in actuality she was the one fucking some guy in Fresno). She had a dress already picked out. I gave her my Grandmother's engagement ring. Thanks Kath. But as I hear, eventually she got herself hitched, kids, the whole nine. She was a drunk, and I was an addict. A fine combination, don't you agree? Although, after all this time, I have since forgiven and forgot, and I wish her only the best, DRUGS.

Going back to Kelly, our second try was, "put off" as it goes. Her parents and I were, unmotivated to participate in our 'love connection'. I believe that her parents had gone through this maneuver before. When we started participating in her family events, I usually brought my kids. I always cherished them. Their initial reaction was 'Luke warm' at best. You can spot a fake fucking smile a mile away, or her mother would be pretending to listen to me or my kids, and 'that's nice, was always the response from her over pickled frontal lobes. I guess it ran in the family. Although, Kelly's Dad had been a World War II pilot, that got shot down in Germany and he spent a while in a Stalag waiting for the war to end. He was a good man. He had guts. He drank Vodka on the rocks.

### **Vampire's Rock**

I think I have my finger on it now. That is, some sort of explanation or feeling one gets from, The Secret Society. Heroin was our blood, our Nourishment, our reason to be. We were not unlike vampires; pale, gray skin tone, sickly. Usually awake until dawn. But the look of a newborn of the evening was, of a vampire, nice ones, the pupils in our eyes, so small, the head of a pin, hence the term. That dude was pinned. Looking in the eyes of one of us at night was as if we were staring into the sun, our eyes, pushing out the evil of light.

To look back now, and wonder, what it all means. It's just that much more confusing. It's a proven fact (even for myself), that clinically anyone can quit. Miles Davis was locked in his closet. But, putting clinical aside, it is the insane beckoning as if it is blood or a life substance that you must have. The sheer torment, it's fucking eerie to feel and see the change, as you wait and shiver, as if death is outside, as you await the man, as if you sense his car pull up behind your house. You come alive as his footsteps approach your door. You immediately dispense with all pleasantries as you give him whatever money that became available to you, and proceed to your home lab in dire need of his medicine. Then to prepare, spoon, water, clean works, lighter and that chunk of black tar, that, as it melts, you are and become its total slave. You heat it, never let it boil. Then, with the other side of the spike, you mix the concoction. Carefully roll up the cotton between your thumb and index fingers. You roll just so. Then, uncap the weapon, place it on the floating cotton that's soaking up the serum and pull back, pull it all in, every drop. Then it's time to sit back and find the

highway. Because of the total blackness inside your fix, it is very hard to see the pullback register. But this time you see your blood enter the spike. Invariably 1/2 the time you miss and it hurts, then you have to pull out and search. If you miss and push in, your arm or whatever form a mound and it hurts like no tomorrow. But this time you're in. I did not use a tourniquet so as you, push you instantly feel the warmth of the scarf around your neck, when you're cold. That old sweater or sweatshirt that says I'm home safe and warm and everything is going to be ok.

The nod begins, and you're safe until the morning, you saved a piece, didn't you?

Take a rest, but you must know. An insatiable thirst for blood that nothing else can give; Heroin, you will die without it, or so you believe, leading to permanent or semi-persistent psychosis.

For the moment I will go back to Kelly and clear some things up, that need be. Again, I am faced with the dilemma of divulging information, more than needs be. In the big picture I am not out to hurt myself or others. I am just re-telling many moments in my life that would make someone open their eyes and say, he already climbed that mountain. He barely made it back down, so on my climb. I will be ready to face the faceless enemy within, and out with. It feels wrong to let others who were faced with their own dilemmas for me to tell, so they will tell you themselves, Kelly was a fucking Crackhead. That's how she abandoned my son and her daughter, she went to her Dad, Jack, my son finally made it to a safe port where things are pleasant and love is strong "Thank you Erin".

At this point of my stay at The Cumberland County Jail, I have achieved the respect and a comfort level that only a few enjoy. Now being a trustee I can enjoy staying out of my cell until 10:30 PM, and I get an extra tray at meal time. This is a coveted item, and much to the chagrin of the other inmates, as I am heavy enough already. I usually turn my meal over to Kevin, one of my tablemates. He's a skinny kid who had a rough childhood, and he needs to eat much more than I do. This particular act enrages some of the other inmates here. As I read my books up on my cell, sometimes I can hear them arguing amongst themselves. Those idiots were actually complaining to the Guard that this shit is unfair. For some odd reason I seem to get a kick out of this, because there is nothing anyone can get out of this.

Because there is nothing anybody can do about it and when there is something edible, I'll have it myself, which steams them even further. I have also procured the ultimate in sleep comfort. Having talked the nurses into an extra mattress and two pillows, I now can sleep through the night, as before I would toss and turn to keep my blood from pooling, due to a 1/2 inch mat on top of a welded on (as if you're not happy about the design layout in your cell), steel slab as a bed.

Chronologically, it is now one week until I accept my fate. As in the length of stay at whatever prison I will be remanded to. At my sentencing, like a social event of the damned, my parents will attend. What a nice day that will be for them. Watching, as their first born son is sentenced for bank robbery. I wish I could go alone. This just doesn't seem like a place for anyone, especially my

family to have to sit through.

Handcuffed and sporting a lovely prison orange. I'm sure that always leaves the Judge and my prosecutor in a fair and non-biased mood. I've put so much thought into the gross and horrid feeling my Mom and Dad will face when they see me. How, in their first day at the hospital in Mt. Vernon, New York, and so proud to have really made a human being, and after all that happened in between, how did life come to a juncture such as this?

How will my siblings feel? Seeing their oldest brother, for good or bad, being in a situation that God can't even touch, with his mighty hand. He told me that if I want to live, I must do a thing, that will make no one proud and anyone to come out of my choice of crime without even a bruise to show their honor and commitment. I could not harm anyone, and besides being a little scared of which I will never forgive myself of, the girl that was on the other side of the counter did not encounter a maniac. No, sir. I went in with an effort to say please and thank you and even, have a nice day. I was a gentleman throughout that event. And in a quiet moment she would probably tell you that I was not mean, nor did I suggest bodily harm. And yes, I knew that even if I was not captured or killed, on my way out, I was always going to give myself up. To face my demons, and do what they tell me. Eat what they shovel at me. I was guilty, and I needed to pay. To the girl at the bank, if you ever had met me before or after you would see that I am not a bloodthirsty killer. I was in need of help or death. I was hoping to get shot, right there in the bank, but life took its twist and turns, and I am now a better person for it, I hope you can forgive me someday. I was very sick, emotionally, physically and addicted to anything that said danger. Your life has meaning, and no one has the right to take that, no matter what.

Since ever I have talked with my mom and Mike, from my motel room in Ft. Lauderdale, and my Dad are getting me representation at his expense. To this day I thought I would be disowned for life. However, they proved me very wrong. They took it with love on the other side of my dirty, timed, recorded calls. Dad sends me letters almost every week. I believe that this is the most we have ever communicated in years, in fact, ever.

The mom, had weathered through, still way too embarrassed to bring it up in conversation (note to my editor, if I ever has one, change embarrassed to something else. That's unless you like it and then I'll change it, because you're fired!), Sorry.

As I see it, my kids have to realize (hopefully) that something isn't right. Even though, throughout time, they have never picked up the phone to call anyone on our side of the family. They never call my mom or dad. I guess they assume that it's not their responsibility, it must be Grandma and Grandpa's and that pisses my parents off. My Dad takes them out as much as he can. They ski, they shop, they laugh, but call not.

It's the same with my mother. You guys ought to know by now. Oh, forget the fact that I have never received a phone call. Their own Dad. That is Bullshit. Whatever you think about me, remember that you're really giving your grandparents the finger.

Since I've been at CCJ I have written two letters to Kelly, and at this point all hope is long gone. Although I would appreciate

a picture of my son Jack, as I don't even know what he looks like. All withstanding, I have discovered some things about myself that was either not there before, or I was too high to realize it sooner. I'm rather intelligent, gentle, and thoughtful. I'm patient, and I quote "eloquent". More centered than ever before, and I'm convinced this is all to my benefit.

Well, this being October 17, 1998, the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of a new life.

As described first by my attorney, and 2<sup>nd</sup> through the Honorable Judge Homby, I now have a very clear understanding of the final and frightening crack of the Judges gavel.

As of yesterday in front of my loved ones, as I shivered from honest fear, and my dear friend and psychoanalyst from home, Dr. Stuart Losen made a remarkable appeal to the court, as well as my parents getting up to the podium. My Brother Scott, who also made touching remarks along with my sister, I love you guys.

All of their remarks, honest and forthcoming in nature with their help, which rang clear as church bells, I was still sentenced to thirty- three months. I rather expected it, although I did not expect the sobbing, clearly un-nerved bank teller to show up, much less testify to the tales of terror she has and does still go through every day. It was sad, and clearly made my case no better. Although the prosecutor paid my mentally challenged housemate Fifty dollars to say, 'he said he was going to rob a bank'. I am sickened at our legal system. They knew he was broke and told him that if he says those words; they would pay him Fifty in cash. Isn't that bribery, or am I way off base here.

In the long run the judge took the prosecutor's determination that 33 months in a Federal Institution, to be decided where was the responsibility of the Bureau of Prisons, in Boston. Clearly my attorney was rankled, but I deserved it, I suppose, otherwise I would have not learned my lesson. Oh, did I mention that my attorney's firm also handled the legal representation of the bank I robbed. He told me that little piece of news a few weeks before I was to be sentenced. Isn't there a word for that too? (You're fucked, with a capital F). Clearly he couldn't really represent me without impunity. His firm made more in a week with the bank, then what my father paid that snake for my silly case. I wonder how these people sleep at night? Hence, if I had gotten a downward departure, which was what was on the table that day, I would certainly Rob yet another fine lending institution. It was decided that my time served would count towards my release date, including 54 months a year of good time, I would be in the halfway house by May 2000, a good time to re-start my new life.

### **Going Quite Mad Quietly**

Prison, or jail to be politically correct, because I still am in Cumberland County Jail, I sit and wait for the day they decide to designate Inmate 54596-004 to my ultimate end of the line. That is the prison that will be decided that I belong in according to all those papers and documents that were shipped to the Bureau of Prisons. I wonder, do they all come to work each morning thinking, 'I am god'. 'I get to decide this puny human fate for the next x number of years the court has concluded on'.

I see them swaggering into the office after a heavy night of living on the edge. Just getting home at 2am with cheap lipstick

on their collar and possibly elsewhere. Stinking of booze and waking up his or her spouse by hitting his head on the closet door; (shhhitt, he says. I should have fixed that damn door months ago'), trying to get undressed discreetly. And by no means waking up your other half and trying to explain where you've been in alcho-English. 'Honey? Is that you. It's 2 o'clock in the fucking morning'. 'Sssshhhh. Go back to sleep, I had a late meeting, and stopped for a burger and a beer with some of the guy's'. 'Hell of a day it was), as a sock lands in the toilet.

This, ladies and gentleman is most likely what happens the night before they decide your fate. So, be goddamn careful out there. You don't want to push the envelope at the B.O.P. How could this little scene not happen. They are no better or worse that all of the other millions of worker bees, pulling out of the driveway 8 minutes later, and the highway is crawling. I bet you know exactly what I'm talking about.

In jail, things are a little different. There is no commute there. There is no night before, there is no nothing. Madness can and will eat you alive. That is why some prisoners start fights. That is why there are never enough guards watching these people. Tell me, would you like to commute every morning to jail. Go through a myriad of steel doors, with a Dunkin' Donuts coffee in your hand, and spend 8 or possibly 16 hours with these morons and all of their petty bullshit. I do include myself in the moron category, of course. The shortage of deputies here, to watch over these animals are at a crisis level. Who would really want that job, starting at \$8.15 per/hour.

My point of this chapter being that imagination is a big part of your day. That is of course after some serious reading. I never really graduated High School. Got my GED and off I went to Berklee College of Music. I didn't pay much attention in school, and my Dad recently informed me that even early in my school years, I never paid attention. I grew up before A.D.D. That is of course Attention Deficit Disorder. Lots of kids were like that. But we were not looked upon as children with a mental disorder. Oh no. Back then you were just a plain fuck up. I could not help my condition. I just thought everything was boring and I needed to daydream to fill in the time between the beginning and the end of class. Now of course, these children are given medication, because some idiot finally took it upon himself to realize that this problem was not only rampant, but it was a serious medical problem. So, they named it, came up with the right amounts of this and that, and created Ritalin, to ease kids into listening and learning, and paying attention. At least the ones that wanted to. The other boys and girls actually sold their supply to other kids, and they actually caught a buzz from this stuff. They tell me it's close to what speed used to do, when I tried that, a couple hundred times.

When my Father explained that to me, I finally did not blame myself for always getting bad grades. I wanted to follow in my fathers' and his fathers' footsteps and become a veterinarian. I really thought that I could. In fact, when I was in grade school, I wrote on the outside of my door at home; Dr. James Howard Lebish D.V.M. I know that it made my dad proud at first, but my grades went down and down, and I truly thought that I was simply an idiot. So instead I took it out on the world. I started getting into trouble and the rest is history.

So for the first time in my life, at CCJ, I decided to get a book that would interest me. It was an Arthur C. Clark book. I saw 2001 the movie when I was a kid and I did not understand the ending. I thought about it for years, but it still eluded me. And I suppose a lot of other people as well. So, I took the book back to my cell and started to read. I loved reading. It took me away from my walls of confinement and brought me to higher plains of existence. I have never ever read a book from cover to cover, in my whole life, up until I was 39 years old. I couldn't. But I used every ounce of commitment and let my imagination take me into the book, and I was hooked. I finished a book. I never thought I could do that. And then it hit me. There are hundreds of thousands of books about everything ever conceived. I personally began with Science fiction, I always loved science fiction.

Star Trek was my favorite show, then came all the other not so cerebral shows like, Lost in Space, My favorite Martian, The twilight zone, The Outer Limits, it was those shows that kept me glued to the television.

I truly believe that had I not had ADD or whatever, my grades would have been good enough to conquer anything I put my mind to. I was tested when I was entering elementary school for my IQ level. I still don't understand how that test determines how smart you are. I was graded in the 140 to 150 areas. For my IQ level, but who knows what any of that shit means. I just know that I could finally read. Not only read, but, fully comprehend, and actually be there, in the book. Every day in jail before and after I started this book, I read more and more. Not only did it keep me sane, I have been always in different lands, and at different times. My mind wandered like never before. I read hundreds of books. Everything from the entire Star Trek novel series, two entire authors' works. I read and loved all of Arthur C. Clark books, and waited in anticipation for his last book to come out before he died. I'm not quite sure of that, but, his final journey with the 2001 series ended with the book 3000. It blew my mind to think that anyone could possibly fathom one particular series of events that took his readers and him all the way to 3000.

Another author started to creep into my soul. It was Norman Mailer. He was insanely talented, yet oddly, he was a misfit of sorts, in his characters, in the stories, such as the Deer Park. That was one odd book. I finally read and understood after a month and a half the book Harlot's Ghost. It was over two thousand pages and at times, extremely technical. I think that he is the best all around writer that ever took me away. His words inspired me to get off my duff, and tell my story, so that others who have the guts to read the truth, and not be disturbed by the occasional bad language could get what I want them to receive. Mostly, it is about how drugs ruined my life, but there are hidden meanings if you care to read in this book, and not at it. My Friend, my only real friend at CCJ was named Kevin. He was a young kid, and he needed straight talk. I tried to let him understand what not to do. He listened. We wrote the following movie treatment together. It is not to be judged. It was our way of passing time. But, it's kind of funny.

**Created by Jamie Lebish and Kevin Olas**

### **The Catano Refuse and Disposal Co**

This is a possible outline of ideas that roamed around our

heads until we could at least put something on paper.

The setting is Queens, NY. In the mid 80's. The story has a lot of characters that are mostly related through blood or marriage. Kevin and I agreed that it should be as real and gory as possible. When the script calls for mangled body parts or someone snorting cocaine, it must appear not only believable, but totally convincing, a Comedy-horror.

The story centers around an Italian-American family, that appears to have an unusual amount of cousins, aunts, uncles, brothers, sisters, and all of the in-laws. The main character is the Patriarch of the Catano Family. He is the owner and Don of a mob family that has been associated with getting rid of or extermination of dead bodies, and or parts of bodies therein. It is a family trademark, but everyone in the family knows and respects the aspects, responsibilities and circumstances of correctly disposing the bodies, because everyone knows, 'no body, no case'. They own and operate The Catano Refuse and Disposal Company, originally brought over from the old country in the late 1800's. The Catano family was widely known in Italy for hundreds of years. The Center of the story and the main character is Richard, or Ricky "Tubs" Catano. He drives the one truck out of the money they use for "special pickups". Ricky Senior takes pride in how he looks and dresses in thousand dollar shirts, tailor made by the Jews over in Brooklyn. Therefore, He dresses the part of a mad man. But after he checks his desk and has any call backs dictated by his secretary among other uses Rhonda. She chews gum, loud. And this pisses Ricky off every morning. Beside'of getting rid of that fuckin' gum, I need you to speak cle-a-ly, so'z I can Fuckin get my fuckin messages right. Is this not too hard? He works in the truck with his son Ricky Jr. Who announces to the other moucks that he has arrived. Then steps into the shit hole of a bathroom, reaches under the counter and hits a switch that opens the last stalls back wall open, and he walks into his private office he uses to bang chicks, change clothes. He checks his safe to see how much stock and cash are there. He pulls put a mirror shaped like a nice set of tits, and dumps a bunch of high grade coke on the mirror. Just then his phone rings, and he puts it on speaker. 'Yeah'. 'Its father, can I ask what you're doing, and when will you be ready to go, you piece of dog shit'. 'I'll be in the truck in 10 minutes", as he disconnects and snorts up a line that would kill an average size horse. He puts on his overalls, does his hair and puts a very large bag of coke in his sock, and heads out for the day.

Ricky Jr. is a total putz. Ricky Jr. Knows nor cares about anything else but, Broads, money, and a lot of cocaine.

The mother is Rose Catano. A tough Bitch, but also a loving mother. She wears too much make-up and her hair is done daily, and is in fact, hard as a rock. Another Brother Joey, whom is just a plain hoodlum. He drives a Black Firebird, with all of the accoutrements therein. He hangs with his gang and likes to push old lady's under trucks as they go by. They all have a laugh, and life goes on.

Then there is Vito, he is not family, but believes in his heart of hearts that hundreds of years ago somebody banged somebody and Badaboom I'm family. Vito is the neighborhood butcher, in nice tenderloins of beef or nice tenderloins of your previously

alive Uncle Pauly.

Then of course there is the good brother Stevie Catano. He's currently in the Air force, stationed in Northern Alaska, and is widely known to be Gay. A nice Eskimo cock gets him going, yeah know what I mean. He doesn't come home, ever.

Of course, there is a sister of Stevie and Ricky. Her name is Angie. Her mother calls her Angela my angle. Angie likes pussy, any pussy. She also does the hits for the family if no one else is available. The scene that introduces Angie to us proceeds like this. Angie has on a 16 inch black strap-on dildo and is fucking her mark, hard and calling her slut fucker and things of that nature. After Angie gets off, she sticks her sawed off shotgun up the mark ass, and she's lovin' it until Angie pulls the trigger and Ricky Sr, gets a call to pick up at 455 Canarsey Blvd., or whatever. She calmly cleans herself off of the scattered guts and packs her dildo and shotgun away, and heads out for a beer. "nice ta meet cha" she says as she slams the door and heads out. Nice girl. So I guess by this point horror /comedy is a loose term. This is the entire true genre of the film. It must contain the horror. The real horror that the mob pictures, don't show you. The wall of insanity that has been not only reached, but perfected. As people walk out of this film, they are no longer going to rationalize or have any reason but of loathing. Pure Loath that people can no longer idolize these Motherfuckers any further. In the film, I need the type of director that is going to scare the shit right out the audience. ('When I was 13. I was attending, Coleytown Jr, High School in Westport, CT. Believe it or not, But since grade school Linda Blair was in my grade, and I knew her pretty well. Since she was little her mom took her to N.Y.C. A couple of afternoons a week to appear in commercials. Before long her work went national. In 7<sup>th</sup> grade, she flew out to Hollywood to audition for the part of Reagan, in The Exorcist. She was away the entire 8<sup>th</sup> grade year, During that summer the Exorcist came out in theaters. My mom took Scott and I see it').

We were scared at first, and jumpy. But as the movie went on it took on a format that arguably was the fucking sickest scenes that I and the nation had ever seen before. We were so freaked out that in the scene when she was fucking herself with the cross, combined with the soundtrack like hulking meat.

This, made my brother and I actually laugh out of total fright. I remember everyone in the movie house had the same reaction. The visual effects were uncommonly accurate and very, very sick. That is not only what I need for this picture. I need to go a step to the next level. I also want audiences to go away from the picture with the feeling and seeing and accepting that the mafia or people that engage in these type of activities, for what they really are. They are Low life's, People that have no remorse over human beings, and am also sorry to say that there are so many individuals in the Biggest of Corporations, or on the highest of Government levels that are no better.

I need for people to see that we are not glorifying the mob. We are going to make a new stand, by showing in detail, the extremely graphic details left in. We will visit that fucking pig, Tubs, in the crapper, complaining to his wife and her three church group friends, as he shits so loud, that these ladies are becoming queasy.

Tubs will yell to his wife to "get more papa cuz that fuckin lasagna you made last night gave me the shits so bad I messed up my draws also". Every character will have his humorous side, but you will come to find out, one by one, that these people have no reason to have a life. They are all human trash, and Kevin and I will make sure you understand this fact perfectly. Let me just introduce you to the other characters, and then we will leave it be.

There is Ricky's brother, Eddie Catano Sr. Eddie is the owner of the Flamingo Room. A half classy mob hangout. Lots of broads, polyester, Illegal narcotics, and of course there is the back room. When the place was bought, the F.B.I, and other law enforcement types came in as the 'hard hats' for the contractors. So of course it's a Union operation. That meant that everybody that got hired on had to be connected. So these "workers" made sure that The Flamingo Room was wired to the hilt. Every room had untraceable bugs. You name it. At some point or another everyone in the cast will come through those doors.

I did forget to mention that Ricky Sr. Does have a serious health issue, Hemorrhoids. Big stinking Hemorrhoids that are not unlike a third leg, puss covered Hemorrhoids that he literally has to tuck into his shorts. And from behind it looks like he took a huge dump in his pants and is walking around like there's no big deal. The doctors want to amputate, but Ricky is not sure that he is ready for that yet. He has grown attached or really his hemorrhoids have been attached for 12 years now. Everybody tells him to lop it off, but he has grown fond of them.

Then there is Eddie Catano Jr. He does the books, and keeps everything on the up and up down at Catano Refuse.

Then there is Eddie Sr's, wife, Brenda Catano. She co-owns a Hair salon with her Jewish friend Mitzie Schwartz. The Salon is called CatShorts Salon (I'm guessing that you got the point of the name CatShorts. One of the many brilliant ideas those two girls always seem to find hysterical, although no one else finds the humor in Cat for Cat-ano and Shorts for Schwartz) on Queens Blvd. They are the first Salon ever to invent snap on wigs. They run a booming business for men. That's right. You read it correctly. Snap on wigs. Maybe there is such a product, but to my knowledge I've never heard of it.

First of all, think of the pain of having to implant button backs with small screws into your noggin, so the fucking thing doesn't fall off They shave the guy's head, then using a Black and Decker 18 volt battery powered screw gun, they insert 8 screws into your head using surgical screws. Then the guy can snap on any style of snap on wigs they want. There's a catalog on the table to look at as they mount the screws in. Usually men will buy two or three, depending on their social life.

There's an evening model with a few sparkles to catch a lady's eye or a disco/John Travolta model, and many others. Snap, snap, snap and you're ready for anything. And of course they are machine washable on the delicate cycle.

I forgot to mention the two Detectives that have been after anyone associated with The Catanos. They are Det. Lt. Barry Malvin, and Det. Lt. Dan Forester. They have been collecting bits and pieces along with the D.A. for almost nine years and have

never been able to pop anybody because they got made a couple years ago, so they are always two moves behind the ball. They are not stupid. Just hard working cops that put in every waking hour following these guys around, but they never can prove anything. By the way, the bugs that were installed at the beginning got pulled two days after the club opened for business.

There is a key character that works for the City in the Mayor's office. His name is David Ruggles. He drives a 1971 Barracuda. It is of course mint. This was a present to Mr. Ruggles for information on a major bust about to go down 4 years ago. This has directly involved The Refuse Company. So for the tip, Ricky Sr., asked him what does he want, and that is where the Barracuda came in. David is a customer at The CatShorts Salon. He was bald, hence the connection. David Ruggles smuggles information in a specially sewn in a compartment in his 'Daytime' wig.

I picture the story opening on the hottest day yet during the summer of 86'. Ricky Sr., is done with the 5 pickups of dead guys compacted into the stinking garbage truck, heading for the drop off. This drop off is the whole key to no body's. Ricky takes his pickup to a garbage incinerator that turns the heat into steam which in turn powers the generators into electrical energy. The family had seen this type of energy and emission free plant by chance on a trip to Connecticut, to the casinos, and there it is, no body, no case. That's as far as we got, I was transported to Ft. Dix and haven't heard from Kevin since. It is time to change the way that crime pays, only through the Media.

## **Me and my Stimuli**

I suppose my twenties were a totally new, but the same Psychological event. Growing up and already vulnerable to all outside stimuli, I put a high price on all stimuli. I was, had been and going to be stimulated, for life was never good enough on its own anymore, for-going my College years for a minute, so we can jump up to a new time line. I had spent almost two years in Boston at Berklee College of Music, and life called. I had to get some 'on the road experience', and quit doing all those drugs so I could move to Florida to do more.

These were my 'chop growing years'. Every professional musician has to go out there and do the hotel circuit, or so I was told. I was hired into a working Show Band, sort of like a bad Las Vegas act. We were called Pepper and Pinnacle.

I'd have to guess that I was twenty when I joined the band. I was invited to stay with my ex-girlfriend at her parents 2<sup>nd</sup> home in Boca Raton. The translation is the mouth of the rat. I equate those words to the position I was finding myself in. It was in fact Nedra and her daughter Kaiya that I was with. We were on again, off again, on again.

Nedra was working at the Cheetah III, as a 'waitress', located in West Lauderdale, and every freaking' Tom, Dick and Harry knew it was a strip club except for yours truly. It seemed a little unusual to me that her hours were from 9PM to 6AM. Well, I was a kid, but on my way to growing up fast, of course Cocaine played a major part of the day, and night. Let's not bullshit around here, we did piles of coke the minute we or I woke up and she was going to sleep.

I assumed the role as father of little Kaiya. I did enjoy our mornings together. I thought to myself that I liked being a dad. Even though it was for a short time, I'll never forget those mornings we had together. I just did enough to get Kaiya dressed, and we would jump into the Spitfire with the top down. We would always stop for breakfast at a little spot on the way to pre-school. We would always have grits and eggs. She liked to put butter and sugar on her grits, and she would tell me, 'they're good that way'. I really got to love that little girl. But all things change, too bad. She was born in the mid 70's, so she must be in her early thirty's by now. I wonder if she remembers me. I still think about her from time to time.

While still in rehearsal for Pepper, I had the car and decided to stop in to the club to see Nedra. As I walked in, I glanced up to the stage, and wouldn't yeah' know it? Yup, who's the dumb boy now? I told the manager to tell her that I would be waiting outside, when she ends her set. I was fucking pissed. But I was pissed at myself for being such a dumb ass.

When she came out, she had the look on her face that made it apparent that getting mad at her was stupid. Although I told her that because of her daughter, she would have to work other hours, because the band was ready to head out for Toronto.

On the way home, we stopped at the entrance to Strathmore Village. It was the complex her parents' house was in. Unbeknown to us was a gung ho little fuck of a private cop watching everything we were doing. We smoked a couple of pipe fulls of weed, and then we headed down her street and into the garage. Three cop cars pulled in behind us, searched the car and found a huge bag of weed and other forms of paraphernalia. Right in her garage in the middle of the night, those fuckers handcuffed us and took us down to the Boca Police station. Since she was a Florida citizen, we were let go, to a PTA At court we paid a fine and let go because of illegal search and seizure, but the whole thing scared the fuck out of me. Did I learn anything?

The real reason we were pulled over and apprehended is because that young buck thought we matched the description of a young couple that was wanted in the area. I guess he thought we were Bonnie and Clyde. He almost had his career bust!

I hadn't been officially placed in Pepper's band yet, so it was at this juncture that I decided to spread my wings. Sensing the inevitable, things at the ranch was not going to work out. So I started going to as many auditions as I could. I got the contacts mostly through sleaze bag agencies, music stores and the want ads for guitarists. This is how I happened into Pepper. I happened across an ad for a guitarist needed for a traveling Showband with world-class singer looking for players with the ultimate dedication and desire to be a true pro, excellent salary and benefits. Call FJM Productions, Lauderdale Lakes, FL.

After my phone call, I was set up to audition at the Musicians Exchange in Ft. Lauderdale. Wow! The big time, I did manage to get the gig, and proceeded to learn and rehearse three separate one hour shows and five dance sets. Forty minutes per dance set. Holy shit! Do you know how much time and energy it took to do this incomprehensible project?

Twelve to fifteen hours a day in a closed windowless room. Sweating our lives out onto the floor. I was way over my head.

It was later that night after another hand and mind breaking day, the keyboard player/arranger, looked at me not like a glance, more like a life force thing. Walter was a very wise man. I was a kid. But I did indeed need to listen to Walter. He had things to say that we're more than spiritual words were, like pixie dust compared to the wisdom and sincerity of that look. He finally spoke for the first time at two in the morning. I was scared. He was as mellow as a cello. He was Yoda. Walter Cunningham told me three words that would echo in my head, and help me out through countless situations to come. Walter said to me, listen man; I know this seems like the hardest challenge of your life. But, life doesn't get easier, so you have to know and accept the concept of three words. Mind over Matter. That was a lot for me at the time, but I went with it. I did manage to learn and almost memorize all the material in two weeks, then we packed up and split town for Toronto, Canada. Here we go.....

Driving, what was ultimately dubbed 'The Hospital Car', it was aptly named for a couple of reasons. This was Pepper and his wife's personal, all white interior and exterior Mercury Cougar. There were a few rules when you would wind up in their car. No talking, no chewing gum, no smoking of any kind, and no radio. How is this possible? Who lives like this? I got stuck in this car for most of the ride. Driving, on a non-stop trip. We left on a Saturday evening in Ft. Lauderdale to wind up in Toronto, Quebec on stage Monday night. We had our share of problems. Caravanning in a four-car troupe, we left Florida on a summer day. By the next afternoon, heading into the Great Smoky Mountains, it was below zero. The road was Black Ice. That's right folks, with Pepper at the wheel they spun out and wound up in a ditch. Fortunately, no one was injured I was riding in Joels', (the drummer's) car. And we were way stoned and watched it happen in slow motion. 'Did you see that man?' 'Yeah, that was excellent!'

Pepper, (Bill Bagby), was some piece of work. I would say a great entertainer, with a chip on his shoulder, the size of New Jersey. Although, he was one strange character none the less. Bill was a retired pimp (no shit), a drug dealer and addict that had found God. Traveling with him was his white Jewish wife named Mindy. You guessed it. She was from Long Island, NY. How did this meeting happen? I don't know, and I'll never know. They didn't talk about each other in public. None the less, they fought incessantly. The bass player drove his own car. His name was Tom. He was probably the most talented musician in the band. He was a rock. Although, it occurs to me now, why did these extremely talented players, actually do this tour? It was a B to C list Hotel tour, \$350.00 per week, endless shows and endless travel, for what?

Was it not possible after all that there was no such thing as love, but only that everybody loved in their own way and did the best they could? Norman Mailer

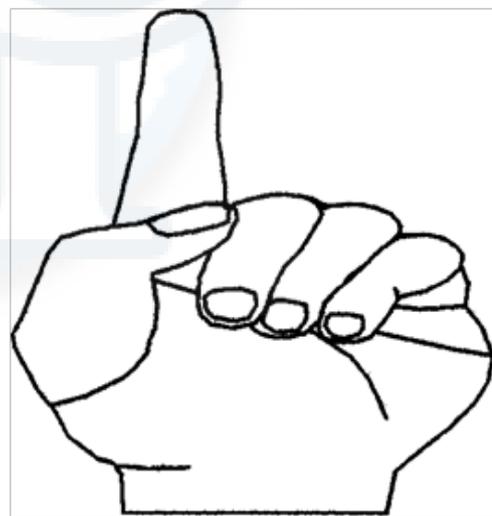
The Deer Park

The strangest thing about life, is life itself It seems that I am

coming to a realization that it is now time to start living life, and not using it. Yes, I have lived a life may be more extreme in some ways than a lot of other people would, but, far less than others, and none compared to some. This time I would like to live life for all it's worth. To really enjoy my children and my music, and everything else that comes from just opening up your eyes to the possibilities of life love and family. I also have realized that you don't have to plead or beg or do anything else, because I know now that if you want it bad enough, you will get it. It happed with drugs, didn't it? I think I've got the concept now, and I do want it. It will all come soon, enjoy it with me.

This was my last week here at the Cumberland County Jail, I hope I have come a long way since I first came here, One hundred and fifty-two days ago. I'll come to know and understand so much more so, Let's Live!

I spoke to my mom on the phone today. I tried to relay in my own sort of way, the frustration and difficulties I seem to be having. Sometimes I can take it here, and not let things get inside me, but other times things just become too overwhelming. I miss my children so badly, and I am smart enough to realize that I caused the rift that is between us. And that rift seems to grow every day. I truly believe that someday our bridge can be mended. I get a feeling that my prayers, (yes, I am learning how to pray), that I have been trying to understand, and accomplish are not easy. I have fucked up so much, that it seems as though the powers that be, namely God, are not getting through. Or, that perhaps I feel so guilty about my past that my prayers will never get through to the big guy, or girl.



I do not find it easy to name a thing with the power and sensitivity, of the powers of light and dark, or creation and destruction, one name. Everyone or almost everyone has a name of their deity. Others believe it's a force. And still others are agnostic, but still I cannot truly put myself into these categories. What I am realizing through my thoughts and my experiences, leads to me getting away from the names of any sort. But, still again, I can only limit my scope of understanding at the moment. So for now let it

be called God. And if you can hear me, let me help.

## **My New Home**

**December 24, 1998**

Today is the first day I continue writing since I've been relocated. On or about my son's birthday, (November 13, 1995), I have been transported, moved, and strip-searched repeatedly from place to place before getting to my designated prison at Ft. Dix, NJ.

Shackled and cuffed through chains around my waist and ankles, I left Cumberland County Jail on that historic, but miserable day back in early November. Driving' in the official car of the F.B.I., or van I should say, we, (other prisoners and myself), left for Manchester, New Hampshire completely confused and frightened of where we were going (they, had not told us where we were being designated for 'security reasons).

I had heard many stories of unruly convicts being led to the 'Diesel Tour', which basically means that once the U.S. Marshalls have you, they can put you on a bus or car, and drive from prison to prison for two days to two weeks, for months before you arrive at your designated prison. One such case a fellow inmate told me that, he started his trip in Buffalo, NY, and was bussed to Otisville, NY. A Medium-High security prison, where I met him at the end of his journey. They then took him to Maryland, F.C.I. For 1 month, then to The Atlanta High Security Federal Penitentiary for three weeks. Then he was moved to Miami F.D.C., (Federal Detention Center) for two weeks, back to Atlanta, by plane. Then the next day with no sleep they took him again by Jet to Manchester, NH. They then took him by bus to Lewisburg, Penn (The Dungeons). He was then transported weeks later by jet to Oklahoma Federal Penitentiary, back to Lewisburg, and finally arriving at his designated prison at Otisville, NY., after three months, where I met him. Talk about a fucking nightmare! Each trip includes a full strip-down, full shackles, in one holding cell after another for eight hours to process, and then traveling. While going from place to place it is impossible to make a call, or get commissary, cigarettes or anything. So, all I can say is what the guards say, you should of thought of that before you broke the law. No shit.

After the short plane ride, shackled to the floor, from Manchester, NH to somewhere in upstate New York we finally got on another bus and headed for Otisville. Strip searched, fed and humiliated, we were finally designated to Unit 5, which is the holding area for traveling prisoners going elsewhere. The Hub, if you will. Unit 5 was originally a Unitor factory building that was magically transformed into a giant dorm holding 300 inmates. This place was a fucking zoo. There were people everywhere, doing everything, Mexicans make all kinds of hooch, the Chinese inmates playing extremely animated games of mahjong. And not the way your grandmother played either. Deals of all kinds going back and forth, Oh yeah, there were stabbings, drugs, and everything in between.

I immediately bonded with one of the only white guys in the place. His name was Cyrus, and another older gentleman I met

was named Mario. He seemed way too old to be in lock-up.

After talking with Cyrus for a while in a holding cell, he and I realized we were both from Connecticut. He also mentioned to me that he used to date a girl from Westport. No big surprise that she was not only someone I knew, but, had dated her myself, will wonders never cease. She also used to go out with my long time friend Jeff S. He won't speak with me anymore because of money, a lifelong friend who finds money much more important than friendship. Now I guess you could figure these two ways. Either this was a wacky co-incidence, or indeed she slept with everybody in lower Fairfield County. You make the call. But, now looking back, I'm sure it was simply a co incidence. Mary-Ann was a great girl.

I happened upon another white guy, his name was Animal, a huge diabetic Biker from Buffalo, NY, and a hell of a nice guy, although it was hard to tell on first impression. The animal has been able to procure just about anything, for a price. To which I never needed or wanted to indulge in. But he was able to get me a klonopin, which was great. I was able to calm and collect myself At least for a while. Thanks a lot Animal. I'll never forget you.

After one week of sleeping under an asbestos-laden hot water heater, and pipes that shed at night, I moved to the top of Cyrus' bunk. That was good. I reminded myself that I was here to be moved from my luxurious Club Fed vacation in upstate NY, to another nightmare traveling scenario to Ft. Dix, NJ.

Ah yes, my new home for 18 months, if I'm good, Ft. Dix, NJ My very own, Federal Correctional Institution, by all Bureau of Prisons, (B.O.P. For the future) a low security correctional Institution in 2000. There are, two side by side razor wired perimeter fences 12 feet high, plus 3 feet of extra razor wire on top for good measure. There was no limited movement, except after lights out. In other words, Ft. Dix was an open army compound with 2 chow halls on either end of the compound, which from end to end was about 1/2 of a mile, and 114 mile side to side. One large and rather expensive commissary, a library in the education building, a huge gymnasium with indoor and outdoor free weight areas, and a rehearsal studio with two electric guitars, a 5 string and a four string basses. Amplifiers for each, one drum set and two synthesizers a full PA system, and an interior sound proof room where I would practice when I worked there. And its own private cable TV, hooked up to a huge stereo for good measure.

But, it took a long time to get involved. There were two thousand inmates on our compound, and two thousand on the west side. They were separated by about one mile. But one warden had control of both.

This was home and I, with what was here, endeavored to better myself, and not let prison get me down, at least on the outside.

Today is Christmas. Yet another Christmas away from my family, but today is different. I'm doing Fed. Time, not so easy, especially today. Yet, I am forthright with my mission to adhere to all the rules, and work out, take care of my friend Mario, work in the carpentry shop, play guitar and bass for all the religious services, all sects and denominations, and I play in three bands .

We set up concerts outside in the summer and in the gym in the winter.

Tonight, I am playing in the show with my R + B band. We have been in rehearsal for months. And I just remember to make the best of it. I am learning, reading a lot, I experience everything I can fit into a day, and forget the past and the outside for now. That is until I come back in time to where I left off in the book, and shoot forward in time, past my twenties and mid-thirties that I will get back only after I begin to explain why. Why all this occurred. It is all experiences I'm sure you'll either agree with, like, dis-like, revult in, or chalk it up to whatever you like. Now, fuck-off so I can sleep.

Hi! I thought that I would change the subject and go back in time or forward depending on how this book is finally arranged. I'm going back to re-hash (I used to love hash), my extreme ups and downs with yours and my friend, Yes that's right folks, the girl who finally pushed me over the edge of sanity, Kelly. Although, as any half-way baked therapist would argue, we don't blame our problems on other people. They are ours to work out. They are ours to scream and shout. Never blame the other guy. Why the fuck not? That's what I don't get. Why can't you blame others for your actions? Excuse me? Could you wake up Dr. Freund for a Sec, I need to ask him something. Yeah, if it were only that easy.

Just after my son was born was when things all began to unravel, as explained previously. I have never ever been really able to harness my feelings enough to describe the horrible intense pain and depression that I was going through. Trying to piece the events together, steals my conscious memories, and invites me to relive old fucked-up situations that should be left alone.

While being able to express these are doing a favor to my subconscious out of control from December 3rd, 1995 on that was the day she told me to "Put the baby down, and get the Fuck out of my house", was when I completely lost control.

The money, what I had, and what items I sold in order to consume huge amounts of crack cocaine and heroin, just tumbled to a point of no return.

It's like feeding the flames of depression, anger, anxiety and resentment with more logs of the same to a huge all consuming fire of my soul. I didn't know who I was or what I had become. By Christmas I somehow decided that I could not live near or where the realities of life could come and get me. So, moving away and drying out was my only rational alternative. Rational, not being the rationale that you think of, but out of control fully paranoid and schizophrenic type behavior. Similar to a trapped cornered, rabid animal with no choice but the easiest my mind could conceive. Rationality is a quality of mind that I was a Million miles away from.

The thought of leaving Connecticut was my only choice. After moving all of my personal items, (that had surmounted to memories, relics and reminders of my whole life), into the Twilight Zone Storage facility. Meaning basically that, I did not have the where with all to move it, myself, so I put my life into the trusty hands of Mongo. (I still have no idea if l has anything left, from 8 years ago), now Mongo (obviously not his real name, but

every ounce as strong, but tall and lanky). Mongo was indeed one of the finest, most trustworthy, and intelligent people that I have ever known. When I met Mongo, he was doing carpentry at the time, so Jeff G. And I hired him on. He filled three workers shoes, and hardly broke a sweat. He was also a very mysterious dude. You never really understood where he came from and where he was headed, but I liked him non-the less. He even babysat for my daughters, when I had a gig. I trusted him. So he was the one who took all of my stuff to a "storage" facility. I paid him despite what I asked of him, and he liked that, Because he was crazy into the lottery. He once won a good piece of change, so he was hooked. It could have been much worse, yes?

I then sold my trusty Volvo wagon to my drug dealer, for \$350.00, which also included as part of the trade, 100mg of methadone, to ease my pain on the trip. Then I sold my couch, T.V and beds and all there was left in the trailer was 1 mattress, a telephone that was still on.

I went to the local travel agency to write a bum check, (sorry, although I did pay it back), for a one way ticket to St. Thomas, after getting help from a friend of my mother, I had a place to stay. I had Mongo drive me, and my eleven pieces of luggage, (All of my tools and stuff I couldn't part with) to Newark International airport, on the coldest day in recent history, where I began my excursion into the unknown. I was a junky, leaving town. What a sad, sad place I was in. And Mongo knew it. He could feel the insanity from within me, but he thought it was good that I was getting away from all of this bullshit. It was me and my partner Jeff G. We were inseparable. We worked together, scored our dope together, in some extremely dangerous circumstances, and, we played music together. We fed each others' habit, and it all got so out of hand. One thing I did that still pisses him, and his family off was, when during my sell-off period, I sold his speaker cabinet. I stole it, sold it, and bought Heroin with it. Aren't I a good friend? Two years of dope, re-Habs, de-toxs', and a new baby boy, that I knew I was never going to see again.

All I had was one bottle of what turned out to be bunk, (bad), methadone to save my ass from getting too sick.

Once I arrived in San Juan for the change in plans, I took 2 cap fulls of methadone, and started to feel intensely depressed, confused and lost.

Being in such a beautiful foreign world, I felt trapped and abandoned, knowing only to go on. Having my cell phone, I blindly called Kelly, to seek guidance and persuasion. That was the wrong idea. By the end of the 1st call she had said that I had all but abandoned her, (what?), left the country and leaving her and the kids to a life without me. Totally wrong, traveling by prop-plane, we made our way over the azure blue Caribbean, seeing all types of islands and boats and thinking that I'm arriving in paradise, on my way to a new life, no heroin, no pain, no wrong. Almost in St. Thomas, I began to feel sicker and emotionally a wreck. It was then, I realized after drinking most of the bottle of methadone, that I had been ripped -off. The whole world was starting to close in on me. I was trapped and isolated, and facing the possibility of withdrawal in a foreign land, with no help of any sort. Panic struck and struck hard.

The moment we touched down, I then believed in heaven and hell. On the outset, I was seeing one of the most beautiful islands I've ever seen, and on the inside I was a total wreck.

Sweating profusely from every pore in my body, but I was ice cold, I managed to contact the people that I was supposed to be staying with. Having gotten into a cab, I gave the cabbie the directions to the place I was supposed to meet these guys. He drove through old St. Thomas, up a switchback road to the top of the mountain. It was a bar. I forget the name, but relief, at least temporary relief was staring me right in my face. I waddled in, pouring from sweat, and ordered myself a double whatever. Tossed that back and ordered two more of the same. After about an hour, I was completely inebriated. Then, my contact showed up. He was an overweight, pale complexioned man who was definitely from Long Island.

As our conversation began, I immediately noticed what only certain people seem to know. He was of expanded consciousness. (Meaning, at some point in his life, he was heavily into LSD).

We got to talking, and extracted each other's nuances and of course reefer came floating into the conversation. We got in his little island car and headed back down the switchbacks to his house, directly over the Port of St. Thomas. It was sort of a beat up hippie house with a tin roof and overgrown local fauna, in need of maintenance. We sat on the patio, overlooking one of the most beautiful views in the world, and he lit up a joint. I suppose he had noticed my heart because he asked me right off, 'Hey, what's wrong man? You're so sweaty and pale'. I then so cleverly, (! Thought at the time), returned his question that I thought that I think I was sick from the sudden climate change, and in a few days time, I would feel better, (Ya, right!) who the fuck was, I am kidding. Only a fool would believe that ridiculous story, and he and his wife were no fools. I was trapped within a trap. Paranoid and getting sicker by the moment. Something must be done soon.

Incoherent, I rode into town with my contacts wife to pick up some real Caribbean takeout from a vendor at the foot of the bay. She knew something was definitely wrong with me, but she did not inquire. I truly believe that she thought it would be best for me to work this out for myself.

After getting back to their pad, (by the way, I picked up the check), we ate dinner in a strange silence. I sort of got a feeling that they did not need me there. Well, except to pay for dinner. The silence only broke by an occasional light question, in regards to my immediate plans for the future. I did not answer.

I retired to bed right after dinner, in a physical and emotional grinding wheel. No sleep occurred as I tossed and turned in ultimate turmoil. Why? Why can't I learn? Here I am, in this plush house in the Caribbean, and I'm fucking miserable. I am the asshole of all time. As I rolled around, my bed, though the night, I hated myself more by the minute. I did want to die, right then and right there. Do you understand why I am writing this book yet? I had gotten myself into such an insane situation, again, for the umpteenth time.

DRUGS.....!

All night it was raining. Banging against the tin roof, which can

get fairly annoying when you can't sleep, and you dream of being dead.

If you can call it waking up, that is what happened in the AM. I must have slept an hour or two. In the mirror, I took it upon myself to have a quick glance, and then I saw death. I was dead. My body was moving, but, I appeared un-dead or something to that nature. I was a walking horror movie, with the insanity factor at level 10. The first thought that came to mind was, escape. I needed a fix. I needed to get well. And here I was in a strange house, in a strange world, only participating on the strings of a marionette, controlled above and below by the devil himself He was now fully in charge of my limited faculties.

To breathe in his horrors, paranoia, guilt, shame, helplessness, and defensiveness, and to control my every moving moment, I had to get to my only source of reality. My cell phones, believe it, or not, because of a recent hurricane, all phone service was out, leaving only cellular or radio. Most of the power on the island was just restored last week, WOW!

I managed through inter-island access to get calls through to the U.S. at Five Dollars per minute. I spoke to Kelly in total panic (Wrong!) Call after call I was of course feeling worse but, I was compiling a plan. She led me on to believe that I needed help. (No Shit!) I was so fucked up, and at wits end, I took her advice. 'Come home', she said with the sweetest has abandoned, hesitation, reassurance and guilt that came pouring from the airwaves into my swollen brain.

Ok, I'm coming home. That's it! After only fifteen hours on the most beautiful island in the world, I'm going back. The relief was not far. (Yeah, right!). The only problem was everything. At last, I had called the same cab company, (getting his card for some reason, when I first arrived). I then wrote a note to my sponsors, thanking them, and expressing my feelings of needing to re-assemble my life, in order to be ready to participate in reality.

My cab showed up after frantic calls with the airline officials suggesting I buy a round trip ticket, but as we all know, I was not thinking in a rational or even a semi-coherent state of mind. All I wanted was out, and the plane connection back to Puerto Rico was only an hour away, re-packing my eleven pieces of extremely heavy belongings into the cab, (and sweating profusely from every pore in my body. Do you know the odor that comes out of an addict?), we raced through downtown past goats and chickens and every other nefarious farm animals alike, and we arrived at the airport with minutes to spare.

In the airport, I placed a call stateside, asking, no telling, no pleading my forlorn friend and compare, only to get his phone machine. In pigeon junkie language, I explained my predicament, and to please leave as much juice, (methadone), inside my grill just outside my trailer door in the very snowy Westport.

As I boarded the plane, barely able to complete whole footsteps or common thought that I was indeed on my way home. Think about it. Just Eighteen hours in paradise and I was running twenty five-hundred miles away for methadone? I reached my seat on the twin-prop Fantasy Island special, I worked wholeheartedly to relax. Yet anxiety had been rampant, showing its ugly face. Like

that of your best friend offering you another hit, and saying, 'go ahead, one more won't kill you' (YA). The engines roared and we lifted off heaven on my way to and from hell. Looking below me, I observed what only the most prolific could describe. I am also not a great flying, passenger, so between air pockets and my acute awareness of my juxtaposition, I eyed the emergency exit located to my right. Then the thought came to mind. Jump. Get the hell out. End it now, before I hit the water I'll be dead anyway, and an easy and beautiful way to die was staring at me as Lucifer himself was steering the plane.

I almost did it, but a gentle voice overrode the dark side, and held me in place. I made it through my first real contemplation of suicide. Whew!

Landing in Puerto Rico International, then taking the shuttle bus over to the main terminal was merely an afterthought. Inside the main terminal, and in real bad shape, we (the passengers of Flight 110 to Newark), were made aware of a very untimely delay in our take-off time due to a raging snowstorm in the New York City area. Great! Just another fucking obtrusion into my already quite intolerable state of mind and body. Left for dead, and sweating to the sounds of meringue Muzak pouring out of the P.A. System.

Before I go on, it just popped into my mind why am I doing this. Am I trying to change society? Of course not. Society will change and grow, or not, without any help or hindrances from me. This is my way of saying that at the time of this trip, and many other times, and I extremely stress, the many times that I have been at this stage of sickness, I was so FUCKING MAD AT MYSELF! My addiction was no one's fault, until I gave up, really gave up, and was going to be the only time in my life that I was made aware that addiction is a disease. That's right. It's a disease that was not known until it was studied by the medical world. Look it up. Ask any doctor, or go to a Narcotics Anonymous meeting, or any other plethora of private organizations like A. A. or, family groups that will explain to you why this person, or yourself is an addict or alcoholic or any other ics.

That is why, I realized after so many tries and failures that you have to get help. And also the people around you may not understand or want anything to do with you. 'Get the Fuck out of my house, you fucking lying, deceiving, good for nothing piece of shit'. You or someone you know has heard that many times before. All I (the author) want is for people to realize that yes, there is hope, but you have to work at it. You are not a bad person. You may have done some insane things while you were using, but there is another side to the equation. Do it. I finally did, but as you will see, it took me a lot longer, and I caused a lot more problems, and I broke the law, in a big way. Read on, and remember that there is help, just ask.

In fact, when I looked at the speakers in the airport language the Muzak appeared to be a pudding type of consistency as I recall. I was hallucinating and mentally and physically strained to the limits of all that mankind was intended to handle.

The next few hours were a total blur. Time ran into pockets. Slow, to slow, dead slow and so on. The information that I tried

to decipher, (in perhaps a foreign tongue borrowed from The Exorcist (The film), you know, sort of like Latin in reverse spoken by the horned one himself), indicated that there was indeed a huge snowstorm in N.Y.C. We were to be delayed for approximately five hours more, to arrive at 3 a.m., in New York.

These were the words that felt like hot knitting needles poking my eyes out. This, was another strained moment in an already strained life. The length of time to boarding, taking off, and landing turned into a complete sweaty, nauseous blur.

Perhaps I was napping occasionally, or, perhaps I was so over-tired and stressed, and into a heavy Jones that I was surely a tourist in my own town, sort of speak.

As we made our final approach into Newark International, (an oxymoron if I'd ever heard one), I was awake and aware enough to be experiencing intense turbulence that offered up the opinion of extremely inept flying. I white-knuckled it down And indeed made it down the runway intact.

It was 2 a.m. local time. I had 30 cents in my pocket. No cabs, no limos and eleven enormously heavy bags that just 24 hours ago were heading in the opposite direction. I then proceeded to call me Brother Scott in Manhattan, whom was wide awake and high as hell, just coming back from a gig. He was doing' the douche chill (Totally high on heroine, living in his own little world, with its own rules that seem to change any time he is required to move off his ass). "What!, are you crazy", he asked, as I pleaded for a ride. "Take a Limo and call me later, there's two feet of snow, and I am not coming, later".

Scott was twenty minutes from me and there are no limos or cabs at that time of night, especially with 30 cents to work with. It was a typical Scott maneuver. He was baked, and couldn't even give his own family the time of day. I have grown to loath my brother over the years, especially now, as I am typing this part of the book from prison paper onto the computer. It is now in real time February 20, 2003. He has my son. And never calls, never lets me speak with, or talk with my only son, Jack. I can't change other people, I've learned that, But, I still hate him for how he treats me and his wife and whoever else could be in the mix that gets in his way. Scott has even threatened to send me back to jail, when I tried to talk to my son..... OK. I'm done with my rant.

By the time he turned me down it was almost 3 a.m. horrified with my situation, all I wanted was to get to my empty trailer, and lift up the grill and experience some kind of relief in the form of green liquid. I really had sewn myself into a comer, and thrown the knitting needles out of reach. Wandering around the empty, cold airport, sweating and freezing at the same time, I wandered up to the airline counter.

Having not one brain cell available to me, I just did what came natural. I began a typical Jewish tirade. I suggest to whoever that poor person was, it was 2 in the morning, and I did have the right to inquire, (loudly, and with plenty of guilt), the situation that their airline puts me into. The airline clerk was in no mood, and I was screwed for a way home. The clerk gave that smirk. You know

that smirk that they have obviously learned in airline school, and pointed a crooked finger towards the official office of some importance to passengers in distress.

Dragging my 11 bags, I practically fell into the door on my way in. I was in so much stress and fatigue that it was obvious to the poor man. He had to do something to remedy the problem, because he could tell that I was at my wits end, and never leave his office until something happened.

He then suggested that since it was obviously the airline's fault for the delay into Newark, that he would be more than happy to pay for a cab back to Connecticut. Tip included would tally up to something in the area of \$165.00, one way.

Through the dark of the night we made our way up the Jersey turnpike, and onto 95 north for the home stretch. Fuckin' A Right. My state of mind was that of a sponge that had been squeezed dry, and held out of reach of the water it needed, before it dried out completely. In Connecticut with 2 feet of snow on the road didn't make it any easier for the cabbie either. Traveling at 35 miles per hour we finally made it to Westports' exit 18. The roads were impossible. There was no one out. Not even a pillow or two, nothing. It was as if I went from paradise into a frozen hell. But I was so happy that things worked out, and I was able to finagle a ride home. And just think, all of this would have never had to happen if it were not for the insanity of addiction. Yes, it is the definition of the word, and the life that comes along with it.

Getting off of the exit ramp we cleared a path for the next sorry person caught up in the hour of the damned. We rounded the corner, and one by one we carried my bags through two feet of fresh powder in my warm but empty trailer. The cabbie left and I thanked him profusely, even though, thanks just didn't seem to cut it. I opened my door and lifted up the grill lid.

I found it, Jeff took care of me. I polished off the entire 90mg in 2 seconds flat. Then sat down and waited. It was truly working. My sickness that I've put up with, which is basically like comparing the worst flu you have ever had, then times that by 10. I felt better and better, then finally made my groggy way to bed, the only bed (before I left for good, something told me that I should keep that bed, the blankets and telephone there). Thank you God, Goodnight for the moment. I also wanted to thank Jeff G personally for helping me out during a real situation. And I'll never, ever forget it. Thank you, and God Bless. I mean it, ya' Bastard!

I awoke the next morning having no idea where I was. But fuck it, wherever I am, I feel good, really good.

My state of mind was relaxed, and I was ready to deal.

### **Was I a New Man?**

Looking around my empty trailer, I scraped up a cup of coffee from the leftovers in the kitchen and sat down. Now, I needed a plan. More than any other time in my fucked-up out of control worthless, so called life, I really needed to think. It's really quite; the snow was all settled around the trailer, which always seems to put up a hash sign when needed.

I was on the totally new ground, sort of speak, and in terms of where would my life go from here. I had the opening of a new timeline. This is where life gets funny, (weird funny, not funny, gay, funny, not laughing funny, it was the weird funny, like the mysteries funny). I must still be out of sorts after drinking way too much methadone than the proper dose that any clinic would give. But after what I had been through those past 24 hours, I would have consumed huge quantities of anything. I'm just grateful that I made it back without jumping out of the plane, or staying with St. Thomas, although I must return someday when I can appreciate the total beauty of that precious island.

It was time to call my mother. Even though I didn't and never wanted her to know how bad off I was, and what's taken place lately, It was the little voice inside. I was always told to listen to that little voice, and this time it was practically yelling.

Somehow, I had the feeling that if she could understand or even try to conceive the unleashed swath of addiction, I should be able to receive maybe not compassion, but at least a way to the other side. I was truly sick of my life, my existence, and my circumspect situation in the regards to my new son, and his mother and daughter that I loved wholeheartedly.

At that moment, in my trailer, I began to see myself going towards the light of day. Remembering the torture I've gone through and now, chemically altered, or medically, my endorphins were acting in a normal manner, (for me, at the time), because of the methadone I was able to relax and think.

For the first time in days, I felt physically and mentally perfect. The nice morning went on. And my mother showed up about 2 hours later. We talked, and of course mothers know. She didn't know the scope of it all, and at the time I was clean and acting normal. She decided to take me to Norwalk Hospital.

Because I had taken the methadone, I was showing no outward sign of withdrawal; I was refused medical de-Tox. I could get on the waiting list, or go to another one of the fine de-tox's in the area (like he was recommending a fucking restaurant or something). So, after a small debate, my mom offered to take me home, to her house to recover. A huge mistake, for all involved. In two or three days I started getting so sick, I was curled up into the prenatal position. Screaming, hallucinating, and kicking my legs. Then on a quiet late night, I stole a twenty and drove over to Jeffs' in the middle of the night. He was up. It was 4 in the morning, and he sold me a bag and I took off. But eventually I was well enough to start looking for a job and get a life. Life with Mom was obviously a living hell. She had no way of knowing. All I can say is that she did the best she could in dealing with this entire unexplored region of her little life. Thanks, Mom. I just wanted to add a note here;

I left out so many of the details concerning the last chapter. There is no way that I could # 1 remember all of it #2 It sucked. Ask anyone who had come off Heroin. It is entirely too excruciating to even write about. Just going back there gives me the Fucking willies. I do want to let those people in St. Thomas know that I am very sorry for my behavior.

## A taste of my mind

Dealing with human need is a funny thing. At times certainly without hesitation, people will do the things they do with no concern for others whatsoever. Not considering another person's feelings or entitlements. I am also guilty as charged. Nonetheless, I am deeply confused and even agitated over this concept. It happens all the time, in every corner of the world. Hence, politics and all of their misconceptions come into play. The world leaders are masters of deception, hypocrisy, manipulation and self preservation. These concepts are not new to any of us, although the general public does not fully comprehend the lengths at which they precede.

During our work-a-day life, the media explains these general items through inter-imposed manipulations through their bosses that own the company that owns that particular network. Not unlike N.B.C. Owned by General Electric, G.E is one of our Governments primary Defense contractors, which is basically if not totally run by Washington. The networks are then told how, when and where to announce news or not.

I and a lot of others feel that the big brother theory is fully in control. That is not a feeling of paranoia, but of fact. The inner workings of our country are being completely watched over by other watchers watching them

Although in conclusion, look at the White House manipulations co-existing with the house and senate. All but a few are rotten to the core, looking out for their own asses as they fall, which brings me to my point. I have recently been able to weed out certain areas of my own mistakes. In turn, I have manipulated and hurt the ones I love, and many others down the line.

Like dominoes, the chain effect leaves untold remorse of a long chain of people. At this point in my life, I am finally coming to grips with the hurt and anguish that I have personally caused throughout my years of manipulation. My first 39 and ½ years on this planet has been a broken arm of sorts. That is the only way I can explain my extreme lack of care concerning my loved ones, and myself. The word humbleness comes to mind only now.

In my travels I have had a chance to come into contact with some very humble beings. The only reason that I know this is for what they did not say. To understand what I mean is to look at examples of the humblest of beings. Certain religious leaders from local settings are an excellent example. The work they perform is of immense value and deeply humane in nature. In life, those of the cloth any cloth, have to be able to accept instances of total chaos, and round out the comers as a mediary, only to be thwarted at these attempts. Try as they will, minimal results may follow, and at no thanks or bonus' to themselves. Yet, they go on each day, each problem and each attempt at solution, because of selfless lessons in life to themselves perhaps or the ones on the other end. Another example would be of the tireless workers in the field of rehabilitation. Those perhaps being either physically impaired, emotionally distressed and impossibly addicted souls searching for the strength to carry on without drugs or alcohol or, take your choice.

Addiction is the one I am most familiar with. In fact, I am aware that my talents of patience and understanding come to

mind. Therefore, I would consider becoming involved in this field someday. Being able to relate to other addicts is the most important aspect, I would assume, a drug and alcohol counselor. Think about it, I have experience in every side of this area. Thinking and acting out every conceivable influence and situation, I have to agree with myself that I would and could become a good candidate the nuances of self-deception leapt across the pages, forcing me into a stream of consciousness that I find unreasonable. Not able to forget my past, I tend to want to wisp it away, as a fish net is cast off the stem in hopes of a new and further bounty. I am only human, but, I get thoughts that get too inconclusive too following. It is how my mind weaves through the insanity that lurks just below the surface. That is jail. That is prison. Not only locked away, but your head wanders and you think about some crazy shit. I wish I was out of here.

The days seem to come and, never know my future past the end of the day. Uncertainty has its hopes for delusion.

I WILL get a grip and consume life to the fullest, no matter what space and time is dealing, death or will deal me. I can persuade my sub-conscience to act accordingly (believe it, or not), leaving dread and foolishness behind for flowers of gold and rainbows of delight.

Back to the past, for instance, is sometimes a deliberate attempt. But, for myself, these precious thoughts, motivations and actions, that I was a part in, will indeed host a new life from the crumbling ashes and not redundancy.

The honest truth about being in prison is easy. Yet, having to explain, it may take a minute. All I can assume is that you have never been there and most certainly not go out of your way to purchase a one way fare ticket for the sheer fun of it. Besides the obvious, lack of family contact, and of course complete and total abstinence from any out of fence contact with women, friends, travel, relationships, earning a living, driving, seeing the ocean, in other words, being free.

We do have television and radio. We cannot have tapes or cds, and no personal musical instruments. That was recently taken away by a congressman that recently broke the law, and had to find out first hand how all of this feels. My day consists by the minute, usually. Getting up, dressed correctly and pick up Mario on the first floor. Then we walk down the road to the chow hall. In the winter, this becomes a real challenge, because Mario would tend to slip, so we would walk slowly, and the wind would cut right through you. Then you're greeted by a long line foe a couple of eggs, or you can just grab a tray and have cereal. I had to be at my assigned job by 7am. Sharp, or they would lock the fence, and you would be in a shitload of trouble, unless you could fast talk your way out of it. Then you would work until I lam and race to the chow hall for some shit ass sandwich. Again, long lines and grease ridden accoutrements to round out your lack of appeal, 12 pm. Back to work until 3:15, walk all the way across the compound to your unit to be ready for a full compound standing up headcount at 4. I go through my time with half to ¾ horse blinders on to allow myself peace of mind to all of the bullshit and foreign aliens blowing their noses into the sink. It is absurd beyond absurdity. 2000 men from all walks of life, warehoused together as per dire circumstances of 100% over- populated.

In essence, this prison is not unlike an elderly housing complex. If you need, tennis is available between 6 and 10am. Then it's all handballs. Basketball teams from each unit battle it out. For the older Italian gentlemen, and others, Bocci courts are in the back of each housing unit. Like clouds of beetles looking for new trees to consume, so is the sight of 2000 aliens running for dear life when the chow call rings. This sight, I can still not get over. As if this would be their last meal on earth before being swept away by a plague of unforeseen UFO's sweeping the planet clean to harvest their own resources. Yes, this is a fucking circus. All day and night yelling, yelling loudly in broken Spanish can be heard anywhere, anytime.

Hoads of them swarm over free items given away for cleaning and personal hygiene. I am sure that most of these men have never slept on sheets or perhaps even mattresses. Only the minorities (the white folk), seem to value work. For the others, getting out of work by any means possible is how they live. They would choose jobs like unit orderlies, whom sole job is mopping a hallway twice a day. Then sleep a lot, eat, lift weights, and hustle is the common language of daily deals. It is a way of life for most to sleep and eat as a way of life.

The first and foremost lesson to be learned is that we are alive. Living creatures, confined or not, why bereave yourself of self-illumination. Daily, I read books, newspapers, write and have intelligent conversation. Joke, pray, learn. It is our duty as humans to proceed. Stagnation is death. Illumination is life.

There. Be gone into. Before I go on in this journey, I would like to update my feelings and current where about, snap, today is March 25, 1999. I am still at Ft. Dix in New Jersey now having alleviated a lot of the tension and uncertainty of prison life. I am going through such immense soul searching, utilizing the meager self help that is offered here.

Alcoholics Anonymous is the undisputed top of the list. I have met and got to know the 8 or 10 regulars out of almost 2000 that care enough to address their problems and feelings with each other, and to come to grips with the mind blowing power of addiction. The disease of addiction is real. I also find comfort in the fact that it did have total control of my life. I'm learning to deal with things through open and trusting lines of dialog. Hi, I'm Jamie and I am an addict. The healing goes on. I thank God I'm alive and have the chance in prison to re-work my life and be the man that I should and will be.

### **Continuation of the Jungles of Seattle**

There is a certain amount of patience required to perform memory calculations. Those include switching in and out of devises inside my own head.

As I first thought appears after a dreary, miserable hot summer comes to a close; a re-arrangement of my mente is in order. I see it as a clearinghouse. A giant but somewhat limited warehouse ½ price sale. Specializing in odds n' ends and brick-a-bracts of thought memorabilia that gets sold to the lowest bidder. So, that the main areas of one's survival and consciousness are not lost in a blur.

At this point I wish to expunge some recent high points (not

many), and low points (or more). Of several months and up until last night that I desperately need to dissipate. Clear my head of some confusion, and actually establishing clarity in some respects, at al. My dreams that I will mention from time to time Affect me in very specific ways. Sleep patterns are key to anyone looking to lead a "normal life", but can be maligned by bumps in the night. Hence, intensely disturbing dreams often are accompanied by repercussions in one's own psyche.

I dream in cycles. Some dreams, as anyone else's, come back in the hazy, un-tuned, like trying to get a long distance signal from a very weak source. Then other dreams are carried into full awake fear. Sleep talking and batting around in the still morning air are commonplace. These cycles of my dreams are very regular and quite predictable, coming once every month for four to five nights in a row. Almost certainly jolting me out of bed, awake from the horrors concocted from my sub-conscious.

A particular dream from the edges of a syrupy haze calls out to explain. But, as I push at the memory, it eludes my grip, except for the thought of cannibalism coming to mind, a wretched thought of being locked away in a room or an apartment (high rise), with my Father. As though we were hiding out from whomever and as insurgents of men or monsters, (some would believe these two were synonymous), break into the room from the doors and windows, we would take turns shooting them with big, (uncommonly large) weapons, point blank in the head and body. Hearing, tasting, seeing body parts and blood spattering in all directions. Then finally slow motion would consume the vision of eating and liking the heads and bodies, we were consumed with ravenous revenge.



The feeling of escaping, yes, quite literally escaping that afternoon via Greyhound was at the time mixed, emotional relief, from the true insanity that my life had become, and fear. Ultimate fear of having only two more bags left. No pills forty dollars and three thousand miles ahead of me in a noisy bus.

And I, being at the time of weakness and unstable character, my sister loaded me on the bus, or should I say pushed me on; with what few belongings I had left. The bus blew the three beeps signaling the departure of life, as I knew it. As I mentioned, weak and scared and, the first thought that came to mind was to make a bag, right away! So, I got up and out of my seat while viewing 1- 95 and the traffic I would soon be away from, and practically sauntered down the aisle. Past the white trash, old people, and college kids that I was, will be, or hope to become.

As you may not know, the restroom in the back of the Greyhound leaves something to be desired. The stainless steel countertop seething with on-disclosed germs and viruses from the entire world was within my reach. The air was rank with piss in conjunction with that weird blue solution that jostles in the bottom of the toilet.

I tried to close my senses and wiped away the Black Plague with a paper towel and proceeded to prepare my second to last bag, (dose) of heroin. I opened the bag real gently, and with a chemists' precision withdrew the exact amount for a few hours of sensory shutdown.

Rolled up one of the two twenty's I had stashed for the trip and sniffed in the glory powder like an athlete. The taste, the feel, the ultimate comfort came over me as I wrestled the bill and the bag back into my jeans, and sat back down in the couch of love the ride into glory for the moment.

The next couple of hours took on a very surrealistic point of view. As the Greyhound snarled along with the precision of a surgeon at the moment the scalpel hits the body, we wove in and out of traffic at sub-light speed (or though it seemed). I was melancholy, reflective, and as sure as I am in jail now, we were leaving town in a hurry.

The Connecticut Turnpike was the yellow brick road. As the couple two seats ahead of me were sucking face so severely as though exchanging brain matter.

My life was whisked by co-op city and the exchange to the Buckner, and on towards Broadway uptown, not far from where I took many excursions from Connecticut to "the spot" on 136th and Amsterdam Ave. Looking as utterly plain as possible as I approached the man.

Into the swirling tunnels of the Port Authority and coasting to a stop, I disembarked to call my brother.

Hoping for a kind word or ultimately a change in plans.

"Hey man, what's up?"

"Not much. Where are you?"

"Oh, yeah know. At Port Authority heading for Seattle, and I thought I would give you a buzz before the Greyhound takes off."

"No shit?"

"No shit."

"All right then. Give me a call when you get there OK?"

"Ya. Later."

"Later."

The biggest help he was. But then again, as most people, was completely fed up with me as humanly possible. But, then again, Scott was going through his own private Idaho as well, living his life on strings of chance and delusion, living gig to gig. So, as most of us have either forgotten or don't even realize, is that even your

most loved ones carry heavy burdens of their own. And, in trying to take your problems on can and often will, break the camel's back. Or, they just simply retreat into the trenches. Hiding from rapid fire strafes that their own lives throw at them. (I would enjoy presuming what other people are thinking, but alas, I cannot Because of non-temporal adherence.

As the three beeps sounded as if a mating calls of a Greyhound in heat, looking for its mate, we pulled out of the Port authority without incidence. I was clouded with insecurity and abandon by the Chiva surging through my veins. Enjoying what seemed to be the last real hours of my planet's history, over the George Washington Bridge, heading west, young man.

My eyes flicked back and forth, trying to take in the last images of the east, specifically, Northern New Jersey. It was then the fear and misjudgment hit me. In the form of my addiction perceiving that I was coming down. My coping mechanism began to hide like a turtles head receding back into its shell, peering out, waiting for the imminent danger to slip out of view. What do I do? You guessed it. I bus surfed down the Aisle to the waiting pestilence and disease, to get my inhibitions back in check. (As I think about this now after, 1,2,3... 16 months clean and sober, I surely see the insanity of addiction. The sheer terror it has reeked on me and those around me during those years. By the way, some very distressing news came my way concerning Kelly, and my son Jack, and her daughter Starling. But, for now I'll wait until I learn more. Let's leave it at the word INSANITY!).

As I reached inside my tight jeans, holding myself up, emotionally and physically, one hand on the strap above my head as the bus rolled and my life rolled simultaneously. Once, again, clearing the Black Plague and handling the last bag as if handling Plutonium238 through 3 inch glass, I prepared the heaven and went through the reassurance that Heroin gives. Made my way back to my temporary home that only a ticket and a travel plan on Greyhound would assure, meaning, really thought, I knew things were going to get a lot worse as the bus caroused west, toward a complete uncertainty and unknown. The wholly (holy) fear that was just below my drugged out mind, pinched at my earlobe.

Telling me how miserable, and what a total mistake this trip was to be. I had to go on though, knowing nothing. Except, that the bus was indeed moving, and I was still very high (The warm sweater within). Savor it my son, for the wrath of Mr. Jones is walking up the steps to the house of pain, about to ring the wake up bell.

The next thought was hunger. A deep seeded growling in my stomach. After I had woken up, from a major nod that lasted almost halfway through the state of Pennsylvania. (Most of the time a nod consists of maybe missing ones favorite Television show, only to find the blanket smoldering from a dropped cigarette, and going, 'Oh wow'). But this was different. I was really far out of range from familiar copping grounds.

The proverbial McDonalds Cheeseburger fries and coke molded like putty to the linings of my intestines, latching on and not letting go, as I didn't know for three or four days later, that being my last meal for quite a while.

My total cash on hand, \$37.22 and dropping up.... Time to head to the familiar 'restroom' aboard my trusty steed, saddle up my head, for it was time to cope, sniffing dope, keep it up. What an asshole I am. Those are the little thoughts that were popping up in my head, like VH-1 was going on in the Greyhound. What a fucking asshole I am. Oh,..... Oh..... There we go..... Oh, that un-mistakable relief from one's own conscience, To Be or Not to Be. Not!!!!!!

That was the question that was no longer on my mind as I drifted from town to city to the woods, seeing unfamiliar road signs. Confusion was cut off as it all blew by. As I nod continued through the night, I could hear only the roar from the heart of my Greyhounds' motor as morning light slowly rose from the east. We were slowing. I then asked the impossibly deft individual to my right, 'where are we?'. The answer came at some great struggle, "ah...I think we're pulling into Cleveland". Wow! I nodded all the way through to Ohio. How cool. Things were looking up, I thought "have you ever been to the Cleveland bus terminal at 5:45am?"

As I dismounted from the bus, it became very clear that this was not Kansas anymore. A nomadic drunk got in the way of the door, and of course my thoughts were on copping, always on copping. How incredibly frustrating? How insane does this ride get?

The inside of the bus terminal was something either seen in the Twilight Zone or in one's own dreams or nightmares, depending on the view.

A single building with twenty-foot high ceilings. Old decrepit wooden benches and pigeons everywhere.

Apparently getting inside of the broken windows lining the ceiling.

A few stragglers from missed connections were waiting for their own horse to appear.

The old, I mean old, vending machines with soft drinks and sandwiches originally meant for World War II soldiers on the way home from the war. A coffee machine that I once had seen as a kid. Where the cup is supposed to drop down and out pours the wake-up elixir. Neither cup nor coffee appeared, but the sound of grinding gears and God knows what, happened instead. Oh well.

This stop is the place where the driver shift changed and the bus is cleaned, and more blue mystery water was installed in the toilet. The wait for return to get back on seemed to progress in slow motion. Birds flew by as faceless people meandered about. Clouds of dust and smoke filtered through the broken windows. Time was half speed in Cleveland that morning. What the fuck am I doing here?

As the P.A. System crackled, then clicked on, the voice of an overtired announcer spoke words that needed translation to my ears. It appeared the Greyhound was ready to move on. We wait on line, moving luggage with our feet as the driver with coffee stains on his blue tie checks tickets as scrupulously as if entering the Pentagon. What security! Back in my area.

I calculated at best I would be ok for the next eighteen hours or so. Well, until then I'll just go through the checkpoint of no return and onto a fresh bus.

The passengers were beginning to change hue. As if my waiting carriage. I collapse into my saddle for the absurdly monotonous stretch through Ohio and Indiana. Three beeps, Ho.....

The Greyhound sounding the three beeps pulled out of the barren wastelands of Cleveland for the imminent Journey westward.

Bands of stores and malls swept by, my personal portal, as children played at a high noise level behind me. Sleeping off and on through Indiana, the cornfields, and small towns that go along with it, I bantered the idea of finishing off my stash. It was a heavyweight match for the belt in my head as I tried to win the fight against Lucifer, who was loose in my head. But, as you all well know, all weaknesses finally cave in. (In my years of experience of which are limited to the states of mind in my keep-sake case of memoirs, I claim total responsibility for. Those including massive guilt, gluttony, ecstasy, and despair), I raced down the aisle to again; "fix" my enormously hungry monkey.

Knowing that Chicago has been just a sneeze away, then a layover change of drivers, luggage handling, and other copious situations that always occur at bus terminals.

After the last bag, of which I huffed up all at once, I levitated back to the coach seat, to await the heaven and hell unleashing at quantum levels in my own personal timeline.

As we neared Chicago and its massive skyscrapers flickering in the distance, my head was spinning. I was plenty high almost to the point of non-thought. A temporal blackout caused by a near overdose of New York P-dope. I was barely noticing all the confusion of passenger melee all around me.

On arrival I had to account for my entire luggage, and dragged myself and all of my belongings into the main terminal. Actually, quite a nice terminal (as terminals go). Many different snack and food areas and an exit onto the street. Yup, I was feeling good, and going to chance an encounter with a local dealer. No such luck though, as we were partitioned and protected from outside civilization, and the riff-raff I needed to see. So disappointed as I was headed back in and waited to depart for points west.

Next stop Milwaukee, Wisconsin. (The Dairy State) On in Minneapolis then Fargo, North Dakota etc. (OH FUCK! !!!!!!! I'M OUT OF DOPE)



The country ahead of me contained a different element of human nature, relevant to the coming landscape. There were farmer types, old people with modest hairdo's, hardly any cosmopolitan types at all. In fact, I was a standout. Black clothes, Black leather, earrings everywhere, long hair and a New York City groove cap. You know, the kind that's worn backwards for the ultimate in comfort and look. So there!

The three beeps and we were off. It was so good to move on. There was a strange comfort inside the Greyhound.

The Greyhound had become my temporary home. Well, let's face it, my only home. So, I laid back and put my groove cap in cruise mode. Oddly, the whine of the tires and the growl of the motor were becoming a comfort to me. I realized that while we were still moving, everything was Ok.

Wisconsin, a state that I have never really paid any mind to, came and went in an evening haze, past the border into Minnesota, where Minneapolis and points north awaited, trees, trees, and more trees, gas stations and fast food. This country thrives on fast food, fast anything, fast sex, fast cars, fast lives and, into the ground for fast eternities.

Wow! Slow down people. Maybe, look up at the stars and the moon. Enjoy candles and a hot bath. Squeeze your loved one just right, for a long time. Hold each other. Slow down enjoy. It's not impossible.

Here's a thought. How many people do you know that could tell you they looked up at the sky today? Saw clouds going by watching the rain fall. Breathed deeply, or caught a glimpse of an animal in the yard, or watched birds gather. Well?

As we made our final approach into Minneapolis it was late at night. And the streets were alive. Cars cruising, people partying. It was then that the devil pricked my shoulder with his pointy tail. "Go.... Get high..... It's Ok....I do it. Mmm".

I looked around and smoked a cigarette outside the front entrance with several of the long haul passengers. I had begun to pick these people out from the other riff raff that moseyed about.

I still felt ok. Not high, but not sick. Next, the announcement, the line, the luggage and into the coach, which now read, SEATTLE on the front marker, a good sign that I was on the right bus headed the wrong way. Three beeps into the night, or what was left of it, on to Fargo, North Dakota. The plain states were just around the bend.

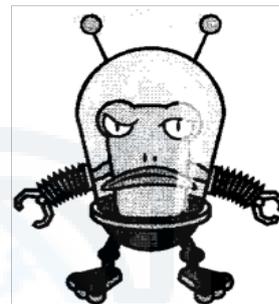
Back on the Greyhound I burrowed into my section. Two seats, well... really one. The luxury and adventure of mood prompted me to recline both seats to the back position, which is still quite upright and hard as a rock. Sleeping was becoming a problem because of the constant banging of my head against the cold glass, the unforgiving glass of my portal. I did manage to sleep on and off or whatever into Fargo.

Where the hell is Fargo, North Dakota and by saying that I am not implying dislike, nor mean to upset any North Dakotans, but what are you people doing here? This run down prairie town is

far too bizarre.

Forget about trying to explain the now semi-normal routine at the terminal. And explaining the one bench, and the outdated services and lack of modern plumbing that seems to go hand in hand with recent building codes. And, the one-eyed 95-year-old ticket agent that was fast asleep at his post. It was again totally surreal. As a matter of fact, abstract. Not unlike living inside a Van Gogh painting. I had to be in some sort of fog.

Nothing made sense. All angles were distorted. People with stone faces, milled about as if this was a waiting area on the way down to hell. Remembering this particular time gives me gas.



I did notice somehow, though, there were a few riders that have been on since NY and Chicago. I may have spoken to them briefly, but I definitely was in no mood. Impending doom was lurking on my horizon, and I was just about to check in, (emotional, physically, spiritually and on and on).

We stopped for breakfast about two hundred miles west of Fargo at a roadside biscuit and egg joint. Stocked in the filthy glass display cabinets I viewed pies. Of which age was clearly no longer a factor. And the women who were serving these pies seemed to survive solely on these foodstuffs.

Everyone was quite over-weight and strange. (Maybe it was me.) Accents I couldn't figure out and hair-do's that went out in 1958. The music if I could tell correctly spun Patsy Cline and the atmosphere was thick with nothing in particular. What goes on here? Why are you people here? The reason is quite simple, but it looms later as things get stranger.

My breakfast came at the speed of light, obviously prepared in advance to get the bus people in and out in a hurry. My meal came to four and change and at that point I was down to twenty-nine and counting. At this point of the journey there are fewer and fewer bus stops and they are all outside in the prairie land, wind and bad hair. Three beeps to Montana.

I remind myself as if looking into the distant past lifetimes before I curled up in the fetal position, close to panic, sweating profusely, yawning constantly. I was in Jonestown. In the middle of Montana I put on my New York groove cap on the over-eye mode as we churned west. I knew this was going to happen. I once had the pleasure of knowing a man named Walter Cunningham. In the distant past (this lifetime), during my turbulent twenty's. He gave me a quick word of advice as we headed up I-95 to Boca Raton at about 3am.

Probably the most important three words of my life and easily the hardest to quantify.

### **Mind over Matter**

Simple words, hard concept and alas, it was these words that rang in my mind as we rolled towards the Rockies. Mind over Matter, or perhaps Mind over Mind, in my case.

It is impossible to relay the total lack of coherence or anything in my life that was more difficult than getting through this period. I wanted it and, I put myself in a position to where I was stripped away, and made myself deal.

Many words have been written in all kinds of books and manuals and medical texts suggesting alternate methods of withdrawal. But in the end, it's all bullshit. You just have to hang, and deal, Ups and downs, hot and cold through the vast open state of Montana.

Over that night I slept on the floor of the bouncing Greyhound because of how insanely uncomfortable I was. My legs were kicking like wild stallions trapped in a corral, waiting for their chance to get out.

We stopped very early in the morning way up in the Montana Rockies, about sixty miles east of the Idaho border. Debarking from the bus was just about impossible, consequently, the bus had to be serviced and everyone needed to disembark.

Then the smell hit me, a sweet smell, like innocence like flowers, but not really. Fresh pine, nature. I was alive. I could smell things. All through my tumultuous journey I never really had my five senses working. Then it hit me, smell. It was incredibly beautiful. This small item gave me enough of a push to disregard anything else and move along. I stayed outside the little breakfast spot in the cold mountain air and pushed for comfort. Insanity needled at my mind from both ears, but I fought back with all my might to keep it at bay. Push my first real morning alive again in Montana.

My first real morning in Montana, but man I felt like shit. Someone, somewhere said it as shit and Shinola, whatever that means. All kidding aside, the feeling was of two separate worlds colliding. And at that moment, along with many other quasi-conscious moments in my life, I wished I could hang out with buddy 'Sigmund'.

For he, and he only could decipher and possibly put some perspective and some resemblance of order to the madness heaving out of my eyeballs. I don't know if madness is the right adverb (?), but because of my limited and discreet vocabulary, I feel comfortable with madness. As a daily companion on the back roads of Jamie's World.

That morning I recall (with some persuasive indicativeness), as motivated off the decking to answer the call to hunger (or so I thought). I then became instantly aware that we were in some sort of casino. A breakfast casino nestled into the beautiful mountains of upper Montana. Who would imagine this?

Our busload of drugs, were really going at it, tossing in pocket change with fervor; to chance for the big money at 6 a.m., Mountain Time.

While trying to ingest my eggs, the sounds of one armed bandits sang out of tune with abandon, as my stomach heaved in loneliness. The first real solid food since I don't know where. May be Chicago?

All I can remember was kicking, literally kicking, physically. 'Kid's, don't try this at home'. You have better things to do with your life than wander aimlessly about our (great?) country kicking dope. Don't do it.

Read it and forget it. Get a nice car. Have a few kids. Go sailing, but God dammit, stay away from drugs (Sermon temporarily over).

Too late for me though. Why is it always too late? Isn't there a section in the space-time continuum where at the great life control room you can hit rewind to say, Hmmm... Lets see? Mid-twenties. - Stop- and -play. I guess that if this were at all possible the world would be in perpetual rewind. "Oh, hi! First time back? Well, count your blessings dude. I'm rewinding twelve times and I have no idea what I am doing".

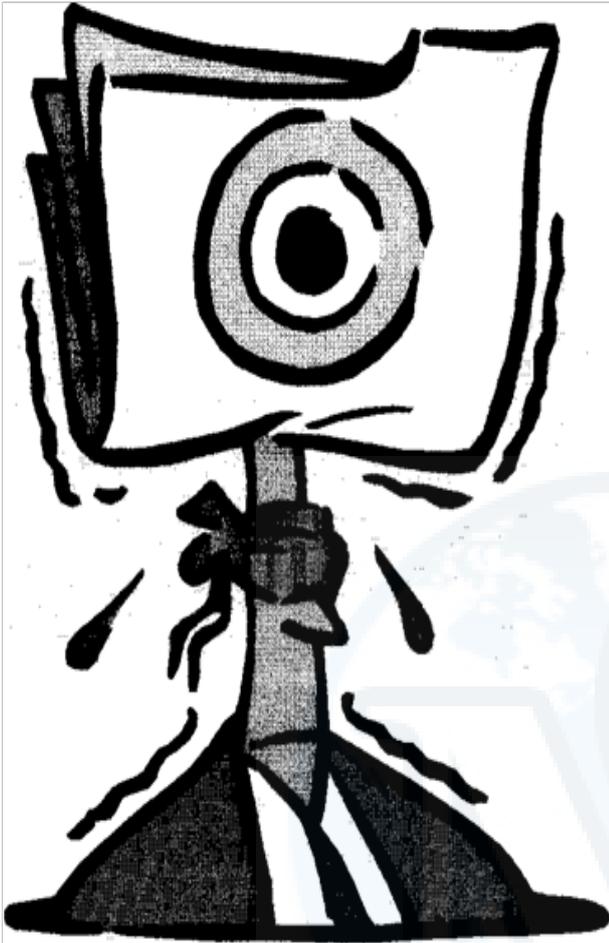
I'm definitely afraid of stopping tape too early. Don't want to re-live those early years, and stopping tape too fast would cause me to miss some of the really good parts. Thus, I wouldn't mind living over again, including some of the most incredible sex.

The new bus driver appeared with cowboy boots and a cowboy hat, mixed in with the inevitable blue polyester, tacky driving uniform, therefore insuring the leisure suit as an exceptional fashion faux pas.

Three beeps and eight hours to Seattle with Twenty one dollars and no clue, hey, that's life right? As I sit here now, in the 'Law Library' at my prison, I read what I have written and get a certain feeling. I suppose from re-living your own past, and at a certain point, knowing that this story brings me ultimately to jail, makes this even more unbelievable. As I mentioned Time lines could have been altered anywhere along the way. Let's just say for arguments sake that the Greyhound crashed and burned as it was toppling over a two-mile crevasse. No parachute. Or, I could have made any number of choices before, during or after this section in time. The line of time would easily have split off to a totally different conclusion. But always as odd as it seems, (now wait a minute and understand this statement on a basic level) I needed this. I needed misery. I needed drugs. I needed a change. I needed constant motion, believe me.

Once I was an actual commuter. By far, the most un successful commuter at that. I lasted maybe three weeks, tops. My conclusion is that, number one; I am not a worker bee. I don't know what my classification really is, but it certainly is not, was not, or will not ever be a commuter. No Sir.

Three beeps and the cowboy bus driver yanked the wagon train away from the breakfast casino spot to stop yet unknown, final destination, Seattle.



As of a couple hundred miles back, I had struck up a conversation with a guy sitting two seats back and across the aisle from me. We seemed to have a lot in common. His name was Jack (my boys' name).

Jack hailed from Indianapolis, Indiana another guy like me, heading west to find gold in them thar hills. Or as it was with him, fish in them thar stormy seas. You see, Jack was heading towards the fishing Mecca of the Northwest, Seattle. Also land of Salmon, Haddock and points north.

Jack was going to land a job on a big fishing vessel, with dreams of bounty. What I could make out through my Jones haze was that Jack was leaving behind some big problems back in the cornfields. And because for the sake of anonymity, I won't bother to mention some details that are associated with him. He was on a mission. Jack had also taken a similar desperate move to change geographies to alter his own timeline. So, there we were riding the wagon train west. Crossing through Idaho and passing Lake C'oeure d'laine. An incredible sight, really for how I was feeling it was truly beautiful.

Jack started to tell me about Northern Idaho. How mercenaries and other skinhead type organizations

We're alive and well and drilling daily in Idaho. Oh well. As we

cleared the summits and started down the steep inclines on the western front of the Rockies we landed in Spokane, Washington. I was not feeling too well. We briefly stopped in the exciting bus terminal, then walked around waiting for the bus to do its business. Jack noticed something a while back, since riding aboard the Greyhound, he had noticed how totally out of it I was. So I had to, or, wanted to come clean about my dilemma. We talked and talked, and decided through much deliberation to go at this thing as a team once we hit Seattle. He could tell and it was so fucking obvious that I was in no shape, and I believe he needed the company. There was talk of staying in a shelter because of the lack of funds. To my understanding Jack had little to no money as well. So, we were in deep shit together. What do they say?

Misery loves company. Well, there you have it, Jack and I traveling with our old friend misery. Three beeps, Oh shit!

Did you know that Washington State is mostly desert? Yes. From Spokane west, we rode through the desert. No trees just an occasional scrub brush or two.

We stopped in a little one-horse town in the middle of this mess-begotten Northern wasteland to dine at the local Dairy King, a truly fine dining experience. Do you remember the television show back in the sixties called *Lost in Space*? Well, there was one episode that completed my belief that we were on that very trip that the Robinson's had to endure across the Black and White desert looking for the Great Sea, as they traveled it began to get hotter because of the unique planet they had landed on (Thanks to Dr. Smith).

Not unlike our journey into the Great desert of the north, the more west we traveled, the hotter it became. Gazing out across the Dairy King Establishment parking lot was a bank sign that flashed 99 degrees. I began to hallucinate as I tried to scarf down my burger and onion rings, and found myself right along with the Robinson's in search of their great sea. The sun was beating on my head as if a sledgehammer made out of pure energy was pounding on my noggin.

I immediately shot back into the air-conditioned coach, for a determination of sanity. My hallucinations were continuing. Was I really losing it? Cattle were floating freely around the bus, seemingly grazing on the open air. As if this was an everyday occurrence. Trees were bending in time to the music coming from my head as I sweated in sheer panic, waiting for this fastidious episode to be over with. I heard three beeps, but alas, it was just part of the song and then I realized that I had no idea what was going on. Ahhh..... The life of a drug addict, want some?

The rest of the day's journey, I'm happy to say, was essentially a total blur. I do remember riding through more mountains. At the top or as they (who are they, anyway) say out west, the Pass. We stopped at a lovely coffee and cappuccino stand. Thank God, Normalcy. I knocked back my Vanilla double shot latte leisurely and savored the flavor as if landing in a foreign country.

And, as I got off the boat, the Natives handed me a taste of their land, which ultimately reminded and reassured me of my own land, one that was a fuck of a long way behind from where we had just campaigned through.

Down we go. Three beeps over the Cascades.



Ok. I was definitely thinking in reverse. Wasn't I? From this time my motion had to be in forward. To a new beginning.

Yes, A new beginning in a new land with new adventures. What? Am I hearing myself correctly? For on this quiet morning, the day after St. Valentines in the year 00, today, I feel slightly depressed. Well, not really depressed but how 'bout.... Melancholy, yeah, melancholy. For on this very day in the year 1986 I was just waking up to Gail's and my honeymoon at the Stamford Sheraton, Yes indeed! This is surely bringing back old memories of times in my mid-twenties that I would rather forget or change. Or just dwell on, depending the situation. For it was later that year our first daughter Sierra was born. And from that day on my beautiful daughter was going to be in my life. (If she reads this she'll probably disagree because yes, I did get divorced from her mother when she was just 3 ½ years old). So, in her eyes, I was not the perfect father. You see what's happening here? My mind has shifted from one post to another. All things centered on some point in the past.

Not unlike how old people live out their remaining years. Hmm..... Am I getting old and repetitive... Nah.?

Let me tell you this much and then I'll continue. There is nothing more I would like to do, is to write out my twenties. Those years were filled with salt and vinegar, Cocaine and Jack Daniels. Music and late nights. Sleepless, wreck less, restless, love-filled, travel-logged days. That, once I get into I'll have to finish. So, for now, let's move on, shall we?



After traveling in excess of four days and nights on the Greyhound, I was beyond weary and sore. I was at the end of my rope. The last hours dragged on like pushing rocks uphill. My ass was sore. But, things were looking up. Jack and I had engaged in some conversations with some fellow riders of the coach of doom from the Seattle area. Within those last hours we had heard about a shelter downtown that seemed like the only likely alternative to the present.

My mind was that of cheese coming out of the other side of the cheese grater, so Jack was taking the immediate control of my destiny.

We traversed through the suburbs of Outer Seattle pas Redmond, Washington where Jimi Hendrix grew up. Not long after that the driver the words I thought I would never hear "Last stop Seattle and points south".



There we were, two of the sorriest bastards. Road bruised and beaten (courtesy of Greyhound), standing on the tarmac in downtown Seattle I had eleven dollars and a fucking headache. No sleep for days. I chose this form of torture. And incidentally, a great form of torture.

A few of our fellow riders on the bus told us about the old Morrison Hotel. (Supposedly owned and operated by Jim Morrisons relatives, hence the name) and now, known to everyone "in the know" as the Downtown Emergency Shelter. But, the local bus driver just didn't seem to be one of those people in the know. (Obviously he has never stayed at a truly luxurious accommodation before.) So we grabbed our luggage and hopped a number 3 bus down 3<sup>rd</sup> avenue towards James Street.

As we were disembarking, cracking people with our loose belongings, "Excuse me, sorry, my fault, excuse me". The driver just happened to mention, "Oh, by the way fell as, watch yourselves down here. There's a lot of riff-raff and drugs and so forth so be cool". I only heard the word drugs. How surprising.

Then the smell hit me. Yes, urine. I smelled urine. Ok, piss. And then I knew we were in the right place. As I looked around the block that was to become our neighborhood, I couldn't help but wish I were checking into a hospital or a detox or even that Betty Ford spot. Instead, I chose my detoxification in the worst section of Seattle. The homeless, the useless people, who had gravitated here from all parts of the world. Drunken Indians (or the PC version alcoholically challenged Native Americans), Wild Mexicans pawning off crack. Canadians on the lamb, and countless other dregs of society that moved through the streets in a rhythm of outrage and despair.

Finding the door to the shelter was another trick in itself. Obviously there would be no outward advertisements.

WELCOME-HOMELESS and HELPLESS, Come in and be rewarded. Yeah, No, the door was not clearly marked. So, we followed what appeared to be a stream of degenerates, (not unlike myself), through an opening portal that was to be my home, for now.

The Morrison Hotel, known in the late 1800's and early 1900's, and up until its demise, as, the place in Seattle. Or so I'm told. Once a fabulous five star hotel in the heart of Seattle now stood a worn-out Welfare hotel, and its second floor, where once was a magnificent Grand Ballroom, now, house the people that society had left behind. The people that people on the street see and turn their heads in disgust. The people, who say, 'look at that bum, that junk. That poor drunk and then possibly toss a quarter into the abyss of a myriad of mental and physical disease that can be pushed under the rug, out of sight, swept away into a corner building, where most of the general public couldn't give a flying fuck about.

I was now one of those people under the rug. But for some strange reason, I not only deserved to be there, I wanted to be there.

And for reasons well beyond the scope of this book. And ultimately for the simple fact of knowing and understanding, as you will see.



At the top of the languid staircase, in constant motion from forgotten or forget me faces, we were face to face with a bulletproof booth. Not unlike a bank teller's window. With television monitors spaced about and a variety of switches and dilapidated filing cabinets and a few old sandwiches. God, the smell. And my tired Jones bones. I was about to keel. Jack noticed my condition and helped me up as we checked into the cuckoo's nest. And that is exactly what it was, highly mentally and deranged and forgotten souls meandering back and forth in the halls so dark and dank. Nicotine stained fingers dark enough to form a new medical abbreviation, clothes that sagged or hung off the forgotten. This

was home.

"Grab a wool blanket," the attendant said. And go through the bulletproof click doors into the world of the unknown.

Walking down the hallway was even, to what the Kings and nobleman experienced as they toured their own town of serfs and peasants, comparably.

We, had luggage. We were different. We represented the other part of society that was worse, the givers and the takers away.

The Morrison Hotel, now the DES, was about nothing I had ever seen or experienced, bar none. Out of all the other places I have been and the few other homeless shelters I had seen, this one takes the cake. Two hundred and eighteen men and sixty women crowded onto one floor of the hotel/shelter.

Cigarette smoke clogged the isles forming clouds of depression and disease. People were everywhere, pacing, talking to themselves walking in circles. This sight is one of total disparity. This is the place where no one sees, no one goes. A corner of the universe reserved for the filtered out freaks. And I was one.

The hallway opened up into the old ballroom, now dilapidated with teams of people from every race. Sitting, standing, pacing. All with no apparent rhyme or reason. Off to the right was the kitchen area. An open area cordoned off only by a wooden counter spread across the front to keep the masses from getting in. As Jack and I attempted to take things in, a "normal" person from behind the counter came into view. He had a name tag announcing himself as a 'volunteer'. As we decided to confront him for any kind of information regarding how this place works, it was obvious he was in no mood.

It seemed as though, because it was the end of the month and everyone's or most everyone had just received their welfare or Social Security check, (what kind of system is this?) or both, and tensions were running high. Most of them had spent their meager checks instantly on drugs and or booze, hotel rooms, whores or whatnot, and now are dead broke. The place was at capacity.

I walked up and introduced myself to the volunteer and he basically explained that in order to have special privileges, or to leave and return by ten forty-five PM. One had to work. Perhaps as a dishwasher, tray taker, server, sweeper or mop per. Fortunately for us most of the 'clientele' were way too lazy or not interested in anything except to eat and sleep.

So, I was knighted, tray taker, basically running on adrenaline, after days of sickness and travel. If you had suggested to me anything to me at the time, I mean anything; I would have complied without persuasion. 'Ah, Jamie, Jump into that vat of boiling oil'.

'Ah..... All right, no problem'.

'Yo, Jamie, feed and clean up for two hundred and fifty homeless people'.

'Ah..... All right, no problem'.

This was my opportunity to stand at the front counter with surgical gloves on and personally meet and greet each soul as they

turned in their tray. One by one they lined up after dining on room temperature vitals that by earth standards were appalling. But, here and now this was, what it was, food.

“Spock did you ever consider a legal career?”

“No Jim, I did not”. There was a smile in the voice if not in the face. “Vulcan Law, while precise and elegant, has always been less aesthetically challenging than my present career, and as far as earths legal practices are concerned” -Spock shrugged, a very small, massively dismissive rise and fall of the shoulder- “A system where parties hire professional exponents of argument, And where those who can afford to hire the best, most Persuasive arguers are most likely to win any given case regardless of its actual merit, strikes me as singularly lacking in logic”.

---Rules of Engagement-

Peter Morwood



To this day, I cannot forget, nor fathom the total disparity in those who came before me. It was as if I were meant to personally view the agony and pure defeat that these men and women were going through. As tired and as over saturated with this day's events, I still cannot let go of the needless waste witnessed here today'.

The process of collecting trays from each person was beginning to become a sensory overload. And, I was damn tired.

Finally things were starting to wind down and the kitchen staff had managed to tackle the enormity of the cleaning, drying and re-stacking of the dishes.

Jack, who was officially in charge of sweeping duty, was out and about during dinner. He was sort of my eyes and ears' concerning what was going on. Jack, he did manage to latch on to a couple of

guys that were in a similar quandary, just from other parts of the country. Also coming to Seattle broke and learning how to take advantage of every possible free convenience, in order to mentally manage and physically succeed. Meaning, ultimately (at least what my innocent eyes saw) food and shelter.

These two guys that Jack had met and subsequently introduced me to were seasoned Seattle homeless. And, not to take it a bad way, they knew the ropes. And the ropes are what we came to climb.

As dinner finally ended and the masses of overtired, under-worked and very under-washed were corralled out of the 'Ballroom' and pushed out into the outer hallway, the moppers took over because as I was now becoming aware of, our ballroom was being slowly transformed into one giant bedroom.

Out of nowhere came stacks and stacks of thin, one and one-half inch blue mats. Not unlike gymnastic mats that were indeed the sleeping arrangements for the sleepy. Hundreds of the mats were spread out over the floor in an array to where each mat had roughly six inches in between the next. People were sleeping right next to each other. I was utterly frantic.

“Oh shit, I can't sleep here! These people have diseases!”

And there really was any range of disease, sickness, bacteria, TB, etc. floating around. You could practically taste it. Horrible! Again, I refer to medieval times when describing this god forsaken place. Picture if you would, that Hospital in Amadeus the movie, where festering wounds would eventually kill off the weak. There now.

A small example of ailment would include, Hepatitis, Encephalitis, Aids, Parkinson's disease, Turrets Syndrome, Scabies, Rabies, Scurvy, Fleas, Ticks, funguses of all known, and some unknown types, Open sores, and purely no hygienic thought among 99% of those around me. Hey, cheer up!

Who was I, and in what position was I in to complain. What could I do? May be checked into the Sheraton on my looks? Not likely. It was all a little too much, and I needed air. Glancing over at the greased over windows that were permanently screwed down and gated over, I really needed to breathe. So because we were 'volunteer workers' we were allowed to leave the building until 10:45 PM.

'One minute late and you slept outside'.

It was exactly 5:30 PM when we walked down the piss drenched stairs into the Seattle evening. The plan was to chip in, and grab a half rack of the cheapest beer possible, and head down to the waterfront located only about three blocks west. As we crossed over James toward Pioneer Square, it became clear that this was indeed the party side of town. Cheap bars by law only served beer and wine. Restaurants and coffee places on every corner, and of course, crack.

Every way you turned we were offered crack. 'Big rocks, twenty bucks!' 60 rocks, 10 rocks, and I thought to myself, this is where you came to get clean. Ha!

Let me tell you right now that the state of mind and the state of being that you have for yourselves could never reflect the sheer torment that I have always put myself through. And, I also realized that by couching down at the local psychiatric office, I could easily finance him/her a one-way ticket to life's riches. He/she would either quit and become a social worker or proceed to invest their earnings from me in the mutual fund if their choice and never work again. Go 'head Sigmund!

So.... I am bypassing that particular method of self help and hopefully drown out the incessant thoughts of worthlessness that I assumed, by way of words on the page. I recommend this method. Much cheaper, and genuinely more rewarding.



As we crossed the last by-way over to the docks it became clear why people like Seattle. Standing here in Elliot Bay, which is in fact part of the much larger Puget Sound.

How incredible was this after so long on a bus. I was on the Pacific coast more or less, staring across the sound into islands of beauty. In the background were huge snow-capped mountains. The Olympics, May God, they were magnificent. Or beautiful, chose your own adjective.

The water, the night sea air and the dock rolling, slowly were below us. Giant cargo ships from far off places parading by against the pink afterglow of the late Pacific Northwest sunset. I had to feel better. I had to become aware of what Seattle had to offer. But, as they say (who are they?), don't look too hard, because you may not always like what you find. Especially with my lack of mental facilities, and the extreme lack of funds, that, put me in a category that was way below the poverty level. So travel with money.

As the evening wore on, and the talk grew cheaper, I started feeling cold. I remembered that I was still and forever in full withdrawal mode. I needed sleep, or at least the attempt of. I convinced a half-drunken Jack to accompany me back to our new home, the shelter, for some much needed rest.

It wasn't long before my knees were starting to buckle, and I became acutely aware that I might not make it up the hill to Third and James. But, as persuasiveness is my middle name, I did make it up the dingy fly ridden staircase, and found a waiting blue mat in the outer room reserved for the volunteers. It took every last ounce of energy and balance to steer my way over the bodies to get to my mat. It fucking smells and in case you were wondering, my luggage was being stored temporarily in the storage room. So, I carried around a shoulder bag with minimal support features. And it doubled nicely as a pillow.

Down for the count I went, with my head resting on my bag. Surprisingly, the bag did not crush under the weight of thoughts spinning out of control, as my eyes closed, and I ended my first day in Seattle.

My first conscious thought was of some asshole yelling.

"Get up! Get up!"

What the fuck is this? I glanced at my expensive timepiece that was strapped on my wrist, remembering now through the haze that I purchased it back in Connecticut with a rubber check. Oh well, I'll deal with that later.

Right now the time was six a.m. I was alive and in total confusion. For the longest time I lay on the mat. I pressed to revive memories as to the locale of my present location. As my eyes started to open, it all became painfully clear. West coast, bus ride, no heroin, no money, lots of beer, hangover. Shelter, I was in a shelter. Today is going to be a harsh day. I could tell already. Fuck.



When it really comes down to it, certain thoughts do create certain things. Things may represent actions, emotions, premonitions, solutions or questions. And a whole lot more. Fortunately for me, I create my writing in streams of consciousness. As compared to carefully thought out logical pages of dribble. This means, to me, that my inept style of writing could all of a sudden stop.....only kidding.

Today is one of those rainy, miserable March days that remind me so much of Seattle. It is probably raining ten months out of the year there. But, it's more of a mist.

Just light rain and the temperature hovers around Forty five degrees. You have to be especially together, or, way too busy in order to not feel depressed by this weather. (People of Seattle have been known to call it, Pajama town). I on the other hand found other ways to avoid this state of mind.

After getting over the initial shock of where I was, and, how I was feeling, I gingerly surged my head off my pillow/shoulder bag, and took in the grim surroundings that were unfolding around me. Teams of dreadfully tired, homeless people were also doing the same thing. It felt as though again, I was participating in a screenplay of a bizarre nightmare. And it looked as though everyone felt the same as I.

Hundreds of sprawl out bodies covered by army issue wool blankets, were coming alive to face another day of blight.

Jack was asleep about six bodies over, and I yelled over to see if he was still alive. I got a minimal response as he lifted his half drunken head from the depths of hell to acknowledge his own lack of veracity.

These or this situation is one of the times you truly do not know what to do next. I knew I had to get out of bed, but to wait. Where do I eat, or go to the bathroom? Overwhelmed with confusion and near panic, I was.

'God damn this was a big mistake.'

'What, my life? Or coming here or what?'

You know, I couldn't even answer my own question.

I rose up and looked around in the toilet, and several attempts at communication with the walking dead went unheeded. I looked out into the hallway and followed the steady stream of souls into the most disgusting sights possible. Yeah, I have seen all types of funky restrooms, but none of them even come close to this.

Open toilets lined the walls of this dimly lit shit house. Feces rolling down the sides of the toilets, and the smell alone could possibly kill small children. It's a damn good thing there are no children here because this is no place for them.

This was no place for me either, but again, whom was I am kidding. For once in your life Jamie, accept where you are and the actions you have taken. You dumb fuck!

I found an empty stall and proceeded to expunge the poisons coming from within my bones. I could not

Pay attention to what was going on around me, so I decided to put on my mental blinders. These were my way of not dealing with my immanent surroundings. And, I am quite sure that many others before I have tried on these mental sunglasses throughout the ages To block Away the disease, death, wars, emptiness and a hundred other forms of outer menace. These "glasses" would definitely come in handy, I could tell.

I was also becoming aware that I could manipulate them with different subtle layers of blockage. Right up to total sensory shutdown for emergencies of all sorts.

I emerged from the medieval pit of doom to stand in the hall crowded with (how do I even describe what I was seeing?). I'll have to go one by one, simply because it was all a little too much. I lit a cigarette and pressed up against the wall. The cigarette tasted good. It relieved my inhibitions just enough to look around for Jack and our other computers to see where to go for food. I knew they would know. A tourist from another planet, I was.

THE JUNGLES OF SEATTLE can't

MIND OVER MATTER Part infinity! July 11, 2002

This should be the final assault on the mountain. I have not written one word since I have left my former place of residence, known as FCI East, Ft. Dix, New Jersey.

Why do I say my final assault? Well, I have been very busy re-constructing my life from the burned-up ashes of my previous life before my incarceration. During the last segment of this book I will go into detail concerning the journey after my release. And also continue to guide you through the long journey that will bring me here in the present. Again the time lines fade to gray as I fill in the spaces of existence, known as my life. Fishfishfishfishfishfishfishfishfishfish.

I am now attempting to finish this part of these previously written pages before I go on the abyss of the rest of the story. What keeps me from writing is very simple, really. I just don't, or let me rephrase that. Can't seem to go on because the memories that I am going to get into, come from a part of my swiss cheese brain that feels like a slithering snake, under my sheets. Knowing that sooner or later, you are going to' get bit, but how bad and when and where. I thank God that I am in therapy so I have a back door if this gets too deep. Step in, please. We will now go back in time to the 1<sup>st</sup> morning in Seattle.

As our "group" gathered, we had a laugh about this particular fellow that was walking up and down the big room, in-between 2 lines up and back. He was carrying an old suitcase, or should I say an old valise stuffed with God knows what, that amounted to this man's entire world. As he paced up and down the aisle, he smiled a big smile or a total smile, and was apparently very happy. Occasionally talking to himself, and apparently going absolutely according to all around him, but in his mind, he was traveling' to a very nice place. Maybe back to his past where he had to go, to get the well deserved sanity coming his way. A place that we all have tucked away in our sub-consciousness most likely, where all need to go sometimes, don't we? This world can get mighty fucked when you let it, or even when you don't. Things can fuck up all by themselves. Anyhow, Suitcase, (as I had dubbed him), stayed inside all day, every day. Pacing between the lines with a look on his face like he was about to embark on a fabulous vacation. Hence the name and the motive of suitcase.

Now, I fully understand the ramifications for us having a chuckle over Suitcase, but it really was funny. And I'm quite sure that if Suitcase could see himself, and was in a fully mental state of being, (whatever that is), then he too could see and appreciate the humor in it all. Ok, enough on suitcase. Although Jung could get complete fulfillment from this case study. Oh yeah, just one

more thing though, Suitcase had been there at the shelter 10 years or more before I arrived and is more than likely to still be there today. Smiling and pacing with his enormously heavy suitcase in between the same lines as he was years ago. I genuinely feel for him. But I know that he is very happy. Yes Sir, the man said. A small note in current time today is March 25<sup>th</sup> 2000.

And another inmate friend past away, His name was George Davis, a good guy, a tough old black man who had seen and done it all. He had been through plenty, and dropped dead of a heart attack last night around 3 am. George was a roommate with my other older friend, Mario. So I did spend a lot of time with them, playing cards and talking' bullshit. I'm truly sorry to see him go, via con Dios, George.

Another small note which is of much better news, yesterday I received word that the halfway house in Portland, Maine, Had willfully and carefully accepted me for a full 6 months in their home.

You know, to me, and a lot of the other guys here, leaving the prison 6 months early is a beautiful thing. It means I can get a job and buy clothes and eat real food. It means I can have a bath and look out at the Ocean. It means no more stand-up counts, and 12 other wild-ass roommates, (no disrespect), All of them speaking different languages at the top of their lungs. It also means that I have completed this chapter of punishment that I deserved, and am deeply grateful because indeed if not for prison, I would be dead. Thank you God, for little miracles.



O.K., moving on back in time (Seattle). The place we embarked for being highly recommended as a 5 star Soup Kitchen. So, I knew we were in for a real dining experience. Yes, I have dined at various soup kitchens in various indigenous locals, including, Beautiful downtown Westport, Connecticut's Gillespie, center, (Named after a close family friend's tragic and way too early demise), as the creme de la creme of soup kitchens. Fresh baked muffins, bread, soups and deserts and entrees donated by local restaurants and served by native Westporters donning plastic gloves and remaining at least 5 feet from the diners at the other side of the window. God Bless the rich.

But this was all in the past concerning my upcoming breakfast in Seattle. We arrived at the mission at 6:45 a.m. on Second Street, to find a line already formed around the block. The patrons consisted of homeless outdoor drunks, and crack heads that could not sleep in an inside environment. Too many rules.

The sight of these people carrying all of their belongings in ripped plastic bags, on their backs, their clothing worn for months at a time, Showers? Noah. These were under the bridge, cardboard box people.

The line started moving very slowly as 30 at a time were let in. As we waited outside in the misty rain this was the most singular depressing mornings for me in recent history. I had to eat and this was it. Welcome to your life, Mr. Lebish. DRUGS.....What a concept.

As we neared the entrance to the mission, 'things' started to become apparent. The disparity of the situation encroached on me as an inchworm slowly but steadily weaves a cocoon around himself, (or herself), so as to metabolize into another life form.

I realized that I had woven my own cocoon and finally came out as a dirty soul. A man who had let his life madness step all over him, and had not had the guts or the balls (or however you would like to put it), to change his course. You know what goes through your mind, right then and there? Ok, I'll tell you.

HATE, MISTRUST, ANXIETY JJ ISPAIR, OUTRAGE and HUNGER in every sense of the word including lack of food.

The mistakes had been made and now I was in the hellish bottom of those mistakes I made. Do you hear me God? I MADE.

These 'mistakes' had now morphed into a state of non-human. One of the wastes of society that was swept away in an area of the world that others did not even notice, as they drove by in shiny SUV's with a cup of Starbucks wrapped tightly around their fat little fingers. I was mad as fuck. (Is that a sentence)?

I can remember being on the other end. Walking the streets as a younger man, and how I loathed and detested those people as they crouched in doorways sleeping on benches or on old cardboard over subway grates, apparently to keep warm. I was mad and all of you, whom had not been them, would also be mad because we believed that they had given up on life.

And now, I was one, in every fucking sense of the word. Look it up in your local thesaurus.

Maybe this was one of the determining factors that was coming to mind, as I stood in that doorway (Literally, metaphysically, spiritually, mystically and of course socially).

Collecting my ticket and shuffling I moved along in a cattle line toward the people in the clean white shirts. Doling out today's special. All I passed were miserable Dirty, some physiologically and physically challenge people who'd come here from God knows where, for a smattering of food, colored water that read coffee on the sign. Light, heat and yes, Love, the love that hides just underneath the disgusting outer crust. That only they can see when gathered for that few minutes.

I believe that now, knowing myself, understanding some critical reasons is what caused the long on going painful powerful breakdown of my mind and body. And I assume others here were keenly aware of that thought as well. Yes, I believe that most homeless, and drug addicted highly desperate individuals understand their situation. And, they could possibly climb forth from the quagmire of the doom, if they had the tools and the hope of a good life. Then again, maybe not.

But to look at them, I'm couldn't even tell you if they had a brain stem function.

Moving on through the line, as the workers slopped on what has come to be known as Shit on a Shingle, better known to some and definitely not to others. It is some sort of gray matter avec chunks of undisclosed material that had the consistency and flavor of warm vomit, over 2 slices of white bread.

We wove through the sleepy crowd to a few open chairs in the back of this fly infested, fucking truly disgusting dump loosely phrased as a dining hall.

But these people were eating this shit with a vengeance. They loved it! And I was so fucking hungry that, without looking directly at it, managed a piece into my mouth. It was vomits little cousin. I gagged, but I forced some down.

Between the foul odor of stale piss and the 'food' filling the air in that totally enclosed room of misbegotten souls chowing on puke I started getting the spins and felt like doing a Linda Blair on the whole bunch of' am, I had to split quick. Another sensory overload was in the works and I needed air. As I pushed away from the table, Jack turned to me and goes "hey man, this isn't so bad". And I was like, "What? Are you fucking kidding me? This is fucking poison", Jack turned to me and said "If you got any better solutions, let me know. Eat this shit up so we can make it to the next spot for lunch". I felt like punching him, but he was right. I couldn't come to grips with my own mind, so his words were maps for my reality.

For the moment, I knew I could not do this much longer. This is not where I am supposed to end up. Life can be so much better than this, but how?

As you are reading this right now, as, I am writing this, it came to my mind, as well as it should yours. (If you have any sort of grooming habits of the now, H-E-L-L-O, this is the 21<sup>st</sup> century), I had not showered, or washed my hair or my Ass since I had left Connecticut. (You do the math). My hair was matted under my groove cap. And even feeling as sick as I did, I had to shower. Even though I didn't know where, I REALLY needed to get clean (Again, physically as well as spiritually, psychologically and legally. One at a time, in this list is what my little voice in my head was saying).

To wash off this useless blah that stuck with me, as if weighing me down and eventually becoming my permanent outer layer, 'shower now my son' was Gods only words for the moment. And I had to agree with him, her or it.

As we turned in our trays of gruel back into the dish window, the guy back there said, 'Have a good day', I returned the gesture with the automatic response of, 'You do the same'. I had to laugh

out of the sheer insanity of it all that being treated like a human being felt good. I took it as a good omen.

The next order of business was finding a shower.

One of the fell as sitting at our table told us about another shelter down by the waterfront that had showers for 50 cents, in the basement, around the corner from the entrance. Ah.. To be clean.

I at least had the foresight of my having basic human cleaning supplies, and, a change of clothes. So it was off to the showers! Jack returned to use that shit ridden, disease infested fucking nightmare that said bathroom above the entrance. So I was to meet up with him in 2 hours. I was on my own in Seattle.

I followed the somewhat vague directions down James, through Pioneer Square, and directly under the Freeway high above to the waterfront corner building that housed the showers.

All around me people were motivated. Heading off to their places of employment, or wherever. The raised highway above me was pulsing from morning traffic, as all residents of Seattle already know that traffic is horrible there.

I still felt like warmed over shit and had a layer of road grunge, not unlike the cowboys of the old west must have felt on a long wagon train west. And then when they hit town, is exactly what I was doing now. Looking for a bath, a shave and some comfort.

There was a line of cowboys or fishermen or whoever the fuck they were coming from inside the land of showers. So, I assumed the stand and shuffle position until it was my turn to go in. As I walked down the steps into the dark, damp hallway, you could smell the soap and otherworldly smell that, because of my unleashed sensory overload, I felt alive, sick but alive.



I can't help but think about some of the characters that I have

met here at my stay at Club Fed, Fort Dix, New Jersey. And if you think about it, and use this acronym as truth, you can help yourself, as I have tried. And in the process, became whole again, for the first time, I am going to mention a few names of some guys I have met here. So as one, not to forget their names, and two, when I arrive back on freeman's soil, I will be able to give you an overview of the type of people they really are. Maybe explain the circumstances, and to thank each and every one of them for their own input towards my personal growth and personal gain or loss.

Names go as; Don Double D, Howard the Jew, George the cheap prick, Reverend Minister Billy, Mott the Horrible Christian, Richard the hypochondriac. The Italian contingent, Jerry you cocksucker', Ralphie 'What's doing Haimi', Joey, Nikki, Big Pauly.

Sherman the movie guy, Chappy, the happy drummer and hunky, The Illustrious Jo-Jo 'Spielberg', Lexx, Old Bill, New Bill, Bad Papa John, Wali, Versatile, Boone and Reese. The Rabbi, The Rebbe, Dr. Ebright, the beloved, The Latin horse caller, Shannil, and the communist.

And all of my Colombian, Dominican, Peruvian, Chilean, Mexican, Scottish, African, European, Japanese, Chinese, Vietnamese, New Zealanders, English, Australian, Bavarian, Russian, Polish, Czech, and Americans that lie in wait in a human warehouse to be returned to their own countries of origin, left up to our INS court systems, and of course my Yogi, Gus.

Needless to say, I had a wonderful shower for 50 cents, 25 cents for the towel. I had my clothes washed and dried while I waited in a somewhat funky bathrobe. Feeling squeaky clean and ready for anything, LET'S DO IT, SEATTLE!!!!!!!!!!!!

### **TIDS Chapter is written**

That is, this chapter is already written, or maybe I should say, This Chapter and the rest of this work have already been lived, experienced. And dare I say paid for, before it is even on the page. To make it even simpler, Today is Wednesday, October 16 2002. And to finish the written part, I must bring myself back. Back to some of the worst, tormenting times that I have had to live one time, but to write it makes me need to be there totally. Completely, to give you the opportunities of viewing a man's life, that even he (me) needs not to go.

Then there is the other side of the view. It's a sponsor, or a friend, or even your own mother, who writes as well, but she did not leave it, there is no pain or self-loathing or Psychiatric bills to deal with, are there. As you can see I have put this part of my life on hold, so I can become a member of 'society'. A decent, hard working Mainer that has a good car, a girlfriend, and a decent job. I have non-of these at the moment.

At this very moment I am listening to meditation music, of which I was introduced to in prison, and have really gotten a lot out of. It centers me, just for a moment. In between the madness of snipers, and Saddam Hussien and my little room far away physically and emotionally from my children Sierra, Kristen and Jack. The weirdest thing is that after all that has gone on he (Jack) lives with my brother, Scott and his ex-wife Erin, and they don't acknowledge me. I am alone. I have fucked with so many people's

lives that I am alone about to lose this place of residence, and my car is un-fixable. But there is some good news too. I have been in Maine care, which pays for most things medical so I have been having narrow UVB band light treatments, and my psoriasis is all but gone. I am on methadone now, but have managed to come down 60mgs. From last year's fuck up with the dentist, the pain pills, and the monster came back with a vengeance. I have anxiety now. I take Valium for that, because at one point last year, I couldn't leave my apartment for two weeks, and wouldn't even answer the phone.

I am ok though. Throughout all of these changes I have become more, one and that, my friend is a good thing. Today is the rest of my life. Do you remember hearing that saying? It's slightly altered, but you get the idea.

I got a call this morning from my newest, and I'll venture to say, my best friend, Tim. The point being is I gave him the first half of this book to read, and I am telling you that it is like handing over part of your life to people and examining it, through language that I have written. So, as you well would realize or not, I haven't given these written words to too many people.

The point being is that he was mad at me. He actually said, "Turn that fucking TV off, and finish this book". Nor did he like it, but he believed in what I believed in, when I started this book some 3 years ago. He told me that people need to read this book. That others like him, and many others would need to read this book on many different levels, some being Addicts, former addicts, potential addicts, family members of addicts, and generally everyone that needs or should see life through different eyes than their own. That blew my mind, but I'm here to tell you' that anybody with any problem or disadvantage can ultimately see there is hope. There is love. There is some form of God, and last but not least is that I sincerely believe that, I was given this chance to reach out to others and shine a ray of hope your way. WOW! (Did I write that?)

OK, forget ah, that dribble and let's get on with the story. After my shower and newly washed clothes I was now fully in command of my new destiny in a city that I knew absolutely nothing about. I realized that yes; I had \$6.22 left, and goddammit, I wanted a real cup of coffee. What do I spot directly ahead of me, you got it. Seattle = Starbucks. All across this great land of ours the coffee sucks. And I only say that for the truck stops along the way. Past Chicago until the Cascade pass there was brown water in a cup. I was in heaven, for the moment. As I neared the door, I got a whiff of real coffee. Is this sick, No, I don't think so.

I just read that there are 330 million cups of coffee poured daily, (just in the U.S.) So I am not alone. I ordered a Redeye. They had some fancy shmansy name for it. It is my Large, (or should I say Grande) cup of dark roast coffee then add 2 shots of espresso. Oh my God!!!!!!!!!!!!!! I sat outside with all my belongings, at a table in early morning mist that only Seattle can vouch for. I savored every drop. I felt warm and at home and comfortable for a good 10 minutes. I felt like a free man with not a care in the world for that 10 minutes, until I got up and felt like I was going to drop over and die, right there in front of Starbucks, heaven forbid, 'move that man out of the store front'. A guy came to my assistance and

said, "are you alright, you look like shit. Please sit down and get it together before you get up again". I muttered 'thank you, and proceeded to find the horizon. I still don't know exactly what happened, but I figured out that I was still quite dope sick. I couldn't get it together for a while, but I was starting to feel that it was raining and I was soaking wet. There was a mission I was told about, where I could lock up my stuff for 50 cents a week. I picked up all of my shit, which consisted of mostly clothes, shoes, and pictures, my shoulder bag, briefcase that I want to keep with me, and a change of clothes, and my groove cap.

It was warm inside the mission, so I went through my stuff for everything I needed like toiletries, a hairbrush, (very important) because my hair by now had grown halfway down my back, and was out of control unless attended to on a daily basis. At that point I saw people coming out of this old elevator.

The last person to come out of the elevator was the biggest motherfucker I had ever seen in my life. He was a seven-foot tall black man with a patch over one eye, and the guy at the counter said, "That's the guy who will lock up your stuff His names' Tiny".

He walked over to me and he looked as though he was going to kill me for fun. Instead, out comes this very nice voice, with a peculiar resonance. "Are you the guy who wants to store some things here". 'Ah... ya, that would be fine'. "Are these your items". He said. And I told him all these were mine. At which time he grabs all of my gear with one hand, un-locks the door with the other and proceeds to have them up on the shelf very nearly 10 feet high. I was frozen. I had never seen anyone so huge in my life. His arms were not un-like tree trunks. His girth was enormous. He had on a black tee shirt and jeans with this massive belt buckle and giant and I mean GIANT black Frankenstein boots. He went over the rules and proceeded to weasel me out of 2 dollars. Of which was refundable if, you paid on time and always had your ticket. "Your ticket is your life". He then disappeared as fast as he appeared (Holy Shit, did that just happen?).

Now I was un-encumbered of all my stuff, and concentrated it all down to my shoulder bag/pillow, basically my life, because Tiny explained that "You could only get at your stuff once a week". Who was I to argue?

The next few days were basically the same, but different. Jack and I slowly started to get around Seattle. We continued to do the same routine each day, as I have already explained. I was also starting to feel a lot better, and with that, magically the sun started breaking out of its 9-month shroud of doom and depression, or so I'm told.

On that first sunny day I woke up, the same as usual, on my ½ inch mat, with my shoulder bag/pillow underneath my swollen head. The place was full as usual, with people sleeping 6 inches apart from each other. And let me tell you, these mothers were the worst of the worst that society had to offer. Fucking scabies ridden tuberculosis infested downright disgusting humans that were left to rot in this hellhole.

I suppose looking back on it now they were lucky to have such a place. I believe that 90% of the clientele were let loose when they (the beaurocrats) closed down the state run mental

institutions, (as in most states in this great country of ours), to fend for themselves. The rest of 'me were either dope fiends or late stage alcoholics, meaning that time was not on their side. Death's door, that sort of thing.

Seattle, as it turns out, is full of homeless. Every day at noon, or sometime after, a lunch truck, full of sandwiches, soda, chips and some kind of desert would supposedly come by the city square on 2nd, right across the street from the police station. We found out about the lunch truck quite accidentally. Our shelter was on 3rd and James, and the center of downtown where all the tall buildings seemed to meet was only about 2 or 3 blocks away. Why I mentioned this is because of the homeless. Right about that time it seemed like people were coming out of the woodwork, heading towards their Mecca.

This is when I found out about the jungles. About 2 or 3 blocks south of city hall were a deep dark, forbidding patch of small trees and shrubs that looked un-penetrable. But, on our way over to lunch one day I asked the guys we were hanging' with why are all of those people coming out of that 1 square, almost straight up block of woods, just underneath the Harbor View hospital.

The conversation got real quite. I was like, what's up? Nobody said anything. I asked again. What the fuck is in there. About a minute later, when we weren't walking next to anyone else, Steve, our newest compadre, came over to me. As we were walking I noticed that there were hundreds and hundreds of people coming from everywhere, including the place I just asked about. Steve pushed his long black hair behind his ear so I could see him. He said, "Dude, you never want to go up in there, that's the jungle. Dudes go in and they don't come out. I know. I've been up in there. Its' the fucking sickest spot on planet earth. That Is the jungle of Seattle, don't ever go in there. And if you do, don't go by yourself. You won't make it out".

Just then we got to the line that formed 3 blocks long, all homeless, mostly addicts or alcoholics or both. You see Seattle is full of drugs, as I'm finding out on the quick crack, lots of Crack everywhere and of course my nemesis, Chiva. That's what the Mexicans and everyone else called heroin. Black Tar Heroin, it was right about then that I was 1, in the wrong place. Or 2, I was in the right place.

Oh fuck me. I was just starting to feel better too.

This is one of the first things you learn in N.A. Geographical change does not work. Why? Because wherever you go, there you are. I had a bad feeling about this trip.

Jack and I were starting to take advantage of some of the opportunities presented to us from one source or another, but I could not get drugs out of my mind. I told him about it, and he seemed to be in another world, but from time to time he did offer up some casual advice concerning the subject. He said to me that, before we started talking on the bus, he had noticed me. He said that not only did I look different, he could tell that something was very wrong. That I spoke in my sleep, and kicked and moaned, allot. He

Was actually going to say something to me way back in North Dakota, but left it alone for a while. He said he felt bad. And

eventually did come over and asked if I was all right. I told him yeah, but he knew. He told me that he had been in prison before and had seen guy's kick. And he thought, no, knew that I was kicking as well.

That was when I went over to his seat area, I row behind mine on the other side. That's how he could tell. Because he could see me, I was sweating constantly, and never wanted to get off the bus when we stopped. And that's how we really got talking, and it made me feel a little better that I could confide in somebody. Jack was a stoic looking man. Good looking in a midwestern way. I'm not sure if you know what I mean, let's put it this way. There was no bullshit about him, he didn't dress hip. He dressed like a working' man. Like a tradesman or something like that, but in his eyes the story was told.

You can usually spot if you try hard enough, to see into a man or a woman's soul, through their eyes; they are like the badge of a person's code. An ethic that I can't explain, but I know you know what I mean. He was the kind of guy that I knew I could trust to a certain amount. Do you know what I mean now?

I told Jack as we traveled west about my past a bit and he told me some things about himself, I liked him. No, not that way, I just thought he was a cool guy.

And then I knew he was cool, when he whipped out a pill bottle with some Valiums inside. Thank you, lord.

They didn't make me sick, but I felt a little relaxed, and could actually get a few hours of sleep. So that is how we really met on a reality basis. No bullshit. He was heading out west to slip out of a bad relationship, and the law. He had heard about all the money there was to do in the fishing industries in the Northwest, and money and mileage was what he needed, so he went for it. To come out to Seattle and hook up (ha ha) with a Fishing company, of which there were many. I followed him from building to building probably so I didn't have to be alone, and maybe if I signed up, I could get on a ship too. Yeah, can you picture that for a second? A long haired, spoiled rotten Jewish kid from one of the richest towns in the world on a fishing boat? Going out to the Bering straits, on the top of the world in 50 foot seas, working inside a smelly rotten fish gutting station for 18 hours a day, and maybe get home alive. There is no way that I could do it, but, I signed up right along with Jack at every office, but for some reason when I was interviewed, they always asked me the same question. Are you sure you want to do this? You just don't seem the type. What they meant to say was I didn't look or act anywhere's near the tip. Have you ever seen those fishing shows on TLC or the Discovery Channel? Do you remember what those guys were like? These guys have long beards and spit allot. These guys were not afraid of anything. And they knew that they may never make it back to port, but they did it anyway. And do you know why? Because they fucking loved it. Fishing was in their bones. And every time my dad took me fishing on our family trips on Long Island sound, on the Wanderlust, I would practically throw up trying to attach that disgusting worm onto the hook. Yeah, I don't look the type. I'm not the type.

I am strictly an on land guy, that loves playing guitar and living

life or so I thought. Little did I know that in the weeks to come my world would never be the same, never?

It was not long before the inevitable happen. I knew that one of our 'posses' was a dope fiend, but I said nothing to him about it. But something was saying something to me. Yup, I have heard that voice before. It was just out of range, and not spoken in any language, but the fucking Devil was back there. Pretending to be your best friend that you knew when you were just a boy. Little Tommy or Davie is waving to you through a haze of delusion and naiveté. Beyond reason before hope and after blemishes, there he was.

Sitting in the frontal lobes of your brain telling you that the home has been just up ahead. You can't see it. No you can't taste or touch it because you don't want to. This time I had traveled three thousand miles to get away from him, but you don't even realize that it is he. You are scared, but encouraged, lost, but about to be found. Free, but the chains is within earshot. You, my friend, are an addict. And you are going to give in. No matter how nice I have to be, or how tangled in cockroaches you must endure to get out, because when you do push me in with a shot of delight (is that what you weak humans feel?). Don't worry. I got time. Remember, I've been around for eternity, and that is the time at its most infinite. Yes, I can be quite charming or bitter or sad, or bothersome, even monotonous, but I'll get you.

That is what goes on before a true addict changes the course to the light, or to the dark the dark can be very comfortable when you're there. It can be sweet as apple pie and hungry as a jackal in the midst of the kill.

I got a stop for now. Because even after 5, 10, 20 years, he can come for a visit when you least expect it. You have to always be on top, in the light. They tell you to pray. But back then I didn't know or could even grasp the opportunity of prayer. Praying is not what I thought. It's very personal, very private, and always reassuring. It took me a very long and hard road to get to the simpler man that I am today, Yet, I can also swear I'm more advanced and more enigmatic than I ever thought I was capable of The funny thing is that what you have, your life, is yours. And it can be finessed out from under you. Any other addicts in recovery told me to write. I guess I took it to heart, because I'm going to give this story to you, and then you do with it as you please.

It was Steve, our posse member who came up with the idea. Steve, also was the only one of us who had a job, therefore, he had money. It was payday and Steve was out for trouble.

As it turned out later on that week I was told that he had been on Black Tar, (or some would call them balloons) since long before he arrived in Seattle. Heroin was packaged in balloons here, little round bundles of joy.

Back to that night Steve decided to head down to 3rd and Pine for a twenty. Ask anyone that lived in Seattle around 96', or 97' that, 3rd and Pine was heroine city. Now, not 'everyone' knew about 3rd and Pine but all the streamers, the police and every dope fiend in the city knew about it. It was open season down there, especially in the mornings because it was a perfect location. The needle exchange was 1 Block down. And most people need it

first thing in the morning, to get through their day. I tell it like I saw it. There were lines of people around the bus stop, by an alley for easy exit, or a quick place to fix.

I walked back there one time and saw at least fifty syringes on the ground. They were everywhere. And that's why Steve took me there, because chances are, even at night, especially at night, you probably would get ripped off or killed, or score. And folks, frankly, when you need a fix, the other options were way tolerable, instead of being sick. So Steve and I hopped on the 3rd Ave. Bus and got off at Pine. At night, 3rd and Pine was not the most populated places, maybe because of its reputation, and also there are no stores or businesses open. So the only reason people would be hanging' around would be expressly for the purpose of coping.

Since I had left Connecticut, and went through that God-awful journey, and sickness, this would be the last place I would choose to be. But, no. "He" was pushing me uptown like the world was just hit with an A bomb and I was madly trying to get to an underground shelter. That is the deal. Once he sticks his sleazy fuckin' head out, even for a second. I'm done.

This is another sign of a dope fiend. One that keeps getting clean, and even malls across the country to get away from IT, and, those associated with IT.

I'm done. I'm finished. Put a fuckin' fork in it.

Yes, I was scared. My heart was in my throat. My stomach acids were gnawing away at what little stomach lining I had left, while Steve did his thing with 'the man'. As far as my decision to do some or not, my diseased (addiction is a medical term, and, I encourage you to get the dictionary or go online, or ask your physician, before reading any further, that way there will be no doubt in anyone's skeptic mind, this should have been a footnote) mind was already made up. Now it was just, how, when and where.

This choice, this section of this book, really comes at the time to think about yourself, your loved ones and anyone else. This is part of the nexus of life and death. Yeah, I'm getting heavy, but I have a point. When anyone or you are standing on the precipice of addiction, and when I say addiction, it covers all the bases Alcohol, Pot, cigarettes, gambling, food and even junk. It's all the same guys. And there is no cure. But, there is the bottom. Hitting the bottom of your life is what now comes to bear.

My bottom, even though some of you are astounded how low I can go, while others find jail, Mental wards, or the easiest and stupidest one of all, Suicide.

Don't tell me that you or someone you know that is an addict hasn't thought about this one more than once. Some succeed and end fucking the devil up the ass from here to eternity. But my being Jewish, I thought I'd let you know that we don't believe in the devil. But there is pure evil itself and no matter how hard things get, that is not the way.

To get clean and sober is the hardest, yet by far the most rewarding thing. But I wasn't ready. I had not yet seen my bottom. I needed to go lower. And that's what I chose to do, once again, after countless rehabs and detoxes. I had to get high, to let the

weight of the world transfer onto someone else's shoulders for a while.

About 10 minutes of waiting, pacing and sweating, Steve appeared around the corner with the thumbs up sign, real discreet.

We started walking back down 3rd towards Pioneer Square, and I could see this fix written already on his face. I'm not quite sure how to describe it. It was a quiet moment of madness that all junkies get after they score and before they fix.

Since I had been straight, more or less since Connecticut, I didn't have that feeling yet. Mine was sheer terror. First of all, we had to find an alley or someplace well hidden, but we could still see out. It turns out that under the Seattle police Station, off 3rd in between some garbage bins was the perfect place. I suppose Steve had been here before, because he had a good sense of the surroundings and he just said, "Right here is cool". Who am I to argue with a guy that had seen the inside of a lot of prisons and copping spots?

Steve had real long thick wavy red, almost blond hair, and his face showed his checks and balances. I'd seen him a scrap with some guy in the park one day, and this guy was behind him and had a knife and was attempting to procure Steve's money, in his wallet.

Steve turned on, this guy so fast, we didn't know what happened. He just told the guy as calm and cool as if asking for a cigarette. "You want my wallet motherfucker, come and get it". At which point the guy made a move and Steve turned into a wild animal. Running toward the guy and yelling. His fists were churning like propellers and the guy broke into a run for his life. That was Steve. A nice guy, but fuckin nuts, and he saved my life more than once. I'll never forget that. I saw him a few years later in Portland, Maine. It blew my mind. He called me from 2 blocks away with that unmistakable southern accent. He was just going' from place to place doing' junk when he could, but I surely won't ever forget him. Get in tough build.

I had bought a bottle of water for the mix. He proceeded to melt the Black tar and water being careful not to bring the spoon of delight to a boil. By the way, that is a cardinal rule, don't ask me why, but it was obvious that I was being instructed by the best.

When he hit his vein and did the push, I told him I wasn't ready for IV. So, Steve is the way he was pulled up the rest out of the cotton filter, actually a piece of cigarette filters. No Q-tips around. Then he poked me in the arm, intra- muscular, and did the push. As he took it out he was starting to nod off, but had the energy to tell me that it takes ten or fifteen minutes to start feeling it. So after all that I wasn't high yet and I was bummed. We walked back to our bar on 2nd around the corner and sat down with the other guys waiting for us. And yup, if he didn't right to give or take a couple of minutes. I started to hear the things going on in the bar, as if I was listening through a seashell. My vision started to feel wavy, and I felt a little sick. I don't know why, but I liked it, and all Jack could say to Steve was un-kind words, which I didn't give a fuck about. I just rolled with it.

All I could hear was, you shouldn't have done that.

He wasn't ready. And I remember that part because thinking about it now, eventually took me to a very bad place. But I have to say that Jack looked out for me, and I him.

Getting back to Jack for a moment, he was a good friend, and also understood me more than most folks ever have, especially because we really hadn't known each other for more than 2 weeks or so. We got along, and I praise God that I met him when I did because I don't think I would have made it if I were alone. But, who knows.

Jack liked to sing Country and Western. We got both kinds. His favorite was Garth Brooks. And I'll have to tell you that I could not stand the man or his music until Jack picked out this one song about being 'On the road and getting' lonely, which we can all appreciate from time to time. Jack would crank up the jukebox, and after many beers he would hop up on to this dilapidated old stage, and wail out Garth. From then on I loved that song (if I can find the title I'll tell you), and, I really started enjoying Garth Brooks for what he stood for and the caliber of musicianship and the songwriter he was. Thanks, Garth, you helped me and some other guys and gals get through some tough nights.

It was by then getting to be bewitching hour. We had to be back at the shelter by 10:45, and not a minute later or we would be locked out. That was really the only rule we had to adhere to, after fucking around from 6 AM on. When we got back inside the place was filled with cigarette smoke. And people were pacing back and forth, talking to themselves. So we said Goodnight to the fell as, and Jack and I grabbed ourselves one of those itchy wool blankets made in the 1800's, and set up our mats to pass out. I was dog tired, but really high stool from that little bit Steve gave me. By the way, Steve was a conscientious dope fiend. Why I tell you this, is that we shared a needle easier that night, and I'm sure some of you were going, Goddam, did he even clean that needle or what. Well, as it happens, all the needle exchanges in Seattle gave out wash out kits for this exact reason.

Yes, Steve cleaned the rig with bleach, and then washed it out many times with water, so, there you go. All I can say is the rest of the night sucked. I itched like a champion all night, and didn't get an hour of sleep.

Yippee, hooray for Heroin. Self-loathing took over.

Why do I mention self-loathing. Well, think about this for a minute, and let's put it in perspective. Picture me, (not you, cause if you had enough sense, or a good home life growing up, all of this would be someone else's story), like take for example, mine.

If and when I get published, and there is a chance to write another book, I'll get into a lot of stories that ultimately led me down this path of destruction. I put myself in harm's way every chance I could get. Maybe for "The experience" or maybe I was looking underneath the tables of reality, looking for real truths that lie in between the dirty mattresses at life's motel. As long as I can remember, I would be the guy still at the scene of an accident, or would simply not follow 'THE RULES'. I fucking hate rules. Rules were meant for other people. Whom don't have the distinct thought that maybe I wouldn't get the whole story unless I pushed the envelope. And yes, I always got into trouble, not bad trouble

most of the time just minor semi-repairable situations, that took my parents or someone else of authority that believed in me, to help me get out of a jam.

There are so many stories that I'd love to tell you, but alas, my job is this work at hand. If we get to know each other better, I'll let you in on some of the more swarthy situations. But until then, I want and need to go on with this story, Mr. ADD man.

After about a week of this nonsense of planning your day around free food, and then stand in huge lines, I had to get something going to get out of this hell hole of an existence.

I was starting to get around Seattle pretty well. I was reading the free local rags and trying as hard as I could to get the fuck out of that 3rd world living arrangement. Meanwhile, the other guys were not as ambitious as Jack and I. The first real step was to get food stamps.

And we fit all the requirements, right down to the address of where to send the food stamps, the downtown emergency center. A sort of Mecca for the homeless, most homeless could not even get into the D.E.C. Because they were not agreeable to the simple rules. 1being, if you don't volunteer as clean up or kitchen help, you had to be in by 4:45 PM and could not leave until 6 AM. But we as volunteers could leave directly after dinner, and did not have to be back to the magical time of 10:45 or you would spend the night outside, of which we did a few times because we were 1 or 2 minutes late. And rules are rules. The first time we were left out it was the 4 of us, and we were quite drunk, and of course it was pouring out. So, stupid old me came up with an idea. Seattle is known as a huge tourist town, and a lot of college kids and people from foreign countries came through and would stay at youth hostels. They are basically shared rooms, and bathrooms equipped with kitchens so you could cook, hence save money for your trip. I had 2 checks from a closed account, and god dammit if I was going to stay outside. So I got a phone book, and called all of the youth hostels and guesthouses in Seattle, It wasn't until the very last call that I got us a place to stay in the Capital Hill district. Now those of you that are familiar with Seattle know that 1, there are no buses running that late. And 2, Capitol Hill was on the very top of Seattle. So with a place to go, we hunkered up Pine Street, which was practically straight up. Or so it seemed. It took every ounce of energy to make it to Broadway. Where the girl on the phone said to turn left and walk 4 blocks to the guest house.

We finally arrived, and for the first time since I could remember, I was going to sleep on a real bed. Well, you can imagine the look on this innocent girls face when the four of us came in around 1 AM. And, to top it all off, I had to convince her that all I had was a check. We came up with this fantastic tale of woe, and the girl had to let us stay. We were not going to leave anyway, and she knew it. So with the most unbelievable words that came out of her mouth finally was, "I'll show you guys to your cabin". Whatever else was in her head before we showed up, it was apparent that we had to stay even though the sign said

NO CHECKS. She felt sorry for us, and if I was her, I would have to. We were led to the back of one of the cabins. It was warm and my clothes were soaked, and I was shivering. I stripped down

naked, put my clothes on the heater and crawled into a real bed, with a real pillow. I was out like a light, and the other guys were snoring just before I fell off.

You know when you wake up, and you have absolutely no foreign' idea where you are? And better yet how the hell did you get there. I know this has happened to you more than once. Well, that morning I was facing up, looking at a pristine white ceiling. And I lay there for quite some time. All I knew at first thought was I had one of the few alcohol headaches that you receive literally once or twice in your life. I'm not a big drinker, and I loathe getting or being drunk. But for some of you, this is a daily occurrence. My head felt as if a clamp had been mounted on my head, overnight. And, when I awoke today it had been turned to the point of explosion. It was heavy. I could not lift my head alone that was for sure. Besides that small problem, it felt as though my saliva factory was shut down and out of business. Yes, cottonmouth of the worst possible type. It was mainly this reason and perhaps the spin, is why I never could endure being an alcoholic. Or I would have made an excellent, perhaps even of award achieving status. But, in the end, I really hate the taste of alcohol. It abhors me. Thank God.

Although, being an addict of dubious proportions myself, I can fully grasp the obsession with alcohol. Why? Because, as they teach you and eventually hearing it enough times, you learn that a drug is a drug. Whatever, your pleasure might be. And even I, before I had tried heroin, just the very idea of associating with the likes of THOSE people, and shooting God knows what into my bloodstream, the river, the essence of my very life, why, it would never happen.

In some places, depending on where you are, and what form of H is available, I had plenty of practice at snorting cocaine, so the first time I was given some, it was in powder form. So all I had to do was get around the mind numbing warnings, since my earliest memories. Growing up, we all equated Heroin addicts as people that live in trailer parks or under bridges, so I always assumed that if I tried it, I too would automatically become one. But where I was, and what I was doing seemed to fit with the idea that, why not try it. My life is relatively together. This could not happen to me because goddammit, no drug has been ever going to' take over my life. Yeah, sure. And right now the Pope is doing a bong hit in the Vatican basement party room, Black light posters of pirate ships, and a Pink Floyd's' Dark Side of the Moon is playing, loud. You get the picture.

I was at a very close friend's house at the time. Actually, he was the drummer in the band we had at the time. Not to blow our horns, but this band Amos was the best original band I've ever had the pleasure of playing in. And I have been in a lot of bands over the years.

Audiences were left horrified. Not from the musical content as much, but rather Kieth and his persona. He was way ahead of his time. I'm getting off the subject, and that gets my therapist mad as a hornet when I "tangent". Tersely, she says, "Please, stay to the point", her lips (which are usually smooth and elegant" get all clenched up. Sort of like the way women look when the doctor say's, PUSH!!!!!!!!!!!! Know what I mean now. THE BEAST WITHIN,

that's a visual that will stay with a man his whole natural life.

OK, then. Let's all take a cleansing breath and move on.

Just one more thing about Amo that has left me sort of whacked for years after our breakup. A couple of months had gone by after giving this band every ounce of energy all of us had. I remember getting a phone call from my best friend and keyboardist in the band, Jeff G that, he had some bad news. I hate when that happens. Anyway, He told me that apparently Keith, our lead singer, and the lyricist had been found, after he had gone missing. A family member, had to knock on Kieths' apartment door, only to find him sitting in the kitchen, with flies all over him, and he was clutching his crack pipe. Apparently, he did the biggest hit that he needed to end it all. He didn't leave a note, but everyone knew that Keith had a bad problem with crack, and after the band stopped, he went into a massive depression, and kept filling the pipe until it killed him. I heard he had such a grip on that pipe still after death; they had to crack the glass to get it away from him. During my time with him, he could be described as a cross between David Byrne, Dr. Zachary Smith, Roy Orbison and Meatloaf, (the earlier years), with a touch of Mr. Rodgers thrown in for good measure. I loved Keith. We all did, and it was a huge shock to all of us, and if I'm not sure, that's when the surviving members all started down our own roads of disillusionment. I believe that was one of the infinite numbers of reason, why I just said, fuck it, and snorted up my first line of Heroin. Not that it was Keith's fault. Nobody makes you do anything. It was there and I saw no reason not to try it just once, Ha.

Nothing happened right away. And after about 10 minutes I said, 'I'm not getting off'. Another line, just larger than a match head appeared in front of me. In other words, I was not fully comprehending or retaining what I was used to. Maybe because I thought the effect was going to be predictable. By that time in my life, I had probably consumed close to \$50,000 worth of cocaine, 150 or so acid trips, PCP, Angels Dust, Mushrooms, Peyote, and God knows what else, but the heroin is of another breed entirely. Time ran at a different speed, but not anything you can qualify. I felt very good. Although I was starting to feel something of other worldly quality, like putting on that one piece of clothing that you treasure, and slip it on every time you get home to make your day fall away. That's sort of what the first feelings were like. Later on I heard the term, 'it's like putting on a warm sweater, on a cold forbidding night'. Heroin made me feel comfortable in my own body.

Yet, I have been fully aware of what was going on around me. In fact, we played ping-pong, and my reflexes were close to normal. I felt wonderful, definitely in control, but wonderful. In fact, it has been described like heaven. That I find hard to fathom. # 1) no one has gone to heaven and come back to tell anybody about it. And #2) Human Beings should not feel this good. It's the perfect drug, in a way. And don't get me wrong, I have not had any heroine since June 19, 1998. So I can survive and in fact love life more from understanding how low one can go to keep this feeling from going away and on top of everything, if you use Heroin for a week or more. And stop. My friends, you will get so sick, physically and especially mentally that you have to get more. You will not stop.

You will rob and steal, manipulate use and abuse all friends and everything you know to get more. You have to have more. Because you know that 5 minutes after you do it, no matter how sick you are, you will feel absolutely perfect. This is insanity. And it happens to all who do not hear or believe.

Hence, all the terms you may have heard like, monkey on your back or TV shows or at the movies, or just in discussion at a nice dinner in a fine restaurant. But chances are, as you find yourself there, A man or woman might walk by and glance in at you. Your automatic response, of course, when faced with the idea of this happening to you, and you are one looking in instead of out, is a very thin line.

No matter who you are or what kind of fancy school you might have gone to, or you just grew up in a middle class environment, whatever your beginnings were like. Drugs, and I mean everything, from those nice little pills your dentist gave you, or a doctor, assumes anxiety is the problem, Valium will do.

Do you get the picture? They say it is a gene. I frankly couldn't give a fuck. If you are an addict and you don't hide the warning signs and slag it off. Kiss your ass good bye. In my travels, I have seen and heard hundreds of stories of 'Oh those nice people'. And before they knew it, they shout, smoked, drank or snorted their house, cars, jewelry even lost their kids. Committed every insane act, above and finally under the law, or stepped in front of a bus all for another hit. Oh yeah, it's out there. Everything I said and every other possibility there is, Do not take my word for it. Find an A. A or an N.A. Meeting in your area, and get some sanity from the only people on this planet that can understand and help, if you or someone you know that can't take it, before it's too late. I hate preaching or whatever you may call these past few pages. But goddamit this happened to me and I had many chances, and I kept blowing it because I had not hit my bottom. Those who know, say it in three words Jails, Institutions, or Death. I've made it to 2 out of 3. Think strong.

### **The Seattle Work for Homeless Program**

After getting my first booklet of food stamps, all I had to do was ask anyone where I could cash them in. They all pointed to the same place, Little Vietnam. It was a small section of Seattle, about 5 blocks square, Just above the Seattle Kingdom. Now in 2002 it has been demolished, and a whole new stadium sits kiddie Comer from the old site.

But in 97' the kingdom was still there, and to tell the truth, a lot of people didn't like going there because they would have to go through our part of town to get there, or God-forbid, if there wasn't any parking they would have to walk through James Street. Or they usually went through Pioneer Square, for safety reasons. I don't really blame them. There were some slimy looking' customers hanging' around. Mainly I suppose because all the homeless shelters or 'missions' were right there by the wharf. The missions were better than the shelters. They charged fifty dollars per week, and there was laundry and showers.

We couldn't afford to stay in the missions for many reasons. We couldn't afford it (although my belongs could), at least they were safe, with Tiny watches' out for me'. The missions generally were

reserved for the fishermen. They would get off the boat with 10 or 20 thousand dollars and would stay in these dumps so they could either send money home or drink it away. Hookers were common. I guess we all figured out why. Generally they were good guys, but occasionally a drunk nasty one would just pick me up in the air, and say to his equally stupid, drunk friends, 'Hey lets beat the piss out of this one' If Jack was around he helped, but when he wasn't, I'd say 'hey look at that chick.' The stupid cocksucker would turn his head, as drool followed and I would kick him in the balls as hard as I could, and took off They were too drunk to do anything to me anyway.

Getting back to the food stamps, there was a whole set of "rules" on how and where to cash them in and get the best price on the dollar. A guy who had been doing this for quite a while gave me the instructions for Mission Undeniable. You would walk up this way, go that way for 4 blocks, take a left and the first Vietnamese store where they were cutting off chicken heads in the window, that was the spot (what the fuck?) So he said to go inside and order hot soup, and hand the food stamps to the lady by the counter. But, don't just hand them to her. Keep them out of sight and face up so they could count quickly and hand you back the money. I did what he said and the lady came back and said, "I Ge Yu 80 dollars for Dees tamp. Yeah, oa, Noa. Huwwy". I said Ok.She handed me 80 dollars.

It was more than I had in my hand in a month. Jack and I walked down the street like Kings. We did it, our first money in the Seattle Oh Boy. Let's get drunk.

That was the first thing to come out of collective mouths. Why I say collective is because I'm really not sure if one of us spoke it or, it was on a subconscious level, just waiting to come out. I think, no. I know, I really wanted to say, let's get high, But, By the time we crossed over to America, it was clear that Jack was heading for our bar. I didn't want to go. Both my head and my little voice that was getting louder as we crossed the street. I gave Jack 10 bucks, mostly because I had borrowed small amounts of money and because it was what he really wanted, He needed to forget and unload. So did I, but in a different way. I don't really like drinking, and at 11:30 in the morning the thought made me quite nauseous.

You see, it's really all about choice. That moment was a choice. Walking upstairs today, right now December 5, 2002 was a choice. It (life) is all choice Think about it. When I really hit my bottom, I hit a choice, a quick one and a very stupid one. But I was backed into a corner. No methadone, kicked out of a weekly apartment, living on the far fringe of society. That is if society really fringes out that far. I called a cab, put on a rain slicker, a Boston baseball cap, and sunglasses. Head out the door, I remember each and every move by choice. Pulled up to the biggest Bank in Downtown Portland, That I did know had a rear entrance or exit, depending on how you look at it.

Gave the cabbie 20 dollars, and asked him to wait, Choice. Walked into Peoples bank, went to the first open teller and asked for all the money in the drawer. She didn't quite hear or understand, I guess because it's not every day you get robbed. I asked again, this time, a little more steam. This time she heard me. She quietly pulled all of the money from the drawer and placed the

money in my backpack. I said, 'Thank you, have a nice day', I then turned around went out into the back promenade. Slowly walking, and disrobing my outer clothes. Not one person noticed that the bank had been robbed. Not even the teller next to my teller. And wouldn't it be even a little weird that I had on a rain poncho, with the hood up, the cap, and dark glasses, and there she is handing me a stack of money around 9 inches high. No one even looked over. Do these things go to every day? I walked out the door, in sheer amazement, got on a bus and the rest will come later.

My whole point being, in a matter of seconds, I changed and affected a lot of outcomes in the future. I had made a 15 second choice that changed my life and a lot of others forever. It was just a choice. Drop the bomb and kill 50 thousand innocent people are not. Or make a right hand turn or go straight. All possibly changes time, people, places and events to come.

Making choices is so vast in terms. It is what made us, what will possibly kill us and everything in-between. If you could look into your future, would you? Could you? The machine or whatever would have to know in advance every choice you are going to make forever. So for that reason alone, there is no way to see your future. It has not been chosen moment by moment yet. So remember, if not anything I wrote, at least remember that you and only you hold the reins. It gets a little hazy as far as accidents go. Because in some of these situations, these choices were made by someone else, that ultimately affects you. So as Obie Wan say's, choose wisely.

Ok, back to the story. It had been around 2 weeks of living in Seattle by now. I was feeling close to normal, and all I wanted to do was get a job, so I could live with humans. Is that too much to ask? Well, actually, not really. You see, since I had been exploring Seattle, and asking every question to anyone I would meet, I found out about the ladies that ran the work for the homeless project in Seattle.

Obviously by the name alone, there was not a hell of a lot of people hanging around this city building.

Why, you ask? I'll tell you. Why are people generally homeless? (I love starting an answer with another question). People are generally homeless, mostly because they want to be. If you play your cards right and lie and manipulate the system enough, you can make out just fine, and you will never have to pay bills or taxes, you can live under assumed names or anything else you can think of. It is one step up from jail, which is Ok for a lot of these weasels because of the same reasons. But now they have a real bed, medical attention, and no bills. No child support.

On the other hand, there are a lot of homeless because of medical and /or psychological reasons. They don't know any better. They are the forgotten race, that all of mankind should be ashamed of. Then there are the addicts. The drunks that are totally broken down that they are just barely alive. If s hideous.

Then there were people like me. Who still had a chance if they wanted it. Some did. Most did not. That's where the ladies that work for the city come into play. My first time in there, I felt like I arrived back on earth, but could only stay a little while, when they first process you. There were a lot of questions you have to

answer, mostly in the State. They were there specifically for the homeless that needed and most of all WANTED to crawl out of the muck and mire. But, they were tough, nice, but tough, these ladies had seen it all and they needed to see you want to get ahead. They would give you day by day little handouts, to keep you coming. For instance, they had phones and desks in the back. And once you qualified, you could use these phones for job searches. In return, they gave you a number for the person to call back.

More or less like a machine that answered with your voice. That was very cool, when I worked up to that level. They had to see progress, and in return they would start you off with a telephone number of job or staffing services, or doctors call you back. I really got to love those ladies. They helped me out with I.D. Day work, places to get clothing, so you could show up looking good for interviews. To me they were like angels. They also made sure that if you drank or did drugs, they would cut you off cold. Fair enough.

Life went on in a daily jumble of attempts at sanity. I went to the ladies every morning, usually with Jack. He and I were a team. I really have to say again, that if it were not for Jack showing up on the bus and things going the way they did, I cannot fathom the other side of that impossible equation.

So day by day, things were slowly improving in every way except a job. We developed a daily routine, because as I was always told by any 'helper', which I use as a word to replace any person that I have met and or worked with or worked for. Those including; the ladies, any doctor or psychologist, including my buddy Dr. Stuart L., All of the de-tox's in many states, all of the re-Habs, short and long term, and of course when I actually became an associate Drug and Alcohol Counselor at Mercy Hospital in Portland, Me.

That is a whole nother story, but remember how I desperately wanted to work in the field when I was locked up? Well, as it turned out, after I got out of prison, I asked my counselor, (Heather, thank you) at the Federal Halfway house. She advised me that if I was that serious about getting into the helping field that I first start by volunteering at a hospital, re-hab, or other helping organizations. Long story short, I called every place in the phone book, and went on to physically experience what all of these places were all about. (I already knew about the other side, now I was in a place, (clean of drugs and alcohol for three years), where I can now make a difference. I can help others through my experience.

Finally, I tracked down the volunteer coordinator for Mercy Hospital. Her name was Glenda. She sounded really nice on the phone, and encouraged me to come to the bi-annual volunteer class, which was started in October. I believe it was August at the time, so I started to read and indulge myself into the helping side of addiction. It was exhaustive and endless. What I needed was hands on. So, October finally came and I was sent a letter from Glenda about where and when to show up for the course, I was so fucking excited. I think I had finally realized what my purpose was, or at least it was like a taste of a much bigger piece. Life was starting to have meaning.

I need to address something before I go on, with what, I don't know. What I do know is that without meeting Glenda, and her

uncompromising attitude, I would have never had the opportunity to fulfill one of my longest and most unlikely goals. That is, she taking me in, and getting me started in the field of addiction.

She had the sixth sense of me the way I did of her.

And we were both right. We both started the same way; it was just that she started a long time before I could. That woman is a rock and a rose petal, all at the same time. I just needed to say that because, after all the shit that has gone wrong all these years, I met someone that cared equally for everyone the same. She was there for me. She started me on the way to volunteering at Mercy Hospital. I chose to get very involved. I came up to the 4th floor, the de-Tox floor two or three times a week, and told my story for some very sick people. They connected with me as much as they could. Because, I have not fed them bullshit or candy coated reality. I told it like it was. Let me tell you that when I first started actually volunteering, I was a nervous wreck. But Glenda was there to guide me through the quagmire of leading a group. I loved it. It (volunteering to tell my story) was indeed cleansing.

I felt like I had really helped others and after on my way back to my little apartment in Portland, I would feel fulfilled that I made things matter. I hopefully set off a spark in some of the addict's minds to at least start thinking of the other side. The side where light and fresh air and guilt, was at least optional. I kept coming back, every week. Then after about six months I asked to be hired on as a counselor. I went through all of the channels, Human resources, meetings, reading a lot and after about 3 months I got the job.

For now all I can tell you is that things were good, but different when I was an employee, rather than a volunteer. I could not tell my story anymore. I had to learn from all of the other great counselors there that I had a boundaries issue. I lasted about six months before I was let go. Things got political and weird. But I learned a lot, and I will approach the field again with intensity, courage and gratitude for Glenda, thanks.

On with the ladies, let's just slowly slip back to Seattle, Ok. I have to apologize to my readers now. I just simply cannot tell a story from beginning to end. I always get caught up on a tangent. Is this good? I fit's bad, then sell this book to someone who might be just a tad off center. I am, and I believe that it is a regal quality. Why Regal? Let's ponder. Reading some books puts me to sleepy land. Other author's, like Norman Mailer and others with vision and perhaps a zing of non-sanity agrees with me, it makes me go wow, did that just happen. You can't write like that. It isn't logical. Well dudes, I'm here to tell you that I am not Spock, although he was pretty cool.

Anyhow, I just wanted to clear that up. I fear the editor that gets this project. He/she/it will certainly be bald by the time it's ready for print.

You know what? One day Jack and I went downtown, or actually uptown, had our nice coffee and headed over to see the ladies. It was a sunny day. In the summer I learned that Seattle is in another town. It is so beautiful, that it's almost worth the nine months of rain to experience the summer in Seattle.

Well, as it turns out, the ladies had a temporary job for us, my 1st one, Jacks 2nd. So we were to take this bus to this house to help a man and his old mother pack up her entire house and ship it off to Boise, Idaho.

It was a huge, did I say a HUGE undertaking. That woman had collected so much stuff over her life, and her husband, before he passed away a couple years back. So, the son decided that he wanted his mother to live near him in Boise. His wife and kids liked Boise so that was it. There were so much antique items that had been stored away since she and her husband rented a rail car in the 40's to move from Washington, D.C. My point being that as Jack and I exposed more stuff, it was very apparent that there were very valuable paintings and furniture. It all needed to be looked at and appraised because it was just way too much stuff for one older woman to need or have at that late time in her life. So, the nice man whom had hired us on for the day liked us and we were hired on for the long haul to drive all her stuff to Boise. WOW!!!!!!!

So, the nice man and his mother asked us simply, would you like to make the move? Instead, we could hire a moving company? Of course we said; Holy shit. There we were, in Seattle for two weeks or so and we got a temporary job, and we were going to drive through Washington State, Oregon, and then into Idaho. I myself had never been through those places and we were getting paid to do it. He offered us Five Hundred per man plus an airline ticket back to Seattle.

After we finally got all that we could fit in the 22' U-Haul, they sold the antiques to a collector in town for around thirteen thousand. So, you have to imagine that it was at least four or five times as valuable, but they just took the money and we headed out of town after 3 days of exhaustive packing and moving.

The deal was so light on our end, and the man knew it. He saved thousands by hiring us instead, and we were happy to do it.

The trip was long, hot and boring. Most of the time it was just wasted, but it was beautiful, especially after being cooped up in that horrible shelter. I couldn't wait to get there, get unloaded and fly home, which we did. The trip was about 15 hours, and we checked into a motel for the night in Boise before we unloaded all that junk into a warehouse the next morning.

He was a kind man, and he took us to the Boise airport for our quick 45 minute flight in Seattle/Tacoma airport. Before he left us he gave us each Five Hundred in cash and we said our good-byes and that was that. Well, not really. Think about Jack and me going back to drug laden Seattle with all that cash. It was not a good thing. I know that now, but when we got back, I told Jack I was moving out of that dump. I had researched the area, before we left. On Capitol Hill there was a guest house that was like a hostile. It was up on the top of Seattle. It had a private bath and was 80 per week. I had to get out of that shelter, and Jack agreed and came with me to our new but very temporary home.

This is the part of the book that will be the hardest to re-live. I have dreaded it since day 1. I'll go slowly.

Slow is the word. I really believe in living life to its fullest, as

you must have guessed by now. Sometimes there is a bump in the road, (my road today March 18th, 2003, sitting at my computer and scared), the bump is huge and I'm not sure if I can drive around it, (Hypothetically). I'm not sure if you have ever gotten to a point in your life when you have to deal the cards, sort of speak. What I mean is that writing this last part of this book has been on my mind since the very days that some of these events occurred.

My therapist, Marina, Whom is the most special, acutely intelligent person I have ever met, told me something this afternoon. Before I tell you I need to let you know that she has read almost the entire book up to this next unwritten part, but doesn't have any idea of what is next and the hardest to complete. She explained my precarious situation about this problem of my being scared into something that made sense to me. I already wrote it on the top of the page. 'Slow down. This is not a race, and no one knows how certain memories can trigger things beyond my control'. And, surprisingly enough, some of the events that occurred before I finally left Seattle will seem to some as mere driftwood of life. Everyone has his or her own limits. Some can be awfully weak, while others may brush it off like a barber brushes the cat hair off your shoulders before he removes the apron. *C'est la vie!*

Jack and I talked a mile a minute thinking out loud about what to do when we get off the plane. Of course, Jack wanted to hit our favorite watering hole, for a couple of cold ones. 'Good God, man', who in their right mind was able to start drinking at 9a.m.. Jack was.

Well, that answered his question. I on the other hand did not ever want to step into that fucking flea bitten hole of the homed one ever again. My view has changed some because, if and when I finish this book, I am going to visit all of the godforsaken shelters. And, with the money I make from the proceeds of this book, if it actually sells, I am going back to all of those shelters and give them each enough money to re-build each one.

I am going to make sure that there are doctors on staff, clean facilities, and real beds. I am going to create a network of shelters so each can be in touch with other shelters to work together, instead of looking for handouts. I want to have these people to be given' a chance to work. Or they will be evaluated case by case so they can get proper psychological assistance so they can live full lives. I'm going to try to get them to clean up and give incentives along the way so they see that they can and will reach the goals. It will happen. I promise that. I have seen and experienced this forgotten and pushed aside community of human beings. Nobody should be treated like the way they are fucking with and swept out of society's range of view. It is intolerable.

While Jack headed for the bar, I headed off in the direction of serenity and maybe a long shower to wash off the last month of madness. And yes, I told Jack where I was going, so don't think that I was a fly by night friend.

Jack did show up at the guesthouse around 11:15 p.m. and he was inebriated. I got there in the am with all of my stuff from the mission that was holding all of my things, and I kissed downtown goodbye. Capitol Hill was on top of Seattle, and it was a different

world from James Street. People were artsy, they were walking their dogs. By all means it appeared to be upper-middle class, although Broadway, the strip of Capital Hill had everything you could think of It was the mixing bowl of Seattle. There were drive-in Burger joints, old movie houses and lots of homeless teenagers everywhere. Hence Dope was on every corner. Mostly kids doing rip-offs, but some were actually legit.

After I checked in and pre-paid my eighty dollars, a cute little Jewish girl showed me around. The kitchen, the bathrooms (they were really clean), and she only had room in the attic, which was cool with me. There were a couple of mattresses and she brought up sheets and towels. I had a big window for air.

The attic was very cool (Hip). By all accounts since I have been in Seattle, I felt at home here. The first thing I did was Gather up some clean clothes that had been in storage at the Mission. The nearest bathroom was down the steep dark and rather rickety steps/ladder on the second floor to the left.

Obviously we've all been in dire need if a shower. But I thought this shower was going to be a religious experience. The bathroom had an old style tub that had the hooves on the bottom. (I could be mistaken on the word hooves, But, I just love saying that word.) 'Hi doll, have you checked out those crazy new hooves they just got in at the shoe store'. See what I mean. If that didn't work, them to someone right now or, if you're alone, call your mother or someone, and work hooves into a sentence. See! I've lost my mind that is a sure sign of insanity. Hmm... .. . . .

That shower, I will remember for the rest of my life.

Think about it. I have only showered since I got to Seattle, and it was 4 or 5 days before I could find a shower that wouldn't infect me with diphtheria after I used it. Then I found the fisherman shower for 50 cents, and clothes washed for \$2.00.

The bathroom in the guest house had plants and knickknacks in the window, and the sun shined in as if the Lord himself was in attendance. I stayed in that shower for 45 minutes or so. Back then my hair was almost down to my butt, and after no showers or conditioner for so long, my hair was not unlike hay. I couldn't get a brush through it for a long time after I got out of that amazing experience. The worst thing of all when you kick dope is that you tend to sweat in buckets, and thus not a nice athletic sweat. This was a funk of a smell that would certainly knock over small children. The worst thing of all was that I could smell it 24 hours a day. It is the poisons coming out your body. Nothing smells more rotten. So, while I was in the shower, I found one of those scrubby things, where you put the soap bar in. And when I was done, the soap had magically disappeared. I then proceeded to throw my clothes out, and then burned them in effigy.

After the shower of all showers, I went down to the first floor where some of the residents were milling about. I heard a voice coming from the kitchen that was a funny voice; In this case it was several different types of funny. I looked into the kitchen to see who was just having' a good old time. It was a guy that I would eventually get to know very well. He was a good looking Black man with a hint of bi-sexuality, and very nicely dressed. He had the couple in the kitchen laughing about something, but his

demeanor was so... I don't know exactly how to put it, but I could tell that we would get along.

Robert was a man that I could never forget, and he knows it too. He had charm and vocabulary that was unusual, but grand. Like an actor in life. He loved to talk, and he was hysterical at points, and just unusual.

We got to be friends on the quick, and we would go out and walk around Broadway; eat sushi and laugh. We talked a lot about each other so very soon we both realized we were cut from the same mold. Honey, he would say let's get fucked up. At the end of the block on Broadway there was a gay Chinese restaurant. I kid you not. I never went there when Robert was on the prowl, but it just reeked of on the edge.

Robert lived on the edge. Sometimes he had lots of money, and we would get a bag of heroine at first, and split it up in the bathroom of the sushi bar. He taught me the ropes, as it were. He had a man purse, which he would keep his life, including his works. Now Robert and I did not shoot Heroine. We would melt it down with a little water in a spoon, and with a lighter; that Black tar cooked right up to before boil. Then we, or he, would mix it with a syringe that had the needle part off of it and we would just split it up and squeeze the Chiva with our head turned back. In it went. At first it hurt a lot. But we had to get out of there or someone would bang on the door, because we were taking too long. We secreted back to our seats and had a scrumptious dinner and grooved all night.

After a week or so, Robert and I became total hang out buddies. The thing is about friends and addicts are not so easily quantified. Meaning, Robert was from a middle class family in Philadelphia. Hence there are quantifiers, yet compared to me they (the quantifiers), are exactly opposite. And as they say opposites attract. I am still not sure where they (who ever THEY are), came up with that expression or where it originates from, but it is most handy to use in a sticky spot where nothing else works.

I am getting off the track as usual. Perhaps you've noticed? I am insane. Legally, I am. Some time or somewhere I heard it mentioned that legally my # of acid trips qualifies me (as in accordance with the Courts, i.e., jury duty) of being insane. That number is 152. I used acid for 1 year and the last 4 or 5 times I used it, I was having 'Bad Trips'. Meaning that, back in 1976 purple micro dots where the acid of that time. In the sixties, they were using pure LSD 25. And it was in liquid form, so you never knew how much or how little you were doing. So I guess compared to my compadres from the sixties, I'm still sane. The reason I'm continuing on the subject is to complete my experiences while going through a bad trip.

First of all, there is strychnine in the acid. I don't know why, but by the last few times I tripped my stomach was in such pain, that I was doubled over trying to come down. There is no coming down. And the more you try the higher and more pain you get.

When you first get off on acid, there are plateaus I call them. After I would snort the crushed up tab, a few minutes went by and nothing would happen. Then you start to get hit with eerie type things and thoughts. That is like level 1. Then you cross through to

the next level without noticing it. You start to see things move that isn't moving, but you would swear that it was. You start hearing little things that you've never noticed before. And all through that time you're laughing. You laugh a lot at nothing. Everything seems funny. You cannot stop smiling. This is the start of a good trip, which lasts about 9-12 hours. But of course I was explaining my bad trips. Instead of laughing and seeing things and everything is excellent, the opposite applies. You get off more, and your stomach aches like you're going to die, then you start wishing or telling that thing inside you to go away. But it doesn't. He horrifies you with thoughts of death, suicide, and you get scared. The more you get scared the more he scares you. By then someone has noticed that you're having a bad trip, so they take you to a place where you can feel comfortable. Instead, you see all your friends with horns or their spitting puss at you. You close your eyes in disbelief, and then your dark closed eye world comes alive with hideous images that I could never explain. It is the world in fast forward and reverses, upside down, but right side up.

Doing anything that requires conscious thought like going to the bathroom is like a 500-mile trip through a deep jungle. Your balance is lost, so you have to hold yourself up. And if you find the bathroom and turn on the light, every possible sight past and present comes at you with a bang. You have no idea of what you're doing, and finally someone from outside the jungle calls out your name, but you can't remember how to speak. And things go on and on this way for hours. Of course, there is a lot of speed mixed with the acid, so you tremble and sweat. Your heart feels like a raging pump and you feel and see everything at that moment. All I can say is do what I did. I took some valiums and sat on the couch or rather was in the fetal position for hours.

I figured out a few days later that if you go into a trip while something in your life is fucked-up, that, in it will trigger your brain into that whole bad thing. Even as trivial as breaking up with your girlfriend 2 weeks ago can trigger a bad trip. I will never trip on acid again. One more time and I will be over the deep end and I'll never come back. This I know to be true. So before you decide to experiment, remember what can happen when you go into it with something wrong in your life. You'll thank me later.

Well, there, yeah' go. I once again explained away another whole issue I went through in my life in a page and a half I can never just stay on the subject. I will now spank myself repeatedly with a 2x4. That's good!

Only kidding you sick bastards. I was talking originally about Robert and me becoming more and more mixing it up together. All the while Jack started taking a different approach to his life. Jack did a lot of hanging out in the lower kitchen with all the beer drinkers.

There was Glen and his older friend that looked exactly like Boris Karloff. He did not find any humor in that.

Those two eventually ran into me later. All I can say for now is I'm sorry. That was not me. At the 2 or 3 week area Robert and I started to go to the crack guy that he knew. We would walk there in usually 20 minutes, but if we were Jonsen for a hit maybe 15 minutes, if we pushed it. We were buying a lot of crack and getting

quite paranoid and started doing more and more insane things. There it is. That word insanity again. That is what this entire disease is based on. The more you get, the more you want, the more you get. This is crack I'm talking about now. In the old days, like the 70's and the early 80's it was called freebase. But then some genius realized that, if he did the work, and cook it down, he could make tons of money and have every person that ever tried it instantly hooked. They were in search of that first hit.

The first hit was magical and also way too good a feeling to be an earthly substance. You see, all the crime, all the money all the images of getting rich off of something so stupid and cheap too, but as powder then it's cooked down to the purest form, sometimes. It had made this country in the late 80's and 90's into crack for anything. People would spend everything they ever made, their jewelry, watches, their house. And even their children for another hit. I was no different. I spent all of my money on crack and heroine. It was the perfect mix. That is it. That is insanity, leaving your entire life to get high, until you're dead or in the jail. Trust me it happens to everyone I knew. Which brings me ultimate crack experience, the Jungle.

The jungle of Seattle. I explained to you earlier where it was but I never told you, you probably figured it out anyway that before I moved to the Guest house, I payed a visit to hell. That's right kids. 1 Fucking block from the Seattle police station was the biggest and scariest crack house that ever was. Tell no one, Steve told me when he asked us if we wanted to go up in there. It was Steve, A smart kid with straight black long hair, like an Indian. He was brilliant, but a total fucking crackhead. Steven and Glen and maybe Jack came too.

Steve told us a few rules about the jungle on the way up to the hidden entrance, on the east corner. All I can say is that I knew that I should not go, but I was one of the fellows, so, I had to, Steve told us. First thing never looks at anybody in the eyes. They will get paranoid and shoot you and rob you before you can say crack. He said this is the place where all of the Homeless, and some non-homeless go to smoke and buy. There are certain laws that he told us about where and when to buy. Never assume. Steve was the only guy that these people knew so they would be freaked out from the very start, we came up to this huge patch of low lying trees and bushes that went almost straight uphill. We walked about 10 feet and this really big guy taking a hit looked at Steve, he goes, who the fuck are these motherfuckers. Steve is like, be cool Barry, they are with me. Barry backed off or sort of falling off because that last hit put him right at death's door. That was cool, Steve said. I go, yeah, the fucking guy almost died. He goes, yeah there must be some good shit up in here today. We walked almost straight up this path littered with syringes, pipes, and thousands of empty crack vials. This was getting very spooky dude. Steve is like coming in here. We walk into this like room cut out to seat about 8 people or so.

Pete, this is my friend Jamie man, he needs some rock. Yeah, but I aren't never seen him around before. Oh, he's cool. He says 50 a rock, and who am I to challenge the price. So me and Steve ante up and split up the rock, and the guy put out his pipe I took a major hit, and literally fell off the branch, waiting to die and

become God's best angel. It was a bell ringer of all bell ringers.

I was so fucking high, they grabbed me by the arms and pulled me up the hill where all of these little rooms were carved out to accommodate smokers and alike.

We got up to a vantage point where you could see downtown and the sea. I looked around, took another hit, and was accosted by this little kid and a couple of these other little black kids. They were smoking crack. This kid asked for a match, and I was like, how old are you? He said, shut the fuck up and give me a light. Then this old black man that was so skinny that he looked dead. He gave the kid a match. He said, in between hits, oh, I guess you met my grandkid. I was like, what! This is a little kid. Then some other black people started coming' out from everywhere, asking' if I was giving him trouble. I said hell no. He's my kid, as she sucks down a huge hit. You are not in yo house so I suggest you and your lily white friends get the fuck out a here.

And that is exactly what we did. I was like doing you see that a fuckin' 90 year old man and a 9 year old kid were Smokin' crack, that is fucking insane. Steve was like, dude, I told you. Don't talk or look at anybody.

Most of them live up there and would not hesitate to shoot your ass.

This was the limit of madness. I have never seen or even heard about shit like that. Whole families living on crack in a jungle 1 block from the police station. Steve said the cops never come in here. They would be killed quicker than shit cause there so many places to hide, and the desperation level was so high that jail or death would undoubtedly be better that what they got going' on now. All I can say is that if they haven't burned that place down and helped those people that this world can go straight to fucking hell because of what I saw taking place. It was twice as intense as I told you about it, only because I was so high and so freaked out that my capacity for memory shut down after seeing what I saw and observed that 1 day in the jungle.

You know what's really funny? That wasn't. That experience jarred me (is that a word?). In all of my crazy fucked life, you know the life. Hey, I came from a good upbringing. Bullshit. That is what this book's sole content had or maybe hasn't relied on, depending on which way you view it. On the one hand, how could I complain, I grew up in a rich town with no Spanish people (except for the migrant workers), and there were I believe 2 token black families in town. The only people that could use our beach had to have a sticker on the fucking window, reporting that we were rich white snobs who only let other rich white snobs from the same town in to view our special beach.

Oh, but 2 towns over, there were Spanish and black people, but they were only allowed in to clean our houses or mow the lawns. We even had our own missile site, just in case those frisky Russians wanted to play ball, then total annihilation was secure. Oh yes. The only good thing is our town was the only town that Jewish people could live in. We were almost a 50% Jewish population when I was growing up.

Funny, no, not that kind of funny, it was more, religious bigotry

funny. My father worked in Darien. There were no Jews in Darien. They even gave my dad a bunch of shit for even suggesting that he would close his Animal practice on a Jewish Holiday. You see there are no Jewish dogs or cats, are there? You see now, this is where I picked up my glorious values. In a bigoted, bullshit society where drinking outrageous amounts of booze were perfectly normal. And if by some chance you got pulled over, why, those nice policemen would drive you home, and you could pick up your car in the morning when you were still drunk, but they just called it a hangover.

Yup, I learned better and young how to manipulate, lie, cheat and be an asshole and it has been just fine. I wonder how my life could have turned out so bad when your parents were either drunk, stoned, on diet pills or those other perfectly legal substances like codeine cough suppressant with real opium in it.

These are all, well and good questions that can be addressed at my regular therapy sessions with Marina. Marina is very demanding, and insists that you really get down to the true issues of your life, and all the mistakes my parents made when they weren't growing me and my siblings up. We had a maid and a live-in housekeeper that took that task over so my parents could be sure to have enough time to be on the "A" party list.

Today is April 8th, 2003. Can you believe that? I just thought I would bring you up to date on progress with my life, as it were. First of all, about 2 months ago, I found out from my younger brother Pete who just had his first daughter, and she is adorable. Pete asked me why I didn't make it for my father's 'family' skiing trip that they take every year to Vermont. I told him that I never even heard about it. He said you must have. Scott and Erin and my son Jack were there. My sister and her family, and Dad and his family were there. So about 2 month's ago I called Connecticut and I got my Father's machine. I left a message that since I didn't know about the trip, how about we take a trip, just the two of us to the Caribbean or some place warm, so we could finally after all of these years, spend some quality time together. I did not mention the info about Pete and my conversation.

Well, he did call me back and he said that going to the Caribbean or any place else this year was impossible. I knew he would say that. He can't be one on one with me. He never could. Then I mentioned to him why I was not invited skiing this year, like every other year. That caught him by total surprise, and he told me that he didn't want me to be there because it would cause a lot of tension. I said are you actually telling me, after years of driving it into my head that, any chance you get to spend time with your kids that it is the most important thing you need to do.

I could not believe what words were coming over that fucking telephone wire. I said so dad, you're telling me that you went out of your way to invite everyone in the family except me because I might cause tension.

I then said, you mean I could have had a whole week with my son, teaching him how to ski, and just being with him for a whole week. I missed out on one of the most valuable times of his and my life and the rest of the family being together, because I might cause tension. Tension that you think might, or might not have happened. The mere fact that he broke the most solemn thing he

has ever told me about kids, and he does this bullshit.

I was so fucking outraged, words became impossible to form in my mouth. Besides all of this, I willingly gave my parental rights over to Scott and Erin, knowing that I would have a much better chance of seeing him grow up, then if Kelly had won the case. They, (Scott and Erin) never call me to speak to Jack. The last time I was on the N. Y. Area, they refused to let me see him.

I haven't spoken to any of my kids or seen them in almost a year. All of this going on when I am finally getting my life back. I finish my parole in November. I have come down 130 mgs in 4 months, from 330 mgs. So I can be free of methadone as soon as humanly possible. I am doing everything in my life that I can to make it an incredible life. Maybe I'll meet a girl.

Maybe a lot of things, but I'm sure of one thing. My family shows me that the better I am doing, the less and less they will be there. This and only this could drive some people mad, but not me. I live to see the day when I meet and marry. And maybe start a family again, and this time actually be allowed to participate in their upbringing. I miss my kids so much that I cry at night, when I'm alone and it's quiet.

I also believe in Karma. Not the real Karma that takes until your next life to get what you deserved, but in this life's Karma. I have seen it work, and I really believe that if you or someone does something either bad or good, something will answer those life charges. I don't wish for anyone to ever get hurt, but there are a lot of other ways to ruin some one's life without getting a scratch on them. And with that, I will leave it up to the powers that be. It is a solemn responsibility that I am ready to take on, and that is that.

Let's get back to matters at hand. I'm really sorry for interrupting myself so much, but sometimes I need to let things out. I suppose, that is one of the ways I have been able to control my sanity, even though I am, quite mad.

On page 163 I was talking about Robert and my huge habit for crack. Heroin was creeping in there as well. The thing is, I don't like crack, or smoking cocaine on its own, I need to have dope (That is what I'll call it from now on, because the word fits the product. Why do you think they call it dope?). If I smokes, crack by itself, get totally whacked and wish I could die. It is such an anxiety rush, (for me) that I never could take it without booze or any sort of depressing. It makes my skin crawl. I really do hate the feeling. But, I talk myself into getting it every chance I can.

About the 3rd week at the Guest house I was starting to become extremely low on money. It was time to get a job. All of the other long-term guests had jobs for the summer, and I needed money, quick. I saw an ad in the paper for a daytime cook at a pancake house type of place. So, I called up and was asked to come down for an interview. The restaurant was a long ride from where I lived by bus. The boss took a liking to me because I was honest, smart, and I had experienced. But the best reason for hiring me was because I was from the East Coast. You see the manager had just moved from Pennsylvania with his family, and he trusted people from the east. Lucky me. I started the next morning, having to get up at 4:30 am to get there by 6 am sharp. It was a hard hot, miserable job, but I had to work.

This next part, is, the crux of the biscuit, if you care to know.

After about a week of double shifts I had a six hundred dollar check. I was proud, but I worked too hard for that amount of money, and the manager knew it but, that's the way it goes. So, I get off the last bus on Broadway, in Capital hill, and I started walking home. I stopped at an all night grocery store for a drink, and a snack. I see this guy kind of walking around in a haze, carrying all of this junk food and I asked him if he needed some help. He said ok. We got to talking, and I told him that I wasn't feeling too good. He looked cool enough to tell him that I was dope sick. He goes, my man, you have just met Oz. We get into a conversation in his car, and he tells me that he delivers Chiva (dope) all over the city for a guy. I said that I needed to get in. He sold me a 20-dollar balloon and said if you like it, just beep me and I'll be there in a half-hour, usually. And usually it turned out to be an hour or so.

I went back to the crib, and Robert was watching TV and sort of nodding out from an earlier blast. I woke him up and asked him for his rig. He sat up so fast it was like I just told him he had just won the lottery. Anyhow, we went downstairs, and had to be quiet because it was 3:30 in the morning. He had his own room so we locked the door and I told him that I just met a guy that sells by beeper. He was as happy as a cat in a litter box. So, I pulled out the balloon and broke half of it off and put the chunk into the spoon, and we added water and melted that fucker just right. He filled up half for me; I leaned back and let the tar slowly drip up my nose. It hurt. But in about 5 minutes Robert and I were drooling. We were so fucking high, yet still able to talk and joke around; we both looked at each other and knew that this new connection was going to bury us quite literally unless we were careful. This heroin was totally pure. And that was the start of my downfall in Seattle.

It (the downfall), isn't as dramatic as I make it out to be. In fact, just the opposite there is nothing pretty, or cool about being a dope fiend. Just as I had again come back to, one more time, after what seemed like hundreds of tries to get clean. And this trip was supposed to be the one. You know, far away from home, and no money. As always nothing matters when you go from coast to coast living high, living low all that really matters is dope. And the reason can be sometimes very simple, but at the same time very complex.

It's the way my habit always shade my direction of right and wrong, up or down, left or right, or be it black or white. Getting rolling on dope again, for me anyway, and as I have been finding out, it is a way to cope with the large evil things lurking in the dark. It is the way that when I finally get comfortable and just getting back on my feet, something always pops up, sometimes out of nowhere. And other times I know exactly what gets me started again.

By the way, this subject, that is the subject of substance abuse has been written on, spoke about and belittled people just like you or me throughout the ages.

For me, I usually start to feel good, get my confidence back, and then just tell myself, as well. I've gotten so far, one hit won't matter at all. It's called the fuck-it. The most common way of rationalizing using as a tool or a slap on the back. Good job Jamie. You have stayed clean for 4 months now. Let's go get a beer. That boys and

girls is exactly what my father said to me after I had completed a 67 day military style re-hab, and then 2 weeks in a % house. My dad came up to visit, we went to a restaurant, and he said let's get a beer. I cannot blame my father even though that is the last thing you offer an addict. Within 2 weeks of that one beer, I was back to doing 3 or 4 bags of heroin a day. It happened to me. And it can and will happen to anyone that is an addict.

Most of us do not have to think twice about this question. WE KNOW! Our whole life and thinking was centered in drugs or alcohol in one form or another-the getting and using and finding ways to get more. We lived to use and used to live. Very simply, an addict is a man or woman whose life is controlled by drugs. We are people in the grip of a continuing and progressive illness whose ends are always the same; jails, institutions and death taken from the Narcotics Anonymous Blue Book Page 3. So far I have visited 2 out of 3. Death will come at a very old age for me. Thanks to Narcotics Anonymous, and God or whoever or whatever you want to call him.

Getting back to matters at hand Robert and I was still hanging together at the start of the 3rd week. I had been warned about being a week late on my rent. Oh yeah! I had a job as a cook in that restaurant/ calories are us. Still, as Robert and I became more serious about our drug habit, I say our, because it's easy to recognize who was paying out all that money on crack and heroin. Another fastening word of advice, that also repeats itself in the Narcotics Anonymous blue book (The Bible), as I call it, and so do millions of active or non active addicts are, your disease never sleeps, (sort of like rust never sleeps), except that's your car and this happens to be your brain. Your disease picks up exactly where you left off. Sort of like when you put down a book you're reading and mark the page. When you start to read the book again, you're at the same place that you left off at, that is that. You are a person that carries around a monster that has a bookmark. When you've decided that you have been a good person or whatever the reason may be, your disease is right there. And it is strong and eventually all consuming, unless you never, ever listen, give in, switch from heroine to pot, or scotch to beer. It's all the same. Ask any one of the millions and millions of active or hopefully non-active members of the society. The secret society that says. Yes Goddammit!, I want to live. And adding up day by day eventually it will become easier and easier. Here is the fuck up. Everyone that stops, is it an hour a week, a day, two months, it's all the same. This is a monster that you can eventually put in your back pocket, but don't ever, ever let it out!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Just look at what happened to me. I am just one of the millions that was lucky enough, smart enough, scared enough, wise enough, almost dead enough to know that it is right here in this room with me as I type away. I type away to show you and yours one of the ways before jails, institutions, or death takes a grip around your fucking neck and kills you. Just like all the ones before you and before A.A. and N.A. existed.

Now I want to end the lecture and return to the never ending story.. back to Seattle. Then if you people like this, I'll write Part 2, my 20's. Oh shit!

One thing I (as the author and dumb fuck who lived this life)

want to purvey to all the brave souls that have not only picked this book up, but, read along this far; I cannot really explain why or where I went so wrong as to have made so many incredibly bad choices, we'll leave it up to the Gods of Therapy to figure that out.

My main point as I ramble further on into complete obscurity is; I needed to write this. I needed to pull these mostly horrible memories out of the back file cabinets in my main frame to 1; make room for more insanity and 2; to become free. What I mean by that is quite simple actually. Freedom (look it up) is to go forth and not make more bad choices that could and would happen to me repeatedly, like the first half of my life turned out. I would not ever change anything, because you can't. Actually that's true but really because now I have room to grow. Of which I have done almost to the extreme. I was able to lift the clouds of doubt, anxiety, disillusionment and frankly self torture. Yes, that's right, and I am sure that if you have gotten to the point of this book, it is highly evident that you have done what I achieved to do or need to do the things I have accomplished simply by staying free of mind altering substances.

Although that does not include what doctors or others in the care profession have given to you, to steer your mind (my mind) back to where it is free again. Free to make honest, sober choices that will carry you and me into the future with dreams of a good night's sleep, for one. And all the other fantastic things that come along with this choice of life.

Let me tell you something. After my last rehab I was clinically depressed, diagnosed by a team of doctors and etc. So I was put on Paxil to relieve the hopelessness and loneliness, and all the other noises that I was feeling in order that maybe I would think about the fact that I was self-medicated. A big word that word is in my humble opinion and many others why the addicts are addicts, self-medication. Are you a doctor? Maybe or maybe not, now we can go back to Seattle.

It was a Saturday night. That I can remember. I had just worked a double shift and I was out of dope. Hence, at the end of my shift, I was given my check by the boss. Why was he here on a Saturday night? Well, I'm sure you've already figured it out. Yup, I was indeed fired, let go, discharged, dismissed, laid off, sent packing, dropped and terminated. In his office, because I really sucked at this job, and he felt that I lied to him, from the beginning of my tenure about my cooking prowess, the truth is that I am a good cook. But a good cook that is a heroin addict, and somehow I had told one guy that was cool at the time, the whole staff probably my boss as well knew about my little problem. My source of Heroin was reliably up to a point. Sometimes he was out of dope, and had to re-up. Other times he was in traffic, and usually my window of opportunity became less and less because my habit grew more and more. That is why he liked his business so much. Once you get a customer, you have him for life or until one of you gets busted or, you decide to get clean, which was not a good topic to discuss with your dealer. What I am trying to say is, by the time I was fired I was out of dope and he called me back at the restaurant after repeated beeps sent out by me. Sometimes he was beeped One-hundred times a day. He had two people working for him, but they were let go because clients would complain of either him never

getting there, or the count was way off. So, at that time it was just my guy doing all the business himself, but obviously his habit was increasing at lightning speed because he always had it and his profit margin still outweighed his cost so he was shooting \$200 per day easily.

That night I left work, sweating and freaked out because I had a bad Jones, and I wound up sitting at a bus stop waiting for him for over an hour. I still needed to tell him I didn't have cash, just a check that was for \$400.00. He gave me a lift home, gave me a gram and told me to beep him on Monday, and then he would bring the check back to me cash it and pay him so there were no problems. He surprised me though.

He liked me because I was an honest, good customer, and I spent lots of money with him. When he finally pulled up to the bus stop, it was almost one am, just about two hours since he said he would be there in fifteen minutes. He had a syringe already made up with a twenty piece of pure ready to hammer into my veins.

But since I still couldn't do it myself yet he pulled over and kindly did the deed, and I was instantly not sick and then I was on planet nine by the time I was dropped off. I couldn't even pronounce thank you when he said, see you Monday at 10.

Whom do you think met me at the door at the Guesthouse? First, it was Robert right behind the manager of the establishment. She quietly grabbed my hand and took me into the office. That means that I was called to the principal's office twice in one day! Which really happened, when I was younger, I was always getting into petty bullshit trouble. The kind I would forget about, like missing detention or some other inane reason that principles are there for, me.

But now I was in real trouble. The manager and I had become friends over the time I stayed there except the deal about building the steps to the attic, that I couldn't figure out because I was either too high or sick. There were good times in that place, and I must apologize for my deplorable behavior, the lies and everything else that I said I would do or pay that never happened. I also know that apologizing to all of you doesn't get back, or change the awful things I did while in Seattle, and you know who you are. All I can promise, i.e.; if this book does get published or I actually accrue some money, I would like to pay the \$88.00 dollars for the Guest house. I could retrieve my Motley Crue leather jacket, and some of the other odds and ends I left there, which would more than equal the money I left that night after being tossed from your lovely establishment. And of course each and everyone that I decide over those awful times during the first forty years of torments and grace.

What could I really say to her, this extremely nice, cooperative, giving in many ways? She was a gal from the sixties. The land and time that I should have grown up in. Why, you ask? All I can say is that we were followers and they were the pioneers. Just like the days of the old west. The original pioneers as we all know had to do everything first hence, pioneer. They were the Donners, and all of the first ones to make it all the way, and get to the riches of this even more beautiful country and much more dangerous as well. If you ever even drive' cross-country you would at least get an idea

at the total immenseness of this great and beautiful land, and also understand so much more about being a pioneer.

That's what I was trying to get to, but of course I sidetracked once again. If left alone to sidetrack, is probably how the bible was written (Just kidding) not.

What I was really getting at was the quality of the beings (most of them, anyhow). The most thoughtful, well read, spacey yet engaged are the people I refer to. These (hippies), the older I get, the more I hate that word. Sometimes this woman and others of that era, especially on the west coast could tangent for hours, (A therapist' nightmare), about the days and things and ideas that have generally gone the wayside except for all those ex-dopers in the computer industry. You know who you are. The whole thing is that I was born too late. I am indeed a follower, and I really believe that I was meant to lead in some respects. Anyone that has heard me play guitar would tell you. Over the years I have had a chance to play for and with a lot of people. I worked with some of the world's best, but what happened to me? Ah, the question that has fucked with me and everyone close to me.

I am an addict. It doesn't matter what you start with, or when. If you were born or developed addictive genes, then my friend either you got a chance to let some work out, let's see. Jimi Hendrix, Janis, Eric Clapton, whom crossed over addiction. He even started his own rehab just like I would do if only I could give back. Or others will die before they get the chances that others got. Like me, and a lot of others.

That last night in the Guesthouse was indeed a crossroad for me, in many ways. One being, I didn't have any cash. Well, maybe thirty or forty dollars, but, my dealer if you remember was 'holding' on to my check until the morning. As an addict knows, the morning is not the meaning. I'm sure lot's of others know that as well, but as an addict, I was totally freaked because he did have my check, I had only to beep him and that would be that.

Yeah, and my tongue is ten inches long. Easy does it there ladies. That was a lie, a fib. An untruth if maybe I had his apartment telephone # or his address, I would have felt a lot less of a wreck knowing that I had to leave in the morning, and co-incidentally, Robert was asked to leave as well. I laid on my top bunk, listening to the Japanese fellow below me snore, while I contemplated my existence. I knew that everything possible that could go wrong would. Do you know when you get a feeling that whatever is supposed to happen, won't. Yup, I knew that everything in my world after I woke up (as late as possible), and, maybe shower for the last time for God knows how long, things were going to get ugly.

They already started to become ugly. When I was in conversation about my removal the next day, it seemed that I had an unpaid balance of \$88.00.

I talked about that already, but what I did not tell you was that she had confiscated some things while I was away at work. She had taken my prize possession. At least that is what I thought of my Motley Crue leather tour jacket that was given to me by my friend Jeff I kept that with me throughout all of the wrangling of

my life, up until then, and she knew it. She also knew a lot more than I ever would have imagined. I'm sure she knew or was becoming aware of my dope habit.

It's not too hard to guess, when you make money, but you never seem to have any at rent time. She helped herself to a few of the items given to me by the nice man that hired us to move to Boise. She had me. And she had Robert. We have enjoyed each other's company for a while. If you ever read this, please hold my stuff I am eventually coming back to right some wrongs.

I have to come back. A lot of damage was done in that short time. I wreaked havoc on myself and everyone else that had anything to do with me. One person comes to mind that I liked very much, and she enjoyed my company as well. I met her at a bagel and a coffee morning place in Capital Hill. We started a conversation and things were starting to click in a friendship sort of way.

I must be blunt. She was quite older than I. But still there was something there. I'm still not sure; perhaps if time occurred differently, and we were closer in age, we would have gotten much closer. I'm not sure if she remembers me as well as I remember her, but I suspect she does.

She was employed at a very eclectic, but above average bookstore, almost across the street from where we first met. I felt good enough about our conversation to ask if we could talk again. She was a very interesting, well-read, and also quite charming. She told me to come by the store and one-day I did. I felt a bit odd, but still enough at ease to progress our friendship. One thing is, especially for a woman, trust is crucial.

And indeed I could tell that she was trying to size me up. I mean, I could have been anything that one mind could conjure up, but on my side of the equation, I was indeed concerned that I could not come up to her intellectual level.

One thing led to another at a very slow pace, and during this time of ours I was becoming more and more addicted again to Heroin and crack. I did not even go there with her, but she could pick up different vibrations coming forth. And she knew that I knew. Sometimes she would ask me over, and I was not fixed that day yet, and she would notice that something was strange. She invited me to a Blues Concert down at this beautiful concert on a pier. It was John Lee Hooker, sitting down and Jammin. Constantly as I grew to know her, I became more and more withdrawn. Probably due to my habit, and the fact that I was indeed clinically depressed but did not know it yet. When I was in between the highs, I was constantly growing into a state of hopelessness. I was walking alongside the homed one.

We sort of grew apart, directly because of my voracious appetite for Chiva. I stopped in to see her occasionally, but she grew more despondent. I am not stupid. Although, being in a haze of the drug I could not face her because of who I was. I was the person that I came to Seattle not to be. Yet, here I have been. I am now Jamie, the addict, yet on a more and more despondent course. A direction named suicide. I hated who I had become. And it was so quick. I was straight for 2 hours before I started drinking,

when I arrived in Seattle.

I was beside myself with fear and loathing of who I became in such a short time. She lent me money the day before I was removed from the guest-house, and that was the end. I could not face her, at least truthfully anymore.

Yet, I had this feeling that if I came to her with this burden, there was a fifty/fifty chance that she would understand and ultimately help. I just could not face her. I was so enamored with her sense of being and intellect that I could not give in to telling her.

Instead I became more withdrawn and realized that I could not in good conscience, let her into my world. So now you know what happened, M. I'm truly an asshole and if you still are around when I come into my own I intend to at least apologize with flowers.

The morning I left the Guest-house for good, I asked as politely as possible, if I could store most of my belongings until I was situated. They had no problem with that, as long as I picked them up in a month's time or they would be tossed. There it was again. My life and possessions tossed like you would throw away a candy wrapper. That is how I felt when I walked off the steps that afternoon.

My life now was garbage; so, I am going to pursue life's garbage with a vengeance. If I was going to be a street addict then let it be. I figured that sooner or later I would be a statistic, so what the fuck. I am going to dive into the dark side now. I toyed with it for years, but now I was in the devil's playground.

Robert and I were two of a kind. I didn't feel so bad knowing that I had someone to share the misery with. He was generally very witty and full of life, so there was hardly a chance at becoming a spot on a log.

With our shoulder bags we went to the sushi place and ate while I cooked up a load for him and myself. I still had to snort it without the help of someone to dose me intravenously, so one by one we went to the restroom and came back totally slammed. I made sure to make an exceptionally strong mixture in celebration of our new lives as street addicts. Somehow, somewhere I did not take to the term with any type of joy. I felt like a piece of shit, and so did Robert. But, heroine can put your mind in a groovy spot for a long time, so life was good right then and there.

We needed a plan, not just any plan, but a way to get money and shelter. By now all of you reading this have presumed that I was on my way towards overdose or some other form of loss of life. Jail was completely realistic as well.

Robert and I talked for hours. We laughed and cried and I miss you even now. On May 3rd, 2003. Where are you? If you are alive will you find me? I hope you're not in jail or dead. At least in jail you have a good chance of getting clean. At least I did.

Our plan was simple and straight forward, but I was not quite up to the challenge. We agreed that once it got dark, we would go to the only gay Chinese restaurant on Capitol Hill. I believe that I have never even heard of a gay Chinese restaurant and bar ever before in my adult life. It was like a forbidden secret that existed at the end of the Broadway section in Capital Hill.

We had a plan. It was quite simple really. I had one personal check left in my wallet, for this exact reason. It was there for emergencies, and ladies, this was an emergency.

We planned to go there to find a table in the center of the room, and start the show. One real big question was, am I a good enough actor, in this case to persuade the lovely gentleman from behind the bar, that we were on vacation, and would he take a check from out of state. Well honey, he was so enamored with me that he said he personally would take responsibility for the check if there was a problem. I had him.

This is the section of the book that I feel very strongly about the subject matter, henceforth.

The Disclaimer that's right ladies and gentleman my views on homosexuality towards men are very clear.

That is not to say that there is anything wrong with it. In fact, medically and every other way to give same sex meaning is of a very personal nature. Why, you ask? Because, as you may have already figured out unless you're a freak in idiot, is that I was about to touch a man, and I do not and did not like it. Finally, it gives me satisfaction to tell you that a hairy man's asshole is generally unappealing to me was that graphic enough.

The next thing is what you all expect me to say, 'Oh yeah, I have a lot of gay friends. They're very smart, no, scratch that. They are generally very intelligent, well mannered and mostly fun to be around'. Now, as most gay men will tell you, that is the typical answer from a hetero. Actually, it is exactly the way I feel.

I worked as a bartender in Manhattan in the mid 90's on 18th and 8th. The heart of the section of town they call Chelsea. The Bar/Restaurant I worked at was called Manray. I'm sure some of you have heard about it. It's ½ straight and ½ gay. So basically it was packed until 4am. Every night I loved working there. With the twins, I want to give my most humble of apologies.

Heroin had me. That's why I left. I would eventually have stolen money or whatever, and you two always believed in me, and I knew if I stayed there, things would have gotten ugly. So I'm sorry, but please forgive me and stay in touch.

Ok. Now I feel good enough about my position in my life to continue writing, I was so very drunk towards the end of the evening at the gay Chinese restaurant. Luckily, I had eaten' a lot so that I was semi in control, as I watched Robert tonguing our mark.

That's right. Men had been coming by our table all night. We were, (excuse the pun), the queens of the world. Robert had coached me about going overboard on the mannerisms. We had a rehearsal earlier that day, and I can act. I could always do voices. Growing up, my mother always said to me, "you should be an actor".

Well, this was not acting, this was real life. And our plan was simple, extremely brutal, but totally necessary. We had to do something for money. And this was the place to get it. We planned to find a man. Not just any man, but a man with money a man that was extremely good looking, because Robert was in no mood to hear. Next we were to get him extremely drunk, and hopefully he would come on to us both at first I was so fucking nervous. Why? I

had to be gay. This is it. I had to look, and act and be a faggot.

It wasn't that hard really. I just let my feminine side take over. I guess it was a Stanislavsky movie. Be the faggot. I loved it, the prancing, and the winking. The men were all over me. I was a hit, but I mostly sat down with Robert and our tall dark and handsome mark. He kept looking over at me. He would say, "You are so beautiful". I was like holy shit I am in fucking huge trouble. Robert noticed and walked away in a huff. He moved closer. He said, "touch me". Then he kissed me softly on the mouth. I was about to throw up, but at the same time it was actually romantic, in a strange way.

He asked me to put my hand on him. I was like, I have to touch him, and he put my hand on his penis. Oh my god. This was to out for me. I could understand the allure, but you are either one or not one. When I touched it, I tried to make it seem that I liked it. It was a horrible thing. I was very drunk so it was not so hard to seduce him. I told him that I wanted to fuck him. He said, I thought you would never ask. I said, I'll pay the check, you write down your number and address and I will meet you there, and make love to you like the first night of your life. I paid the check, wrote out enough for a tip and asked for fifty extra. I needed to get high, now.

Well, wouldn't you? Even if you don't get high, if you were in my position, what would you do? No, No and no. Put yourself in my shoes, and I know that you can't you won't and you wouldn't. You are a sensible being, I, on the other hand, am a dim witted fuck that let my disease coxswain me over God's green earth.

Let's get one thing very clear. My disease and the war stories (that's what people in the 12 step land call your experiences) and most of the time, they do not, I repeat, do not want to hear war stories. Why, besides the obvious. It's because they have their own war stories as well. And some are a hell of a lot different and incredibly more horrifying than mine.

That is one of the reasons why this book is so important because you cannot get people in recovery, to get into their war stories. Oh yeah, they get up to the podium and tell you that they are, let's say, an alcoholic. They may touch on some of the things they did, but they always talk about getting and staying clean. That's just fine. But it's bullshit. To really go where no man or woman has gone before is to get out on paper or in words all the shit you went through time and time again, to dig deep and let the newcomers realize what can potentially can happen.

Most of the 12 step groups are the only way to be with and talk with others that have been through the same situations before they were able to overcome their disease. There is no better way once you're able to get through a meeting and finally grasp at the things they did to get and remain clean.

I'm here to actually live my life out with you so that you or yours, or a friend, an office worker can see what can happen to a nice upper middle-class Jewish boy from Connecticut. As you see, and have seen, my disease was dragging me into places and situations that normal people didn't realize existed. Meanwhile your kids or your wife or your parents or anyone may be struggling to stay alive, and the fact is that a lot don't. It's Jails, Institutions and then death.

I realize that I'm going off again, but for me to be here writing this was done purely through pain, awareness, and change. Change is stepping up to the plate.

Speaking of stepping up to the plate, I had my own solution to contend with. Now you may have already grasped the meaning of why Robert and I had concocted this scheme in the first place.

We were cornered, rabid animals with no path. I wonder if any one of you would be able to grasp this concept. However, we got to this point of no money, no place to go. Robert and I came up with a way of at least making it through the night. We were simply going to get a man to invite us into his home. And while Robert was going to go first, sort of speaking, I was going to choose the place for money jewelry or anything of value.

Hopefully, he would have been so fucked up that he would have passed out, or we were going to help him along if need be. We were desperate enough to hit this fucker over the head, or drag him or what have you.

We would have probably used his credit cards and cash and whatever else of value, and stay at a fine hotel. The next morning I had to meet with my dealer and Robert was going to pick up his food stamps, so either way we would have been ok.

Things didn't go as planned. First, as I mentioned before, Robert seemed to have vanished close to closing time. He had my stuff, and after 20 minutes went by, still no Robert. Better yet, I had harangued my way into going back to this man's house to have gay sex. I was not that desperate yet. He wanted to get a taxi and meet me back at his place. I had led him, on so well that I would have almost have done it, but I wasn't that drunk. After he left and I left, I went to my buddies' crack house down the street. This guy lived with his mother, yet people came and went as they pleased.. He weighed all of 90 pounds, but he pretty much held it together.

Without cash, or trade there was no talking. I whipped out fifty, and his eyes lit up like it was Christmas morning. I stuffed the pipe and blew my head clean off after coming down I realized that I was still on a mission. So I used my guy's phone, and he's so paranoid that he actually asked me, Hey man, are you calling the cops. Wow. This dude was on another planet. My secret gay lover picked up the phone after about eight rings. He was so drunk, that he almost forgot. I told him I would be there in 5 minutes. Then I left that scene at my boy's house. Just being near that place made my stomach chum, he drove his insanity and paranoia into my brain. This house was going to be the next house to slide into the earth and down into the depths of hell. I just hope he would get it together. I liked him when he was straight, which was rare. But he had an intensity of an actor playing the role that was called life. He was good slick, smooth, and full of shit. Just what agents look for so they can drill money out of their actor's pool? It all stinks. And I mean just about all of life, except the 2% of god's children that were on the level, and only wants good things to happen. Those are the people you can trust from day one. I guess the way things were after the war. Girls got married virgins. Life was predictable and safe. If you only knew half of the motherfuckers out there just beyond the vision of the ordinary, the cultures that run above and below the sanity of Mr. 9 to 5, his wife and kids. They have no clue how dangerous and vindictive the underpinnings of society really

reached. Hopefully they will grow old and besides reading about it, they will be left un-touched for their journey to a new.

I rang the bell to his apartment. In my mind one thousand reasons why I should run away hit me on the head from Thors' hammer. First and foremost, this deal was impossible without Robert. I looked everywhere for him when I left the bar. I checked, and he was at least smart enough to grab our things, so I knew that when I did catch up with him, most likely at the social Security office in the morning, I would find out what happened. He (the mark) opens the door butt naked, and begins with French kiss me in the hallway of his building.

I pushed him back with some force, and he liked that. I was up shits creek this time, boy. Robert, Why? He lay on the bed, spread himself open awaiting something that was never coming out of my pants and deliberately entering an exit only. I asked him to slow down. It was all new to me, and I had only had been with a couple of men before. This did not keep him from practically pulling my clothes off. (Apparently I said the exact wrong thing. Gay men dream of men, still, in the closet). He was going to have me and was fucking weirded out. I drew on instinct, from television and movies. How odd? I pushed him down and forcefully said, wait until I get a drink and settle in. I am a little uncomfortable and I need a few minutes of Jamie time. He respected that. I went into the kitchen, pulled out a Heineken, and drank it in one swig; I drank another one and thought about how I was going to get out of here without having to touch him anymore.

I was not even thinking about knocking him over the head now. Too many people had seen us together. I also cashed a check with my real name of the Gay Chinese establishment. With my luck, I would have killed him, and spent the rest of my life being Bubba's wife in cell block 6. No thanks.

I went out to the bedroom and he was sleeping. So, I went through his wallet, there was nothing but plastic. I woke him up, and told him I was leaving. He was like, you can't, you just came over and I'm horny. I told him that he was sleeping, and I had to get up for work. I asked him for 10 dollars for cab fare, and left. The sense of relief came over me like OJ's glove. Not quite perfect. I had to sleep outside. So I found an alley that was brightly lit, pulled my sweater over my face and thanked God as I fell asleep in the deep quiet of late night Seattle.

I slept a deep, dark, dreamless 4 hours. I awoke to the sound of someone yelling, as I peeked out of my sweater/sleeping bag, at the beginning of the alley there was an older man waving a broom and yelling at me, obviously keeping his distance. I heard only part of what he said, the word police was clear as day. He said something to the effect that I was to 'get my stinking carcass' off his property before he would call the police. That in and of itself was motivated to try, face this new but confusing day.

Then, as I got up and started walking, passing by the old goat, that was still yelling at me, even though I had already crossed the street I wished that I could turn around and tell him where I had been, and was going through as I turned the corner towards coffee.

I had reached into my pocket, and the whole evening started coming back to me in pieces. Because of the sheer amount of

alcohol I had consumed things were only flashes of the beginning, some of the middle of the night, of which I almost gagged when I thought of the act of making out intensely, was terrifying (To the bi sexual and gay communities of the world; I hope and pray that you understand that my story and my reactions to these events do no way reflect the fact that my opinion is just that, no more. I celebrate the fact that human beings, in any form or belief, can observe and live in the fashion in which they chose. This is just to get it 100% clear that my thoughts are in no way meant or said to offend the other beings in the world that choose the life that they want I am proud of that I would not be who I am now or back then, if it not for freedom of belief, worship, sexual choices, and the thought of any entity to take our freedoms or choices away would be like stepping back in time, to a very socially and politically inept society. That's the beauty of freedom. I have more to say. I turned 44 on May 19th, 2003. I never thought I would live this long. Because I have, I want to introduce new approaches to addiction.

As I am allowed to speak freely, and In fact that I am alive to write or talk at all is a blessing from God as you and I choose to believe in, or not. How cool is that? Being that as it may, at the age of 44 I am suffering from a few mind and body issues that I want to discuss for a minute. I believe that some or all of these "problems" with my body and mind are most likely from years of addiction and abuse to myself. I always and still do adhere to the principle that life is here now. You could get run over by a bus when you leave your house. Or, a small meteorite may have made its way through our atmosphere and hit you square on the head at any point in your life. That is why I am writing now; it is also the reason why I live each day to the fullest.

My friends, when you believe in that principle and you are an addict, you're in big trouble. At least I was. I used any and every drug. Not to be social, but to experience life on every plane of existence. Be it though pharmaceuticals, alcohol, or any other form of self-indulgence. And there are a lot of addictions out there that need to be addressed. Not because I want to save the world, but simply because it is possible. The horrible monster that sits in a crack pipe, or on a plate full of food, or churning up janitorial supplies in your bathtub that is later to be called crystal meth. Yes, there are and is a huge society of people that live beneath the layer that you see during your day. If you are an addict you understand that, but to the rest of the world, they have no idea that there is an entire society of people and governments, and "family" run businesses and even someone in your own family that has lived right underneath the "real" world.

Maybe, as an example, your law partner gets up from an important situation and needs to "go to the men's room". Innocent enough, but, chances could be, (and a lot of people know this already), that your partner is in the restroom, but not to pee. He may be in stall number 3 pulling out a bag of cocaine, or a small envelope of heroin, that was delivered to the building an hour before the meeting started other side.

Yes folk's, in the years of self-abuse, the first medically diagnosed problem was clinical depression. That was initialized at Harbor View Hospital, by a team of doctors, psychiatrists, social workers, drug counselors and whoever else was there that

morning I could finally get out of bed. I had been told that for four days I was in and out of consciousness. Having sweated through 2 to 3 sets of sheets per day, and God knows what other totally embarrassing and "self induced" trauma I went through before my first of many diagnoses. I was already covered (let's say 75%) with psoriasis. I picked this up through a dormant gene that was lurking within my body, until it was awakened with fervor after my near death car accident in 1993.

Because of putting my drugs ahead of anything else, my psoriasis grew with no abandon, and by the time I reached that hospital I was a walking scab. It was so awful to live with. I tried everything medically, to no avail, directly because of my addiction. Think about that for a second. Close the book and put yourself in my shoes, (unless you're already there). I chose to put drugs before everything that happened in my life from 15 years old until June 21st, 1998, when I was locked up.

The reason I mention this is because I had to learn that I was an addict. I had to say it. I had to admit to myself for the first time in my life that I was powerless over my addiction and need help. Before anyone with an addiction can get well, they have to give into the fact that indeed, they are sick. They have a medically diagnosed disease of addiction. A chemical imbalance caused either through hereditary means or acquired somehow. Next medical problem happened after I was clean. I have been a self-taught carpenter for some 25 years off and on. Mostly remodeling I can fix almost anything. I can just grasp a situation and through osmosis I can make it or fix it. I almost finished a huge 9-month project, here in Portland, Maine at a condo complex that was constructed by a shyster contractor. All of the sliding back glass doors, leading to the porch were rotten most, right down to the foundation. Much to the chagrin of the condo association, they were going to have to accept the fact that, if not re-built, floors would fall and eventually someone would get hurt and sue. During those months between July and January, Mike, (my partner) and I worked straight through a very good job. And we re-constructed every last item to code and beyond in some cases. My whole point being is that I had to use a tool call a reciprocating saw, or better known as a sawzall. After months and months the vibrations from that tool destroyed the nerves in my wrists. Hence, I developed a very bad case of Carpal tunnel syndrome. At its peak I couldn't feel anything in my hands. They were totally numb. At night, my arms and hands would get pins and needles to the point of torture. I couldn't work at my second profession for, at least, six months. I went to a Chinese doctor, for fear of surgery and they constructed splints that were formed to my arms and hands, to wear day and night, eventually just at night. I deserved this because I took this project on with an addicts' point of view. I had not learned through now 4 years of therapy that life is lived completely different then I knew. They, (the professional addiction people), told me that I stopped being who I was learning to be when I started using drugs and alcohol to cope instead of actually coping. I was emotionally 15 years old. I had to re-learn all of life's nuances from square one. It wasn't always fun. But my therapist say's that I have almost completed part of the big picture.

Even at this point of the book, and you are addicted to something, it's not too late to start over before you cannot. Please,

please choose life. It is not always perfect, but I do wake up every day clear headed, and ready to take on the day.

The next diagnosed disease was anxiety. It developed after I was clean. It was caused by a myriad of unbelievable events all occurring during the same month. I was fired from the hospital, for no apparent reason. I was being stalked by a patient from whom the hospital had gotten my address and phone number somehow. I had 9 teeth pulled at 2 weeks during the same weeks. I was put on narcotic painkillers. I tried as hard as I could, not to take them, but the pain became too unbearable. I instantly reverted into my disease of addiction, and that scared me, to the point where I wouldn't ad couldn't answer the phone or the door. I started having anxiety attacks so badly that I thought I was going to die. My vision went around in circles; my heart rate was crazy high. I started having heart palpitations. I finally got the courage to call a doctor, and I was diagnosed with acute anxiety. It was awful. The next thing to happen was, I was prescribed Valium, which in turn helped me to the point of returning my life to me. I was unfortunate being constantly hounded by the addiction monster inside me. All I wanted was to get high. I knew that I would not only go back to jail, but all the work that I put into my treatment would have been swept off the earth like a un-wanted plague. I called the methadone clinic that I used to send patients to. A friend that worked there asked me to come see him. I was put on methadone and eventually lost all craving and my life became as normal as it could. So, you see what can happen after being clean for 31/2 years can do to you. Close your eyes now. Think about the horrible world of addiction. Now get to work. If you're not an addict, then help one. If you are one, it's not your fault, but just get and receive help now.

The final disease that I was diagnosed with a year ago, and now I cannot work, and can barely write or move, is called, psoriatic arthritis. I achieved the total package from regular psoriasis to psoriatic arthritis and am injecting Enbrel subcutaneously twice a week for the rest of my life. I applied for food stamps, and last year I applied for social security disability, but it's still up in the air. I cannot hike nor take long walks. All of this was most likely induced by DRUGS.....

Today is not yesterday. I mean that in the literal way. As you have now come to the edge with me, I'm not sure we've always enjoyed the ride. In fact, it could be closely misconstrued to some as a house of horrors. That is not only one ride, one ticket, but, many rides and they are always ever-changing shape and form. The tickets are not for sale. They are not even tickets in the reality of a paper ticket. These 'tickets' are payable only in the most hurtful, and non-joyous of costs. The cost of my ride through my particular life cannot be collected. Instead, my payments are in the form of sanity and physical redemption.

I'm not sure if that made any sense, but as in all things, these are things that cannot be classified or filed.

I'm speaking right now, or should I say, speaking though the written text on May 27th, 2003. It is 12:08 P.M. And, I am scared. I was told last night by the one person that has had a close, even symbiotic relationship with that, in no more clearly said that, I am to get out of her house.

She has just had her ovaries removed because of Cancer. I feel very badly for her. I was and am at her beck and call, like any normal person would be in a situation such as this. But, in fact, she is going through menopause at an ungodly rate of speed. Her doctors told her that she would “take the menopause helicopter ride”, instead of the 3 to 8 year cycle, because of her age and circumstances, hence her un-bridled lack of reason and humanity.

Since the operation, she had work done on her house that was directly because of my idea to use my friend Tim to do the job. Who, in turn, charged her cost for all of the work done? I thought that after that, and the fact that I pay my way, and I have been there when she needed a hand to hold, I had the chance of staying here for the agreed time my parole was up. November, 15.

Or the completion of this “book”. One or the other, but last night, after a very dreary Memorial Day weekend, of which I took off from writing, for the purpose of them. To re-charge my creations, and physical Juices.

She, (my roommate), had been instructed by the doctor that she remains on sick leave for six weeks. Doesn't that sound a bit long. I'm no doctor, but after 3 days she was driving to the market, re-positioning furniture, and anything else that a 'well' person would do. But, she chose to use all of her sick leave, and stay at home, while getting full-time paid. As though she was at work. She also receives over 2000 dollars in medical leave. Maybe it is just me, but, if I were lucky enough to get paid to be sick, wouldn't you go away for the time off it would essentially be a free vacation. Four weeks vacation anywhere in the world. I cannot imagine even having the money to travel, but, actually making a choice to stay at home, and do nothing, except pay attention to my world. And that, ladies and gentleman is where we are right now. I sit upstairs, in my 7x9 room, filled with everything I own, and remain up here, all the time. I go to the restroom to shower and relieve myself. I go to the kitchen so I can satisfy my hunger, and then I am back upstairs, Is this not exactly like jail except, I have no social life. At least in jail I could come and go. Play music, talk and laugh with friends. Here I have cut off, except for my phone.

The overwhelming guilt and anxiety is almost unbearable. If not for the fact that I choose not to use drugs, I think I would. I am trapped. My physical and emotional problems are amplified in this existence.

What can I do in this world to satisfy my own God, to the point where life is good? I do and live just as I am told, so I can be given those that were either taken away, or I never had, but have tasted, so I know that a good life is out there. Tell me God, and I will do what you need of me. This book, is and will be the under said help and reason to guide those of us that are trying to get out, or trying to understand others stricken down.

I received a reminder through means of communication. I had and have been burning with tension, and mad at the state of degradation that is between my father and myself This is very personal, but ultimately, it is the very essence of my life with drugs. Yes, at one point I had burned every imaginable bridge that there was to bum. My bridge with my father was on fire for a long time. He's a logical nonemotional scientific type, that uses reason

of his own demise to instruct him how to deal with life and its oddities. The burning bridge grew ever hotter over time. I confess that in many situations where other parents would stay parents, my father has been using a torch to put the bridge into accelerated destruction. And now, after my last email to him, I almost begged to be let in. Giving him suggestions as to reversing the damage and then becoming my father again. It is as if my father is not alive. Now I know that for sure.

He claimed that he never received my e-mail. I know he did. I checked. It was sent, read and deleted. He said to me that I never got it. I know that he is in total denial.

All of this aside, I need a father. I am in a state of flux. Earlier this year I asked him over the phone, and sent him an e-mail. I laid out the fact that the years are passing us by. I needed to confide and learn from my father. He said that he had no time to get away, yet he sees the other children on a semi-regular basis. I am not here. It is from drugs. Drugs broke our relationship down to the point where we are not family. Is not the idea of family forever? No exceptions. My children and most of the people in Connecticut that I had intimate relationships on many levels are gone. My friends and confidantes are now basically Cheryl my roommate that has gone way out of her way to be there. I almost committed suicide last weekend. She took my silence to her as most would. That I had gone back to my old ways of thinking. And she didn't feel emotionally safe in her own house. There are no words for how incredibly bad I feel. I would never intentionally abuse or let her never-ending kindness get in between us. She is more or less my lifeline. She knows me. She has read almost all of this book, and has always been there.

When my own family was not, I cannot ever tell her what she has done for me. Trust, trust is what she enabled me to have again. All addicts know this. Addicts will do anything to anybody to fill their need. It is chemically and a non human approach to a person that is going to eventually give up. My lead singer, in a band years ago gave up. A lot of people in the grips of addiction give up.

I now am learning how to live in a world that inherently does not like our help addicted people. I know this. I've lived it. And I made it out the other side Tim. Tim is my only male friend and confidant I have here in Portland. He was a user, but not fully described as an addict. He was spared, but, he too understands on the many subtle levels how and what this thing can do. He is very smart, very athletic and the ladies find him very handsome. I find him to be a good friend who will go out of his way to be there if needed. Even though he has 5 children between him and his lifemate, they communicate. I sometimes can actually become an advocate and listener/adviser to Tim as well. Which gives me the feeling of being needed. And that my knowledge and communication strengths click between us. I am pleased to be there. I also let him know and be very aware that he has something that is rare. A beautiful girlfriend, an almost ex-wife that is a friend to him, and they communicate. That is almost non-existent in these trying times. Kids that love and respect him, a successful business, and an excellent musician/drummer. I thank God that I have these two people there. I now believe that I can go back to Seattle, and release the rest of that journey. Of which are

many. Someday, if wanted, they will be told.

“As soon as a man is in his own place he has peace; until then he cannot have it”.

From the book; *The Music of Life* by HAZRAT INAYAT KHAN

The day is; the morning I woke up in the alley. I had never slept in an alley. But one time I was locked out of the shelter, and a straight friend named Dan told me he had a place to go. He was a large Mountain man type of guy. The beard, the long unkempt hair, and the one set of clothing. I talked with him at length a few times. He was a smart guy, who had succumbed to unheard of amounts of crack-cocaine. He was straight the night I was locked out. Sitting on the same park bench that he could always be found at.

We walked and talked and we finally came to a grove of pine trees, and brush. We walked into a small camp. He and his buddy had established this area as theirs. He gave me a somewhat clean blanket and pulled out a spare refrigerator box, reserved for company. It was indeed shelter from the elements. We talked for a bit, then I climbed into my box, a GE, I believe. My trusty shoulder bag turned into a pillow, and I fell into a deep dark sleep.

I awoke the next morning and thanked Dan for the hospitality. Getting back to that morning, I had coffee at my usual spot, of which are on every corner in Seattle. I then jumped aboard a bus headed toward the office where I would eventually find Robert. It was much too early to call my dealer, so I sat down in the office, and waited for Robert to appear.

He showed up nearly 3 hours later. It turned out that he was so drunk, that he went outside to vomit. He then used his brain and remembered our gear, grabbed it and snuck into the guest house where he spent the night. He had a nice shower and here he was happy as a fucking clam. I was so pissed that the words were too hard to achieve, he knew it.

When I finally calmed down, I told him in the lurch, I was left to handle. He was also too afraid to injure anyone. I wish he had told me. He got his food stamps, and we were off to Little Vietnam to cash them in. We then ate and did laundry. We decided to split up so that we had a better chance of finding a life.

I called my dealer and he asked me to meet him in the U-District (The University of Washington district).

I jumped a bus to the closest location, and walked the rest of the way. I was down to almost no dope. At least I wasn't sick. When I arrived at the pre-designated coordinates, there were two other very vampire like fell as waiting there as well. After a few minutes we talked and realized we were waiting for the same guy. That was a relief I suppose.

Anyhow, I told them of my situation, and asked them if I could rent a spot on their floor for \$25.00. They were very agreeable. They lived in a house that was owned by a very insane woman that collected everything she ever ate, every page of the newspaper. There were hundreds of cereal boxes. There was stuff right up to the ceiling. I was told that this disease was called hoarding, but that is not what I think. She literally made a path from her living

room couch to the kitchen. It was the most disgusting and helpless thing I had ever seen.

The two rocker/vampires told me to leave her be. So I did. These guys were pro's at fixing. I asked one of the guys to fix me. Up until that point I had never been injected with heroin intravenously, so I was quite excited, but nervous. As I said before, I was ready to take the dark road to the depths of hell. Here I was.

Their basement apartment was nice, and immaculate.

I'm not sure if I mentioned this before, but, heroin makes you want to clean. At 2 in the morning I heard the vacuum turn on. These guys were pro's.

We got along well and the next day I gave them some dope and money of which I had four hundred and some odd amount, so I asked them if I could live here for a while. After my morning fix, I laid back to the most groovy, sensual high that I ever could imagine.

Doing dope in this manner was sublime. It was delicious and deadly. I loved it. I spaced out on the floor for hours the night before and then again in the morning. This is me now. I am a vampire. Live in the master. Go out only at night and I started to lose weight, and become pale, as the color of the moon.

I began to live for him. The guys spoke to the crazy lady, and she took \$200.00 for a month. I was told that the room was the floor above hers. It wasn't clean, but no hoarding in sight. I chose the far bedroom, and cleaned and polished. I found furniture in the other unused room that was probably for her kids a long time ago.

So I had a roof. I had dope and money. I fixed up my room nicely, and practically sterilized it. Twice a day I asked the boys in the basement to fix me. They taught me how doing it.

All that night, I lay awake in my new home and stared at the ceiling, looking at absolutely nothing for hours. I found a Television, so that helped. I had not ever looked at Seattle based news or Seattle television, so I was enamored. I was also quaking in my shoes at the thought of doing the deed of shooting up by myself. I had nightmares of missing, or getting air in the syringe that would kill me in an instant.

The next morning I started feeling sick, so I did exactly as I was taught. I chipped off a piece of the Chiva, and put it in a slightly bent spoon so it could be set down level. I then took a new syringe that the guys gave me. A starter pack, if you will. I then drew up the exact amount of bottled water and put it in the spoon. Using my trusty hire lighter, I slowly melted the mixture, remembering to never let it boil. I then mixed it up with the other end of the syringe. I took a piece of cotton off of a tip, rolled it up in my fingers and dropped it into the mixture, so as to act as a filter. I put the needle on top of the soaked cotton and drew up all of the liquid, remembering to save the cotton for an emergency.

I belted my arm and injected. I pulled out the needle and let the belt go. It was 10 seconds, then pure bliss.

### **From Bliss to Burnt**

Yes, the initial feeling was sheer bliss. I felt as though I were floating amongst the clouds. Sort of what heaven must be like? That was exactly what it was. I was pretending, or better yet rehearsing for death. When all of the shit that surrounds the myths, the cures, the addiction, the craving, and the phone calls or should I say the desperate phone calls. The life that I finally arrived at was death. I indeed was set up and in rehearsal to die.

Heroin, is the easy way out. I realized this, not right then, but, all the time never putting words to meaning. Instead, I was trying to arrive at the reaper's door, fully prepared to cut out.

Right then, (back at the point of the total nod), I awoke to flames surrounding my feet. Apparently, I had lit a cigarette and had nodded off I rose up in a singular, petrified moment, without thinking, I rolled the blanket around itself and the fire was gone. It was quick, and no apparent damage to myself or even the underlying sheets. I opened the window shade to discover that there was a horrendous storm going on without my attendance. How rude. I lifted the (frozen in time) window to equally feel the right angle rain and the trees bending over from an apparent bow, or a gesture to the great mother nature being thanked for her unique approach to this storm being just inches from my face. I was untouched, but the outside world was snarling and moaning as if the forces that be, had a particular anger with someone, or something. I would never presume that this ferocious event was a wake up call for me, but as the smoke lifted and seemed to be engulfed by the sheer anger of the storm, I wondered.

Is this not a way for forces much, much greater than I, to merely suggest the way an elevator operator of the cosmos said, "Going Down". I was then very unsure of my very existence. Of what I had become, as I closed the window almost completely, letting in the good, while ushering out, the worse it would take a lot more than that.

You see, I had trapped myself. This time it was not a mere thing. This time it was on someone else's property, and they wanted their rightful 'being' to be returned in good condition. Not on the property that was temporarily me. I in fact gave thought to both equations, since I had a lot of excess time.

I stood in the middle, the middle of the room, the middle of the city, the middle earth, the middle of the cosmos and the middle between life and death. As I stated earlier, I had chosen a plan the low road. The devil's highway and now I was laying sideways on the bed. Brain matter seemed to seethe from my ear. Not in the physical way, that would be disgusting. No, it was the metaphysical seethe. If there is such a thing, I knew that I (I had injected heroine by myself so, the outcome of this tidbit suggested that from now on, I could do it as much or as little as I please). I could get dressed up and pretend that I had plans and say to an adoring wife, "I'll be right down honey. Just need a small pick-me-up, and then we'll hop into the Benz for a steak the size of New Jersey".

Yeah, and I'm fucking Wilt Chamberlin. Sorry Walt, your name popped out first. No, I needed to get a life, fast. Or I could die. You choose. I always chose life, as I pushed in the plunger one more time. I always had a guy inside my head that knew what the fuck was going on. Sometimes he slept, out of sheer hatred towards my outer self Other times I heard him, but I would yell back to the

little fucker, (that was trying to save my life), and tell him to go back to someone who gives a shit. I really think that if, if he had a name besides my inner voice or my sub-conscious, he deserves to be co-writer of this book. He finally pushed me into a situation that seemed to be the only way out, besides dying. That's why I robbed the bank. That's why I'm so sorry to the lady in the bank, and that's how I got straight. I had to, or death was an inch away. If my children ever read this, I wonder what they would think of dear old Dad. I know that because of what has already transpired, they gave up on me as a father years ago. I think that was a mistake. I needed to hear from them. They never acknowledged my birthday, Christmas, and every other time. I got one letter in 16 years. They hate me. I know I've let them down, way more than anyone could imagine. But, I always sent them Christmas and Birthday presents. Yeah, I missed a few, but, in all, I made sure to always tell them I loved them.

That is what my life is looking forward to. Maybe they will grow up and want to know their Dad. They could get a lot out of me. And we could have a lot of fun. Goddammit!!!! Life must move on. Come to me when you can.

Do you want to know something, I was a terrible junkie. Not in the sense that I couldn't get the hang of it. The actual process one goes through to inject. No. I made a habit out of being medically sterile. My vampire roommates were, disturbed by this. "Get a belt, hold it with your teeth, and jam the fucker in." I had no intention of doing it at all, unless it was done right. After 2 weeks and 2 jobs later I was not even using a tourniquet. I started to lose weight at an alarming rate. My left arm was unusable because I had collapsed the elbow vein.

Since I was right handed, I tried and tried, but usually missed. I tried different areas of my body, but that little voice was getting weaker and I could not count on him anymore. The last thing I remember before he was gone, he said get help before you die.

By week three my landlady searched my room and found lots of needles and other paraphernalia, of which she confiscated. That night she called the police. I knew that I was done. I hated this life. And she, and the police were the catalyst. I did my last shot at 11pm and listened to her pound at my door, yelling at the top of her lungs over and over. GET OUT!! GET OUT!! Over and over the police arrived at 2am, and were shocked and horrified at the condition of her house. They brought me downstairs to take me off the premises. On the way out, she pulled out the bag of needles and such. The police had already searched my room, and it came up clean. I at least made sure of that. But she insisted to arrest me. The police had many dealings with her in the past, and they told her that #1 there was nothing to arrest me on #2 if she didn't shut up they would arrest her for pulling out illegal material from her room not mine.

She was so fucking confused, it almost seemed funny. But, the police were dead serious about the condition of her house and renting illegally as well.

We climbed over the path to the front door, and I breathed I sigh of relief that came from the bowels of my soul. I could use this moment in time to clean up.

They dropped me at the only open place at 3 in the morning, and they said to me that this is your time. Do the right thing because you don't belong in this lifestyle. You seem educated and a man like you could do great things. On that note they handed me a dollar and said, "go in and get yourself a coffee, you're going to need it". So I grabbed all the life belongings I had left, and went inside. I was the only customer.

The waitress brought me a coffee, and asked if I needed anything else. Remember eating? I began by saying thank you for the coffee. I told her about how my evening had gone so far.

She was honestly listening to me. That is amazing. It seems that even in deep conversation, most people never really listen, but she was. Thank you. I learned a lot that night. I was treated to 3 scrambled and wheat toast, of which I devoured before the plate was completely on the table.

We talked for an hour or so. She learned about my little problem, and agreed that it was time to re-join planet earth. I'll always remember that night. She was so different and so there. I ran into my inner voice, somehow communicating through her. She told me that the eggs were free, but life is not. So, in no less time than it took her to give me directions to the nearest hospital, I took over my life. On the way out the door, with all of my things in tow, I thanked her for being her, and for caring enough to change a person's life. I thank you, the unknown waitress of the night.

I barely made it to The University of Washington's teaching Hospital. I made it aware that I had thought of suicide, or robbing any bank that would have me. They were most concerned with the amount of Heroin in my bloodstream. That was when I was transported to Harbor View Hospital and brought to the de-Tox floor.

I had mentioned most of what happened there in stages, so I'll not repeat it again, for my own benefit.

There is something you should know. After all those days and nights of blindness, blindness to myself, I called my dealer a day before I was supposed to leave the hospital to go back east. A patient on thorazine somehow by not swallowing her pills (the correct word for that is called cheeking), got me to have my dealer come up and sell a gram to her through me. Of course I agreed. I am an asshole, you know.

That assessment of myself was quite accurate I have made some bad judgment calls in the past, this one truly takes the cake.

I signed out on the smoking board so the nurses know where you are. Simple enough, right? I get downstairs and got through 2 cigarettes before the truck of delight or doom pulled up and we quickly exchanged the money for the drugs.

My dealer didn't even notice my hospital clothing, non-the less it seemed to me that this was just another drop off. He didn't ask how I was or when am I going to get out either. He was oblivious just another stop.

I quickly got back to my floor and erased my name from the smoking list. I was still thinking about what had just transpired. Actually buying a gram of heroin for someone in re-hab, without

the slightest inkling of how wrong this was.

I stopped by the girl's room; she thanked me as if I had just picked up a magazine. She then cut off a fairly large chunk and handed it to me.

Here is where the addict comes out and the guy that was in the bed, sweating, sick as the worst flu you have ever had times then splits up into two different people. I knew that rational thought was leaving my mind, like a race car passes by you in the front row. It was clear. I had everything I needed to get high. My guy actually brought me a new syringe, so I could take the high and proper road and toss that piece into the garbage, or find a quiet place to get high.

I was eight days clean, and had the reasoning power to choose the right path. But the monster was pushing. It felt like a war of good and evil raged in my head as I ate Jello.

The next memory I have is of being on the 2nd level of the basement, where they house the morgue. Without thinking my addiction leads me to the quietest place the hospital had to offer. I do not remember getting on an elevator or walking anywhere. I was in the last stall with a lighter, a spoon filled with the exact amount of water, and I was mixing. I realized where I was but was not in control of my physical body. I was indeed going to die. That's what my conscience wanted. But I just wanted to get high. I filled the syringe with the elixir. As I pushed it through the tiny opening and into my life's highway, I prayed not to die as I was feeling the potion and the taste of death. I fell off, into a nod.

In and out. In then out. Then in... my eyes are open, I'm not dead, at least not yet. I look at my arm. The needle is still stuck in my vein. I try to reach, but no reaction. Am I paralyzed? I fall off again, still sitting upright on the toilet.

As I am writing this now I am straining to remember, and trying to forget. I opened my eyes again. I see blood so I awaken enough to pull out the needle and pick up the lighter and spoon off the floor. I fall off again.

This time I am awake enough to know where I am and what the fuck was going on. I almost died. Somehow, I pulled back. Out of the hands of the reaper, he knew it wasn't my turn yet. So as I became acclimated to the place I'm in, I got up and walked over to the sink and washed my arm off. Thank Fucking God. I kept whispering to myself, as I threw away all that remained of my personal effects. I glanced at the clock in the hallway. Holy shit! I had been gone for four hours. That's it. I'm fucked. No more hospital, I think, pressing the elevator button to get back to my floor.

They, (the staff) figured that I had gone awol. So, I was ordered into the meeting room and was told in no certain terms that I could stay, only if they could search my belongings.

At that point, knowing that I had left a piece of, you know what in my bag, I said no. They then asked me to leave the premises immediately.

I packed up, and asked if I could leave most of my things here until tomorrow, Hesitantly, they agreed. I felt so stupid. I was so beside myself with guilt, but not too much. You see, I was still

mighty high. They said if you make it back here tomorrow by 11:00 in the morning, I could still have my bus ticket to Connecticut. That was all it took. I had a way home. Now all I had left to do, survived the night.

## One Last Night

I was in a deep hole looking up from the bottom. The top of the hole was in view. I saw light and people, but there was something right beside me. I can't even begin to explain what it was. The closest thing I can point to, in terms of feelings, is the sight of films and experiences my ancestors went through the concentration camps. The dead, rotting corpses the missing gold that was ripped from their teeth by those fucking Nazi's. It was pure shame, guilt, anger and most of all hatred. I hated who I had become. After every attempt to get clean, I lean ever closer to death. Like those bodies piled up.

I needed to just make it through the night. Still, drugs were on my mind. That is the quintessential addict. Without a doubt, a terrifying thought to those who do not realize the total control this disease has over you. Even though in clearer moments all I want is to be clean, my disease calls the shots.

Money, you can always obtain, because you have the will of ten tigers pulling you on a chain of anguish. So before eating, washing, sleeping, it comes down to how and where can I get high. Don't ask me why. Why not waste away and die.

All of those thoughts came in and out of my mind just on the elevator down to street level. I will overcome these hours. Drugs or not at some point of my miserable existence, I will get clean and give back from which I have taken.

I walked back up to Capitol Hill. I found a telephone number in my pocket. It was that of a nice guy I had met while in rehab. I called him. I needed some drugs for the trip home on the Greyhound. His wife had un-operable cancer, and he told me to come by first thing in the morning, and he said that we'd see what we could do. I was ok with that. I went into my favorite all night diners and told the waitress of my situation that I was to leave for home in the morning, and, can I hang here and help out or anything until the morning.

She talked it over with her boss, and he said I could sweep up, and he would feed me, and if I did a good job, at 6 when I was to leave so the day crew could start, ten bucks were in it as well. I felt like the luckiest man on earth. Those floors were never so clean, by the time that long night became day.

I stood tall and proud. Although, extremely exhausted at the end of my shift. It was 6:05 am and I was ready to accomplish my last duties that would at least allow me an easier trip home (mentally), but certainly not right. Whatever and wherever that was. I guess it was Seattle, but it was quickly going to just become a memory. A memory of pain and total loss of control I learned so much about the dark side, while in the brightest most beautiful city I've yet to see.

The most beautiful place, yet living such an evil, vindictive

lifestyle that few in Seattle realize how wrong lives like mine had become I was a man on a string. A puppet filled with darkness and fear that all around me were not even part of my itching trigger finger of loneliness that my life had become.

I had a few dollars that I earned from tips that night. So, I was able to stop for my favorite coffee. A Red-eye, they called it. But my Red-eye was a triple espresso shot. It was a good cup of coffee, as I took in my last morning in Seattle.

My mind was so punished that it was impossible to realize the effects of my short time here. I could not think. I did not care to. I had a mission. My last mission on the west coast. Oh, how I love the West coast. Then at that moment I knew that I was not a part of this beautiful and enormously brilliant set of beings that flew by me that morning, as I tossed my sprint cup in the trash, and rode off to my friend's house. To put a cap on a seemingly endless quagmire of drugs.

My friend had given me perfect directions. It was an odd section of Seattle. You would ride through Queensland, and take a road that would bring you around the other side of Seattle nearest to the ports of thousands of fishing vessels and all of the services that went along with that industry.

The bus driver was nice enough to stop directly in front of the road that my friend lived on.

At this point I began to worry. I had a total of thirty dollars and some odds and ends, including a boom box that I was hoping he would take in trade.

It was exactly 8:30 in the morning, the time at which to be on time. I rang the bell, and my nice friend that was a tad older than myself opened the door, with a gracious hello.

It was then that he introduced me to his dying wife. I immediately bent over to shake her hand, as if it was the queen.

She had such dread in her eyes yet, she was remarkably nice and smiled at me, as if the unspoken words of her affliction, and my understanding, (to a point), came together in a moment of truth, and pain.

After the pleasantries had been taken care of, it was time to take care of business for two reasons. First, I had to catch a bus to the hospital, so I had a time limitation and it was how things had to be. And two, She had a Doctor's appointment, which literally meant hours of preparation to go through. She required her medication to always be on hand. She also needed a fresh bottle of oxygen for the trip. A shower was in order for both, so my time was basically set to 10-12 minutes, for all things to fit into place.

Since she was dying, and they were living on social Security, money was tight. So they did whatever was possible to keep stock off their worldly items of life. All medicine and accessories were paid through Medicaid, I suppose. As a lot of very talented and needed people are also helped to die in a dignified way. That is if dying is dignified. While our politicians put money towards weapons and their own agenda's before they realize how many

sick Americans are being walked over because of the total lack of care for the people that are dying every day of diseases that are treatable, and yes you motherfuckers, curable. Think about that the next time you vote, and millions of felons cannot. What would those votes do with your agenda?

We were able to come to an agreement so that I had what I needed and they had what they needed, more or less. More on my side because what they gave me was worth a lot more than what I had to offer.

They were young and vibrant once, and they made a stipulation in our agreement. I was getting back to the east and get well, and then write about this. To let the other 99% of the United States and the world know about the mad underbelly of our greed? Nation and the others all over the world, that cannot speak for themselves. I am making that promise.

So, I am now about to finish that promise. I am not doing this just because of my word, which is all a man or women really do have, do they? No, I am writing this snippet of one man's fight for survival that, on a scale the size of the Earth is infinitesimal.

This is real. I still fight it out each day, like everyone else on this planet has to do. I could go on and on about all the reasons why. But most of us know the answer already, LOVE.

That is all we need to start with, literally and physically and that is how it usually ends with Eulogy, and with simple kindness, and honor. Share that with all you know.

As I left the nice people's home, it wasn't without a taste of death with dignity, kindness to all, as they shared what they had with a man they will never see again, and only met with trust in the first place. I took the bus that went closest to the Harbor View Hospital.

Did I mention the amazing work that takes place every second there and every other hospital and in my case, relapse and psychiatric problems of which I have.

Lately, anxiety, methadone and psoriatic arthritis, among others. I have to take Enbrel for my arthritis. If I were not on Medicaid it would cost \$15,000 a year. It does help, alas my musical abilities have suffered greatly, but I work hard to right the wrongs. The way we all should do with everything we all take in during the course of our days left.

I can drag on. But for now I will finish this text, so I can go on to bigger and better things.

I walked almost a mile after being up all night. The Hospital waiting room looked very inviting after what has transpired of

late. It was after 9am and I fell asleep for a while. I dreamed of drugs. DRUGS??????????????

I was starting to feel sick after getting back on the horse. My nice friends gave me six tabs of morphine, placable under your tongue. That was making me feel normal. I also had six hits of Thorazine, 50mgs each. That should be enough for that ungodly Greyhound ride back to where I needed to belong.

Do you know how strong and potentially dangerous Morphine is? Do you have any idea what Thorazine is? Thorazine is what they are given to patients in the mental wards, which turn their minds into silly putty. Commonly referred to as the Thorazine shuffle, because that's all you can do. Lay in bed, or, shuffle mindlessly up and down the hallways. With a blank stare in your eyes, as if the person inside is no longer there. That's what Thorazine is.

So, as the addict in me has accomplished its mission, it is now time for the melting human inside to draw upon strength normally reserved for getting and using to go up-the de-Tox floor. I have to get my ticket to get to the bus, so I can sleep for days in a row, thanks to the pharmacy looming discreetly amongst my things.

When I arrived on the floor, I was escorted by security to the social services department. I was warmly greeted, having thought that I definitely would not return. That I would give up my only chance left at all to get help. Yes, I was here, and yes, I need to get back to the East Coast so I can at least have some form of support, besides the incredible people working on this floor. I was awarded my ticket for a one way trip by Greyhound, to NYC.

I thanked each and everyone that I could, even though I fucked up, I still believed in my heart, that I can beat this thing. The very large security person gave me the rest of my belongings, and I walked to the bus station. Those bags were so heavy, or maybe I was so out of shape that they only seemed heavy because of my weighing less than my high school weight.

It was a long final walk. Then, I don't have any, yes, this time I had no money until I arrived 5 days later in New York.

That big blue monster with New York painted on the front like a badge of honor was waiting for me as I loaded my things underneath, and wiped the sweat from my brow.

I took the last seat because as any long time bus rider will tell you, chances are you won't have company, and 2, I could pretty much stretch out so I could sleep. The girl in front of me was in a party mood. So, I shared some of mine and she returned the favor. I took 2 Thorazine and 2 morphine's as we kissed, the bus pulled out, sounding those familiar 3 beeps. Here we go, again.