

Foreword

The following short story is something that I wrote many years ago and has inspired some other musings that I have had since.

The Experiment

'CRACK!' All John saw was the fist as it impacted with his face.

"OK pick the wimp up", was the last thing he would have heard before waking up here.

"Get up you low life piece of scum", was the phrase that greeted him as he opened his eyes to the new surrounding, "I said get up!"

The voice grew louder, then a face came into view; at first it was just a shadow. The light behind the head obscured John's vision, he sat upright and the features of this ... ogre became clear.

John scuttled backwards, as fast as he could, shaking with fear. The man was about six feet six inches tall and appeared to be almost as wide, as he came closer, John could almost feel the floor move with each massive step.

"Come an' see 'Enry then", the man boomed.

"H...H...Henry, is that y...your name?" John stammered.

"Yeah, did you bring me 'ere?" questioned Henry.

"N...No, I have no idea how I got here, let alone you", John stated, approaching Henry, cautiously.

"I've been 'ere tree days", began Henry, "an' I 'aint seen no one".

"No-one! Have you at least been fed?", asked John

"Yeah, a slit opens over dere and a tray wiv' food on comes in".

John began to relax a little, more at ease knowing that Henry was not the one who had spirited him away here, although he was still concerned as to why he had been taken.

“Why did you call me ‘Low life scum’?”, inquired John.

“I didn’t”, replied Henry”, It was the...the...whoever is out dere”, Henry pointed to a blank wall, as they all were.

It seemed like hours later, John and Henry had talked, telling their own story. They had learnt a lot about each other, as did we. Johns story was not in depth, in fact it was short and sweet.

He had been walking home after finishing work, the way he had gone a thousand times before, over the fence at old man Jensen’s farm and through the field, this lead to a small path.

At the end of the path was a little alleyway. This is where it had happened, he turned upon hearing a sound behind him and got knocked out. He woke up here.

Henry’s story had a little more to it.

It began with Henry being released from his detention, at her Majesties pleasure. As he stepped out into the wide world again, the ‘Clank’ of the solid iron door closing behind him signalled to him that he was free.

Henry didn’t really know why he had been jailed, only that it was to do with a man named Harry. Harry was Henry’s friend, or so Henry thought. Harry had been a user of people all his life. Henry was the perfect puppet for him, as Henry was big, bold and not too bright.

After Harry had befriended Henry, it wasn’t long before he was ‘Rolling out’ as the new ‘Henchman’. Henry’s job was to collect on the debts owed to Harry.

One of these debts was quite a substantial amount, from a petty crook, when Henry turned up to collect, it happened that someone had been there already and made quite a mess.

It was at this point that the police arrived and carted Henry off. In court a witness stated that they had seen Henry enter the building, he also stated that there had been a row and a fight, then all fell silent.

This confused Henry (an easy thing to do), as none of that was true and he had arrived just before the police.

Another witness stated that that the crook, whose name was Bill Shepherd, had died from having his neck snapped like a dry twig and judging by the marks on Bills neck the hands that did it could only belong to Henry.

When it came time for Henry's lawyer to defend him... Nothing, no defence at all, the lawyer stood up and all but admitted Henry's guilt, begging for a reduced sentence due to Henry's reduced mental state.

Henry was found guilty and sentenced to 20 years. It was about three months later that Henry found out about Harry masterminding the whole thing, because he wanted to retire and the police were getting closer to him.

Everyone involved in the case was bought off and the farce was successful. Now Henry was out and a lot had changed in 20 years. Where to begin? Henry hailed a cab, got in, the next thing he knew he was waking up in the room with no doors, alone as ever.

For three days, all that happened was every few hours the slit would open and food would arrive, until today, when John arrived.

Now that John and Henry were acquainted John decided that he would like to know more about where he was. It was then that the sirens went off, in the confusion John jumped at the chance to get out of this prison.

He convinced Henry that with his strength they could work together and get out.

Henry backed up and charged at the wall, nothing happened. John persuaded Henry that he should try again so that they could get out, they almost did. That is why I terminated the experiment.... and the subjects.