

CHAPTER 1

Visit to the Loonie Bin



'PASSING TIME' – oil on canvas (1979)

'It is a miserable, cold and drizzly winters day early in July of 1989 in Perth, Western Australia as the Artist Kelving's brother escorts him to Graylands Mental Hospital for assessment'.

CHAPTER 1

Visit to the Loonie Bin

Sitting in my accountant brother Noel's Nissen Liberty car while he was escorting me to Graylands Mental Hospital for assessment, little did I realise my liberty was about to be taken away from me for seven hellish years. All for good reasons beyond my imagination.

Gazing blindly out of the rain-washed side window on this cold, miserable winter's day. My mind was wandering off into the lyrics and feelings from a song playing on the radio by Chris de Burgh song - *A Spaceman Came Traveling* regarding the 2nd Coming of humanity. I was feeling like a lamb being taken to the slaughterhouse to be crucified, after being accused of trying to raise an elderly woman from the dead during her funeral. No one could hear my explanation of denial. The song took me deep into the core of my heart, where I felt the supporting touch of the inner Christ as tears of gratitude and assurance that I was not going in alone, filled my eyes. I never questioned that it was meant to be, as my Life was in for a turnaround.

I could sense that Noel was picking up on my emotions with the song, as we slowed down approaching the entrance to the hospital. Looking at the large sign, Noel – with a little compassionate lump in his throat – exclaimed

“Here we are! GRAYLANDS! What a bloody drab name for an institution”

“Yeah!” in a quick witty voice I replied, saying *“They should call it Whitelands or even Gracelands, brighten it up with flowers and white wash it with rainbow trimmings with a touch of gold, silver and bronze. Some choice music in the air would also be good – Instead of a hospital it could be a Healing Centre”*.

With an exhausted sigh Noel entered the car park somewhat concerned and in agreeance.” Err! you do have a point”.

On parking, a news flash came to air that announced the drama of Beijing's student massacre outburst in Tiananmen Square, something I had a premonition on some 10 days earlier and happened to mention to Noel over the phone. He gave me a puzzling 'how did you know?' look, as he stepped out of the car.

With the massacre currently taking place while Noel opens his door, I meanwhile sat still reflecting back to that insight in my shop last week.

I was talking to a fellow artist friend, Maria, the phone started ringing and Kurt, a employee, called out to me from the front counter with a question. At the time the radio was playing the song "On the Eve of Destruction" by Barry McGuire. All of a sudden the song became louder and clearer while every other sound faded to silence. I felt myself feeling sympathetic to the hundreds of innocent children being killed in what was Tiananmen Square, this was Saturday week in the future mid afternoon. The details were crystal clear and sharp as if I was there witnessing the commotion. The next second my surrounding sounds came back to life as the radio returned to its normal volume in the background. I excused myself to Maria to answer Kurts request then proceeded to answer the phone near by.

It was Noel phoning from Perth with a question on my business accounts. I explained to him of this weird premonition of hundreds being massacred in a square in China I just had as he phoned through the song "Eve of Destruction" on the radio being highlighted. Noel knew the song I referred to about the Vietnam war in the 60's and could faintly hear it playing over the phone.

Now I was pondering, was this song meant to forewarn me of my destruction as the door opened abruptly.

Seeing I didn't enthusiastically leap out as he did, Noel ran around, annoyed by the windy rain and opened my door, asking,

“Well are you coming or what?”

“WHAT!” I replied bewilderingly *“What the hell am I doing here?”*, while stepping out of the car in my full colours, holding my diary and art journals. Noel then gathered my overnight bag from the rear seat, with the rain becoming heavier he quickly led me into the admission ward with the doctor’s referral in his pocket.

Passing through the solid metal entrance door, although air-conditioned, the atmosphere felt just as cold and damp as the outside, as we approached the reception desk.

Naïve, innocent and vulnerable, I stood tall and confident as routine forms were filled in. The receptionist asked my name - *“Kelvin Paul McKenney”*, my address - *“12 Buckby Road, Harvey”*, date of birth - *“17th February, 1953”*, the admission date is 7th July, 1989, and when asked my religion, I answered.

“Living! Living with God and you”, then when insisting on a formal religion, I asked her to write.

“A true New Aged Christian Buddhist”, which totally confused her. Noel also preferring a straight forward answer, on completion he saw me seated to wait for the initial psychiatric interview and feeling uncomfortable in this environment, he was pleased to rush back to his heavy workload.

More than two hours passed before the team called me in. Meanwhile, I built a close rapport with my new fellow patients, who took a curious interest in me. When suddenly the double doors burst open, while I was in the corridor. A hysterical teenage boy screaming in protest and kicking for his life, held by three nurses yelling at him with one following. I stood in their path, surprised, as I automatically made compassionate eye contact with the frightened boy. He tried to reach towards me so I spontaneously took a step towards him, not sideways, slightly raising my arms, with a helpful look. Mysteriously two of the nurses let him go as I felt this incredible wave of energy, with my heart open to him we embraced, all went ghostly quiet and

within seconds he was as calm and relaxed as a baby lamb. I then had him sit down on a nearby wall bench to peacefully talk but two of the militant nurses grabbed him insisting he had to have a tranquilising injection. I tried to convince them that he was calm, communicative and didn't need it – my words were not heard as they dragged him away. Calling out and reaching for help, I followed the boy to the door of the room he was to be injected in. One nurse acknowledged what I had done patted me on my arm while raising his eyebrows and hands in dismay.

As I went into the room in defense, the receptionist amongst the commotion came in requesting me for my interview. I was soon ushered out, a little anxious as I introduced myself to the male psychiatrist and female registrar doctor, they appeared rather rushed and stressed with cold vibrations bouncing over the desk – he peered over his glasses with no 'hello's or how are your feeling?', he bluntly fired questions at me like a judge in a court room.

Not knowing their practice of straight A-B answers, I felt the need to explain my defense in detail by going to C before B, which went against me.

After they tested my concentration with trivial questions such as counting backwards by 4's from 100 to find me as sharp as a razor and fluent as counting from 1 upwards, they moved on to ask me.

“Why did you try to raise a woman from the dead?”

I answered the presumption saying, *“I didn't! I am not capable, as far as I know only Jesus, Elijha and perhaps Buddha could do that. I've got a long way to go but I'm still working on it”*.

With frowned looks on their faces I proceeded then to explain by FLASHING BACK to where the incident started in the fish shop in Harvey.

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After a positively happy and busy day in my Art Gallery framing business, on arriving home my wife Sue asked me to go down and buy \$1.50 of chips to go with our steak and salad. My six year old son Simon was in the bath, so my eight year old daughter Tara, that I missed during the day, came with me for the ride. I treasured every minute of quality time with the children.

Walking into the shop it was odd to find new staff all down in the dumps. Jokingly and unknowingly I said aloud.

“Cheer up! Looks as if someone has died”

They all stopped what they were doing to look at me as the girl behind the counter morsefully explained *“Mrs. Panetta died this morning”*.

Surprised, I apologised saying.

“Gee I am sorry – that’s puttin’ my foot in it”

Then after placing my order I stood back holding Tara’s hand, contemplating and opening my heart compassionately to old Mrs. Panetta and her family, for it was only last week I spoke to her in the shop. I played football with her two elder sons. As my mind slowed down towards the Theta state of consciousness, it was difficult to explain to these conservative clinical doctors, how the soul hovers about for up to three days to comfort grieving souls and tidying up physical earthly matters. Mrs. Panetta in Spirit saw an opening from my projecting Light and entered my mind space. For in my quite meditative state in the shop, thoughts suddenly came to my mind and I knew they were not of me. I soon realised they were hers, that she is OK and asked that her Italian family re-unite on Sundays over dinner, like the good old times and to accept daughter Rosie with her husband; an Australian policeman – non-Catholic, into the family and let the resentments she created go, the old lady specifically asked that I contact each child on her behalf, independently, and to reassure her husband Joe.

For on dying, in a flash, she reviewed and reassessed her entire life and all in it to come to realise the importance of the family unit and about forgiveness and letting go. With me she

took this opportunity to make amends. After all when you die you take what ever is in your mind memory bank with you as you step over the threshold to the other side. Mrs. Panetta was simply trying to lessen her load.

At first I was a little hesitant on her request, then how could I reject something from Spirit if it was for the good? (Back then I knew practically nothing about schizophrenia, but this information of an audible voice without a voice, set alarm bells amongst the two shrinks. Perhaps the movie “Ghost” may open their minds a little).

On the spur of the moment I had the chips held back, asked for Joe’s address, which was close by, then took Tara with me to visit the grieving family. As I arrived I greeted Joe, on his front porch accompanied by a supporting friend, with a sympathetic and comforting hug I was able to pass on his wife’s messages as if they had been transferred directly from her, feeling so close and deep to her he accepted, then with relief and gratitude, he directed me to the back patio to his children amongst other relations and close friends. Similarly the two boys knowing me of sound mind and integrity over the years, also accepted my unusual message. Rosie alongside her husband, whom I had little previous acquaintance with, did not hesitate and in fact was so pleased to hear from me, saying.

“Strange! I’ve been feeling Mums presence all afternoon as I am right now. Oh! thank you Kelvin, I knew she lives on”

Leaving her with loving tears in her eyes Tara and I returned to the shop on the way home. I briefly made an attempt to explain the situation to Sue – apart from the death the rest bounced back from her puzzled look.

The next day from the lengthy, hearty notices in the paper that I read that evening, which were very touching (as Italian’s can well express), bringing tears to my eyes, I discovered she had two other children. Thinking my job was over I now faced the task of meeting the two at the funeral later in the week to fulfill my promise.

On that morning I felt the need to take Tara with me for some puzzling reason, maybe because she had shared the experience the other night? or because I also felt her soul connection to the situation. Once I collected Tara from school, we arrived early at the church in the hope to see the two children quietly and quickly so as to return to our scheduled day. As it was, they were nearly the last to attend the packed Catholic Church of predominantly Italians. A little earlier Tara smiled as she pointed to the purple and yellow light in my hair from a sunbeam through the stain glass windows. It was no where else in the church, it made me feel more at ease, that I was meant to be here with Tara.

Up to now Tara was comfortable with the proceeding but that was about to be shattered. She stayed in the seat as I approached the younger son who like his brothers accepted the message only to ask me to paint a picture of his mother. I told him he could mentally carry a live one around with him always and telepathically talk to her. He then gave me directions to his younger sister Angie, third on the right in the front seating. By now the service had commenced with the congregation standing while singing a hymn. So not to be noticed, I moved towards Angie via the coffin out front for a direct approach.

To my startling surprise just as I was adjacent to the coffin, the hymn came to an abrupt end and with a rumble like thunder, everyone sat down to complete silence. You could hear a pin drop, while I froze, startled, raising my hands near the coffin. With a hundred plus eyes peering at me seeing me standing there, with what would appear from their perspective, my hands over the coffin. Within seconds before I had a chance to move away, three cousins came up to grab me, calling out abuse as they commenced dragging me down the aisle. Pleading for them to let go so I could leave peacefully seemed to only dramatise the ordeal more. Knowing Tara would be upset I mentally anchored my feet as if in concrete, I called out to the sensitive congregation in an echoing voice

“Let me have my daughter! – and we’ll go in Peace!!”

With Tara frightened, she ran up the aisle crying out

“Daddy! Daddy!!”

A lady in the nearby seating called out

“Let him go – Let him have his daughter”

By then my feet were well anchored as I reached down freeing myself to capture Tara in my arms. With tears running down both our cheeks, we headed straight for the exit. Outside the church we passed my brother-in-laws new wife (the florist for the funeral) on the way to the car. She looked a little puzzled and asked why Tara was not at school.

From here I took Tara to a quiet location along side a paddock near the school to calm and settle her down before returning her to class, feeling I couldn't take her home to Sue. Then I drove for 30 minutes to my shop in Bunbury rolling over the ordeal in my mind. I was most upset for little Tara, wishing I hadn't taken her, once at the shop my workload distracted me until returning home, to be greeted by the local Chinese, (not so wise), doctor Wu, a good friend of Sue's mother, and I was further surprised to see my brother, Noel, down from Perth. Alarm bells were beginning to ring in my head.

Sue was most concerned and upset having been called to collect Tara from school and from hearing various versions of the ordeal, specially from her sister-in-law who was outside the church hearing exaggerated dramatised hearsay information from blurred witnesses.

Similarly I tried to explain my version and point of view, to the doctor with Sue and Noel, but just like these two shrinks, my words drifted above their heads only to bounce off the wall back to me. It was here that Dr. Wu, thinking “skitzo”, referred me to Graylands on form 'B'. To have Noel come down to escort me up to Perth after dinner demonstrated to me that Dr. Wu came to this conclusion prior to my assessment and explanation or defense.

After dinner (was this to be my last supper) I put Tara and Simon to bed and tried to explain that I should be back in a day or two I needed to go to Perth with uncle Noel to sort out

some business. Little did I know it would be three months before I would be tucking them in again. In the meantime Sue was packing a overnight bag while I went to the studio to collect my art books to add credibility and sanity to my case.

We kissed goodbye both with teary eyes and I gave a reassuring hug that it was all OK.

The two hour drive to Perth soon past with Noel and I deep in conversation, he was most supportive. I ended up staying at Noels home overnight before being escorted to Graylands.

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Now, back with the two psychiatrists, who became lost and confused in my explicit factual explanations, wanting only a 30 second A-B account, judged my spiritual experience as psychotic with my audio voice as schizophrenia and being talkative only found me in the manic basket.

The senior doctor Lambert totally oblivious of what I said, fixed on symptoms, with great authority ordered me to stay, saying

“We need to keep you here for a while to treat you, you have an illness, and you will commence medication this afternoon”

Seeing no justification and realising my deployment I strongly replied.

“NO!!” disturbed, *“I need to go home to my family and run my business, here is a journal of my artwork to show you my sanity”*. With a frustrated look I went on to say: *“You guys never heard a word I said and even if you were to attentively listen you still couldn’t hear me.*

I know who and what I am.

I know where the wind comes from and where it goes. Do You?”

Eager to end the consultation, Dr Lambert snapped at me saying.

“You’re sick and we’re here to help you”

Feeling helpless I ended up saying *"I'm not crazy, maybe a wise fool, but you are nothing, - but a bunch of ignorant fools"*.

They raised their eyes to each other; mentally throwing labels and tablets at me as I was signed to the ward.

Well! Before we continue on our healing path I was obviously meant to check out what mental hospitals and its patients are all about. So allow me to take you on this unexpected guided tour, it's to take about three months. If the public were revealed the truth, in total disgust and outrage, would cry in shame for a week of fortnights. As a child I always felt empathy for more the physical mentally ill, so I guess the best way to understand the illness as such is to become one.

I soon learned the ward procedures from the other patients, the staff told us nothing we did not ask for, and many choose the wrong vocation. This was all a new experience, immediately I was appalled by it and to see the effects of medication on a few patients, hearing their complaints and feeling the wave of vagueness and confusion from my first intake, I soon learnt to master tricks to avoid the oral drug enforcement discreetly, while still being pleasant and compliant to the nurses. When I did not accept certain nurses behaviour, I never hesitated to protect myself and also to stand up for any vulnerable defenseless patients, many were long time victims. The out of whack nurses didn't take well to being challenged, just like cops, carers, teachers etc, we have good and bad ones, sadly due to pressures from the system and society many have become out of balance.

By the second day I realised I was unjustly imprisoned and was deeply missing Simon and Tara also feeling a little anxious about the running of the business, my only hope was for a early release.

Since this admission west ward is open, two young men in Peter and John keeping fit and to combat the drugs, invited me on their early morning jog around the grounds. I was a little stiff

after the first, however, by the third run I was up the front like a friendly playful football coach raising our motivation and fitness levels.

The adjacent St. John XIII private schools architectural aesthetics interested and attracted us. Bored of this course, we crossed the damp road around the 7am mark jogging happily through the school grounds; we then headed up to the original old haunted asylum on the hill to check it out. Once inside the walls spoke, I was able to feel the experiences – how spooky, sad, cruel and disturbing. The hairs raised all down my arms and up the back of my neck. Shame on the authorities.

It's really no better today even if the dollars were being spent cleaning up its outside appearances with fresh paint and prints on the wall with new carpets; it's still hiding the messy problems with even worse drugs being enforced. It's the system and management that also needs renovating.

Happy to climb out of the old building and its memories, we hesitantly returned to today's loonie bin via the roadside to the ward by 7.30 to shower before the 8 o'clock breakfast. On the odd mornings we would come across the early morning student or two acknowledging them with friendly gestures, little did they realise we were three loonies on the run.

The three of us got on so well, like brothers, in our sharing we openly trusted one another, helping each other. Our physical fitness sharpened our mental state, well, until the end of the week for Peter, when he was injected with an antipsychotic hit, which put the wind up me. To see him a normal active intelligent coherent and friendly heartfelt individual with a few minor personal problems inside like most. I was shocked in horror to see Peter return to our table in a shattered, lethargic and trembling zombie state with a dropped jaw and droopy eyes that could hardly recognise us. Hardly able to talk, slurring worse than as if drunk, he just wanted to sleep, this really upset me, I was so annoyed. How dare they mistreat him – US in this way? The attitude of this pressured militant staff had a lot to answer for, explaining nothing. No wonder I

became so opposed to medications. What I am in for, I saw and heard the negative results of E.T.C. During my second week when I was taken in to be zapped, I was able to avoid the shock treatment by protesting and saying,

“You may try to physically torture me but you, NOBODY is to interfere with my mind”, as I pushed the insisting operator against the equipment damaging it and ran out. Somehow it wasn't insisted upon me after that. Years later, a young frightened girl came to me for Light after nine shock treatments in a week, its criminal to have her lose the memory of her name and who and where she was. Can you imagine how scary that was? Within five minutes of Light her fears turned to smiling laughter in relief as her memory all came back.

I took it on myself to care for all on the ward getting to know each case by personally befriending everyone. Because of our trusting mutual rapport's we shared deep sensitive information doctors and even family never shared.

Without filling this book on this stint alone, I'll skim through the high and low lights, before going home. Even the profound movie 'One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest' only passed over, for I, first hand, became well nestled here amongst the situations observing and to fly out a zombie myself. It's true when most say they leave a mental hospital sick, far worse than they arrived.

Noel visited through concern and care regularly early on in the piece. He gathered what information he could on my case, which I learnt later, was mainly propaganda. Simon and Tara with Sue were only able to visit twice over the three months. It was so hard being separate from both sides. I phoned most days, always hanging up with tears rolling down my cheeks..

In the admission ward, patients would come and go most days; normally a patient would be transferred to the open or closed locked wards within a week or two. It wasn't long before most saw my art folio all wishing they could paint like me. I came across a few tatty art supplies in a cupboard, gained some A4 paper from the nurses to set up an art session in the dining area.

Most participated. I guided them to paint what they felt, imagined or wanted, rather than what they saw. It wasn't long before we had several finished works and they were so proud of their efforts, I found some tape with the nurses to display their works on the glass square panel between the dining area and the corridor.

I took particular interest in a chronic patient named Suzie who stayed clear at first feeling somewhat agitated moved through the activities kicking chairs abusing people. I offered some paper and brushes, if she was interested. With everyone so actively enjoying themselves, curiosity got the better of her. When she finally sat down, still stropky, I handed her a palette with black and red on it. Suzie attacked the page very aggressively. Once well underway, I approached and sensing abuse, asked,

“That’s very lively, what does the black represent?”

She snapped back at me while ripping into the paper,

“It’s my fuck’n cunt, what do you think it is!”

Since Suzie began to release her pain, I encouraged and supported her. Tears came freely until she tore and screwed up the sheet, yelling out *“The bastards!”* knocked her chair backwards throwing the paper away while stomping out pushing her way through anyone or thing in her path. Due to such a positive and enjoyable session, most were keen to continue in the afternoon. Suzie came back settled and more approachable by other patients. This time I only gave her a lead pencil where she in a minute or two continually scribbled round and around never taking her pencil off the page to form an amazing drawing of her womb. I recognised the incredibly detailed baby embryo amongst the web of lines.

In doing so, we spoke of its delicate beauty as I empathised with her rape from my own youthful experiences, Suzie then opened right up, telling me her story and how her lovely daughter came from the rape. I explained to her by dealing with the rape through art, expressing it, releases it from inside the mind and with the pain by screwing it up harshly and throwing it

away is very healing. This pencil drawing after releasing her pain earlier found her very mothering and gentle and loving consequently the early morning aggression was substituted with kindness and gentleness. She became very friendly with everyone, what a turnaround.

With a little room left on the display window, I conducted a third session the following morning; the exhibition became such a focal and talking point. The relations and friends that visited were most interested and proud of the person they knew. Suzie was so happy, hugging and kissing most of her fellow patients. This time I gave her coloured pencils of the rainbows, where she created a delightful, happy fun loving drawing of a little girl skipping on a path with a dog and birds and butterflies about her with lots of flowers on a bright smiling sunny day including white puffy clouds and an Angel in the air. Get the picture?

Suzie was so excited and proud of her effort and keen for her work to be displayed. The previous day I had salvaged her other two drawings and asked if I could display the three together. Thankfully she approved. The nurses were most impressed and also took interest, the entire environment had changed, spirits were lifted. Co-operation in preparing the joint exhibition harmonised the group, which made the nurse's job easier and more pleasant.

After lunch I visited a fellow patient, whom had been transferred a few days earlier to Langley, an open ward. On my return I arrived just as Suzie came bursting out of a consulting room crying and most upset by her psychiatrist that angered her. He told her that she was becoming too elevated and increased Suzie's medication to send her back down in a spiral. How insensitive and insightful.

Hearing wind of this from Suzie, I confronted her shrink soon as he left his room, to explain how, through art therapy, Suzie went from a depressed aggressive mood – disturbing other patients abusively, and now after three drawing sessions she had released her problems, her pain, to become happy and co-operative and friendly to everyone, full of enthusiasm energy and life.

Her doctor showed no interest, coming from a patient. After pausing he continued to walk away when I confronted him again. Nevertheless, I insisted he view her drawings so continually talking in front of him to cut him off into the dining area, as we approached the entrance towards the exhibition. Just to shut me up, he moved in, I tried to explain the three-session progression from the rape to the baby onto the happy angelic little girl – Suzie. But the ignoramous couldn't see or care a dam.

“Yeah! Yeah! very nice, must go I have a lot to do!”

Yeah, a lot of prescriptions to write. Under pressure the psychiatrist may mean well, but do not do well stuck without a paddle in the mainstream unable to see an alternate way clear.

Since I was still very active, my doctor was suspicious whether I was taking the medication after my first week, so had the nurses supervise. I converted to new tricks of holding the tablets in my throat, in between the base of my fingers, and distracting the nurse while flicking the tablet in my side pocket and so forth since they checked under my tongue after swallowing.

As the days and weeks ticked by, most patients from the art therapy were drawn to me as I listened, cared and tried to help. I guess in counseling I became more a psychiatrist and psychologist to them in a sense than those white coats with their files and medication charts. We established a friendly trustworthy rapport, no threats to fear.

There were five on-ward psychiatrists that dealt with us in admissions while doing their rounds. I seemed to have upset their delicate applecart with many of their patients now questioning and challenging their form of treatment or mistreatment, by saying ‘but Kelvin said this and that’. Several patients arguing with the doctors they lost trust with became upset from the interviews. My name floated amongst the shrinks and being a threat, it wasn't long before I was banned from conversing with my new friends. Nurses policed closely but not close enough.

There were many incidents from all types of cases. I heard their versions in a different Light than the clinical ones. For example, a 4th Dann martial arts tutor was most upset when his Grand Masters swords awarded to him, his treasure, was stolen. He didn't have a mental illness as such; it was no different than a woman who loved her grandmother so much would be emotionally upset if her wedding ring was stolen which originally belonged to her grandmother. The 4th Dann, Michael, taught me a thing or two, saying I was a natural 'Black Panther' showing me some of the movements that I was able to fluently mirror.

A new depressed patient, Jenny, came in very upset, hurting and crying after her interview, anti everyone, not wishing to talk, just left alone. Once I acknowledged her in the dining room sitting at the nearby table, I placed my pen down and rewound my tape to a selected heartfelt song, turned the volume to a softer tone to inspire her and left Jenny with the song. When I returned to my letter writing she was much happier and talkative, telling me how that song related and meant so much to her at the moment. We then moved out in the sunlight to continue our chat. Something I never saw the nurses do.

Music and colour are great healers as well proven, this hospital and the like lacks both.

Well into my third week I desperately needed a break outside to connect to the so-called real world, this place was driving me crazy. Since we were allowed to walk the grounds I gathered up five other patients from other wards and we flew the cuckoo nest by catching a train to Perth city malls for an hour or so. What fun we had amusing the crowd in our freedom, returning at lunch to have the staff none the wiser.

During those first four weeks in admittance, apart from busy Noel's short and sweet visits that I truly appreciated, and Sue and the children visit one weekend which tickled me and tore my heart apart on them leaving. My only other visitor to my surprise was my fellow artist and client friend Robyn plus my long term school friend, Mick and his family.

Rob found out from my Kelsue art shop and drove up to visit me with her wonderful smile and most comforting hug topped with an amazingly beautiful bouquet of combined cut and natural flowers. Rob stayed all afternoon until meal time before returning to her two and a half hour drive home leaving with me the Shakti Gawain book "Living in the Light".

It would often be up to a week before a patient would see his or her shrink. In my case every few days and just when I thought I could see a little more light in my tunnel, Dr. Goossen called me to sit at the dining table for a briefing. I always acknowledge people with their Christian names; I feel it's much more friendly and personal.

"Kelvin can we have a moment?"

I greeted her asking, *"Good afternoon Caroline, you're lookin' good, like your blue blouse, - so, how are you feeling today?"*

Her abrupt insisting reply was, *"How many times do I have to tell you to call me Dr. Goossen".*

With a continual smile I repeated, *"O.K. Caroline, darling, how is Dr. GOOSE – SIN feeling today?"*

Shaking her head, *"Exhausted!"* as she guided me to sit at a dining table with her file. Then once again she asked, *"I have my doubts still if you are taking your tablets. Are you?"*

I casually answered, *"Yes, of course, they're supervising me, the nurses are a witness."*

"Yes! But are you absorbing them into your blood system?"

Sitting back on my chair, *"Shit!"* I grunted. *"I can not tell a lie, I have been taking them and putting them in the toilet where they belong. So, NO! not in my blood, I've been protecting myself from the poison".*

Her blood boiled, yelling, *"THAT'S IT!!"* in a rage she hit down hard on her files as she abruptly stood. *"I've had enough! I'm transferring you to Montgomery – gather your things".*

Feeling sorry for her, under the surface, as well as opposed to her order, I tried calming her saying gently,

“Oh! Dr. Goossen, please – settle down, for if anyone was to come in the room, right now, they’ll mistake you as the patient!”. This only sparked her off more; she grabbed at her files and stormed off. Only to return minutes later to find me just sitting and contemplating.

“Sorry Kelvin, I’ve had a bad day, I didn’t mean to snap and take it out on you, but you’re not helping us any. I’ve called for the van; you’ll be picked up in ten minutes. I’ll see you on the ward in a day or two”.

Capital punishment in maximum security, what next. The fellow patients still on the ward all gave me a warm farewell. I was saddened to leave them in a way.

Mysteriously, the lovely flowers Rob gave me some ten to twelve days earlier were still as fresh as the day she came in. I asked to take them to Montgomery but wasn’t allowed. However, I picked one native flower, which stayed alive throughout my time on the locked ward. Several mystic spiritual happenings occurred here. I wasn’t alone.

By now, into my fifth week, I was really desperately missing my family. Not being able to put Tara and Simon to bed and to hear of their day at school, tell them a story and so forth. Was also very concerned on how my art business was coping with Sue’s parents and my right hand man, Kurt, running the show. We spoke regularly over the phone. Sue was battling under extreme pressures from her first year educational course at Uni, as well as running the family and overseeing our business, with the only support coming from her parents next door. It was so demanding and exhausting for her because of this government action to have me put away. She worried over the unknown ordeal up here. Has her husband lost it and was she losing him, when is he returning – what’s manic depression? Fortunately her parents next door were there for her, they were great, without them.....

On my arrival to the maximum security ward, I first was made to shower and have my personal property recorded and checked prior to going in the actual ward amongst the other fifteen patients or should I say inmates. Back in '89, there wasn't a forensic unit. I was in the company of two murderers, a brutal rapist and two armed robbers, each accompanied by a prison warden as a shadow. One of them, Chris, in for twenty years is such a kind, gentle, loving person. Everyone liked and respected him, we got on very well into deep philosophical conversations on relationships and living. Chris came home drunk one night to find his wife in bed, being raped again by her father. In shock and rage he took to his father-in-law and in the fight the father fell knocking the side of his head, dying on arrival to hospital. After years of incest under the spell of the past manipulation, Chris' wife would not testify against her father in front of her family members and so sacrificed her husband. Blood is thicker than water. Another sad case, but he has adapted to helping others and others in return treat him well. He lives for the people, found me most interesting.

This ward was no different to the prison system, the prisoners agreed, in the set up, but Chris explains it's far, far worse here to see patients also imprisoned by the drugs walking the perimeters of the caged fence, shaking with worms inside and becoming so dopey and drowsy unable to do anything. I dreaded the injection. For the first week here I was on liquid oral medication, supervised – made to talk to the nurse on intake and drink water straight after. To help dilute the portion that passed through I'd regularly did push-ups, sit-ups and exercise plus lots of coke to counteracted most of it. Normally I'd never drink coke, that a poison in itself, but it had a purpose in this case.

We lived in each others space, pockets, 24 hours a day in a dining area, pool table and a smoke area, so you could imagine tension rising at times. Twice a day we were taken out into the exercise arena, a fully caged grassed area up against the gymnasium wall. We looked and felt like caged animals to the open patients and visitors on the other side of the fence. It was

only twenty minutes morning and afternoon (if it wasn't raining) that we saw daylight. Every second day we could go to the gym to throw a ball or hit badminton, half of us would sleep on the floor from the drugs.

There was shared accommodation. My roommate was the same young sixteen-year-old Glen who was attempting suicide from a bridge when brought in hysterical on my first day. We got on well; Glen looked at me as an elder brother.

It was here that I met up with the Carlton A.F.L. football champion, Rhett Baynes, he took an immediate liking to me, we were instant mates. Standing a couple of inches taller than I at about 6' 5", we were both very fit at this stage in the circumstances, we shared our football skills amongst others in the exercise yard. We talked about combining to play with the Perth team the Eagles. Rhett had already flown to the top. Being a little naturally elevated, mild hypermania is an added bonus to any sportsperson to excel, greater than enhancement drugs.

An old school friend, Mick, whom we've kept in contact with over thirty years, with his family, heard of my hospitalisation – imprisonment, and visited regularly, he was so pleased to have met Rhett even if behind in the cage, we all shared some great stories and laughs.

Rhett was happy to finally met someone he could relate to. We connected on his life philosophies that he based on Richard Bach's story of Jonathon Livingston Seagull, who became his role model. As he explained the mind of J.L.S., I used the Christ within US, the Higher Self, in comparison as the perfect man. Together with the seagull and the man we mentally climbed the ladder to achieve the absolute ultimate, Enlightenment.

In this pit of pits there is a further pit hole. Later in the week they locked Rhett in the solid confinement, the slammer, a small room a little larger than a toilet, all it had in it was a mattress on the floor, a pan with empty space to contemplate in . He spent most of the day and well into the evening there. Blamed for causing a disturbance, he didn't, he just dealt with it. Rhett doesn't tolerate nonsense.

From here on he became more lethargic by the day from an increase in the anti-psychotic drug 'modecate'. He was injected fortnightly.

Into the following week, Glen was upset on his 17th birthday because his parents would not come in to visit him. He was hurting inside and displayed that by throwing chairs around and yelling out abuse. Before I got to settle him, the nurses had him in the slammer to sit in his frustration.

A couple of us went off to Occupational Therapy, where I made Glen a cake to return at 10.30am for morning tea. I insisted that Glen be let out to cut his cake so we could help him celebrate his birthday. All went well, Glen was touched, after the break the nurse put a damper on it wanting, or insisting Glen be locked away again as punishment for his outburst. Not a way to treat a person. The other patients were also disturbed by the staff's action but I protested the loudest not allowing poor young Glen to spend his day alone, as it was I joined him in the slammer. After a friendly chat for ten to fifteen minutes, we thumped the hell out of the door, promising not to stop unless we were let out to display our cool, calm and collective state of mind. And that is what happened, we got out to pass the day together with the others.

A typical day is nothing to write home about. If heavily drugged, you are woken to shower before breakfast at 8am, porridge or cereal and toast. The bedrooms are locked by 8.30am; we are then confined to the dining/T.V. area with table tennis and the smoking section. We wait to be taken up to the enclosed exercise yard mid morning (if not raining) and those days that the gym and O.T. is made available. We survived on the meat and boiled veggies, meals on wheels style, I had a vegetarian meal. Well that's it from the inside, rather boring, - the days seemed like a week and the week's months.

During my 6th week I was caught out bringing up the medication in the toilet. I held toast or bread in my throat to collect the liquid poison. This started the enforced medication, I

received my first modocate injection, and within a half-hour it took effect as I felt dopey. Chris, in particular and others were saddened to see me zonked in this warped state. Chris remarked,

“That’s why I’ve been saying to you guys. It’s far worse here than any prison, because of the drug abuse, it’s a prison within a prison”.

“Yeah!” added one of the female patients. *“Look at fuckin’ poor Gerry wearing the grass down around the perimeter of the cage”*, as another overlapped saying, *“Love to give those cruel fucked shrinks a shot up their arse with their own medicine”.*

At least the prisoners, the criminals, are not drugged, tortured, like the innocent victim here.

It was interesting to hear so many case scenarios, where most problems derived from their childhood, families and spouses.

My caring sister, Pauline in Darwin, became very concerned once she heard I was locked up in a mental hospital, as it unfolded she flew down to investigate. It was good to see her, she was somewhat shocked and appalled to see me drugged in Montgomery. The doctor fed her conflicting propaganda she wasn’t happy with. Pauline found out and met our first cousin, Russell, who happened to be the head administrator of the hospital. How about that!.

How typical after my 6th week, I was finally allowed or actually made to go to creative expression unit for artwork, because of my artistic ability. But it was all too late; I slept through most of it, too lethargic to even create a mess. In the two weeks I managed a couple of pieces, a meaningful symbolic tie-dye sarong and a drawing depicting this sick game I was caught up in here.

While in the locked ward for little over four weeks, I poked my nose in the nurses station and came across a brochure on the *‘Rights of Patients’*, which I should have been handed on

arrival. I wrote letters appealing to each section. To the Minister of Health, the Ombudsman, the Commission of Human Rights, all to no avail, since the psychiatrist opinion overrules, even the second opinion has no weight. It was certainly an eye opener coming here.

Now, in writing this book some 10 years later the video in my mind is replayed in fine detail even more so than the original recording, now I am wiser. So I can definitely feel for all patients, the war veterans and the rape victims as we reflect and reminisce, understanding why most of US choose not to talk and think about past mishaps. To take the lessons and roll on to the good times. I am prepared to share my lessons and teaching for the good of all.

On my 8th week I was finally transferred to 'Gascoyne', an open ward with dormitories, in my severely drugged state I was terrible and had become desperate and sick I called for help only to be put off. We had various O.T. exercise but I was in no fit condition to participate, could hardly keep my eyes open or raise my arms, constantly trembling.

Now I really looked like a loonie feeling real sick, they considered me docile enough for release/discharge. Although mentally ill from the drug abuse, I never had a mental illness.

While I was gathering my gear ready to be taken to the station to catch the train back to Harvey, my psychiatrist 'Caroline' came to say goodbye with my referral to Dr. Kemp in Bunbury. *"Kelvin I wish you well, you don't belong here, you have a beautiful caring family, rebuild your business and all the best with your art, your work is exceptional ----- it's a pity we didn't record your first interview because a lot what you said is starting to make sense now"*. I gave her a trembling hug and moved on to catch the train home.

Like a great minority of people I am able to use the Power of Imagination and Visualization to combine them perfectly, as illustrated in producing my master painting *"Passing Time"* seen at the commencement of this chapter, which has its own story to tell. As it turned out later during my last visit to Graylands in '96 I came across the print of my painting hanging on a Montgomery wall, my energy carries on from when I was *"Passing Time"* in the loonie bin.

