

CHAPTER 2

The Home Coming

I shuffled onto the 'Australind' train homeward bound to Harvey. Feeling somewhat strange and uncomfortable from the drugs, I ended up sleeping for most of the two-hour journey.

After being institutionalised for three months, the homecoming wasn't what I had been looking forward to or hoped for.

It all seemed so different and disconnected as I stepped off the train late that morning. All I could think of was seeing my beautiful children and Sue, but with school in, no one was there to greet me. Sue would have driven up to Perth to collect me from the hospital but she was studying at the University in Bunbury, and Sue's parents were running our business.

It took more than twenty minutes to drag my gear home over just two hundred metres. On arrival, I felt such a stranger in my own home, it was scary. Sitting in the kitchen I felt hemmed in, made a sandwich and unpacked my bags the best way I could, then wandered in to my studio for a while. The atmosphere in my studio felt just as scary, my self worth had plummeted with no confidence to even scribble. It depressed me, so I moved to sit in the open air on the back porch while waiting for Tara and Simon to return from school. Very lethargic from the injection, I dozed off to awaken to the cheerful voices of the children calling out as they ran from the back fence.

"Daddy! Daddy! Daddy!!"

It was such a delight; I cannot find words for my feelings of belonging and to have Tara and Simon jump into my outstretched arms. Tears of joy and laughter rolled down my cheeks as Simon simultaneously snuggled in. They were so glad to see me after only being able to visit on two occasions in the ten weeks, I even more so.

In their 8 and 6 years, this was the first time we had been separated, I could sense their horror and sadness as they felt my shaking hands, heard my slurred speech and saw my droopy face. “It wasn’t their same Dad, what have they done to my Dad?”, must have passed through their pure innocent minds.

Like so many patients I went into hospital feeling well, only to come home a shattered injured mess. The first week or two is the hardest, many of US alone do not survive the state of being institutionalised in such a hopeless condition and situation. At least I had a home and a loving family to return to, many don’t. They discharged or released me on what is called ‘Aftercare’, what a joke, it sounds good but the order is nothing but parole. If you smile at the wrong person or slip up on the medication you’re back in, no buts about it, no assessment, a faxed form and you have a police escort at your door before you know it.

The first few nights were unbearable and very frightening for Sue, the drugs made me feel claustrophobic when lying down in bed (it was horrific in my trembles). It felt as if worms filled my blood vessels. I couldn’t tolerate being still, keeping Sue awake – already exhausted from her study. It got to a point that I gasped for breath in panic, as the pressure built up. I tried to run outside screaming for air but only staggered through the back door to sit on the open lawn in heavy rain on a still night. But even the rain seemed to suppress me; I felt I needed to separate the rain like fly screen strips to get air. This spun Sue out to see me hopelessly sitting saturated on the back lawn, shivering, trying to breathe. This finally had her mind questioned the drugs too.

First thing in the morning we urgently phoned to have my appointment brought forward. The best they could do was late in the afternoon.

As well as the moderate injection I was forced to take 1200mg of lithium carbonate a day plus side affect tablets, which only helped my bluriness enabling me to read and write again. These ignorant self-righteous shrinks had no idea what they were experimenting with on this

pure guinea pig. What's good for the goose is not good for the gander. The fools may say my dose was minimal, sure they reduced it from 50 to 12.5mg, but I am supersensitive to any drugs for the simple reason that I had never used any drugs in the past to abuse myself. Never really smoked, only bum smoked at high school, socially drunk a little alcohol in my active twenties to burn it out in the many sports. In recent years I had consumed hardly any coffee and Coca-Cola. Apart from being overworked, I was extremely fit and healthy prior to being hospitalised. So in my case, the drugs hit me extra hard.

On the other hand, I met 17 stone Big John, an eight-year chronic patient of Graylands – he was a heavy heroin user, chain smoked, having many well-sugared strong coffees a day and has a potbelly from guzzling too much coke. No wonder he could handle his 100mg injection without blinking an eyelid, he is so immune to these drugs, it's just like an alcoholic can handle a carton where as a non-drinker slurs on one single can.

I certainly looked a loonie crouched over and trembling in the chair waiting at the Bunbury Clinic. After nearly an hour in complete discomfort I was called into Dr. Kemp's office, cold and stark as Graylands. To ensure he didn't give me my due injection, I slightly exaggerated my condition by slowly shuffling down the corridor into his room (not that I needed to). For once he saw my eyes, dribbling mouth and my uncoordinated trembling body and on hearing of my last couple of nights, he did not hesitate to stop the injections. In such a depressed state, still he kept me on the lithium. Although I was grateful for not being injected again, Dr. Kemp (John) still did not win me over, his attitude and listening skills did not impress me. He too showed no warmth or empathy.

It still took several more days before I could feel any relief from the injection and it took weeks for the drug to clear from my system.

Poor Tara and Simon were so confused and upset to see me like this. Meanwhile unknown to them, or anyone, I was fighting suicide daily due to the moderate drug.

My new close friend Rhett had kept in contact most days up to me leaving Graylands, he was discharged a few days before me and on the same drug with a 50mg injection. I knew he was having difficulties out there too. He left his contact via a girlfriend, but she was hard to reach.

Into my second week home I couldn't bear it any longer. It was the day the preoccupied psyche nurse, Christie, popped in to say hello while on his weekly round. On this day I was seriously planning to hang myself in my studio to escape this insane burden on me. My mind was disorientated and irrational, I was feeling very separated from the world and frightfully alone again, losing my spiritual connection. I questioned my future, as the Light in my tunnel became ever so dull in the distance. I knew so many of US in society do not survive in this poverty depressed hole not going forward or backwards. But I was, I am, a fighter, a survivor. No one, no government was going to take my angelic children from me or me from them.

I was concerned and a little worried about Rhett, so I tried again to get through to his girlfriend after trying several times, to my shock, but not to my surprise, her tearful voice explained that Rhett had shot himself two days earlier. *"The bastard killed him and it's killing me"*. He flew off to be in Peace with his Jonathan Livingston Seagull, he graduated into the LIGHT, becoming Christed, pity he didn't stay, he is a great teacher and friend. We'll re-unite into Photon in 2013.

I recall his last words to me when leaving the loonie bin, after adamantly insisting for days – *"Promise me you'll read 'The Bridge Across Forever' by Richard Bach"*. We departed with a strong hug of hugs. Now, finally after 10 years, ironically while writing this chapter homesitting in the hills of Perth at Darlington, with my dearest friend Tereza, the book virtually fell out of the bookshelf at a secondhand bookshop. Perhaps it was Rhett who pushed it under my nose again. Thanks Rhett it is great, I have had it in my hand on three previous occasions. The timing I read books I'm drawn to is always most appropriate and significant for that

particular point of time, as it is for most people. Rhett you are a champion of champions, too good for this physical dimension, your Light is appreciated by all that radiate in it. Sadly doctors and others failed to see and hear you.

Rhett's death hit me hard and cut deep, to bring me to my senses. He brightened my Light enough, so that I could see and feel my way out of my depressed state. It was so very close to being the end of my story too, to leave my wonderful children in the dark without a father, to live without answers, not knowing the truth or understanding why. SHAME on the GOVERNMENTS - the PSYCHIATRIST'S. It is so criminal and cruel what these self-righteous, ignorant and arrogant experts do and get away with in these institutions and the courtrooms. They may mean well but don't necessarily do well. Without a thought, with simply the stroke of a pen, they can prescribe a lethal injection. I was very angry and with what I see as Rhett's murder, I just wanted to fight on for him and others. If I had the resources I would take on all bureaucrats, all governments to court, but then how just is the judicial system? Who override a patient by accepting these so called expert witnesses. Time will come.

To top it off another patient I befriended died, in Barbara, a beautiful, gentle, loving woman in her 60's with so much Love and Wisdom to offer. She had just been transferred to Murchison House (a long-term ward) to see her days out because she never had a home to go to. On phoning Barbara, she only suffered a few weeks further for she was able to tell me,

“Kelvin, you'll make it, I'm proud and Love you and feel very tired now and the warmth of God is around me”

Immediately, I painted a lovely card of a happy SUN to welcome her home. I was told by a nurse a few days later that Barbara was smiling and holding my card when she passed away.

When I visited the Murchison ward I was saddened by the chronic cases that surrounded me, one young man, Ian, had been there for five years. He had been restricted to a wheelchair after a nurse jumped on his back to hold him down for an injection he protested against,

unfortunately his spine was broken. I followed his case up on my return, Ian is so intelligent and spiritually aware, we got on well. Ian is a old wise soul who can tell a story or two.

We on occasions hear about the alarming deaths from suicide in custody in prisons and mental institutions. However, the public would be surprised and appalled to learn of the much higher statistics of suicide during the first few weeks of discharge or release. The suicides, so sad and torturous, are covered up. The hospitals do not hold any responsibilities for creating these states of institutionalisation. The victims never get to wear their bravery medals. If there were real aftercare and support, I am sure the figures would drop dramatically, especially if a rehabilitation program was in place.

The buck is passed, saying it is all part of the illness – the depression – but who makes them/US ill and depressed in the first place? Who gives them/US the lethal injection to sit shaking alone on death row? I may have survived my first murder attempt and the torturous prolonged seven others to follow, but they all had their toll. From it all I, nevertheless, became more empathetic and helpful for others contemplating suicide, helping and saving many lives in the years to come.

There is nothing worse than when you are the convicted victim, the judge and the executor all in one counting down on death row, saying your last good-byes silently. Only those who have written their last words and reached that last second could understand this completely.

I stayed home lonely for the first two weeks, trying to cope and adjust, with great difficulty even to manage the most simple and mundane chores.

The day after hearing of Rhett's death my artist friend, Robyn, who visited me in Graylands admittance, phoned to say she would call in to see me on her return trip from Perth. Rob arrived close to school home time while I was sitting in the studio listening to music, waiting for Simon and Tara to return from school.

On entering the open roller doors, she was surprised to see me in such a state shuffling towards her. In a sympathetic soft voice she said, “*Oh my God! Just look at you – what have they done?*” We stood in silence as we embraced in a very healing hug for nearly a minute. Rob gave me a gentle kiss on the cheeks feeling deeply sorry for me.

Just as this occurred, darling little Tara arrived home from school and upon hearing the music, she walked around the corner into the studio to see or catch her Dad in the arms of another woman kissing. Even as pure and innocent as it was, in later years the event was still stuck in her mind as she questioned the action from the presumptions put before her.

I was hurting, upset about Rhett and drugged coming off death row; the soothing hug was such a relief that I needed. Rob is such an extremely compassionate, spiritual person, who is very caring with sensitive feelings, moving on from her earlier nursing-sister career to incorporate alternate hearty healing practices.

Seconds later Simon followed in behind taking his school bag off and joined us. I introduced Robyn, then we moved inside to have a drink and a bite to eat. Rob and I chatted over a cuppa; I gave her a briefing of the later part of Graylands and told her of Rhett. Rob mentioned that she had recently completed courses on reflexology and massage so she could help the elderly. She left her short and sweet visit somewhat saddened and sincerely touched. At the car she gave me another interesting and helpful book ‘Numbers of Love’ by Robin Smith. The drugs blurred my vision, nevertheless, I was truly grateful, even more so as the years ticked by, as were the numerous people I shared it with. Numerology and Astrology go hand in hand, to give us an insight and introduction into the personalities and the strengths and weaknesses our characters are developed upon. The book over time proved to be an ideal guideline to draw from, no matter how much I cross-examined it, it always read true. This hidden mystery of numbers in our society eventually became second nature to me without the need to add them up.

Something I recommend, especially to all teachers and doctors to help them understand their students and patients more.

The following week, to break the boredom at home by myself, I returned to the shop with Seymour, Sue's father. It was frightening at first because of the drugs. The business I created and developed over six years, I now felt disconnected to. Unable to work as before I had to start from scratch until I could pick up where the two shops were at. I stayed behind the scenes for the first day or two, making an effort doing mundane jobs like cleaning the glass and setting in framing jobs but that was too much at first.

My first day back was firmly planted in the minds of the shopkeepers who saw me slowly shuffling past their shop curved over with the banking bag under my arm. After six years in business I was well known, befriending them all. They were used to and would expect me to be sprinting past on most days only minutes before the banks would close and would cheerfully chat to those unoccupied near the front of their shops on my return trip. Our business sense expanded by sharing our trades particularly through the 1983 recession difficulties. It was the following year '84 our business excelled in reaching the finals in the states Small Business Award and won the states A.P.F.A. picture-framing award.

Heather, a close business friend, whom we sublet part of the shop to for her House of Handy Crafts from '85 to '88, happened to be in the queue as I entered the bank. She had heard of my hospitalisation and like Rob she was shocked and upset seeing me in this state. She accompanied and helped me back to the shop; several shop owners came out to greet me on the return trip.

As the anti-psychotic drug wore off I took hold of the reins again of both the Bunbury and Kalgoorlie shops of our Kelsue Art Centres. With Christmas fast approaching, demand on stock and framing jobs soon had me back in full swing; between 60-80 hours a week. In the late

80's there were plenty of dollars floating in the market place, Kalgoorlie was in a mini gold boom and décor prints were very popular as were local paintings.

After the hospital saga, it was not the same with the business. With another unreasonable price increase in our rent of the Bunbury city centre branch, we moved it out of the main street, letting go of the art supplies division, to a smaller premises and wound it back to just the two of us. With the pressure of the Kalgoorlie branch some 850km away, Sue and I were forced to sell that branch, well under value only to clear our debts.

Until Easter, Rob would frequently call in and catch up. She was the only person I had met who felt the Oneness of Life in nature. I was hoping Sue would accept her as a true friend, we could have all got on so well, if Rob was male it may have had a chance. As spiritual brothers and sisters, Rob and I connected perfectly well. She didn't want to come between Sue and I, so she phased away into her art, herself, to produce an amazing autobiographic exhibition titled "*Connections*". The collection was sold to a German business man from which she later produced the full coloured book titled "*Moving Pictures – To Whom It May Concern*", with a live performance on her book launch of which I was privileged to attend. It was ahead of its time and above the heads of most of the dense academic left brainers. A masterpiece I treasure.

That Easter, angelic Rob gave me a third book 'New Teachings for an Awakening Humanity' by Christ and written by Virginia Essence, that I recommend to you all. It became my second bible to speak that helped guide me into the Light. This was the first book I actually read from cover to cover since my high school novels. In the years to come I followed up to read all Virginia's new spiritual books.

To further assist readers, I will be cross referencing books, songs and movies along with my artworks to help those needing growth. Virginia's book "Secret Truths" is an excellent guide for Young Adults in particular for Creating Peace and to take charge of their Life and deals with

suicides and death. A book, I feel, should be given, by governments, to all students approaching high school. I do question and challenge today's educational system and curriculums.

It is not that I haven't read much, it mainly has been bits and pieces in research, newspapers and magazines. Sue on the other hand always had a fiction book or two on the bedside table. My hearty spiritual books did not impress her; she prefers a good romance story. No doubt this Love story I'm writing will interest her.

In the year to follow I began to gather several books under my belt to form a library to share. They were always either given to me or drawn to my attention at the right and most appropriate time. I never look for books, they always find me. The White Eagle – Spiritual Unfoldments I, II and III books were helpful and reassuring at this time. From birth our Spiritual blueprint is hidden from US, it is up to US independently to open up our Minds and Hearts to it.

By this stage, with the year ticking on, I had pretty well recovered from the hospital ordeal and drug abuse but still under the microscope with aftercare. Sue was asked to supervise my oral intake of lithium carbonate, which suppressed my creativity affecting my thyroid gland, however, most of the time I was able to avoid it. It took into the second half of the following year to become creative again. This particular day I entered the studio to create "Love or Greed".