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First listed Sept. 2009

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INTRODUCTION

The book you are about to read is based on real events that took place back in the early sixties. The names of the people have been changed. This is the story of a young man setting out on a life of crime. It started with a sentence of three months detention.....

Enjoy my story.

*“I dedicate my book to my dear wife Mary.
She turned my life around 40yrs ago when I was on a road to
nowhere.*

*She changed all that for me.
Thank you Mary, you gave me my life back.”*

MEDOMSLEY BOYS

by

Ron Henzell.

CHAPTER ONE

THE SENTENCE

As I stood in the dock looking over at the Magistrate whispering to the two blokes either side of her, I thought to myself, you've blown it this time Ray, this old cow is going to send you down. No more fines for you Ray, this cow is going to put you away. Just then the Recorder, he's the bloke that sits in front of the Magistrate and advises her on what sentence to give out, stood up and turned and faced the Magistrate, he whispered something to her then sat down again. The Magistrate looked at me as she cleared her throat and said.

“Mr Hunter you have an appalling police record for a man your age, you have been fined on a number of occasion's, you've been put on probation, but none of this has done you any good. In my opinion you are a young man out of control, and I think you need a short sharp shock, so I'm sending you to a Detention Centre for three months. Lets hope this does you some good.”

The copper standing next to me grabbed my arm and pulled me towards the stairs that lead down to the cells. We went down the stairs and the copper handed me over to the copper on cell duty.

“One for you sir,” he said as he turned and went back up the stairs.

I was taken into an office in the middle of a row of cells, woman's cells on the right, men's cells on the left, once inside the office the copper said.

“Empty your pockets lad.”

While I was doing that he sat down at the desk and wrote everything down that I had taken out of my pockets, then he turned the sheet of paper he had been writing on and handed me his pen.

“Sign here.” he said.

He came round to where I was standing.

“I have to search you so put your arm's up.”

After searching me and finding nothing on me he said.

“Follow me.”

He opened the steel gate that lead to the row of cells. Once we got to the second cell up he stopped and opened the cell door.

“Right. In here lad.”

As I walked into the cell the cell door slammed shut behind me.

I walked up and down the cell a few times, three months that's not so bad, my solicitor had said. The magistrate could remand me to crown court,

where I would certainly have got borstal. Stealing a car was bad enough, but trying to head butt the copper who pulled me over didn't help. So I've been lucky really. I've got three months to do so I might as well settle down and get it done. Another thing flashed through my mind as I walked up and down my cell. What about Pat? I had arranged to meet her tonight, I was on a sure thing with this lass, I would definitely have had my leg over tonight. I had met Pat a few days ago. Last night she had invited me over to her place. Pat said her Mam and Dad would be out for the night at the local club and we would have the place to our selves.

We snogged on the settee for a while then decided to go up to her room, I had just got her clothes off when we heard the front door open then close and a voice saying.

“Put the kettle on pet, I'll just shout up and see if our Pat wants a cup.”

I looked at Pat and whispered. “I thought you said they would be out for the night.”

Pat whispered back. “They were, something must have happened for them to come back early.”

Just then the voice from down stairs shouted.

“Pat, are you up there?”

We both panicked. “Tell him your getting ready for bed, you'll be down in five minutes,” I whispered.

Pat went to the bedroom door and shouted what I had told her. I heard her father shout.

“Ok pet, your mam's making the tea now so don't be long.”

I looked at Pat as she rushed to put her night dress on over her head, her breasts were bouncing all over her chest, my erection came back and all I wanted to do was throw Pat on the bed and finish what I had started. Pat looked at me, then down to my erection, she smiled at me and whispered.

“You can put that away big man and get your pants on. If my dad comes up here and catches us, he'll kill you as well as me.”

I quickly came back to reality and put my pants on.

While putting my shoes on I whispered to Pat. “How the hell am I going to get out of here?”

Pat give a little nervous laugh, then took me over to her bedroom window, opening it she whispered. “Climb down onto the kitchen roof then drop down into the back yard, the back gates never locked. But walk as quiet as you can across the kitchen roof my mothers in the kitchen making tea, I'll come to yours tomorrow night straight from work.

Pat give a little nervous laugh as I climbed out of her window.

“For Christ sake don't fall Ray. I'll see you tomorrow night.”

I climbed out of the window, it wasn't much of a drop to the kitchen roof, but I must have made some noise, because I heard Pats mother's voice shouting to her husband.

“There's someone on the roof Jack. Our bloody Pats had someone in her room again.”

I thought to myself as I ran across the kitchen roof. How many lads have ran across this friggin roof?

I got off the roof as quick as I could and made my way to the back gate.

Again I thought to myself. I hope that Pats right and the back gate is open or I'm a dead man.

I could hear Pats dad shouting.

“Where's the friggin keys to this back door?”

I lifted the latch and pulled, the back gate opened thank Christ, I set off running down the back lane. I didn't get far when I heard a loud voice behind me.

“If I get my hands on you I'll break your fucking legs you bastard.”

“What the fucks he mad about,” I thought to myself as I ran down the back lane. “It was me who got nothing.”

But I decided not to stop and discuss this with him, I got the feeling he was a bit upset.

Just then the cell door opened and the copper walked in with a pot of tea in one hand and a plate in the other.

“Here's your dinner lad, and I'll bring you some company in a minute, there's another lad just got himself three months detention, we're just sorting him out now.” Then he slammed the cell door shut.

I couldn't eat the dinner, I never did like cold egg and chips, anyway I was to wound up to eat. The tea was hot so I sat on the bed and started drinking it, I say bed, it was a wooden bench eight inches off the floor.

The cell door opened again and the copper said.

“In here lad, I'll bring you your dinner in a minute.”

I stood up and said to the copper. “Any chance of a fag boss?”

The copper looked at me and shook his head. “I'll see what I can do lad.”

Then he slammed the cell door shut again.

I turned and looked at the lad that had just come into the cell. This lad was

a big twat, six foot and built like a shit house. This lad was a half cast, but I don't think many lads would have told him that.

“How you doing mate, I hear you’re going to the same place as me. Three months is fuck all man, what did you get your three months for?”

The lad spoke in a quiet voice and told me his story.

He said he had worked at the fruit market in Gateshead, his mates had been coming in and he had been giving them extra boxes of fruit. His boss got suspicious and set a trap for him. His boss caught him red handed and called the police. The lad shook his head and said.

“My mates got of scot free and I got three months detention.”

“Never mind mate, when you get out you can always give them a slap, and three months is fuck all anyway.”

The cell door opened and the copper walked in and threw a fag at me, then he took out his matches and said. “Here, get a light.”

I lit my fag and thanked him.

“There's no smoking where your going so you might as well enjoy that.

There's two fags left in your box you might as well smoke them before you leave here. I'll bring them along later.”

I thanked him again.

“You’re not so bad for being a copper,” I said.

He looked at me and laughed. “Cheeky twat.”

Then he slammed the cell door again.

I sat down on the bed and took a deep draw of my fag. Like me the other lad hadn't touched his food, he stood against the wall drinking his tea. I offered him a draw of my fag. He put his hand up and said.

“Thanks all the same, but I don't smoke.”

I sat with my back against the wall smoking my fag and thinking to myself, Pat would be going to my place tonight and I'm stuck in this fucking shit hole, what a friggin shame, she had a great pair of tits as well. Still I'm only doing three months not three years, I'll see her when I get out, I hope. Still, I can't worry about women, I've got some time to do.

The other lad who had been standing drinking his tea suddenly said.

“Do you know what this place is like we're going to?”

I shook my head.

“I don't know much really. I know it hasn't been open long and its supposed to be one of the toughest ones in the country, but that's about all.

Anyway we'll be up there ourselves soon then we can find out for our selves.”

Just then the cell door opened and the copper came in.

“Plates and pots lads”, he looked at the plates and said. “What's wrong with the food lads not hungry.?”

I looked at the copper and said.

“Couldn't eat that shit boss, any chance of my two fags boss?”

“OK. I'll bring them up, you might as well smoke them, they'll be your last for three months. By the way, they've just sentenced another lad to three months detention. So when I bring him up I'll bring your two fags up as well.”

The cell door closed again and I turned to the other lad.

“Well it looks like there's three of us going up to the detention centre.

What's your name anyway? Mines Ray.”

“Mines Mohamed Cushy,” he answered. “But everyone calls me Cushy.”

I was just about to say. “Nice to meet you Cushy,” when the cell door opened and the copper walked in with my two fags in his hand. I asked him for a light and put the other fag behind my ear. The copper stood aside

and said.

“In here lad,” then slammed the cell door shut.

I looked at the lad that had just come in and started laughing. “What the fucking hell you doing here Jeff? Why didn't you tell me you were up today.”

Jeff looked at me and shook his head.

“Because I thought I was going to get chucked. I never thought I would get three months.”

Jeff was one of my best mates, we had been mates since we were kids, I shook my head.

“Never mind Jeff lad, its only three months.”

I took the fag from behind my ear and offered it to him.

“Here mate have a smoke and tell me what you got your three months for.”

Jeff took the fag and lit it off mine, then started walking up and down the cell.

“I don't want to be here. I'm supposed to be doing a job tonight Ray, a nice warehouse, I would have made a good few quid out of it. But now I'm stuck in this friggin shit hole. But what makes me mad is our Billy got off,

and he was the cause of this fucking mess.”

“So what's your Billy got to do with all this?” I asked.

Billy was Jeff's older brother, and you could bet if there was a fight going on Billy would be amongst it.

Jeff said. “We were in the Dodds' Arms on Elswick Rd. Billy was in the bar, I was in the room selling some rings to a bloke. I heard a fight start in the bar so I went in to see what was going on. It's only our fucking Billy fighting with some Irishman, so I ran in and picked up a chair and whacked the bloke over the head with it. He went down like a bag of shit. But then the blokes mates decided to kick the shit out of Billy and me. But while all this was going on the landlord called the coppers and Billy and me got lifted. That was two months ago. We were in court today after dinner, our Billy gets a sixty pound fine and bound over to keep the peace for twelve months. I got three months detention. The magistrate said I need a short sharp shock, the cow.”

“Don't worry Jeff, that's what the cow said to me.”

Jeff looked at me and said. “What you doing here Ray? The last time I saw you, you said you had scored for a good few quid so you were going to stay out of trouble for a while, so what the fuck happened?”

“Well, I was at a party, when I left I couldn't be bothered to walk home so I pinched a car, and on the way home I got pulled over by a copper. When he tried to arrest me I tried to head butt the twat.”

Jeff laughed. “What do you mean you tried?”

“Well I was pissed at the time, I could hardly stand.”

Jeff laughed again and said. “Daft twat, why didn't you kick him in the balls?”

We both started laughing.

Jeff looked down at Cushy who was now sitting on the wooden bed.

“Did you get detention as well mate?”

Cushy stood up and said. “Three months, the same as you two.”

“Was this your first time in court?” Jeff asked.

“No. I took my old man's van one night, me and my mates were going down to Blyth to see a couple of girls we had met the night before. The coppers stopped me. When they opened the back of the van it was full of stolen T shirts. My dads brother had been buying knocked of T shirts. I got done for the lot.”

“That was a bit of bad luck mate.” Jeff said.

“Still not to worry, three months, we can do that standing on our heads.”

The cell door opened and the copper shouted.

“Ok lads, your taxi's here, time to go to your holiday camp.”

We walked along the corridor and up the stairs to where the desk sergeant stood. He was a big fat twat, but looked as if he could have handled himself years ago. But now he looked as if he had let himself go.

“You lad,” he yelled looking at me. “Come here , time to put your bracelets on.”

Handcuffs he meant.

“Can't have you running away now can we.”

I looked at him and said, “Smart arse.”

“Smarter then you lad,” he scoffed. “I'm not going to detention.”

He put the cuffs on, not too gently I must say, then pushed me over to the corner of the room.

We all got cuffed up and were led out one by one to the police van, better known as the Meat Wagon. The sergeant waved his hand.

“See you in three months lads.”

Me and Jeff both stuck our two fingers up at him.

“Now lads, that's not nice. What would your mothers say?” He said with a big grin on his face and banged the van door shut.

“He's a right twat,” I said to Jeff. He totally agreed.

The copper sitting opposite us said, “Yes, he used to be, he was in the Special Forces during the last war. He used to be a right handful, but he's a lot quieter now.

I looked at him and thought, I'll take my chances so I asked, “Any chance of a fag Boss, when we get up to there we can't smoke. One last fag would be good.”

I was surprised when he replied,

“Do you all smoke?”

“No,” I answered. “Just me and Jeff.”

He pulled out his fag packet and said, “I've only got three, have one between you, I need one for coming back.”

This would be my last smoke for three months, so I was going to enjoy my half. I sat back on the wooden bench, thanked the copper for the fag, and thought, not all coppers are twats, there is some decent ones among them.

I asked him if he knew anything about the detention centre we were going

to. He shook his head as he answered. “Not really. I've taken a few lads up there but we don't get to see much. I've heard it's the toughest in the country. It's run as the army way of life. They have a proper army assault course and everywhere you go you march so by the time you get out you'll be fit. They are very strict, that's about all I know really. Anyway your about to find out for yourselves, we're here now.”

The van had left the main road and was heading down a narrow drive, I looked out the back window and could see houses on both sides of the drive. I thought to myself, they must be screws houses. The van came to a stop, the copper sitting beside us got up and put on his helmet, the driver also got out. I didn't show it but I was getting pretty nervous. Now my heart was going fifty to the dozen. It wasn't so much being scared, it was not knowing what to expect. I was brought back to reality with a voice shouting,

“Three for you sir,” to the screw at the gate.

The back doors of the van opened and the copper said. “Right lads lets have ya,”

He led us through the iron gate to a door marked reception where a screw was sitting at his desk. When we walked in he stood up, looked at the three

of us and snarled. “Stand there and keep your mouths shut.”

Good start I thought.

He turned to the coppers and asked them for the paper work. They all signed their bits of paper and the coppers said. “They're all yours now sir. We'll be on our way.”

The screw sat back at his desk and gave a polite, “thank you,” to the coppers. By this time another screw had come to the door. The one at the desk said to him. “Will you show these officers out please Mr. Bishop.”

Then he turned to us. “My name is Mr. Scott, or Sir, nothing else. You might think of other names but never say them, understood? When I call your name, move to the front of my desk.”

Cushy was the first to be called, the screw who was seeing the coppers out had returned. He glared at us as he passed, he looked an evil faced twat and I instantly knew me and him were never going to get on.

I looked to the front again and I heard the screw at the desk say to Cushy. “Full name, where you were sentenced, and for how long.”

Before Cushy answered I felt this slap to the back of my head and a voice shouting. “Get your hands out your pockets, where do you think you are lad?”

The screw that had passed earlier had returned and had slapped me on the back of my head. I felt a rush of anger rise up in me from my guts to my chest and into my head, I couldn't control it. You fucking bastard I thought, I rushed forward and grabbed him with such force we fell against the wall and landed on the floor. Mr. Scott jumped to his feet and came to Mr. Bishop's aid. I tried to head butt Mr. Bishop, but I felt an arm around my neck pulling me off. By this time all hell had let loose, another screw appeared from nowhere, he had my arm up my back so I couldn't move. I was face down on the floor with two screws sat on top of me. The reception door opened and another two screws rushed in.

“What's the trouble?” One of them asked.

Mr. Bishop who had slapped me was sitting at the desk. His face was as white as a sheet.

I think that's the first time a prisoner had retaliated, it was a shock to me, but I bet he got a bigger shock.

Mr. Bishop shouted. “That prisoner attacked me.”

Pointing to me still pinned to the floor, the screw who had taken charge said. “Right, let's get this lad onto his feet. Mr. Scott will you take charge of reception again please? Mr. Bishop, you will stay here in reception till I

return.”

He then turned to the screws that had hold of me.

“Right, let’s get this lad over to the block.”

I was taken out of reception with my arms up my back and taken to a building on its own. The screw that had taken charge opened the door to the building and I was taken to one of the cells. The screw in charge stood at the cell door.

“Right. I'm not interested in what happened, or why it happened. I'm only interested in what's going to happen. Now I want your belt and your shoes, have you anything in your pockets before my officer searches you?”

I shook my head.

“Don't shake your bloody head at me lad, I want you to say, yes sir or no sir, do you understand lad?”

I looked him in the eyes. “Yes sir.”

“Now, again. Do you have anything in your pockets?”

“No sir.”

I thought to myself the odds are against me, I was by myself in a cell with three screws, my head hurt, my arms hurt, if this twat wanted me to call

him sir that was fine by me, for the moment.

“You'll stay in this cell tonight, tomorrow you'll see the governor.” One of the screws handed me two sheets and a blanket. Then the cell door slammed shut. I turned and looked around the cell, a bed a piss pot in the corner and that was it. I lay down on the bed and thought to myself, this was a good start. I think that copper was right, at this rate I won't last a week. It must have been only seven or eight o'clock, but I felt knackered, I turned over onto my side, what a day I've had and what I wouldn't give for a fag right now. I wondered if Jeff and Cushy had made it through reception alright, and with that thought I must have fallen fast asleep.

CHAPTER TWO

THE BLOCK