



They should have known better.

Just another kid placed into an institution, for what? because mother and father couldn't afford the luxuries of child support, or maybe mother and father were junkies and society rips the kids away from them, and then the kid is placed into an institution, for what! No father no mother. And for the time he or she might be in that institution, not by choice he or she has to suffer shame.

The system puts the minders there to be responsible for us as children, but it's the minders that should be punished, as it is those that instilled into us as children the hatred and remorse we have, for not having the luxury of a Mother or Father. For that we as orphans are punished in the most degrading ways thought possible.

After 18 years as a 'Ward of the State' and some 32 years later, I finally get enough nerve, to have the audacity to ask the system for whatever relevant details they may or may not have on me during my childhood. For my first attempt I get two sheets of paper with about 9 or 12 lines on it, I look at these two sheets and I am devastated, 18 years of my life on two sheets of paper. I ponder and wonder this can't be all of my 18 years on two sheets of paper.

So now I'm left with how can this be, it's taken me 32 years to get the courage to go to the human resources to get what info they might have on me, and I get two sheets of paper. 32 years to finally deal with my shame my insecurities and all for two sheets of paper.

I fell out of the system as soon as I got out of that institution. At the tender age of 14 years, I was out of there and there was no way of me going back, yes I connived my way out, letting the nuns think that I was just going on a holiday with some people who I never knew at all, but I was out to impress these people, with only one intention and that was to get the hell out of this hole. I asked these people if they could get work for me which they did, at the GPO in Burke St., Melbourne.

As a young kid we were looked at as though we didn't belong here, we were misfits, orphans, bastards we were lower than low, and yes we were made to feel like this every day we were there. Well what did the system do for me, it made me a bitter person towards the system, as the minders that were left there to look after us were nothing less than monsters dressed in black habits. There were no happy days I can remember in the orphanage. I can still remember when I was a small child how petrified of 'Santa Claus' I was, sure some of the other kids liked him, but me for some reason I feared him immensely, whether this was something that was instilled in me as a kid I don't know. What I do know is, for what I achieve in my lifetime I can honestly say "The System" I owe nothing.

You know, I thought I had gotten over this childhood of mine, but I hadn't, I had just let it dwell in the background for a while, that is to say I had a sudden reminder, when I went to a place I thought I had forgotten, but all of my childhood from the past had come back to me.

Seeing young kids that were the same age, as when I was kid, with no hope, and all they can do is survive the best way they know how. They are going through the same crap I went through as a kid. Hoping that tomorrow comes and if it doesn't they just don't

care. The yearning for life in that place is lost; the desire for love is not there, to be cuddled was determined as immoral or you were a sissy. These kids for the majority of their lives just keep on giving, the more they give, the more tormented they are inside, as giving, keeps going on, but the receiving is so tiny that the little receiving you get, you 'treasure' most of all.

Where is the love they desire? During my growing up years, I was so ashamed to tell anyone my background, that I didn't know who my mother or father was or for that matter whether I had one at all, the fear that they might call me a bastard or illegitimate was a shameful stigma to carry, it was drummed into us that we were the lowest form of life, why because we didn't know who we were, or where we had come from.

To this day I am still hesitant on telling people my background. This is not a cry for help or for grief, or for you to understand this; it is just an awareness to let you know out there, that there are many kids out there hurting immensely. Kids living together without their mothers and fathers there, maybe because their mothers and fathers don't want them, or they are too much of a burden on their pockets, for all sorts of reasons, but these kids are out there trying to survive the system, "they do the best they can", and when they do they are told they are bad, why? Because the kid is trying to survive, he or she doesn't know about the resources out there and if they do, there is no way are they going to go through the systems as it already has let them down. The system places these kids into institutions to better them, but we don't better them, instead we instill hatred in them towards the system, why because the system has once again treated them as "THEY SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BETTER".

Myself I know I have a lot of convictions, whether or not, that had anything with the way I was raised as a kid, I don't know, but what I do know is that everything I did do; I did it to survive, and I am still doing it today.

When you are 14 years old and no one you can trust to turn to, because the system made you that way, you had to buy your friends so that you had some sort of protection, you dare not go to the welfare system as you had lived that for 14 years and you know what that got you, nothing but misery, and the misery I was in now was a hell of a lot better than where I had just came from. Yes I would make up stories if the Police would ask me where I belong, like my mum and dad were on holidays and I lived just around the corner.

Another problem that was bestowed upon us at the orphanage was the true meaning or value of money was, we were never taught to respect or save it as we never saw it to spend it, we were never given the chance to understand what it could or could not do, this we had to learn for ourselves, nobody showed us, nobody showed us how to earn it, and when we did find a way we were told it was wrong, once again the system had failed us just the simple things in life.

Being raised in the orphanage the teachings there were immoral, to love was immoral, to look at oneself or someone else without clothes on we were told it was a mortal sin and we would go to hell and we would be punished by the nuns and also by God. That was the love we were shown, to look at yourself was immodest, and that, was a mortal sin, we were made to feel ashamed of our bodies, and especially of your genital area, this was something that you should never have had, to get an erection whether it was mother nature telling you to go to the toilet or you might have been titillated, that

was a mortal sin, and you would be spread-eagled for it an flogged with a hand broom, or broom handle or even a branch off a tree.

For a long time I had been ashamed of my body, why because the system raised me that way, in the lie, that what I was, and what I had, I should be ashamed of. The thought of someone looking at my body brought great shame on me, and sometimes I still feel that today. Is this a shame that I deserve and does any kid deserve this sort of stigma placed on their shoulders?

It was wrong for us to touch our bodies it was **'immoral'** but the adults as in the minders or nuns that was ok so to speak, they could do with a kid what they want. And we as kids were led to believe what they did was right.

Our esteem was never at high, as you weren't sure if you would wake up alive, and if you did you weren't too happy about it, as you knew that it would be the same old same old. But it was something you were caught in, not by choice, but because the system ripped you away as a kid, and because you were born illegitimate, you didn't deserve to be on this planet, and we did deserve to be punished, because we are what we are, orphans, bastards, illegitimate etc etc

To try to meet people to talk to strangers, to girls I was very embarrassed to talk to them, as I had felt right throughout my youth, that they were laughing at me, and taunting me, not that this happened literally, it was the stigma that I had been scarred with, and it took me many years to deal with it.

I am now 52 years old and my past has come back to haunt me, or maybe it is to prompt me, maybe to get someone anyone to read my story, just maybe we might realize there are a lot of kids in despair out there who are not looking for pity but a recognition, that they can achieve, providing we give them the resources, that are at our disposal now.

The knowledge we have around us is endless, but the price the system says we have to pay for those resources, is horrendous, the kid that's left to fend for themselves, and wants to learn, but can't learn, because the system puts a big price on knowledge, way out of reach for the kid that has been abandoned. You know that kid "THE ONE THAT SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BETTER". Well maybe he or she would have known better if the knowledge and resources weren't out of reach, he or she just might turn out to be a gift to the system instead of a burden, and the system wouldn't have to say "HE SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BETTER"

I wrote earlier that this is not a cry for help, but it is a despairing cry for help, for our kids, our future, our existence, we have to show them love and respect before we can expect it back, as it is that, that was ripped from my heart and all of those kids out there who are still giving just to get that one love that they never got and probably will never get. Don't let our children despair; give them the love, the aspirations, and the dreams they so richly deserve. The lack of resources that the system can afford but won't let our kids at them for fear, they just might learn something.

At the stroke of the pen on the 10th of December 1946 I was officially deemed a 'ward of the state' (nearly 3 months old) , signed by mother Mary Bernice Harrison. When I read the Adoption Order the words are so harsh. **Quote:** "I understand that the effect of the order will be permanently to deprive me of my parental rights," **Unquote.** I'm sure society does not understand the anguish and the heartbreak the mother has to go through, to make a decision regarding adoption, yet the written word is not precise in the way, it was meant to be said. It is really something else or to say the least bizarre to read

that you were free of syphilis and epilepsy, (I wonder what might have happened if it had been positive, what would the system had done?) and to see that the document was signed by a GP. A mother with an illegitimate son, working at a laundry earning 10/- a week.

Well have a look now it's 1997 and it seems nothing has changed, have a look in Broadmeadows, and all of those classified areas and you will see the system still drags us down to the lowest level and does nothing to improve anything, except the superficial things. Yet the most important things we have yet society wants to abuse and that's our tangible assets, our souls, our hopes and our dreams.

From the 27/9/47 the system appeared, in writing to be concerned about "70516" Garry John Harrison from then until 20/9/74.

The system hasn't got it right, it's not about prevention, but more about preservation, we have to teach our kids to love, feel love, know love and enjoy the love they are receiving then you don't need preservation, we have to get it right, not just at home but also in the classroom, the love has to continue there. The system always takes the easy way out "THE QUICK FIX" and then it goes away for a while but it raises it's ugly head again.

The system is the one **THAT SHOULD NO BETTER.**
THE END

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