

My Story: Part 11

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly."

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

"I have always found that mercy bears richer fruits than strict justice."

- Abraham Lincoln

I'm back in the UK. I just cannot shake off those ICE officers. Having said that, one was very understanding. He opened up to me and told me of his own former relationship to a European lady. From his own experiences, he could understand my anguish and empathise with my cause.

Concerning my own predicament, this may not amount to a hill of beans, but it was good to know that someone understood my motives. I also sympathised with this ICE officer and felt for his predicament as well. In other circumstances, we may have become good friends, but he had to do his duty and ensure I arrived back in the UK.

His colleague was OK, not unfriendly, but remained somewhat intransigent. This was OK, I had no difficulty with this guy and he was something of a support worker. His colleague was running the show.

I was treated very well on the way home. I got a sandwich and drink on the first leg of the journey between SeaTac (Seattle) airport and Atlanta. And I managed to get a 'Starbuck's' at Atlanta airport.

We arrived at Heathrow around 11-30am to midday. The ICE officers were a little surprised nobody was there from the UK immigration authorities to question me about my motives to travel to Canada. In fact, nobody at Heathrow really cared about my return. One gentleman did turn up eventually and gave the 'so what' response to the ICE officers. These officers were also a little surprised that they were not subjected to the same level of intrusion that US immigration officers impose upon visitors to their country - such as taking fingerprints, photographs, etc. It was all very laid back at Heathrow.

It was now time to go our own ways, though I helped the ICE officers find a suitable way to get into London City centre. We shared an underground ride to Hyde Park Corner where we parted ways. They were staying in a hotel in Mayfair (yes, Mayfair). They were hardly slumming it while in London. One officer stayed for two days and the one who befriended me decided to stay for 4 days.

Essentially, they were paid to bring me back to the UK, but they said they were responsible for their own expenses if they decided to stay in London for any time deemed longer than necessary. In fact, returning people back to their own country is often used as an excuse by ICE officers to take holidays in those countries. As long as they paid their own expenses, they could take holiday leave and save money on flight costs, etc.

I don't know where in Portman Square (Mayfair) they were staying, but it could not have been cheap. There again, they were saving a lot of money on travel costs, so they could afford to spend some money. Seems like a good job to try and get.

I'm now in trouble, financially. There is some money in my overdraft, but because I have not used my Visa account since being detained, it has been frozen. First stop after reaching the city was to visit the one branch of my building society I knew from a previous visit. I headed off to Oxford Street and was able to get some cash out of my account. Then it was over to Victoria for a National Express bus to the Midlands and to stay with my sister for a few days.

I was not able to get through to my sister for a long time, even when I was in London. It was only when I turned up on her doorstep that she knew I alive and (relatively) well.

My next journey was back to the hotel where I had spent so many heartbreaking months worrying about my wife. It was painful to return, but I knew a room would be ready for me. I I have been here since and struggled to survive.

A once-a-week call is arriving from my wife. I still worry myself sick about her welfare and safety. But now she is speaking of leaving the US later this year and returning home. It will then be up to me to get her to the UK. I'm hoping it will be in time for our second wedding anniversary on the 28th May. It all depends on how much money I can raise, how much I can earn. I still have severe Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, and it is worse than ever. It's not easy to make progress when one feels so badly handicapped.

The future is uncertain. Trying to get my wife to the UK will now be a daily challenge. The overwhelming feeling of tiredness and fatigue I feel every day will have to be overcome. I will have to die before I give up with my campaign to be reunited with Ling-Ling.

Part 12 will completed later this year. When I have news about my wife and her hope of coming to the UK, then I shall write more. Until then I am relying upon developing a high profile and making my story known to the rest of the world, and to those in power who may just decide to help me. But I'm not holding my breath.