

## THE RUPTURE - Or, My First Rave Experience

By Simon Carter

HOUSE.....

yeah you know house.....

not sayin i wanted to stuff my face right there and be in league wid some cookie crew sized ass, i guess this comes later ...much later from where i stand anyhoo... anyway, HOUSE...

Who's house? RUNS HOUSE!!! and it was only a matter of months till when they dropped the 4/4 and the 1st thing I did was RUN ....FAR ...AWAY....from MYYYYY HOUSE!!!

Talk about drop yourself in it: here i was, a GOTH...well that's what i THOUGHT i was...but listening to the same 'joy division' tape over and over again on Thornton clevelys beach wasn't getting me anywhere, so i diverted...yeah , ok , clever way of saying 'looked up and checked out my surroundings, and did my utmost to become aware of such,' ...good grief, thank FUCK the average 15 year old isn't AWARE of the ego-logical DAMAGE eh?

ANYWAY

the best bit happened when i , against all odds, decided , that the best option for an open mind right now was to tell my various conflicting homunculi to SHUT THE FUCK UP!!!

hell, i was supposed to APPRECIATE the fact that i had no 'higher education' to go to, was living in a box full of unattainable standards, ironically beset by the complete and utter inability to lean on the might of institution and pull strings (some call it suck cocks for rocks but the only dick i've ever drained the orgasmic energy out of up till now has thankfully been corporate), dressed like an extra from 'charmed', and sitting , alone, on a fucking beach in Clevelys, paying absolutely NO attention to the beautiful sound of sloshing water against pebbles and sand, and FORGET..... everything i knew about life.....

Well, it wasn't like my 47 year old auntie Bernie was ever gonna help me out of THAT dilemma, god bless her, she did end up moving into cruise cabaret event organization , but then there you are, despite how loosely, families are TIED.....

Yeah, i was staying with her, right when i should have been out there, embracing the summer that changed so MANY people of my era, indefinitely....

Well, as luck would have it, I wasn't the one choosing my future life path that day...

I looked to my left (future political factions may dispute this as what happened next was entirely right: i'll let them suss it over a brandy or something (here IIIII go again....pffft) and upon the horizon, two horsemen rode the prow.....

Allright, it was some random geezer and his mate staggering along the seafront, and by all accounts (if only to get the ball onside again) needed a place to rest..

no i DIDN'T let them sit on me, (i was a very different person i my teens), they CHOSE to sit by my side ( at that tender age , the only people who had ever DARED to proximize themselves within my 'reach', 'stench', social pestilence', (there must be a more accurate description) were predominantly aged, fat, senile, (yeah right i sound like a ..insert 'ism' or 'ist' Here...) well they certainly weren't GIRLS MY AGE OK?????

"y'allright mate?"

that was them ...well one of them, i forget which, but hey, he had long hair, i remember that bit cos he hid things in it, more on that later.

"fine"

all i could mutter while doing my best to delete the current social proceedings from my mind, body and soul, out of utter self loathing and embarrassment (goths have a habit of doing that, even the pretendy ones)....come on, i honestly thought i was going to be 'made an example of ' by these 'northern scallywags!!'...well, shows what I knew about people doesn't it? all that, TV...North/South divide, WATFORD FUCKING GAP for FUCKS SAKE! people of now, HEAR ME, THE COLD WAR WAS A TIME WHERE EVERYBODY KNEW WHERE THEY WERE.....right?

oh i was SOOOOOO about to be proved wrong....

"ye don't look allright mate..."

inner tensions made of past experiences dissolved like anadin to skyslaughter whence up against the likes of THIS... 'whaddozemeenidooonlookokay?'

cue his mate "ye look bored"

"bored out yer brain", the first one come back with. me at a total loss right here , i mean what the FUCK do you SAY?

how the HELL are you supposed to GIVE as good as you GOT when SOMEONE you've NEVER MET BEFORE, just so HAPPENS to take ONE LOOK AT YOU, and ...not decide...no....KNOW, at a GLANCE,? exACTLY whats kept you here shakin shingles for the past couple hours or so, and get to the ROOT of it ALL, so QUICKLY, and might i add, DISARMINGLY! for the first time in my teenage LIFE, i was come up upon by two random strangers and WASN'T IN FEAR or OUTLINING POSSIBILITIES, and getting ready to DEFEND MYSELF AGAINST WHAT WAS BOUND TO HAPPEN NEXT!!!

"ye wanna coom to a paaarty?" :geezer one.

"a house party , likes", geezer two.

"really-er , i mean, .....wot now?", whoever I was at the time.....

"not like, right now....tonight though.." geezer two

"warehouse party... raaaave...ye knaaaw", geezer one again.

"oh...like acid house?", ....tellya what, looking back at this from a birds eye/mind librarian point of view, this must have been sooooo SAD to the casual observer: here i was, black skintight jeans, camelskin oxfam jacket, patchouli rub stinking the whole thing to high heaven, black dyed self shaved, crimped, and spiked hair doing wonders for the 'vision' i wished of me but doing absolutely sweet fuck all in the shore breeze of the irish sea over yonder, even having the were-withal to ASSUME, that something I read briefly in a tabloid newspaper a couple weeks back gave me ANY KIND of CLUE as to what life these types were leading on a regular basis....need i go on?

"Midnight, bus garage", says the first.

"we'll find ye there, n get uz all in a motor, likes", adapted by his peer.

"wha. th...he....yu.....party?" i attempted to inquire

"12 o clock, the bus garage, follow the noise, ye caan't miss it"....

and walked away.....

i never listened to that tape again.

oblivious i was to it at the time, this was phase one of the change in direction and insight my life was about to take on. Still, could have gone either way really, i could have just satisfied myself with an outright dismissal of curiosity in favour of a safe and secure life from here on in, but as i didn't even have or know what one of those WAS, my feline side got the better of me.....

and so i ventured onwards, well, veered is the one you and i may agree on if the truth be told.

clueless sod i was, i went back to auntie Bernie's and spent 4 hours in front of the mirror attempting to repair the sea-shore wrought damage, i even snuck out a bottle of red from the pantry not having the guts to try the 'londis market' across the way, anyway, there i was, walking, businessman sprint, man with a purpose, dressed like a chucky victim, or a pale rendition of an extra from the 'lost boys', off to meet up with these ultimately cool guys who were going to take me to a party in a house made of acid; 'novel way to get burned', i figured.

Now, my experience of 'teen fads, and peer pressure' was always, up till this point, locked into the whole 'if you iz a casual you lissen to the beestie boyz, publik enema, salt and frikkin PEPA, n drop yer bomber jackit right dahn as far as yer arse can hit the floor', and anyone who did different was a 'fuckin goffik n got dere eddz beetn in', oh it was the clone wars alright. funny how soon as you got mashed up by a load of pringle perrys that paisley perfect cure fan you were dating suddenly just got a life, a rugby sweater, and a penchant for dancing to rick astley after a few bacardi n cokes easily procured by the jock whose dad ran the hare and hounds pub within the twinkling of an eye and a flash of the abbey students card. SO, why wasn't ANYTHING LIKE THIS, happening around HERE?

here now being the bus garage....midnight.....bedlam.....

Who could tell who anyone was? what they were into? where or how they lived? the major play here was 'riiight, ooze gotta car? ooze got space? ere, i got sum e's, gizz a lift n ah'll sort yers owt likes' and ZOOM, off they went.....

actually, headwise, i still wasn't getting any further than 'cars, at a bus stop?' before those two guys come up from behind, clapped me on the back n said "eh! ye did it!"

"did what?"

"ye coom down"

"well, i say down, but...."

"eee's gonna go ooop!"

"fuckin ooop"

"fuuuuukkkkkiiiiin uuuuuuuuuuuuuuppppppp!!!!!!"

little did i know, but within hours, i was gonna know ABSOLUTELY what they were on about.....

Hundreds of the buggers, windows down, stereo's full blast, the constant throb of a collective yet unrehearsed cultural cacophony punctuated by sultry slogans, science fiction esque bleeps and bleeps, and an ever pervading wika wika wika sound to butter the toast that was a solid yet squishy boom boom kick. Kids hanging out the windows screaming unmentionables at the top of their voices with eyes the size of saucers; a handshake here, a bro slap there, the landscape pitted with brightly clothed ex hooligans chattering away into mobile phones the size of bricks, a tension in the air that could only be described as electric, even the air itself started to taste like licking a 9v battery: young adults from all walks of life, all different backgrounds, banded together in collective anticipation of the festive rush that was to come.....

and nobody trying to kick the shit out of each other?

"I've got us a lift, he's down there, about 50 odd cars back, a red nissan."

"oozat? jaimie?"

"yeah, you know, from down salford way. got some trips on im too e sez."

"come on then. lets go get in. got any info tho? like where we goin n that?"

"bugger off, i only work ere"

"fookin sacked mate"

"awriiiiiite, ang on"

and he was off again, sliding up to some random tit in a pork pie hat, arm across shoulder, word in his ear, pork pie bobbing up n down like he needed a piss or something, mass of arm gesticulations, the admission of defeat by lack of short term memory capacity and the succumbing to a pen and a scrap of paper and the scrawling of bawled instructions scratched out on an ample side slice of pork pie shoulder before bouncing back towards the prostate and immobile figure of myself and my new found one way ticket to another world, well, half anyway. "bout 20 mile up the sea-front. old pitney bowes factory. coom on, lets get out of ere while we still can"

"seconded", and sharp as mustard, quick as a flash, about turn and dodge, duck, dive, weave, through the throng, pushes of 'out my way, cunt!' cunningly disguised as "ey, awwrite maate? hows it goin? what ye ad? yeah its...fuck it, e knows, see yz there awright? safe" and the waves of ravers, for i now knew what they collectively referred to each other as, parted like a day glo speckled red sea, leading us miraculously to the nissan up ahead.

This is when i witnessed a spread of info via word of mouth fast enough to rival even the most fibre opticced of network data packet transfer: Once WE knew where we were going, EVERYBODY ELSE did too! By the time we got to the car the wild eyed driver, whilst happily ensconced in the revelry was keen to get us on board, spin the car round, and up the pavement with a beep of the horn and a couple of skids to open highway. "took yer fookin time dintchuz! we coulda bin stook in ere fer HOURS man!"

"a told yer, joost had te pick oop matey, find out where the venue wz n get to yz, n ere we are. s'all good man. anyway, "cross seat hug for the driver "fookin massive mate. cheers eh!"

"yeah man. easy. was gonna put some birds in the back but, ye naw, washing hair on friday, dryin it saturday.."

"dunno wot dey fookin missin" collective uproarious laughter, all of this, and the previous hours worth of exchanges totally lost on me of course. Still, not one to shy away from new experiences, ventured a greeting, expecting total ignorance, or even a 'shoot oop or piss off', being surprisingly (to me) rewarded with the opposite.

"hi. er, thanks for the lift"

"no worries man. where ye from?"

"oh i come up from london"

"London? good parties down there like?"

oh fuck NOW what was i gonna do? i'd only just sussed out a pub in st albans that would serve me a snakebite and black if i put enough make up on, and here i was, expected to deliver the news, that things my side of the country were hip, trendy, and swinging to the sound of a brand new beat: i could feel the rivulets of sweat under my arms starting to appear.....truth or dare, simon? truth or dare.....

"well....yeah.....guess so....i mean, .....its london innit"

(what a fucking pussy)

"wouldn't know, never bin."

"aw I did, bit cloobey, they'll catch on." and all dissolved into silence, broken only by the crackling stereo's rendition of 'come get my lovin, come get my lovin tonight.....'

oh fuck, what have i done.....

lightbulb above head effect switched into action, this game aint over yet: I knew what to do: "sayin that though, never seen anything like this, that's a lot of people for a house party."

"fookin wicked innit!"

"theys gonna be more than that like. fookin petrol stations all down the m6 far as manchester, full o fookin ravers man,

s'wot matey said oo give us the info, gonna be a biggie"

"goona be ramm"

"fookin paaartaaae!" and there it was again: they all started bobbing about like eggs in a boiling pan. WHAT WAS MAKING THEM DO THIS? music? excitement?

drugs??????

oh yeah, then i dropped the clanger of all clangers. if i really wanted to make myself out as a newbie, i couldn't have done it better than by saying this....

"i guess its a big house they got then....."

"ye wot mate?"

"well, the party.....must be in a big house....somebody rich....big house, all these people...."

"sorry , don't follow yer"

"this party we're going to...the house party. must be in a big house belonging to a rich person for him to have the space to invite all these guests", floundering now, eyes darting around in search of a hole that could just suck me out of here and keep my last fragments of dignity about my person. Oh yes, they laughed.

they fucking pissed themselves!

"where didja dig im oop from?"

"found im on the beach."

"said e was bored"

"looked bored"

"lonely"

"thought we'd show im a good time, like."

"standin on the beach? starin at the sea?..." this from the driver who was now checkin out my robert smith esque mop of hair upon my head. "fookin right e was!" again, pissing themselves and slapping dashboards....

"you've never bin to one of these ave ye"

"er.....well....no.....you can tell right?"

"don't worry mate, twatface ere 's only bin to is first one 2 week ago" at least the laughing was now collective and affected even what looked to me to be members of some higher echelon of uber cool, tellin yz, the disarming nature i was getting from all parties concerned was fuel for a new kind of fire, one where we really COULD all huddle up and take warmth from no matter your creed or outlook. "naw but seriouslikes, this is gonna blow your fookin BLOCK off mate" "id like that.....i mean....you know i don't have a clue whats going to happen don't you?"

little nudge to my side as the instigator of all this, as far as I was concerned anyway for it was he who spoke first on the beach in the afternoon, an event that now seemed to be light years in the past, turned to me and said. "right, i'll fill yer in then. its a warehouse party. there's goona be undreds, mebbe thousands of people like, n we all goin down to this old factory thats closed down, n there's a big party in there, fookin sound system, moozik, lights, visuals, droogs, ravers, fookin AVIN IT mate, you goona fookin flip. yev not sin anythin like this, guarantee it....bigtime"

"Ere, mate, whatever yer name is" this from Jaimie the driver, "By the way wot iz ye name?"

"er, Simon"

"Alright Simon. Not that we'll remember in a few minutes but i'm Jaimie, this here's Pete, and that's Ross. I figured id introduce em all too likes, seein as they a pair o rude basterds, or is it too off yer tits to remember? eh Ross?"

"ye wot mate?"

"See? told yer, Anyway" and reached into his curly long mop of bob hair, revealed a tennis player's sweatband, and pulled a pretty damn large joint from under it. "Ye wanna get this lit oop fer us mate? M gagging fer a draw but ah'm a bit fooked already. Would light it but don't dare tek me ands off the wheel. Fookin sister spiked me drink bfor i coom out, dozy tart"

"What a fookin waste, ah'd av ad that", Ross retorted, now rapt with attention."Got any more?"

"naah, she as tho. sed she'd meet us inside n sort uz out. safer that way, wot wiv security not too oop on fiddlin fanny bags n that"

"Sorry , any more of What?" I enquired.

"Trips." said Jaimie."Ye know, acid."

Now, i was still utterly clueless when it came to what kind of drug was what and did what, id had my fair share of joints of course, my dad sending me up the estate to score (days when i wore my levis and lacoste disguise and kept my hair very much down, combed, and under a baseball cap) so it hadn't quite sunk in that the guy was tripping off his tits and driving us along at 60 miles an hour, until he said

"S'allright when ye get used to it. Fookin road markins are a waste o time tho. most of em're oop in the air now." again, explosions of laughter, dash slapping, and the bobbing up and down came to the fray. "Right, Simon. See wot yer can do wi this then, n DON'T PASS IT TO IM FIRST" hinting at Ross who was sitting in the back with me. "Ah MEEN it. one

lapse in concentration n e'll ave it off yer, n that'll be the end o that"

"Cheeky fooker you t'night eh?" from Ross.

"Its fookin TRUE tho, yer a fookin joint hogger" Pete craning round to address him nose to nose.

"Am I heck!" but his hand was wandering my way. I was quite relaxed by this point, aided dramatically by a few drags on this exquisite tasting and highly potent strain of marijuana.

"One false move and the joint gets it" I quipped, holding it out of reach and holding the lighter very close with intent to burn, exercising a new found bravado that was ultimately inspired by playing along.

"ooooooooOOOOoooooooo" they chorused together in a mock old lady style voice.

"I think id better pass this forward, you ready jaimie?"

"Don't do that mate! watch out!" coming from Pete but it was too late, "Ah will ta, cheers." Jaimie having not only forgotten to buckle up but was both hands off the wheel and turned round in his seat facing me to receive my offering. A screeching of brakes outside and an urgent sound of car horn brought him to his senses. Thankfully, Pete had grabbed the wheel and was steering us away from mortal danger. I think my heart must have skipped a beat, Ross looked a bit pale too as it goes. "AWIIGHT AWWIIIIIGHT!!!" goes Jaimie. " S'AWWIIIIIGHT, ere av not bin drinkin so its ok int' it."

"Av eard of 'Self drive' from a rental, but this takes the piss! Yer a nooter, n a fookin pillock!" ranted Pete.

"Weren't me, s'me sisters fault, doin oop me lucozade fore a went owt"

"If Ah knew that, tht she'd bin at yz ah'd've tekkn yor keys, n drivvn there meself, n yd be looky teh get a ride pal!"

"Ang on....its MY CAR!"

"Sez oo? Property iz THEFT man!"

"Shut the fook oop the pair o yz!" from Ross. "s Pitney Bowes on the Sign oop there. We're ERE!!"

The screaming and cheering could have lasted a lifetime.....

Here, actually constituted another pile of cars and people in turmoil, a 3 car wide Queue stretching out in front as far as anyone could make out in the streetlamped gloom. Shaven heads in black bomber jackets knocking on people's bonnets and attempting to get the ravers to quieten down and 'not bring it on top yer daft hape' worths!" For all the good they were doing, they might as well have been doing it to themselves in a mirror: Nobody, i mean NOBODY, gave a FLYING FUCK! Stereo's were full blast, people hanging out of windows, standing through sunroofs, sitting on bonnets, entire carloads just giving up , exiting the motor and just leaving it there with the engine still running and making the rest of their way on foot. others who were more determined to see their way to the top of the queue on wheels having to get out and move said vehicles to the grass verge, and every now and then a whoop and a cheer as yet another abandoned vehicle wedged itself into the drainage ditch. Meanwhile, back in the nissan.....

"Joost , fookin, leave, it HERE jaimie!"

"ah Caan't , its not miine iz it?"

"See, ah told yer ee wz full o shit!"

"Pack it in the both of yer! n soom one, fer fook's sake, while we're ere, skin oop! ah'm goin fookin spare puttin up wi youse! yer like a pair o toddlers over a tonka toy!"

"Ross.", Jaimie pulling yet another prize winning leek sized bifter out from the other side of the ivan lend'lesque head-wear. "Yer awright bout hash tho? out o weed fer the minute"

"Cheers.....phwwoooooow.....now ow ard wz that eh? bit o peace while we work it out eh?" the smoke plumes that were now engulfing the inside of the car doing exactly what was written on the tin.

"fook this. ahm off fer a look." Pete upping from seat, out and slamming the door.Jaimie winding the window down. "What yer doin?"

"Scopin"

"Y'll not find us again if ye go oop there."

"Not goin that far!"

"So whats oop wi yer?"

About turn and back to the open window "I'm GOIN....to mek meself USEFUL? ever eard of it? s'wot people DO when they FOOKED OFF te the back teeth wi MOOPETS! Nowt personal n that."

"nowt tekken"

"Ahll be BACK, wi E's, Trips, bit more poof te smooke, we're goona fookin need it, and HOPEFULLY, joost possibly, an idea of ow far we are, n where we cn safely DOOMP the CAR, n go FOOKIN RAAVIN, Fook it, while ahm ere, anyone want anythin special? gizz soom mooney"

This is where I started to lose the calming effects of the pot smoking earlier on. I was down to my last 20 quid, had no idea what i needed to spend it on, was oblivious to the fact that i needed cash on the hip to get IN to the bloody place. I was this far into the game now, best move i guess was to come clean. " I got a tenner left. " I uttered, sheepishly.

Silent, abject , shock.....

“ye’ll not go far wi one o them mate”, from Ross.

“I’m ONLY FIFTEEN” I whined.

“yer don’t alf pick um” Pete through the window, scowls all round. You could hear the ticking of an imaginary clock.....

Then it was back, the laughter, almost to tears by this point, all parties involved, including myself, even though i was the total pazzi for this. Well, you couldn’t help it could you? Laughter on this scale is infectious, even before death by firing squad! Jaimie had turned round again, the car was, thankfully, stationary. He reached over, grabbed hold of me, pulled me into a massive bear hug and said “Dont you worry about anythin mate. We’ll look after ye! First time owt n all that, stick with oos n will get yer fookin BOLLOXED!”

“You’re buyin” Pete, having almost recovered by now.

“Course a am! got me redoanancy throo from the pie factory. Giro’s coomin next week n all. MILKY BARS ER ON MEEEEEEEEEE!!!!!!!”

“Coom on then, cough oop. joost sin som bloke wi a moe-bile. Looks fookin boxed too. bet he’s runnin a thrift shop in is kecks like. oory oop, e’s movin quick” Pete starting to nervously bang the car door, Jaimie reaching under his hoodie and fiddling around in a kangaroo pouch, pulls out a couple of fifties and hands them over, “We’ll have four of everythin n chips twice please” as he did so. The traffic in front heaved into life, and moved a grandiose distance of about 4 feet. A couple more ravers followed in pete’s footsteps shouting “FOOOKIN MEEEEENTAAAAALLLLLLL” at the top of their voices, a third came into step making that “wika wika wika” sound while a fourth was doing possibly the worst, most fartiest rendition of a breakbeat by human beatbox. Was I being taken to a party? or was i going to the zoo, the zoo??.....

The joint came back my way, and a quiet but anxious calm came with it. Everybody, including me, were waiting for Pete to come back, I didn’t even know what for, but hell, that was the nature of things so i naturally joined in. Jaimie was the first to break the silence with “ay Ross, rmember that time at the hacienda?”

“wot , when yoo wz followin that fookin trollop round the girls bogs?”

“Not that time.....fookin ell, forgot bout err”

“Built like a fookin bulldog she were, face like the back end of a bus-”

“Not THAT time ye COONT! The other one. when Lopsy tried to joomp from the seats oopstairs to the dancefloor?”

“oh aye, THAT TIME. eh Si, this fookin coont got sooo BOLLOXED he wz gonna joomp from the seats oopstairs, try n land on the main floor, n do the moonwalk e sed”

“But that coulda killed him” I ventured.

“BY eck did it, e never got that far...” Ross letting the last bit hang in the air...

then both of them “Got his belt loop stook to the fookin railing!!!” sidesplitting uproarious guffawing for the next couple of minutes while i tried to picture what and where the Hacienda possibly was. All that and i was a fan of both Joy Division, AND New Order....the fucking IRONY.....

“SORTED!” came the exclamation through the window about 10 minutes later, by which point we’d settled into an easy hashy haze. Coupled with another slap to the car door we were jolted back into existence. Pete was looking a lot happier by this point. “Groobs oop little burdies, owpen wiiide” as he climbed back into the front seat with a handful of tiny decorated bits of paper and what looked like a few capsules of Lemsip. “One fer you”, the paper being popped onto Ross’s tongue. “You’ve ad enuff jaimie”

“As ‘eck I ave! gimme!”

“goo on then. anyway, fouwnd soomwhere oop the way we cn leave ye motor, s’ a bit tight mind but i’ll guide yer in.”

and now Jaimie was on his second trip of the evening. “right, Si, owpen up. Offmuns. Your first step in a larger world” This said in an Obi Wan Kenobi style accent.

I hesitated..

“Go on lad, eat oop. s’good fer ye”

“put airs on ye chest”

“go oooooon”

ross grabbed my hand and said “serious, its fine. you’ll love it. Look at me.....nobody gets left alone when its oos lot. yer in fer a penny, in fer a pound.”

“have you done this a lot then?” my eyes were wide enough, with or without the drugs i think.

“Jaimie ere wz fookin born into a pool o the stuff, like that mate of Asterix”

“but surely that means he doesn’t nee-”

Too late, The bit of paper was in my mouth, and heading full speed towards my digestive system, adjusting my blood flow and rewiring neurons as it made the journey. Things were never going to be the same again. That was it. I was officially , on drugs.

and it kind of worried me.....

Minutes later we'd been guided out of our space in the traffic to crawl alongside, Pete standing between two cars to make sure they stayed apart long enough for Jaimie to cut through and onto a patch of gravel hidden behind a copse, narrowly missing a girl younger than me doubled up and puking into the bush. "Ere ahm not tryin to be funny or anythin Simon, but could yer leave that fookin jacket ere? Smells like a fookin zombie oos bin te the body shop!"

"I think its alright actually" Jaimie: not sure if he was taking the piss, "but you'll not need it in there, its gonna get really hot, like, n y'll tek it off n loose it. So if yer wanna keep it, shove it in the boot. there's a spare oodie in there fer when ye coom out so grab it."

I too was starting to feel adverse towards that jacket as the night grew on so was only happy to comply. I was also starting to understand others contempt for anything remotely 'Gothick' too. Moping around listening to slit your wrist music wearing black and drinking wine in graveyards was really starting to lose its appeal. I had a smile on my face, for the first time since childhood, and i was determined to keep it there.

"Right, lads, Ah'll ang on to the pills till we're joost outside the gate, then we'll neck em before the security sees us. Oose got summat te drink?" Pete was turning into a kind of Psychedelic Sergeant Major before my very eyes. The others drew a blank. "didn't plan that far ahead." Jaimie, looking a little meek because of this.

"I can help here. I was gonna wait till we got to the door to offer this as a way to get in, but doesn't look like that kind of party now." Unscrewing the top from the bottle of red wine i had in a carrier bag and taking a lengthy draft before passing it on. I say unscrew rather than uncork, as the quality of the wine was the epitome of cheap.

"yeuk."

"No thanks..."

Jaimie hesitated, and then, "No, yer alright mate."

"Whats the matter?" I asked, a hint of bewilderment creeping up on me.

"Its just that, most people, if not nobody, drinks alcohol here." explained pete to a now hooded topped me who still just wasn't quite getting it.

"Ruins the droog buzz, ye see." agreed Ross.

"Brings yer ee's down, meks yer need more of em, sooner", from Jaimie.

"And meks yer puke em all oop again if ye've ad a few, n nobody enjoys rootin around in their own pyoowke tryin to find wots left of the bugger nd knockin it back again." this provoked a few chuckles, I however had a knot in my stomach that had just resurfaced for about the 10th time tonight. "You don't think....I haven't....."

"Ruined it for yz? naaaah, y'll be alright, y've not bin drinkin all day ave yer?"

"No, not at all." This was a lie, i'd sneaked a couple of shots of Bells Whisky down my gullet before embarking upon this adventure in the name of 'Dutch Courage'. I guess i was to find out later the damage that was going to have upon my system once a few more chemicals were making their way round its veins. Anyway, i closed the bottle again, stashed it in the boot with the now defunct goth jacket, closed the lid, and set off with the others towards the traffic, and onwards to the disused factory.....

"I suppose it's a good deterrent, in a way", i mused as we wondered along.

"Ye wot mate?" jaimie keeping a keen eye on me like i was some kind of laboratory animal now he didn't have the task of driving and was actually able to get the measure of me for the first time since our journey began.

"The alcohol thing. Nobody drinking at these do's."

"What yer on about si?"

"Well, if there's no alcohol, there'd be no hooligans, you know, football hooligans there, smashing the place up and kicking people in for no reason and all that sort of thing"

"oh yer jokin! there's loads o the coonts there."

My face briefly whitened and my knuckles clenched, only to relax seconds later as he went on. "But there's no trouble likes, they're all pilled oop n loovin each other now, dancin around havin a great laff. Ardly any violence at all at these things. ye get the odd one or two but they get dealt with in their own way."

"how dya mean?"

"Well, these hooligans, the firms n all that, the really nasty ones, they all roonin the droogs n that, or doin the door, holdin onter the dogs, ye know, fieldin the cops, breakin the venues, gettin the rigs in, payin off locals, keepin em sweet so they don't get grassed oop, mafia sorta things, anythin to get a party like this off the ground n keep it that way. y've gotta be soom sort of messed oop psycho wi a death wish if yer wanna mess wi some of them likes."

Nods of heads and murmurs of "aye" from the two others. "They don't even get too arsey if ye find a way round n brek in either, wot wi the mooney them lot re pullin in." he continued. "they'll ave yer if yer show oop with a suitcase full o droogs n they didn't ave owt to do wi floggin it to yer, but part from that...sound really."

"ye'd not think it to look at em though" Pete concluded, agreed laughter from the others.

"scary fookers, built like brick shithouses. mek big daddy look like a fookin stick insect!"

"Never give ye no grief once yer in there tho, get away wi blue murder compared to a cloob. All them wankers watchin yer every move, breathin down yer neck, out on yer earhole if ye so much as THINK of smokin a spliff, hangin out round toilets waitin yer coom out after avin a line just ter grab yer, nick yer stoof n bash u about n out the door, fook-

ers.” This all coming from Ross, wistfully gazing into the distance as he spoke so, sounded to me like a man talking from past experience.

“Cloobs...” Jaimie accompanying this distateful remark with an precision executed flob of spit that hit a nearby road sign dead centre.” Ah ardly bother wiv em meself these days. S’only me bird wants to go owt to em, see some special acts n that. Me i couldn’t give a toss whose playin, long as it’s GOOD.”

“And not over at 4 in the mornin!” Ross and Jaimie slapping hands to this closing remark. All of the above was nicely taking my mind off what the ingested LSD was starting to do.....until now.....

It started with the tail lights: Every time the cars alongside us started to move, the projected luminescence just seemed to stay there, and get longer with each stop and start, like some kind of neon Play-Doh. Then the engines started harmonizing; the steady thump of our footsteps on the tarmac providing a drum track to a new kind of music that was forming itself within the confines of my head. “This music’s pretty good actually.” I smiled to the others. Ross looked at me quizzically. “What yer on about? from over there?”

“No, the stuff thats going on right here”

“That tune there? from that motor? Ah don’t like that one, too floofy, fookin shit.”

“Oh, I didn’t even hear that one until now. oh yeah, lets get away from it, it was much better over there...” , my grin becoming slightly inane.

“But the moozik from the paarteh’s coomin from over THERE”

“Wasn’t talking about that one either. just seems to be....i dunno ....all around us....and the drums sound suspiciously like footsteps.....”

“Eh’s fookin good for a first time dropper!” Laughs all round, then

“You’re serious n’t ye!” Ross’s attention fully on me now. “I thought ye wz tekkin the piss but yer not....Are ye?”

“never been so serious.....if thats possible.....”

Jaimie’s turn to almost collapse in a fit, tears escaping from the sides of his eyes. “I think, ross, what he’s tryin to tell ye, right, is he’s coomin oop on that there offman we bung im!”

Interjection by Pete: “ acieeeeeeeed! acieeeeeeeed!” soon as i looked at him and sort of laughed he swept his arms up and down and side to side like somebody drunk trying to park a plane at Heathrow. And boy did I get into that!

“Pete, you’ve got more arms than Kali now, stop it! put them back.” I told him, still jocular but verging on the slightly scared. Then time itself started to unravel around me.

My steps were starting to falter; i could feel the blood running through my veins, the air around me entering every pore, turned into sweat, and dripping back out again, and i mean EVERY PORE. It was like someone had switched on a Halogen bulb connected to my soul. The stars were winking at me, with their enigmatic sense of humour, and there I felt it: The planet I was on was spinning through space, orbiting our sun, being orbited by other planets, moons, comets, suns, space junk, galaxies, you name it, and I could feel and hear each and every one of them gyrating away in their universal zumba dance, satellites whizzing around my head and me catching excerpts of their transmissions as sound-bites emanating from the procession of vehicles. I could have held down a meaningful conversation with God had I wanted to, and even told Him a few things that not even He was aware of.....if only this feeling wasn’t accompanied by an immense crippling fear of ‘whats HAPPENING TO MEEEEEEEE????????!!!!!!!’

“It’ll be alright once we’re in there pal, don’t you worry.” Jaimie with a reassuring arm across my shoulder stopping me from veering into the ditch. “We’ll pop those e’s, then joost got the door to get through, n thats it, soom REAL moozik, none of yer steppin oop te car engines bollocks!” and a buddy like squeeze. Had I just landed on another planet? one where Jesus had been allowed to live and people were too busy being nice to each other to notice how easy it was to profit from one upmanship? Did they even have GUNS anymore?

Had Acid and Ecstasy really changed all that in a heartbeat?

The warehouse loomed up ahead, the queues of people were think and frantic. The door security looked even meaner than previously described, and their dogs.....the sheer size of those dogs! Pit Bulls, or Rottweilers, guardians of the gates of hell itself, and these guys were holding two in one hand! The other hand receiving tenners and twentys at a rate of hundreds by the minute while their partner security guy gave the people a quick pat down for weapons etc before showing them in through barely a crack in the warehouse slide doors. Crash barriers helped keep the throng nicely packed together, that final squeeze of oppression before being squeezed through the entrance and expanding into a brand new leaderless existence.....

I think the first thing that hit me was the colours: wall to wall flourescent and UV detailed backdrops adorned with smiley faces, cosmic beings, swirling tribal patterns, and alien planet landscapes. Someone had even set up a make-shift sandy beach complete with cardboard palm trees, deckchairs, and the possibility to procure a handkerchief , ok a bandana then but you know what i mean. Multicoloured outlines of slightly obese jelly baby esque humans seemed to scurry across the walls, change size and embed themselves into the very clothes the people around me were wearing. I was later on to find out that these were the work of an incredibly talented New York artist who unfortunately left

this mortal coil way before his time had come. I think it was the constant strobe that had the most effect on what i was seeing. Time suddenly seemed to have gaps and holes in it, and for the first time ever I was able to see into these places and percieve what was really there, behind the facade of our normal waking days, and it really did make everything come to life in a way i'd never dreamed possible. Everything was breathing; the sound, the music, the lights, the people, even the building itself. Patterns seemed to move across the air we breathed, spin towards the sound system, then get sucked in and spat out as something new. Sweeps of lasers and coloured smoky mist seemed to cut the partygoers into small pieces that would stick back together again as long as they followed the dance, which was, do anything that made you feel remotely looser than you were was considered , dancing, just don't stop moving.....

The red and yellow capsules we'd gulped down with the end of a can of coke procured from an ice cream van nearer the entrance were starting to take effect. i mean, an ice cream van and there wasn't a single person in sight under the age of 20! They really do show up absolutely anywhere and everywhere don't they. I was so glad i hadn't brought that jacket after all, and even this hooded top was becoming surplus to requirements. I took it off and tied it round my waist noticing a whole bunch of gunk leaving my hair and dribbling down my neck as I did so. The next bit kind of shocked me too. I mean, what would you normally do if some random stranger walks up to you and throws their drink at you in public? well you'd kick off wouldn't you? There'd be teeth , hair and eyes all over the carpet and a night in the slammer wasn't out of the question. This time though.....

well the drink happened to be a squeezey bottle of mineral water, and he'd got me right where i needed it, all over my head and soaking the last of the goth ness out of my skull along with it: i soooooo wasn't going back to my record and tape collection for a while yet after this!! So I shook off the excess, gave my head a quick rub with the front of my t-shirt, and was touched by a rush of happiness, and an overwhelming desire to hug that person and walk arm around shoulder towards the dancefloor, always paying attention not to lose sight of my benefactors, pete, ross and jaimie.

I actually dared to go right up close to one of the speaker stacks. One bloke actually said to me "stick yer ead in there mate, coom on, it'll blow yer miiiiiiiiind", he was right, i actually felt my brain almost loosen and fly out from between my ears after just a few seconds of putting my head inside the sub bass units. It was the last bit i needed to do to shake any doubt about my situation, and open up to the fantastically positive currents that engulfed me and my fellow partgoers, for now i felt like one of them, belonging to some joyous counterculture for the first time in my life, and boy was it a good one.....

I must have been dancing for hours non stop but it felt like seconds had passed since i'd seen the lads again. Jaimie had turned up by this point with yet another zeppelin sized joint dangling from his mouth which he then passed onto me. "coom n ave a look over ere. its like fookin houston" was what i think he must have said to me before escorting me round the back of the speaker stacks and to some sort of makeshift stage in between that i hadn't been aware of until now. More of those big shaven headed bastards in black bombers were to be seen guarding the steps, but jaimie just seemed to wave his hand 'obi wan kenobi' style and we were able to pass straight through. Now i got to see what all the fuss was about, and the view of the rave from here, was nothing short of magnificent....

Gouts of fire spewed up from a distance, a few jugglers were the source of this. Watching these guys and girls casually drinking from a petrol flagon and throwing it into the air as dragons breath surrounded by cheering onlookers, well it just spun my nut thats what it did, i'm not going to be clever about the phrasing of that one, thats for sure! The crowd seemed to go on for ever.....

Jaimie had just finished conversing with two of the people up on the platform when he beckoned me over. I guess these people were going to be responsible for the next bit of music that was going to be played, for as they pulled a tarpaulin off a section of bench, the future greeted me in the form of glowing boxes, flashing lights and diodes, buttons, levers, keys, pads, and anything else you might have seen onboard the Millenium Falcon.

We were in fact not just at some party, we were onboard a massive inside out spaceship, and the pilots looked ever so unlikely: How was one of them going to be able to even SEE through that mass of tangled hair? let alone drive us towards a galaxy far far away and back! Well he obviously had some inkling of what he was going to do because it was at this point he flexed his fingers together and outwards the way a piano virtuoso would do before burying himself within the controls, his hands a flurry across mixer faders, and bashing buttons as fast as they could blink. The other guy grabbed the mic, said something about going mental or whatever then joined in with his mate, stabbing at switches and making peculiar patterns emerge on an ever so apt looking oscilloscope. The crowd were going wild. Jaimie took his cue and told me "well you've seen mission control, but we don't wanna disturb em too mooch eh! joost coom oop ere to giv um a bifter likes, shall we?" pointing to the steps and motioning for us to go down and check out what music was to emerge from these crazed space warriors minds.

Now I had experimented rudimentarily with cutting up tape and re-arranging it my way, i also had been given a japa- nese computer by my uncle that was capable of providing 4 tracks of synthesizer parts, and a drum machine I'd ran away with from the front stall of Dixons Hi Fi was enough for me to commit sonic experiments to tape when i should have been studying for my exams, but walking down those steps , to the dancefloor again, I was filled with the certainty

that whatever I was going to do with my life, whether it be for fun or profit, was going to heavily involve me being around creations such as they had in their hands up on that stage. I had never been so sure of anything ever before, but here I was making a promise to myself, that come what may, one day I was going to be doing just like they were. Playing mind bending repetitive music to crowds of dynamically happy people, stoned or otherwise, and bringing us all towards a brighter future as a result.

There was definitely work to do.....

But all that would come later in life, for the here and now, i had a rave to get on with, more dancing to do, more smiling, cheering , hugging, jumping, kissing, sweating, talking utter rubbish with random strangers and promising to see them again at the next one of these, wherever that would be. The absence of alcohol was definitely a good thing, even if it were to be shortlived as the movement made its way back into clubland, and eventually brought back bar culture in a new and advanced form many years later, but people were just different to what I was used to, or had been brought up to believe. There was finally hope beyond an existence addicted to football, making as much money as you could at the expense of all that crossed your path, quaffing 'dos equis' in a stripey work shirt even though this was your night off, and getting it covered in blood through bashing the shit out of anyone who looked at you funny once you'd had a few. Popstars were on the verge of being replaced by "faceless techno bollocks" and the people of earth were up for it. Nobody cared about the world view imposed upon us anymore, it was too late for that now, for we had found something in amongst all that was cast away by a system that had failed us: we had finally found each other.....

I went back to school in september of that year a very different person. I now looked up to the sky and smiled rather than down at my feet and hiding. I never had a chance to sit there and be bored and stare off into space even though thats exactly what it looked like i as doing most of the time, i was actually composing tracks in my head in the eternal hope i was going to get to use some of these fancy toys sometime in the future. Many of my so called 'enemies' would come up to me and ask what I was so cheerful about?

There was no point in telling them until they discovered it for themselves, they wouldn't believe me anyway.....