

REALITY QUEST

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...continued...

...television news that evening, because when he saw my picture and that I was wanted for kidnapping, he immediately called the police and reported the incident. How stupid he must have felt- the poor guy.

I took off the front plate of "L-8AGAIN" and put it on the front of our new car. Then I made the first mistake of my getaway.

I had to let my boss know where his truck was, so I called his house but no one answered. I remembered that he had a good friend that worked at the Safeway in Hamilton. I didn't know it at the time, but his good friend had a wife who didn't know me, but knew that I thought all born again Christians were lunatics. Shane Morris was a born again Christian, but he knew I held my opinion in jest. Shane and I had discussed religion on many occasions and I believe he came to respect my views enough that he began to discuss some of the things we talked about at his church. He must have mentioned my name to other members, because he later told me how much this particular woman detested the views I held.

Anyway, I called up the Safeway and asked to talk to the manager of the grocery department. I couldn't remember the guy's name, but knew he was the manager of the grocery department. He wasn't working that day, but I found out his name and got his home number from directory assistance. I called to leave a message with him to give to Shane. I trusted this guy somewhat, so I thought I could tell him where I had left "L-8AGAIN". When I called, his wife answered the phone. I proceeded to explain where I had left the truck. She was very nice on the phone, and had already heard about what had happened and wished me the best of luck. Little did I know that she would hang up the phone, call the police, and anonymously give them the address where I was at. I had no idea this lady hated me enough to do this, nor did I concern myself in the least. However, about 30 minutes later, I announced to Jackie that we had to leave immediately. What prompted me to do so, I do not know. Jackie was tired. She tried to convince me that we could stay at the motel for the night, get a good rest, and leave in the morning. I don't know why, but I was determined to pack up the kids and leave for Idaho.

The second mistake I made was to call my best friend, Kyle Williams, in Idaho Falls, Idaho collect. I called him and explained what had happened. Kyle knew me well and offered any assistance he could to help. Stupid me! I forgot that the motel had a list of all the calls made from that room. I didn't think about that at the time I called Kyle to tell him we were coming.

We packed the kids in the car, and left out the back way where our car was parked. When we drove around the front of the motel, there was a police car with two officers getting out. I didn't think anything of it at the time and joked to Jackie, "Boy, wouldn't that be funny if they were looking for us?" Little did I know, but they were. I guess Shane's blessing of, "...May God be with you and your family," paid off.

CHAPTER TWELVE

MY FRIEND, JUDAS

I drove all night without stopping until we reached Kyle's house in Idaho Falls. He greeted us with open arms and made our first night after taking Joshua very comfortable.

I woke up the next morning and asked Kyle if he would go with me back to Montana, so that we could get some of our stuff we had left behind. He agreed, so we left Jackie and the kids at his house and took his car and headed back up to Montana.

We had a wonderful trip going back to Montana. Kyle and I first met when we both served together as missionaries for the Mormon church in Buenos Aires, Argentina. We were wonderful friends

and I trusted Kyle with my life. We talked the whole way up, which made the eight hour drive go by quickly.

When we reached Missoula, I wanted to go back to the motel where we had stayed and see if my boss had picked up his truck okay. When we got to the motel, I noticed that the truck was not where we had parked it the night before. Curiosity overcame me as I wondered if in fact those police officers I had noticed upon leaving the night before, were looking for me. I went into the front office and asked about anything unusual which had taken place yesterday. The clerk, who was the same woman who had checked me in the day before, and who obviously couldn't wait to tell someone about her involvement, said, "Oh, you wouldn't believe what happened!" As I stood there with Kyle, my heart began to beat faster.

"This guy came in and said he was Dan Farmer. But he was really a kidnapper who the police were looking for. He cut his hair in his room, changed his clothes, stole a car and took off for Idaho." "How do they know he went to Idaho," I asked, trying to keep my heart from beating out of my chest. "Well, we keep track of all the phone calls made from the rooms," she responded triumphantly, as if she was helping to enforce justice. "I gave a copy of his calls to the police and they found some collect calls to Idaho Falls." I thanked the clerk kindly for her wonderful efforts in trying to bring about justice, because what she had just done enabled me to escape injustice once again.

Kyle and I calmly left the office. I yelled to Kyle to keep up, as I sprinted around the corner where I noticed a pay phone. I frantically called Jackie collect. Jackie answered the phone, accepted the call, and I said, "Jackie listen carefully!" I then proceeded to tell Jackie that the police knew we were at Kyle's. But before I was able to finish the sentence, Jackie screamed that they had already been at the house, talked to her, saw the kids and left.

About three hours before, a police officer knocked on Kyle's front door and asked if anyone knew about the whereabouts of Chris Nemelka, a.k.a. Abraham Stohl, a.k.a. Dan Farmer. Jackie, who has never told a lie in her life, wasn't about to break tradition today. She answered him, "I'm his wife." The officer then asked if she knew where I was. She told him that I had gone with Kyle for a couple of days and that she didn't know when I would be back. Miraculously, the officer left his name and number and told her to have Kyle call him when he got back.

The officer obviously assumed that Jackie said that she was Kyle's wife, assuming that since Jackie was also wanted for kidnapping, she would not be so cooperative. Later, that poor cop beat his head against the wall when he came to realize that he came face to face with a wanted kidnapper, and the kidnapped child, and let them get away.

Shane's blessing was still working.

I instructed Jackie to call a cab and take the kids to a motel in Idaho Falls and stay there until we got back. Kyle and I turned around and immediately went back to Idaho Falls. On the way back, Kyle told me he was going to give me his birth certificate, college diploma, and anything else I needed to take on his identity.

Kyle and I made that eight hour drive back in about five hours.

We went straight to the motel where Jackie was. I knew the cab company now had a record of where they dropped her off, so I took my family to another motel in the area. Once Jackie was safe in the motel, Kyle and I returned to his house where he gave me the license plates off his car, his identification, and a big hug. I thanked my friend and told him I would stay in touch.

The next day, I loaded up the family and left for Twin Falls, Idaho, where I was going to apply for a license under the name of Kyle D. Williams. We arrived in Twin Falls about 6:00 p.m., that same day. I was very tired, having driven all the way myself without stopping. We checked into a motel and finally I felt like we could relax.

Later that evening, I had the strongest premonition to call Kyle and tell him that we were okay and what we were doing. I called him collect. Kyle accepted the collect call and started to cry. "What's wrong, Kyle?" I asked quite surprised. "Chris, I am Judas," he sobbed. "What did you do?" I asked. "Chris the cops are listening right now. They've bugged my phone and are going to arrest you when you try to get a license under my name. They told me I was going to jail if I didn't cooperate. I'm sorry my friend, I love you!"

"What have you done," I said and then hung up the phone.

It didn't take that police officer too long to figure out that he had made a big mistake the day before at Kyle's house. Before long, Kyle's house was surrounded by police cars as they interrogated him about my

where abouts. They intimidated and scared my poor friend until he gave in. However, they were listening when Kyle turned on them and informed me what they were doing.

Kyle disappeared the next day, not to reappear again until all charges against me were dropped. Yes, Kyle was Judas, but it was not me he betrayed.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN NO REASON TO RUN

Because of Kyle's help, I was able to allude the authorities for some time. I was scared. "Why is the government doing this to me?" I often thought to myself. "I have done nothing wrong! I was only trying to protect my family."

Back in Ravalli County, Montana, the system began to role with its injustice.

I guess the District Attorney, George Corn, was a little bit worried, at the time, about what his office was getting involved with, so he turned the case over to Deputy District Attorney, Gerald D. Williams. An election was coming up and Corn must have smelled some dirty underwear in this case, and didn't want to get caught with his pants down. Later, I believe he wished he had never heard about this case, especially if this book gets published.

On the 14th of June, 1991, the day I took Joshua from the D.F.S., Williams went before Judge Nancy Sabo, Justice of the Peace, and got a warrant for Jackie's and my arrest for the charge of "VISITATION INTERFERENCE", a misdemeanor. (See appendix ?) Bail was set at \$1,000.

Well, I had "pissed off", which is the term used by a Sheriff's Deputy involved in the case, the authorities in Ravalli county, by making them look like fools in trying to catch me. So what did the brave, just County Attorney's office decide to do? On June, 15, 1994, a Saturday, Williams found Judge Sabo at her home, or wherever she could be found, and got her to sign another warrant upgrading the charge against me to "KIDNAPPING", a felony, and increased my bail to \$20,000. (See appendix ?)

You see, these "hick" attorneys *wanted* this lowly farmer who had embarrassed them. They knew they couldn't get him on their own, so they enlisted the aid of the Federal Government. They turned me into a "Wanted Felon" so that the F.B.I. would get involved and help them track and find this, "*felon who is armed and dangerous, willing to take lives if necessary.*" I didn't own a gun or had I ever threatened so much as a bird in my life. I had not even received so much as a parking ticket in the past, but all of the sudden, I was on the front page of all of Montana's newspapers, on the 5 o'clock news, and on the computer of every law enforcement agency in the country.

What is amusing are the ensuing stories which the media concocted while I was on the run. In one of the news story, one will note that even though the police knew we were on our way to Idaho Falls, and had even spoken to my wife, who, by the way, was also wanted for felony kidnapping, this newspaper had my smiling picture on the front page claiming we were trying to get over the mountains into Canada. Most other stories were just as ridiculous.

Eventually, we ended up in Salt Lake City where I felt that the justice there couldn't be as bad as Montana's. It was here that I learned just how serious things had become. I was still confused as to why the system couldn't figure out the injustice that had occurred. It became obvious that many of the main characters in my case were frantically trying to "save face" by making me out to be someone and to have committed something I did not.

I decided to turn myself into the authorities, but only after I told my story to the media in order to put pressure on "the system" to give me a fair hearing.

I talked to the Salt Lake Tribune, a local Utah paper, who interviewed me and ran my story. I soon found out that the legal system despises the media, unless they serve their purposes; and the media cooperates with the legal system as much as possible to stay out of trouble with "the system".

Why should I continue to run when I am not guilty of anything but protecting my rights as a free, United States, parent? I trusted that "the system" would treat me fairly and understand my actions. I did not want to run any more. But, had I known beforehand what was going to happen after I turned myself in, i.e., how the system works to protect its own and punish all those who stand up to it, I would have had reason to take my family and run forever.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN FILIAL LOVE RETURNS

After I had taken Joshua back from the State of Montana and proceeded to run, Paula called my relatives in Utah and perpetuated lies that has destroyed her credibility with many to this day.

She called some of my brothers and told them that I had kidnapped Joshua and that I had gone crazy. She continued that the authorities were desperately looking for me and that she thought I might come to Utah and seek refuge with some of my relatives. She continued claiming that I could be armed and dangerous and could possibly harm members of my own family.

I previously discussed in chapter five how my own father turned against me and began to persecute me. After my father received a call from Paula informing him of Joshua's abduction, he very soon thereafter left for Montana to aid Paula in her cause. My father figured I had flipped out and that his grandchildren were in danger.

My dad proceeded to Kalispell where he spoke with Paula and Brittany. After his conversation with Brittany, my father began to doubt the allegations against Jackie and me. Notwithstanding his doubts, he gave Oleson \$500 to aid Paula and now him, as a party to the cause, in that he was concerned for the welfare of his grandchildren, and wanted custody taken away from me.

My father is an ex-policeman and a very intelligent individual. Even though he didn't understand me and had estranged himself from me, he felt he needed to do his own investigation. He went to Ravalli County, did an investigation and became pretty upset with the Ladenburgs and their attorney. He found out that I was being railroaded and persecuted beyond anything he had yet witnessed being involved for over 25 years in the legal system. He called up Oleson, told him to stop the case against me, pay him back his retainer, and send all the confidential information which he had provided the case against me back to him.

Oleson was a proud attorney who didn't like to be told what to do. He refused to cooperate with my father. The Ladenburgs got very upset they had lost the help of my father and from that day forward, have called him a liar, manipulator, and many other words which would be up for censoring.

Even though my father didn't agree with my religious views, he wanted the truth to be known. If I had been guilty of any crime, my father would have let me be punished. But seeing that I had been abused far worse than he ever persecuted me, he decided to do all he could to help me.

I have included his statement which he prepared for his attorney to be presented to the court, as appendix ?. Though I disagree with my father in many ways today, I can honestly say that his statement presented in the appendix is straightforward and truthful. However, his accusations against the Ladenburgs are merely his opinion of them and not necessarily the truth.

After I turned myself in and my siblings were able to hear my side of the story, they immediately determined that their fears about me were simply false accusations made from Paula's wild imagination. Some of them never believed them for a moment.

My eldest brother, Mike, who is married to Paula's eldest sister Teena, was another story. Though I had never done anything to Mike or his family, he hated me and felt that I was trying to disrupt his family. Mike was in a hard spot. If he took my side, he would lose his wife who would take his kids away. Being a staunch Mormon, and me being an ex-Mormon, was all that was needed for Mike to make his stand. However, I trust that my big brother will see things a little different when he has the facts presented to him, so that he can make a better judgment not based on religious bigotry. It is sad to admit that Mike, who was once my idol, and I will never share the closeness that two brothers should, just because of the "wrath of his wife", something Mike will avoid even at the peril of any other relationship, or truth for that matter.

My father and sisters arranged bail for me and I was soon free to get my case together and fight the injustice that had taken place.

It is nice to have one's family backing one in this sort of situation, but it would have been even nicer had the filial feelings stayed in the heart where they belong instead of in the mouth where they can cause tremendous pain and sorrow for a family. For it wasn't too long after the charges were dropped against me, that my father again turned against me and continues to persecute me because of religion to this day. . . .

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