

Friday 24th April 2015

The Great Escape...

Blackness... Is this the last colour that I'll see? My fatigued eyes struggle to open. Relentlessly, my lifeless body is being pierced by heated needles, scorching my skin. The hands of death are trying to drag me back to hell. My lugubrious past is haunting me. An endless land of grey, red and brown fills my fear stricken eyes. Where am I? Is this heaven or hell? The merciless waves continue to thrash my body. I'm vulnerable here, death always upon me. With my very last strength I battle my famine and thirst to live. I gaze up... A mountain of pain scowls down on me. Like a baby, I crawl from the hands of death. With my legs paralyzed by the bitterness of the waves I heave my motionless body up the treacherous mountain. Trying to keep my eyes open, I pass the wreckage of my raft submerged with in the shingle and stones. There is no going back now. The pebbles run from my knees as-well-as scar them whilst I try to conquer the mountain of pain.

Breeze... The breeze that I've been longing to feel replenishes my body. I sit on the lofty grass and take in my surroundings. I hear the seagulls squawking; it's not the normal sound of screaming children that I hear. I see the clouds above me, or is that the smoke of fire burning houses to embers? Scanning the horizon my eyes widen at the sight. The sight that tells me the truth. A flag... The English flag... Finally, I'm here in paradise. For a moment reality is a dream. The hunger, the thirst, the hypothermia; all gone. Then, reality strikes. If anyone sees me (a black man with dilapidated clothes and speaking a different language) then they could report me to the authorities. I have to stay inconspicuous. I need to find: shelter, warmth, food and water. The wails of sirens startle me. Someone's seen me and recognised me as an asylum seeker. The authorities are here to get me and send me back to my life of hell. I run...Anywhere... My conscience hauls me into a bush. Men with metal cuffs, just the other side of my shelter...

My past comes back to haunt me:

"Makambe, Makambe, where are you!!!" I screamed to my son. "Father... father. Help me!" Came the faint distant reply of my son. I knew that that would be the last time that I would hear his innocent voice.

“Come back ‘ere... Oi!!” Suddenly, Men were chasing me through my once beautiful village. I threw myself into a wreck of a mud house. Looking through a hole in the last standing wall I saw the men with guns on the other side. That was when I realized - I must leave the dastardly country...

By Harrison Steven Bailey Last