

SEVEN

MIKE WECH

Copyright © 2011 Mike Wech
All rights reserved.
ISBN: 0615505813
ISBN-13: 978-0615505817

DEDICATION

To my wife, Ana Maria, whose love and support always
gets me through my roughest moments.

To our parents
Mike and Diane Wech and Mary and Robert DuFour.
They are blessings to us and their contributions to our lives
have helped us achieve our dreams.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks for the contributions of
My friends and family, and the mercy of God,
Who rescued me from the depths of darkness
And showed me His grace, love and kindness.

SEVEN

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 8, 2010

I feel like I'm signing away my life. Literally. I just read through the consent forms I need to sign to cover this story. A story that has to be told. A story I uncovered as part of my investigation into seven missing death row prisoners in the State of Texas.

This journal along with my audio recordings and video diary is my record of the Uphir Behavioral Health Center in Uphir, Texas. An unofficial ghost town that's completely off the grid. A place without a ZIP code or mailing address.

My best guess is that this is a privately funded asylum where experimental procedures are being conducted without the consent of its patients. While conducting this investigation, I am voluntarily under the care of Dr. Alan Haworth, a clinical psychologist and Reverend William H. Billings, a local minister.

My name is Eddie Hansen. I'm a reporter for the Los Angeles Times.

It is my theory that Annette Dobson, The SIDS Killer, is being held in Uphir, at the asylum, under the care of Billings and Haworth.

In case you missed the news, here's her story. Over a thirteen-year period, Mrs. Dobson killed six of her children before they reached their first birthday. Each time, SIDS was determined as the cause of death and no wrongdoing was suspected.

Pregnant with child number seven, Dobson broke down and confessed to the murders. A trial quickly ensued, and Annette Dobson received the death penalty from the great state of Texas, with her execution scheduled for Friday May 13, 2011. According to case records, Mrs. Dobson had requested a closed execution to be moved to November 19, 2010 with no media, no family, and no outside witnesses to be present. She stated that her privacy was to be respected, and she alone would suffer the consequences of her actions. She left no last statement. A death certificate was filed with the state on the nineteenth, and her case was closed.

Kevin Dobson, her infamous husband vehemently denied knowledge of the murders. He repeatedly muttered to me in our interview that Annie was afraid to die.

“She didn’t want to go to hell and take the baby with her,” he told me. “There is no way she would move her execution.”

Kevin said she pleaded insistently for an abortion, then an exorcism before her execution, so she wouldn’t be attached to the demons committed to dragging her to hell.

She told Kevin months earlier that she wanted him to be with her at the end, but when the State told Kevin that her wishes had changed, he knew something was wrong. So he came to me. He begged me to find answers.

So here I am sitting in the only diner in Dell City, Texas, a booming bastion of 413 people. The town infamously known in the children’s song *The Farmer in the Dell*, and the last place I’ll have phone service or Internet access for a while. I feel like Michael J. Fox in *Back to the Future*. It’s as if I punched 1957 on the dashboard of my Delorian and crashed into this world. A far cry from my bungalow in Hollywood.

Hearing people talk about hunting elk with a White Onyx, double barrel, is refreshing compared to the endless chatter of wanna-be Spielbergs gabbing about their latest film project over a half-decaf double latte.

The fashionable beauty of missing teeth makes every smile a picture worth a thousand words, and I'm stuck in this moment, enjoying simplicity. Everything seems so appreciatively simple, yet this hunger in me is pushing me to sign my life away for my shot at glory.

These people don't give a shit about glory. They ain't crying to become the next reality star or rock legend. They're not spending their last dollar on plastic surgery desperately trying to maintain fleeting youth.

No. They're going to take their toothless asses out into the woods behind me and shoot a deer or elk or rabbit and some primal urge within them are going to find unlimited satisfaction in dragging that carcass back home on top of their pickup truck and ripping it apart to eat.

I guess I'm the same animal with a more sophisticated palette and better dental coverage. My unlimited satisfaction is coming from the hunt too. The hunt for truth, for my story to be seen by the world. I'm going thirty-two miles away from what these Dell folks call civilization, heading into nowhere to hunt.

Or maybe I'm the poor elk, wandering into the path of the White Onyx, staring stupidly into that double barrel wondering what the hell I did to deserve this fate.

As a precautionary measure, my assistant, and part-time girlfriend, Melody Swann is transcribing my tapes and piecing this diary together from my notes.

You read that right. Her real name is Melody Swann, and as fate would have it, she came to Hollywood to be a singer. Five American Idol auditions later and a part time job at Dimples Karaoke Bar and here we are together. Anyway, should anything happen to me, Melody will retain authorship of this work and she has instructions for its completion.

NOTE: All entries will be assembled in chronological order and transcribed as given. Entries may be placed together to provide clarity and descriptions of audio and video recordings may be added as needed.

Should anything happen to me?

As I write these words, the gravity of the situation bears contemplation. I've assessed the risk, and the rewards far outweigh any potential problems I may encounter. Speaking of rewards, I need to speak to my greatest one now. Sometimes I even tape our conversations so I can remember her voice and picture her face when I'm away from home.

"Hey baby girl."

"Daddy!" she answered, excitedly.

The sound of her voice melted any remaining fear that I felt as I asked, "How's my Pebbly?"

"Daddy, I'm eight."

"I know sweetie," I told her. "You're a big girl. I love you; Peb... Kennedy. I love you Kennedy. Sorry."

"I love you. Guess what?"

"What?"

"I got the Virgin Mary. I got it Daddy."

"Wow. Where is she?"

"You're silly." Her laugh busted my heart open as she continued. "In the play, Daddy. My school play. I'm the Virgin Mary. I got a solo. I'm the only one. I'm singing a solo in front of the whole school."

"Are you scared?" I asked.

"No. Daddy. It's fun. I love it. But mommy put me in ballet too. I like hip-hop better. The music is weird. And you can't just have fun, you have to be all in step and stuff, and I told mommy, it sucks, but she says it makes me cultured, which is so dumb. I don't want to be like yogurt."

I laughed. "You'll be peachy," I said.

"She makes me eat it, you know. But I only like vanilla with Cheerios. But Todd always licks his fingers and sticks them in the box. And Mommy even doesn't hit him. If I did that, I'd be so dead."

"Me too, sweetie."

And then, there was that moment of silence when I knew her little brain was churning with possibility.

"Daddy?"

"Yeah, baby."

"Promise me something?"

"Sure, I can try honey. What is it?"

"Promise! You won't tell mom."

"Don't worry."

"Okay," she said so innocently. "First you have to come to my play."

"I'll ask your mom."

"Daddy. No! You have to come. You have to! Then you can spend Christmas with me."

"Christmas with whom?" I knew that voice. I knew it too well. "Christmas with whom? Who are you talking to Kennedy?"

"Nobody. My friend," I heard my baby say defensively.

"Give me the phone. Give me that phone! This is not the phone I bought you, is it?"

There was silence. "Is this the phone I bought you?"

More silence. And then the inevitable.

"Honey. Go outside. Go. Now!" I heard her instruct Kennedy. Then came the shit storm.

"Son of a bitch. I warned you not to buy her any more phones."

"Sorry," was all I could muster. The energy sucked out of my body, but this was nowhere near the end of this conversation. If you knew my ex-wife Jamie like I do, you'd know exactly what was coming.

"How stupid are you?" she barked.

"Really."

"Yeah, really stupid Eddie. You're violating a court order."

"I'm not with her, okay? You got sole custody. You win."

"That's not the point, Eddie. When can we live our lives? You never let go. It's been four years. Move on. She would have forgotten about you, and I'd have peace in my family. Not some child who doesn't acknowledge her father."

"I am her father!"

"You're nobody's father. You blew that privilege. Move on with your life."

"It's not final. You know it."

"You brought this on yourself. You bring everything on yourself Eddie. That's you! You are responsible for your actions. Now you have to pay for them."

"I am paying!"

"No you're not. You never paid alimony. You thought you had the upper hand, then you made your play for her."

"I gave you everything I had. I wanted us to work out."

"You never thought Scott would beat you, Eddie. You thought you'd be on top. Get your big story and ride off into the sunset with my baby."

"I never said that. I wanted to work this out."

"Then work it out. Work Eddie. Pay your child support so you can support your child. You want a kid. Kids cost money. I better not catch you within fifty yards of my daughter, or your next call will be for bail money. Understand?"

That was that. She never gave me time to answer. She always has to have the last word.

"Need a fill?"

That was my waitress bringing me back to reality, ready to stalk me with more coffee. She has this peculiar habit of sneaking up behind me while I'm writing and starting up a conversation.

"You alright, hon? Your face one-eightied, just flippy flopped all happy to sad."

"Sure, fill me," I said, watching her watch me. "See I flipped back. All smiles," I told her as I stretched out my cup.

"Well that's better. People digest better when they're happy. You've been sitting here all day, and your face keeps changing."

"I've got a lot going on," I told her trying to organize my things.

"I see. All them papers you got," she told me before her face changed with a look of wonder and sense of excitement. "I know you. I do. You were here before. 'Bout a month or two ago, weren't ya?" she asked.

"You got me," I smiled.

"I 'member you now," she said, scanning me with curiosity. "Said you were headed up to Uphir."

"No." I answered.

Then, she paused for a second as this look of confusion settled into her face. "You made it back here."

"Guess I did," I said, smiling as I noticed the sudden change in her demeanor. A frightened cognizance crawled through her as she asked, "How'd you do that?"

"Do what?" I replied.

"Get out," she groaned, fighting something building up inside her. "Never seen anyone go up that way and come back. Maybe they do. But they don't stop here."

Then with a sincere look, she gazed back at me and asked innocently, "Is it my food?"

"No, the food's great," I responded, trying to be polite.

She just smiled back, relieved, and her next words poured out over me like hot coffee. "Well then, it must be the devil!"

"What do you mean?" I inquired.

She stopped cold and looked around as if someone else besides me was listening, then she leaned into me and whispered tentatively, "You can't say nothing. Promise?"

"Sure" I told her.

"Promise!" she warned.

"Yeah. Go ahead," I said as she walked over to the window and looked out making sure no one was within audible distance.

Then she turned and slowly walked back to me, acting a bit nervous with the coffee pot shaking in her hands. Clenching the pot, she let out a mighty sigh and began.

“Bout ten years ago. They came here looking at land. Asking questions. Mostly about the water, 'cuz we feed El Paso, and they wanted to run pipes out there too.”

“Who?” I asked, perking up.

“I don’t know. Corporate. Government folk. The kind with money. Anyhoo, all the sudden, the whole town went crazy, fighting over everything. Money, mostly, I guess. ‘Cuz they spent a lot up there. Then once that hospital got reborn, it got worse.”

“How?” I asked, feeling her nervous energy puncture me.

“You know, the folk in the wood who lived up near there, all moved out. Or disappeared. Some we just never heard from. And nobody says nothing.”

“Why you think?” I asked, seeing her hesitate for a moment before scurrying to the window again, looking out carefully for signs of trouble.

She took a deep breath, then slowly walked back and sat down across from me, staring at me with eyes that reminded me of a wounded animal. In choppy breaths, she continued her story. “They were scared to death... Evil things go on... Some folk say they heard hell rising. Demons running wild... You can never... tell anyone, I told you this. Promise

“I won’t. You can tell me anything,” I said, touching her hand gently, to reassure her of my intentions.

“All right. You have kind eyes,” she replied, standing up and nervously taking out a rag to wipe off the coffee that missed my cup.

“Anything else peculiar, you notice?” I asked, feeling there was something beneath her charred surface.

“Well... I did see prison trucks roll on by here at night. Mostly down that back road,” she revealed, gesturing with her head cocked toward the back door.

That perked me up more than the coffee, knowing clues to my investigation were bubbling up all around me. She finished wiping the table and began to make her way past me when I stopped her and asked, “You know if any came through here recently.”

She hesitated, trying to read me for trust. "Not that I know of," she whispered. "But, a man did come by in a uniform, while back, looking for that hospital. You know... No one can figure out them roads up there, all curvy and crisscrossed. They don't want nobody up there. That other one, he ain't been back."

"Was he a Spanish guy?" I asked.

"I think so... yessiree!" she exclaimed excitedly.

"Was his name Renaldo?"

She paused for a moment, thinking hard, then scanned the room again like she was trying to listen for the answer.

"Rings a bell," she fluttered. Then her eyes sort of bugged out as she burst with this vein of knowledge. She bent down and looked me dead in the eye saying, "Know what! I just heard him. Jose. His name is Jose!"

"You what? You heard what?" I said, trying to gauge her sanity. She squinted as if listening to someone whisper in her ear. Then, she closed her eyes softly and squatted down in front of me as we engulfed this ominous breath of silence together. After a moment, she casually responded, "No. Sorry... He said Ose. Not Jose." She paused again. "Yep. Ose! He called you. I just heard him."

"What?" I answered, confused.

She was zeroing in on something, darting into my eyes with direct contact. "Listen! He's saying Eddie. Hey Eddie."

"I don't hear nothing," I told her, not tipping my hat to signs of her lunacy.

"Well he said it again! Eddie, that's you, right?" She asked.

"Yeah. That's me."

Then she broke contact, got up and walked to the back door. "Maybe he's round back."

"Sure you heard that?" I asked.

"I swear I did! I heard a voice say 'Eddie. Hey Eddie.' Then he just said, 'It's Ose. I'm coming for ya.'"

"Okay," was all I could muster as she looked out the door.

Then in a flash, she locked it tightly and excused herself into the kitchen saying, “Well alright. You be careful up there. That place is the heartbeat of hell. If you want more coffee, just holler.”

And with that she disappeared into the kitchen. All I wanted was coffee and Internet service. But Aida Mae, my psychic waitress, hears voices calling me.

She wasn’t this scatterbrained on my first visit or was she?

Maybe I didn’t notice. Maybe I didn’t remember. Maybe I didn’t care. I was focused on finding Annette Dobson. And that hasn’t changed. I need to get answers.

I pulled out my file from my first trip and reviewed the forms again, to see whether there were any red flags or fine print I should be aware of before I check into Uphir.

Looking through, I notice the name Reverend William H. Billings. I have no idea why he’s on this agreement as the counselor in charge of assessing my spiritual condition. I don’t remember approving this consent. Then there’s Dr. Alan Haworth, into whose hands I’m signing myself away.

I only spent a few minutes interviewing him on my first visit to Uphir, before being escorted away. Dr. Haworth has a lean, gray haired sophistication wrapped with green eyes that dart into you. It was like a chess match talking with him. He interviewed me more than I did him. He wanted to know what I truly wanted. What was I doing there? How did I find him? I played his game, but didn’t get the answers I wanted about him, and I’m not sure if he got what he wanted out of me.

I usually get something, some sort of clue that helps me unravel the real story. But this boy is brilliant. He has that power of diversion where unconsciously the conversation always seems to tip in his favor.

About a week after my visit with him, I got this Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory in the mail with a P.O Box from Dell City to return it. This thing was about fifty pages with a few hundred “Yes” or “No” questions and highly repetitive, like one of those dumb-ass corporate job applications.

Needless to say, I knew who it was and what they wanted so I filled out Haworth’s MMPI and mailed it back to him.

Three days ago I got this ‘open house’ invitation to come to Uphir to cover his story. So here I am sitting, waiting for the answers. And now I got them. I got everything I need. I know what I have to do.

I’m signing my Consent Of Voluntary Commitment and a Liability Release and heading into what Aida Mae calls *The Heartbeat Of Hell*.

AUDIO LOG:

**WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 8, 2010 –
1:30 PM**

(Entered by Eddie Hansen, 12-8-10, 8:30 PM with additional notes.)

If Dell City is *Back to the Future 1*, and I drove back into the 1950s, then Uphir is *Back to the Future 3*, and my rental car must be a Delorian, or I’m just driving further back in time, the deeper I disappear into these woods. Because now I’m in the 1850s. The building before me is epic. A historical landmark from an age of mad scientists, lunatic asylums, and bloodletting. A remnant lost in time, but now restored to the glory of the spirit that lives inside. A spirit, or a feeling that somehow is taking hold of me.

As I stand here, I am in both in awe and respect for the millions of stones laid on top of each other, to create this masterpiece in history.

Deep inside this heart of nowhere, is this massive colony of Gothic Architecture, hidden between mountains, sprawled across acres of dead land, forgotten in time, but now rediscovered with my own eyes. This building is alive! I feel it! I feel its force, its power, and its majesty. I feel its breath, as if the stones are ready to speak to me. To tell me their story.

As I entered, I stepped back in time. Long before I was born, this place was breathing with unspoken tales of terror. I know it. I feel it. Every part of my body trembled with anticipation as I reached the massive arched doorway that would welcome me inside.

A nurse greeted me, ordained in uniform of that golden age. It was more than by design; it was by choice. Her friendly greeting and forced smile led me to believe something was quite different here. My inquisitive nature forced me to step inside.

As we walked down the long, cold hallway, she was silent and I could think of nothing to say to break the awkward sound of our pounding footsteps echoing down the corridor. I merely observed the architecture with reverence, as I saw my breath pour out before me with each footstep. Clouds of smoky air reminded me that my body was alive and much warmer inside than my new environment. Soon enough, I could feel the air begin to grow warmer and the sound of a heater filled the room I was about to enter.

"The Doctor will be with you momentarily," the nurse told me. "Take a seat and make yourself comfortable."

And with that, she left me there, in a room of wonderment, staring at the ghosts of this place. Pictures and paintings adorned the walls of people I neither knew, nor ever heard of.

A warrior, a philosopher, a family portrait, they were all dead now, and the only memory of them were these portraits, painstakingly painted by hand, not some digital flash of random numbers that create the instant images we see today.

This painting was created by someone who spent endless hours observing their subject and applying precise strokes of paint in patterns to replicate what their mind said was the essence of the person who stood before them. And with that thought, in walked Dr. Alan Haworth.

I was finally face-to-face with him again. This time inside the heart of his domain.

"Sir Richard Andrews," he told me. "The designer of this magnificent structure. We strive to maintain his spirit, to restore the glory of such a time, when men would adhere to noble causes. Wouldn't you agree?"

"Sure," I told him not fully comprehending his statement, but playing along.

"Please come in," Haworth stated as he led me inside his personal office. It's the kind of room that is purposely designed to make you feel inferior. I took a seat at his command, a bit below him, on a plush 19th Century crimson chair, looking up across his massive mahogany desk. I had to shift myself to see him clearly past all his impressive credentials and this peculiar statue of a leopard attacking a man.

He sat there draped in the finest linens of that bygone era. Like Daniel Day Lewis in *Gangs of New York* or one of those Ivory Merchant Films, Haworth was indeed a character of great magnitude.

"Your papers please," he stated as he leaned back in his chair. I placed my signed consent forms on his desk, while he quietly observed me. To capture the moment, I pulled out my digital recorder and asked. "Do you mind if I turn this on?"

"Not at all," Haworth responded, acting colloquial though I knew he had motives behind everything he said.

He continued. "Welcome to Uphir, Mr. Hansen. During your stay, you may record when given permission and at no other time. Do you agree to this?"

"Sure," I told him, gaining the sudden realization that I had no other choice.

"Then let's begin," he replied, staring at me as he picked up a pen and maneuvered his note pad and case file just out of my line of sight.

I turned on my recorder and stated, "This is Eddie Hansen. It's Wednesday, December 8th, 2010. I am at the Uphir Behavioral Health Center in Uphir, Texas speaking with Dr. Alan Haworth."

"Correct," he interrupted making sure to control the conversation and stop me when he desired. "Edward Thomas Hansen. You are of sound mind and body. You are currently not under the influence of medication, alcohol, or drugs. You enter this facility voluntarily and under your own freewill?"

"Yes," I replied watching him read me beneath my answers.

He continued, "And you will submit to my procedures for your care during your stay here. Yes? This is true?"

Here's where it got weird. Parts of my interview are not on this memory card. As I play back my recording, all I hear is hissing from this point on. Every once in awhile I hear this low rumble and a muffled voice breaking through the static.

As I sat there with Haworth, I felt like there were eyes all over me. More than just the hundreds of cameras that seemed to be planted in every corner of the institution. There was a presence, or a strong feeling that someone else was in the room with us. Maybe it was Rev. Billings watching, because about five minutes later, he came into the room fully informed of not just my conversation with Haworth, but of our past meeting and my present agenda.

This guy spooked me. If Haworth was looking into me, Billings was looking through me. He looked more like a football player than some minister. He had this hulking stillness wrapped in a pinstripe suit, which sat in direct defiance to the whole 19th Century theme Haworth had going on.

Reverend Billings looked as if he had seen it all, and nothing was going to faze him. He was eyeballing me hard, trying to penetrate me deeper than my emotional or mental cognitive capacity. Billings was examining my essence or spirit man as he called it. I'll be honest; I was uncomfortable in that room, with these two playing good cop-bad cop, dissecting my mind, and spirit like it was a game.

Haworth said they needed a comprehensive assessment of my total being if I were to be allowed full access to the facility, from my childhood memories to my family medical history, they drilled me on it all.

Then Billings told me I would see and hear things that I won't be able to explain or rationalize with my senses and that I needed to trust them and their procedures completely. And finally Haworth concluded that I must be fully prepared to protect myself. Protect myself? Seriously?

At this point, I was ready to pop Haworth in the head. His even toned probing of me was bashing my nerves, but I kept my cool. I listened as they continued interrogating my psyche. Sitting there, the lingering scent of sulfur burned through my nostrils, waking me to the fact that I needed to fight to maintain control of this situation, and never let my guard down. So I began to dissect their strategies and formulate my plan to get the answers I needed to break this case.

I'm thinking, and stop me if I'm paranoid, that they have some sort of white noise generator, like inside a military facility, to control any digital communication in and out of the facility, including my recordings.

After about fifteen minutes of this static, our conversation came back clearly. My memory now clenches onto the subject matter as I hear Reverend Billings speaking. "The gateway to demonic forces is a thin veil covering a realm that influences most human beings. Do you believe that a mere thought can act as a core element in the infiltration and possession of demonic hosts?"

“No,” I answered firmly.

Then, Dr. Haworth interjected with his air of superiority. “Would you care to elaborate, Mr. Hansen?”

“No. Not really,” I told them. “I don’t get myself crazy over this whole God-Devil debate. I kind of like to separate church and state. Especially in a mental institution.”

“But what if that’s the place that they come together?” Billings responded.

Knowing I wouldn’t answer that, Haworth proceeded. “Mr. Hansen, Would you say the core of evil is rooted in our experience, a chemical imbalance caused by instability in the world around us?”

“Maybe partially true,” I responded, noticing Haworth purposely thumb through a file he created on me. I could see a picture of my ex-wife with me, on his desk. A pulse of fury rushed through me, and I was ready to strike! He did his homework on me, and now I’m his guinea pig as he smiled and asked me, “What’s the worst evil you’ve ever committed?” All I could think of was the evil I wanted to commit. I know I had a response, but this recording went static again.

As I listen back, all I hear is this static buzz. Maybe it’s the white noise, or they are trying to jam the frequency, or modulate the sound, because I hear a low, gravelly voice saying something. I can’t understand it, because it doesn’t sound like it is English.

I listened back a few times trying to accurately define what I’m hearing. But it’s hard. I can’t really make out what this voice is saying. I’ll break it up into segments where the voice pauses and write it down. After repeated attempts, this is the closest I got. At least, what I feel is correct.

*“Ego Animo Habitat Quemadmodum
Habitarunt Hoc Recording”*

I have no idea what that means. If I break it up, maybe it will make sense.

Ego Animo Habitant

Maybe that's something about an animal, habitat. An animal's house, A living animal, maybe?

Quemadmodum.

That sounds weird but that's what I think it says. I keep listening and it's fast and sharp, the way he says it. Quemadmodum. Quemadmodum. What is that? *Que*, means "what" in Spanish. Maybe it's what? A modem? A mad modem? A listening device? I don't know.

Habitarunt Hoc Recording.

The house for recording. An animal lives in this house or recording. Is that right? Could that be right? An animal in this recording? Is that a clue to something?

Maybe it's some software that garbles the frequency or pitch shifts it, creating this effect. I don't know. It's weird, but I feel like that voice is trying to tell me something. I need Google translate, because the more I listen, the more this voice becomes distinct, almost piercing to me. I feel it deep in my chest when I hear it. I feel like it's warning me or trying to communicate a vital message.

*"Ego Animo Habitant Quemadmodum
Habitarunt Hoc Recording"*

Right after it finishes speaking that message, the audio track from my conversation with Haworth and Billings returns clearly. I hear my own voice cracking with emotion.

"I got him to the ground and kept kicking him. Hard. Really hard. In the head, chest, face, balls. Blood was bouncing out of him with every shot."

I was talking about a fight I had in college, in the woods behind campus. I remember now before that frequency jam, we talked about the evil within us that allows us to do things that bypass the filters of our reasoning.

Dr. Haworth wanted to know the worst things I've done and what I am talking about now is part of this conversation.

I see myself clearly now, and I remember as I listen. It was this unconscious recollection that surfaced and seemed to push through me as I spoke. After seeing that picture of my ex, I felt like I wanted to rip Haworth's head off his shoulders for prying into my personal life, so I stopped looking at him and focused on that statue on his desk of the leopard attacking the man. I could see myself, like that animal, ruthless and without conscience destroying my victim. It all seemed to pour out of me as I recalled this long-forgotten attack.

Listening again, I feel that swell of adrenaline pulsate with unrestrained violence, which accompanied my words to Haworth and Billings.

"Then I kicked again, watching his face pop beneath the jaw. Then I went for the ribs. Not letting anything up as I felt my feet cracking through him. The breath burst out of him. I didn't care if he died, but I just stopped. I stopped! I stopped and watched him struggle to get air."

"What stopped you Eddie?" Billings inquired.

"I don't know... I just... He... He... stopped defending himself, and his mouth was twisted wide open. The blood pooled up around his head, soaking into my shoes. And I thought... I thought maybe the cops would come and I just... I... needed to leave."

"Do you regret almost killing another human?" Haworth asked.

"Yeah. No. I don't know! I don't remember anything. It just happened," I told him bluntly.

That set something off in Reverend Billings. He got up and walked over to me stating, "Do you understand that this type of behavior may be the result of a demon working though you? Surrendering to his will, enabling his power over you."

"I don't believe that!" I laughed, not mockingly or on purpose, just uncontrollably, which got Billings inflamed as he fired back at me. "You stated that you had no self-control while fighting and you couldn't remember everything that happened."

That goaded me to throw it back at Billings. "I was drinking, man! Everyone fought. It's what we did to settle things!"

Then Dr. Haworth chimed in arrogantly. "So was it a chemical reaction? A cerebral imbalance brought on by alcohol intoxication and external stress? An imbalance so intense and so acute that it would cause you to engage in unpredictable and violent behaviors?"

"It is what it is. Two guys fighting. No devils, chemicals, or psychosis. Fucking human nature... Shit happens!" I concluded, letting out a grunt while trying to compose myself in the midst of their assault.

Taking notes of my response Haworth continued in his monotone assessment, "Do you often swear when you're upset or is this part of your normal vernacular?"

"Is that another demon at work?" I asked him, using my sarcastic Texan accent to dig in my point. "Little Focker. The swear demon. Oooh," I shuddered, watching the eyes of Dr. Haworth squint with anger. "According to your ass-nalysis, he's working through me right now, huh Doc? With all them devils looking for homes 'round here, you boys should be in real estate."

"I wish it were a joke, Eddie," Reverend Billings said solemnly backing away from me. Dr. Haworth continued taking notes as an unsettling silence engulfed the room.

Finally Haworth looked up, stating coldly, "Mr. Hansen, We would like you to take a few tests now, along with some precautionary vaccinations."

"You're shitting me!" I said aloud, thinking there is no way I'm going to submit myself to this.

After another silence, Reverend Billings quietly excused himself, submerged in deep thought and a sense of disappointment in my answers. Dr. Haworth casually leaned over toward me and shut off my recorder. The office door opened to reveal my security escorts.

**JOURNAL ENTRY:
WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 8, 2010 -
9:45 PM**

I can't believe I spent three hours being tested like a lab monkey. Height. Weight. Blood pressure. All the usual shit, and I say that having provided samples to the staff for review. If this is a pissing contest with Doc Haworth, he got my first shot, in a cup no less, ready for examination.

That bastard's probably drug testing me to see if I'm lying about using. I'm clean! If the glove don't fit, you must acquit.

No stone was left unturned in there. I got the full physical, with all the bells, coughs and whistles. At least one of the nurses was kind of hot. A young blonde in her mid twenties. She didn't say a hell of a lot, but she helped pass the time and kept me from losing my temper.

I'm not the type that likes being poked and prodded, and I felt as though I was on display the whole time. Window dressing, a guinea pig being set up for a treadmill run.

I knew they were watching me to see how I react. It felt like Nurse Hottie was part of this experiment, as though she was waiting for my reaction. She'd do something ditsy, drop cotton balls, bend over, whisk her hair, laugh at my stupid jokes, then I'd catch her look over at one of the cameras like I didn't notice. I didn't care because she was the only one with any semblance of a personality. Everyone else robotically attended to me as if I were a lab rat. At least she smiled.

Now my arm's sore and I feel woozy. I'm a little nauseous, like something's off. Maybe it was all those vaccinations.

Or it could be the fact that I'm starving and can't eat anything. I'm forced to fast so they can take my blood in the morning. There's not even any food in the place where they put me up.

Speaking of which, I'm in the guest house from *Psycho*. I'm shackled up in this little cottage about a half mile from the institution. I guess I'm still officially on their property because I'm fenced in, and the guard's gate is about a quarter mile up the road. It keeps me isolated from the madness of the facility.

You've got to see this decor. It's shabby-chic mystique. There's a leopard print blanket over this old iron bed, which looks like the patients put together, because the cross is upside-down. The blood red pillows and sheet set are straight from the Martha Stuart Insanity Collection at K-Mart.

A mounted deer head headlines the back wall with a beautiful hand carved table below. The table has this bevel of circles going across, and each one has a little stone dot in the center, almost like an eyeball. On top of the table is a crushed velvet liner and circle of black candles that surround a black bowl filled with herbs. Of course, no room is complete without an obligatory leopard statue.

Dr. Haworth must have this weird leopard obsession, because I see them everywhere. This one is bronze. It's sitting, starting at me. The more I look at it; the more it feels alive.

He looks like he's waiting for his prey. Observing me in a calm but powerful position, in total control. He's even watching me closely as I type. The more I look back at him, the more I feel like he's moving toward me ready to strike.

The most unusual part of this place though, is the only window looking out. It's shaped like a triangle and catches the glow of the lights from the institution.

You can see straight down Madness Avenue. So I'm sitting, hidden inside these purple walls, ready to entertain myself and get out of my thoughts. But the ancient TV in here doesn't have cable. I can't even make any phone calls to the outside world. I'm only connected to the guard gate or receptionist in Ward A, and cell phone service is a fantasy at this point.

I do however; have a vast array of psychology and religious books at my disposal, all tucked into a little bookcase, which, as I notice, has the same-circled carvings as the table.

But I'm not in the mood to read. I want cable. I want TV. I want to veg out and watch Comedy Central. I need a laugh. I need something stupid-funny to knock me out of this anxious mind-set. What back-ass town has no cable, no Internet and no cell phone reception? Nobody even cares. They think an iPhone's shaped like an "I." The Beverly Hillbillies were more technically advanced than this primitive tribe of lunatics.

At least, there's a VCR here. Yep! A VCR. Just like grandma had. And I found a stack of old movies stored in the cabinet below. Here's what we got. *The Exorcist* Very nice. *Rosemary's Baby* Very appropriate considering what may be inside here. *Jacob's Ladder*. What do you know? Doc Haworth has cult classics. What else we got? *Altered States*. *Session 9*. Never saw that one. *The Brood*. And last but not least. Drum roll please... *In the Mouth of Madness* with Sam Neill.

Am I'm sensing a pattern here?

You know what I think? I think that this is all on purpose to focus my mind and thoughts into their game. Media has power to make us think, even conform to patterns of acceptable behavior and in here I'm the guinea pig in the maze, the monkey under the microscope. So my choices are movie night at Mad Villa or keep exploring for more clues to the game. Let's explore, shall we?

On the little counter of this kitchenette is an old boom box with a cassette player. It looks very nostalgic. Let's see if it even works. I'll check the radio first. See what's out here...

Static... Static... Damn, I got nothing. No radio stations come in out here. Go figure. Why would they even put a radio in here? Do they want me to know how isolated I am?

There's got to be something. Let's try AM. Still nothing. Nothing.

Wait. Wait. I think we got something. 660 AM. You got to hear this. It sounds like two hillbillies out in the woods killing something. I'm getting my recorder. Listen...

"If you don't plan to mount the head, you got to keep cutting all the way to the hollow, fleshy junction of the neck and chest cavity."

"Short strokes right. I'm using my fingers to push that belly open as I cut, right?" "Once most of the organs are exposed. Sever the diaphragm." "Got it."

They're ripping the flesh open. That sound is nauseating. I think that animal may still be alive. I hear groaning. A sad, pained moan. It's sick.

Wait!

Listen. There's another animal digging around. It may be a hunting dog. What's going on? I think they shot a deer. I think that's it. Listen! What the hell is that pounding? "I use a camp axe to separate the rib cage and pelvis. Wedge the lower edge of the axe into the sternum, then pound the back of the hatchet with the sledge hammer."

Oh God, that hick is pounding open the ribs. That sound is turning my stomach. I'm turning this off, taking a shower and going to bed. I'm done. I had enough stimulation for one day. "This is Eddie Hansen signing out from the Uphir Behavioral Center, December 8th, 2010."

THURSDAY DECEMBER 9, 2010

JOURNAL ENTRY:

THURSDAY DECEMBER 9, 2010 –

2:00 AM

It's two in the morning, and I can't sleep. My body feels agitated and my heart's pumping. I'm not sure if it's my nerves or a panic attack or worse.

It feels like something is pulling on my chest, on my heart mostly. It's a gnawing pull that won't let me rest.

I'm looking out my triangle window at the institution. It has this moonlit glow that makes me feel like I am in some horror movie. Like some nut job will come busting in any minute with a chainsaw or hockey mask. It's surreal, this feeling. Everything is heightened, over-sensitive in me. Maybe that's why I can't sleep.

Self-preservation, instinct is taking over before Freddy comes in my dream. I have a feeling they're watching me too. I never feel alone in here.

I did a clean sweep for hidden cameras, took down the mirror, checked the deer head, the lamps, the clock. I didn't find anything.

But I'm going to type instead of recording anything until I know it's clear in here. I don't want to give them the upper hand on what I'm thinking or doing.

I'm putting this puzzle together, and I know everything was put here for a reason.

The pile of psychotic movies and books in here.

The hissing sounds on the recordings I made.

I've got to give them credit for trying to rattle me. The Reverend even left a Bible in the top drawer of the nightstand like in a cheap motel. He personally inscribed it:

"To Eddie. My words are spirit and my words are life. Use them and live." John 6:63

What's that supposed to mean? Is it a warning? Sure enough, I checked his reference and that's what it says in that Bible. The good minister also took the liberty to highlight, in yellow, some verses about demons. I noticed this as I flipped the book open and looked for that John 6:63 reference. It's a couple of pages after that verse. Page 1,898 to be exact. He circled number 19, and then highlighted this.

"At these words the Jews were again divided. Many of them said, "He is demon-possessed and raving mad. Why listen to him? But others said, "These are not the sayings of a man possessed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"

He underlined demon each time in pen. Curious, I continued thumbing ahead to see what other clues he thinks he left me. The next one I found on page 2077. The top of the page says 1 Corinthians 10. He's got number 20 circled, and he highlighted this.

"No, but the sacrifices of pagans are offered to demons, not to God, and I do not want you to be participants with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord's table and the table of demons."

He's got demon underlined again. Is it a message or manipulation? Who's sacrificing whom?

Participating with demons. Drinking from a cup of demons. What's that? What's going on here?

Is Annette Dobson the sacrifice?

I'm trying to figure this out. I see demon underlined seven times. Someone is demon possessed and raving mad? But people are divided.

There are two sides in both of these verses, arguing opposite points. Billings and Haworth!

Both are trying to get me to see their side of some story or argument that they are presenting or experimenting with. That's a debate!

That's it! "IT'S THE GREAT DEBATE."

Picture this. We got this minister and this psychologist, two puppeteers of humanity squaring off over something or someone.

Annette Dobson!

If she is here, why is she here? What do they want from her? What's the topic?

"What's the worst thing you've ever done?"

That's what came to my mind right now. Haworth asked me that yesterday. He and Billings were so intent on exploring my dark side. What is the worst thing inside me? What creates that evil in me? Evil! That's the common denominator. That's our theme!

"The Core of Evil!"

They ping-ponged this off my head all day. We spoke of unrestrained violence, fits of rage, outbursts of passion. The things we do so easily without thinking or remorse. So what's the catch? What's their motive?

To actually find the origin or core of evil?
To discover its birth!

That is it! I know it is!

Follow my reasoning. Annette Dobson was twenty-four weeks pregnant when she had her abortion. Supposedly had. All the protestors, the right-to-lifers were in a rage, but since it was legal, no one could do anything about it.

Public sentiment is against Annette Dobson, so when she makes this plea to have her execution moved up, no one asked any questions. That's what the people wanted. To slay the monster! But to quell any controversy and hide her pregnancy, her execution needed to be closed.

Why?

If whoever is behind this can keep the media out, there's no trace of her body. No trace of a baby. They send her husband some ashes with a few personal items, and a handwritten letter explaining everything and the case has closure. Everyone walks away satisfied, and no one looks for anything. We're all satisfied that justice was served. A few weeks later people move on to the next monster. So they remove Mrs. Dobson from prison and ship her here, where she can be forced to give birth. It's the perfect case study. That kid has the blood of a stone cold killer. How is he going to react to that? Is he a natural born killer or an innocent baby?

AN ANGEL OR A DEMON?

Dr. Haworth wants his mind. Reverend Billings wants his spirit. They can raise him any way they want without question. They can influence him. Study him. Mutilate him if they really wanted to. He's no more than a lab rat because he doesn't exist. He's got no birth certificate. No social security number. Out here, no one would ever find him. No one would even look. Except me!

If there's a chance in hell I'm right, then Annette Dobson is here and she's about thirty-eight weeks pregnant. So the baby is due in a week or two. Which means---

THANKS FOR READING THE EXCERPT OF SEVEN-X

More information is available at www.seven-x.com