

# A LOST HOLIDAY

BY JIM-BEAU LIEYEAH

It's 4:20 and I hear the tea pot boiling. Finally, something to warm the bones. The halls are empty right now. Where has everyone gone? I pour the tea and then add sugar. My brain power has extended beyond simple tasks... like getting warm, breathing and drinking water. What a crazy Drink the Barn Dry party last night. Where is everyone? Why is it so cold in here? Wheres the hangover? How come these lights don't turn on? The TV will warm me and lighten up my room. No blue glow... No electricity period. No football. What the hell is going on? Phone, need a phone. No dial tone... no nothing. Gotta see something. Window, find a window. Too much concrete. White, its all white. Snowed in? Did I miss an evacuation? Find another window... Still the same. Why is panic setting in? My heart is accelerating as my anxiety grows. Exit. Need to get outside and Ill be able to relax. The door isn't budging. What is going on? No sign of anybody. No life, period. More tea and perhaps a smoke...

On the third drag, it became painfully clear my only course of action. Look above me to try to find a way out or... What's this entrance? Have to get up this trapdoor. A chair. Not much light in this nook. Here we go...

Pitch black. Need that flashlight! Now lets see. No windows and not much crawl space. Smells like old, moldy air. Or asbestos? But this means I must look below me. And that raises a difficult question. The long alleged tunnel to school. All the talk. No better time to check it out than now.

Black... complete darkness.

What is this beyond the furnace? Snow? Where is that coming from? A grill I have never seen before. A little light into the subject. Mental note: Do not seek out questions whose answers you dont want to find.

What the hell? I'm all bundled up. Just to get through this gate. To get back into civilization. To breathe that has not been confined. To get out. This place is wicked...

The tunnel is pitch black but it appears there is a wall about 30 feet ahead. The ground crunches under my steps which seems to be the only evidence of any life in awhile. Old graffiti still lives on the walls. The air is stale. A T ahead in the tunnel. Left or right? A little flashlight will tell...

Instinctively I turn left. The light shines but the snow is gone. The ground is a little more travelled. Twenty feet ahead the floor is covered with mounds of rubble and snow. The hallway has collapsed. I guess I have to go right. But as the flashlight shines across the wall, I see something carved exquisitely in the wall. Pvt Jeremy Thomas, Liverpool, (HRM) British Colonial Army December 17, 1863... I felt a chill down my spine and for the first time felt cold.

Only one way to go...

My mind wandered about what it would be like to be a soldier over from England. To be walking around the bustling town. Did he know what lay ahead for what is now such a large country? But before I could think about it any more I saw another opening. What is this huge door? Fumbling in the dark I manage to slightly move the rotting wood. My light cuts through the stagnant, sitting air. Its hard to focus on what is in the darkly walled room. Both eyes see two figures. But the left sees what appears to be men. The right sees what appears to be women. The peeling posters have been glued there for awhile. I stagger away confused.

My pace quickens. The ground is no longer frozen under me. My feet are squishing below. But the long sound of silence around me is finally breaking. I hear a slight humming sound. The tunnel still runs into darkness but the air does not smell as stagnant. The blackness is pierced by my weakly powered flashlight. Another enclave appears on my left. A short door with a lift up lock. Why not?

The light shines unto a bizarre ecosystem. It is only three feet