

The bastards got me

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Introduction

Thankyou for troubling yourself to open this PDF file.

This is by far the longest poem I've ever written. It's available on video at my YouTube channel here but I wanted to put out the text itself.

It's not exactly brilliant poetry although I hope it's not actually terrible. It is heartfelt though. This narrative poem describes my journey into and out of Christianity. Here I describe the cynical, opportunist exploitation of the evangelist, preying upon the desperate, the grief stricken and the depressed. I explain, at least in principle the not so subtle 'carrot and stick' trap that leads people to abandon actual knowledge in favour of bronze age stories written by people who genuinely didn't know where the sun went at night.

Finally I explain how integrity and intellectual honesty can lead a person out of the dogmatic prison of Christianity and the blatant profiteering of religious organisations.

I hope you find it helpful.



The bastards got me

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*I was 17 years old,
Trying to make sense of the world,
Riddled with anxiety,
Bravado and naivety,
In a job selling washers and cookers, Hi-fi and TV
To gullible suckers who trusted me,
Who never knew we ripped 'em off,
With a smile and a handshake and a sideways cough.
Chasing the commission to supplement our pay,
To keep the bank manager at bay,
A money-making scheme,
With a cynical theme.*

*But I couldn't sleep at night,
It just wasn't right,
My conscience couldn't take it,
The way I had to fake it,
Persuading them that it's a steal,
Trained in clever ways to close the deal,
Manipulative tricks to establish rapport,
Betraying the trust of the marks at the store.*

The bastards got me

*I hated that job 'cause it made me a liar,
But in Thatcher's Britain my prospects were dire,
So every day,
I'd make the gullible pay,
For crap with a smile and a handshake,
To send them on their way.*

*I felt like a jerk,
I hated that shop,
But after work,
I could stop,
Conning the world,
And be with my girl,
My first true love,
The girl of my dreams.
Forgetting retail schemes,
I'd lose myself in her beautiful eyes,
Her come to bed eyes,
Her teenage sighs,
Her lovely face,
Her warm embrace,
And life was worth living,
And life was worth giving,
All that I had,
And all I could be.*

The bastards got me

*You may think me mad,
But all I could see,
Was my love,
Was my girl,
She completed my world,
She made it all worth it.
My work life was shit,
But with her life was grand,
As we dreamed and we planned
Of decades together,
We swore that we'd never,
Be apart,
We'd never split,
Until we did,
And then I really felt like shit!*

*I was lost, I felt bereft,
I felt alone, my love had left,
My life's purpose was overthrown,
There was no future that I could see,
And that's when the bastards got me!
It's often kids they convert,
Or the hurt,
Those in need,
Those who bleed.
An easy catch, to hook for a Platitudinous Creed,
A pastor's greed and a lying ancient book,
Unassailable, so long as you don't look too deep.*

The bastards got me

*Come join the sheep. Join the flock.
Then they turn their metaphorical key
In your psychological lock
And your mind's no longer free.
That's how the bastards got me!*

*They promised me love
From Heaven above,
In a Platonic way,
It was different but... hey,
It still hit the spot,
And my self-esteem was shot!*

*I was welcomed and cared for,
It all felt so nice,
Just so long as I paid the religious price,
The price of admission, to make it legit,
I had to believe all their crazy bullshit.*

*They called me 'ripe for harvest',
What they meant was 'desperate',
Vulnerable and needy,
Evangelistic double-talk,
Exploitative and seedy,
Abusive targeting of those in need,
They offer platitudes for those in pain.*

The bastards got me

*They used the same techniques I'd learned to sell,
But I refused to see, refused to smell,
The stench of their deception,
Their malevolent intention,
They fooled me with cheap tricks and social skills,
Promising they'd wash away all ills,
If only I'd believe,
Allow them to relieve me
Of all thoughts of disbelief,
And sink my teeth,
Into their dogma and their creed.*

*They said my life was like dirty rags,
They said I had to hate the fags,
Nor the sinner, just the sin,
In practice though, I noticed that distinction seemed to be awfully thin.*

*That narrow path they bid me take
To leave behind that fiery lake,
To find that narrow door,
Where saints had trod so long before.*

*My salvation depended upon such vile doctrine,
I did the same at work but at least
I didn't claim the moral high ground,
I was ashamed of what I did.*

The bastards got me

*They seemed to revel in the power they had
Over a naïve, grieving kid.
Grieving the love I thought was mine,
The love I thought would outlast time
My dreams had all been ripped apart,
She broke my heart
And then the bastards got me!*

*They called belief in the big bang particularly tragic,
God spoke some words,
And all was made,
And no – it wasn't magic!
They spoke of Jumbo jets and hurricanes,
In scrapyards and of watches on the sand,
Analogies and metaphors presented with no hint of shame,
As though they're proof of God's almighty hand.
At 17 I didn't know,*

*Still a child I couldn't show
I couldn't hope to make it plain,
The difference between hurricane
And evolution.*

*That teenage me,
So hurt, so sad,
So desperate not to feel so sad,
Devoured every word they said,
Believing I'll be happy once I'm dead.*

The bastards got me

*So I abandoned all I knew,
Too frightened to accept as true,
The science facts I'd learned at school
Too terrified to be that 'fool'
Who in his heart said "There's no God".
A slanderous Christian lie
Designed to appeal to the naïve lie
And that I was,
Naïve as fuck!*

*The bastards probably couldn't believe their luck,
They'd seen me coming and no mistake,
I was too blind to notice that it was completely fake,
Too blind to see,
They suckered me,
With their tall tales of God above
And promises of post-mortem love,
Eternal bliss they promised me,
If I'd accept that fantasy.*

*I was such good ground for their seed,
Of ignorance and bigotry,
Of hatred and misogyny
Of moral filth, ironically
Pretending to be love.
But if you don't fit they'll shove you under the bus,
Without a second glance!*

The bastards got me

*So you'd best believe,
With all your heart,
If not then leave,
And be apart,
Fron Jesus who you'll never know,
And in the end to Hell you'll go.*

*That carrot and stick,
Did the trick,
Fellowship or flame,
Those options really aren't the same.*

*And when you're ripe for harvest,
The evangelist is at his best,
With manipulative skill,
He'll reel you in until
You even censor your own thought
That's when they know you're truly caught
You're judged in thought and word and deed,
Imprisoned by a bullshit creed,
When every thought that might have led you back,
You label as Satanic attack,
As treason!*

***"Get the behind me, Satan – let me be,
I'm happy in my chains of bigotry!"***

The bastards got me

*I hated gays and learned to disagree,
With evolution and equality,
Referring now to Pastor's word,
As though his voice was all I ever heard.
I read the Bible, old and new,
Believing every word was true,
I had to or I'd burn,
And in that lake of fire I'd yearn,
For all eternity in shame,
For mercy that never came.*

*So I rejected all my doubts,
For fear that they might lead me out,
Ignored the archaeology I'd learned,
Because it didn't match with Noah's flood,
Big bang cosmology's a lie,
Young earth creationism tells us why
We're here
Our purpose is so clear,
To worship God or lie,
In flames and in fear,
Don't doubt,
The Devil's always near.*

*The bastards kept me through my youth,
So certain that I'd found the truth,
Too frightened to consider,
The views of any other,*

The bastards got me

*Still censoring each thought I caught,
That could have led to doubt so fraught,
With terror of damnation,
Intellectual stagnation.*

*I tightly locked my doubts away,
Reading my Bible every day,
Refusing to acknowledge,
The wickedness on every page.*

*I knew what I'd read,
But with even a shred,
Of doubt I'd be damned,
'Til the vault in my head,
Full of thoughts of a blasphemous kind,
Became too crammed.*

*All the things that I saw in the church,
The fruits of the Spirit so flawed as they lurch
From sin to sin
Self righteous and smug as they grin,
And speak of their salvation,
Taking pleasure in their dreams about damnation
Of the rest.
Believing themselves to be the best,
God's chosen,
They were saved.*

The bastards got me

*The malice they displayed,
Made me want to turn away,
When they lied about each other,
Claiming guidance as they'd smother,
The truth that didn't suit them.
The vault door began to weaken,
Cracks appeared.
All those Bible stories,
Screaming to be heard,
And I no longer could ignore,
The scripture that I'd heard before.*

*Down fell the door,
To the vault in my mind,
I could hold it no more,
Though still frightened, I peered inside,
Determined no longer to hide,
I soon would be amazed at what I'd find.
I wondered how I could have been so blind.*

*Genocide and slavery,
Gaslighting and rape,
All sanctioned and ordered,
By this God of perfect love,
Arbitrary punishments,
Capricious twists of fate,
Hypocrisy,
Failed prophecy,
Sadism and hate.*

The bastards got me

*The devaluing of women,
Only useful when they breed,
Receptacles for callous, selfish men,
To sow their seed.*

*And I realised in trembling fear,
Shedding many a heartfelt tear,
That this hateful God was far from good,
No one with integrity could
Support its vile crimes,
And for the first of many times,
I realised I must burn
That I must turn away.
Though I'd suffer for all eternity,
I could not abandon my integrity,
Terrified of Hell,
I knew all too well,
That might does not make right,
If He damns me then so be it,
But this god's a cruel, sadistic piece of shit.*

*I thought a lot for two more years,
Still as a believer,
Convinced of my damnation,
But my resolve didn't waver.
I couldn't stop Him damning me,
But I could hang on to my integrity,
And something else was plain to see,
I no longer had to censor – I was free.*

The bastards got me

*Free to think,
Free to reflect,
Free to be more circumspect.
All the knowledge I'd rejected,
Flooded back as I reflected
On the implausibility,
Of the flood, of the passion, of the deity.*

*And over time I understood,
That grieving teenager who could not see
How to be free,
And I realised just how
The bastards got me.*

*They say there's no morality,
Without Christianity,
But if you think that about the human throng,
A group to which you belong,
Then you're not talking about me,
You're describing yourself,
And if that's the only thing keeping you,
From the immoral things you'd clearly rather do,
You carry on.
I'll support anything that,
Keeps you from being such a twat!*

The bastards got me

*They told me that God loves me,
That He'd always have my back,
And only condemn me to Hell,
If I didn't love him back.*

*They said that Jesus died for me,
Crucified on Calvary,
But never once did they explain,
How if the martyr lives again,
Becoming King of everything,
That's not sacrifice, not really,
It's merely spin.*

*Insisting that it's personal,
Pretending that we owe a debt
To you or rather to the clergy
They're the ones who get the gold.
Why would God need my salary?
Perhaps that's why He gives it to the priest to hold,
To hold the gold,
To carry like a salary.*

*That ten percent from me and you,
Can soon accrue,
If fifty of the flock give ten percent
The pastor can afford five times the rent
That you and I could ever dream.
And what if there's a hundred
Or a thousand in the church?*

The bastards got me

*It's odd how churches never say in detail
What they do with all that pay,
They may name the odd charity,
But do you know the whole story,
About the money they collect?
Is it the same in every sect?
What does your Pastor do?
Do you know? Do you care?
Do you even give a shit?*

*Faith exists because of mystery
But how can that be,
When the Pastor said to me,
He knows the mind of God?
He knows why all the Midianites are dead,
He understands, at least that's what he said.
So it's not such a mystery
Unless it comes to be
As now, it seems to me
That whatever the Pastor wants to be
Is what he tells us that this God has said.*

*And over time I came to know,
And then decided that I'd show,
Because I want society to grow.
The God of Abraham's not a shit,
He's just a myth that doesn't fit the modern world.
We know too much.*

That's when the bastards lost me!