

CARA

Book 1

Chapter 1

By Whitedove

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Thoughts on this chapter and book “Cara”

I wrote this book in 2004, as part of www.nanowrimo.org.

It is based on a true experience, one that I needed to write a book about to overcome. I just started writing. I did not worry about spelling, what I was saying or what the end was going to be. I just wrote.

I would recommend this if you wish to explore an experience. The month or so that it took me to write was very enlightening in my life. By the end, I had discovered a few things that I did not know.

The book is 50,000 words, a short novel. The second book is nearly completed. There is a third in the works, continuing the life story.

Thanks for reading. Your comments much appreciated via www.whitedovesnest.com – a site for sexual abuse survivors and their supporters.

Chapter 1

“Who are you?”, I asked. I truly did not know where I was, or even what I was. I felt in a daze, like I had somehow been disconnected from the world for a short period of time. It was like I had woken from a long dream, one mixed with fantasy and realism, bits and pieces from everywhere, not quite making sense.

“Who are you?” I asked again. There was someone sitting in a chair beside the bed that I was laying in. I did not know her. In fact I did not know where I was and I did not know how I got to where I was. I looked down. I was dressed in track pants, blue ones though I did not own a pair like these. They were way too big for me. I was in what looked like a hospital bed, in a room with nothing else in it. There were hospital curtains and the room was semi-dark as they were drawn. The walls were white, a bright white. There was something that looked like a bathroom with a mirror. It was not quite a mirror though. There was something dark about it. I felt awful, not quite right and how did I get to where I was? Who had brought me here and where was my husband?

Flashes of thoughts came to mind. I had been dreaming it all surely? “Hello there, are you back with us?” the lady smiled. Her voice was tinged with sympathy. She had a huge smile where you could see all her teeth. Her face beamed. She was friendly, I could tell. She was dark skinned, really dark. She had brown eyes and wore what seemed to be a nurses uniform, white, with a fob watch and a name tag.

“I don’t know where I am” I said. It was the first obvious thing that came to mind.

“You are in West Central Hospital, Ward 8A” she replied. “You have been here for three days now”

“I am hungry.” I was actually starving. I needed something to eat now. It felt like I had not eaten in a while.

“I’ll take you out into the cafeteria area shortly, I’ll call for the doctor for you, he may just take a while to come as we are busy around here.”

“Why am I here, the last thing I remember was eating dinner and now you tell me I am in hospital, was I in an accident?”

“No, love, we were just concerned about you, your family is really concerned, the doctors thought it best for you to stay in here until you recovered”

“I want to go home, I don’t know where I am and I don’t like it here” I said to the smiling lady. Things were starting to scare me, like what was I doing in hospital, did I have a car accident or had I fallen over and hit my head some how. I know that I had fallen over about a month or so ago and I had to attend an x-ray. Maybe this was why I was in hospital. But, I had just finished dinner, it was fish I had – maybe I had a reaction to it. Perhaps it was more than this, a heart attack or perhaps something wrong with the baby. Not the baby – please not the baby.

I moved my hand down to my belly. I was seven and a half months pregnant. Was the baby still there? It seemed like an eternity, I started to panic and my heart started to race. Was the baby sick? What about my baby, is this why I was in hospital, was the baby ok?

I was too panicked to ask, so I decided to feel my belly slowly. It still felt large and I still felt pregnant. I did not feel sick at all, just a bit hazy like I had just woken up from a long sleep. The baby was not moving though.

“I see you have put your hand on your tummy, you’re baby is fine as far as we can tell. We have a number of tests and you are also due for a cat scan shortly, perhaps after you have eaten. The cat scan was ordered yesterday according to your chart here”

I was so relieved. The baby was fine. I let out a sign of relief. I had not felt happier, but I was still confused. There was not a problem with the baby but what about me? Where was I and why was I in hospital?

The room was not familiar. Nothing was familiar at all. I could see a bag sitting on a bench at the end of the bed. It was a sports bag, a black one with red writing on it. It was large. That was ours. Finally something I could recognise. We use it when we go on holidays but I could not remember packing it. I was going to use it when I went to hospital to have the baby. It was the obvious thing to use. It carried a lot in it. Who had packed the bag though? I could not remember bringing it here, wherever here was.

I was booked into West Central Memorial Hospital to have the baby. It was so close to home and it appeared as if I was there already. I was still not with it. The world seemed fuzzy. “We need to check you out, take blood pressure tests” the nurse said. She seemed really nice.

“I want to leave” I said to her. I was so scared I did not know where I was and the nurse, though

nice was not forthcoming. “You cannot leave, a doctor has to sign you out, normally that takes a while. What about you have something to eat, they will be serving breakfast shortly , we can turn up and have some cereal. Are you hungry?”

“Yes I am but I want to leave. If you don’t let me leave I will walk out the door, there is nothing stopping me.”

“Ward 8A is a secure ward. You are not allowed to leave. There is coded locks on the doors. You cannot leave without a doctors say so”

This made me angry. What was this lady saying. A secure ward? Like hell I could not leave, I have legs I can find my way out surely

“Also, there are security guards are at the entrances here, they will not let you leave either.

This is great. The lady has no idea. I wanted out and today, out of this whole situation.

“What about you call someone you know. Your husband has been here with you most of the time. Do you want to ring him?”

That sounded good. Finally, I would get some answers.

“I don’t remember the number” I said. I was so mixed up and fuzzy that I had no idea of our telephone number. “We have it on file here, I will call him for you if you like.”

“Yes thanks. I want to speak to him” I was happy. She walked away. “I’ll be back shortly with the phone, it’s a walk around one”

She walked out the room, leaving me alone again. A secure ward I thought. Why would I be in a secure ward at hospital. My questions were not being answered. As I was thinking, the baby moved. She was moving finally, what a relief to feel the baby move. The baby was ok, a smile broke over my face. I felt like crying because of the relief and happiness I felt.

Surely they would not stop me if I just walked out. Secure ward or not, this was a free country after all. Did my legs work? I felt ok, I could just walk out and see what was outside the room and down the hall. I wanted to get up, I had clothes on. I had no shoes but that was fine. I just wanted out. I waited for a while, she said she would bring the phone back to me and I would speak to Trent. He could answer a few questions for me. He would know what was going on. He would know where I was.

I waited for what seemed like an eternity. I decided I wanted to get up and explore outside the room. I could see a chair at the door. The room was only small but it had a bathroom that I could see from where I was. I needed to splash my face and wake myself up a bit. I got out of the bed. I felt a bit stiff in the legs. I swung my legs over the bed and walked over to the basin in the bathroom. There was another mirror above the wash basin, and a corner shower. Everything was stark white. The light was on in the bathroom. There was no soap so I just splashed my face with the water. There was also no hand towels or hand dryer. I let my hands drip dry. I wanted to walk out the door. I wanted to go and find the nurse and get the phone myself. What was taking her so long?

I was dressed I thought, who would stop me? The nurse was not here and I was all alone. Nobody would see me. Perhaps I could find the nurse with the phone. I walked over towards the door and peeked my head out. There was a long corridor, and no other rooms in sight. The chair was facing towards the door and there was no one sitting on it. To the right was a long clean hall. I could hear noise in the distance. Clattering and banging and a few muffled voices. I could just walk down the hall to see what the noise was about. The hallway was well lit, not like my room which was darkened by the curtains.

I could hear whistling, a tune that some one was doing, a familiar one, but I could not quite put my thoughts onto what the tune was. It was sung in a mans voice. My head was sore. I felt like I had a headache and that things were not quite right, not real, but like a television set where you watch what others are doing. Where was this nurse? I could not hear her. I wandered down the corridor. The passage was large and it seemed to come down on an angle to meet a larger area. There was a door. It was a coded lock. I was stuck it seemed, if I did not know the code to the silver lock. I could hear noises still, like plates crashing and trolleys rolling.

I could see through a glass insert in the door, into the larger area, but there was no one there. I thought I could go back to my room and sit and wait on the bed, she still had not come back.

I turned around, perhaps I should try the lock I thought, but I was no locksmith, I would just be guessing the code. Then a thought came to me, what if she did not come back, there was no one here? No one at all that I could see. I could not remember a window in the room, was there one in the bathroom, perhaps I could see outside to see where I was?

I turned around, and walked towards the room. I heard a noise coming from the door. It was the

nurse coming back, she must have been gone about ten minutes. She was putting the code into the silver lock, I turned to see her. She was still smiling her beaming smile.

“Are you out of bed already?”

“Yes, I was coming to see where you were. I was waiting a while”

“I found your file, with the number in it, do you want to speak to your husband now?”

“Yes please” I replied, relieved that someone may be able to supply me with some answers to this situation.

“Here you go, I am dialing the number that your husband gave us as an emergency contact for you. I believe that should be your home number.”

“Thanks”, I said as she handed me the phone. It was ringing and ringing. I wondered what time it was. For all I knew it could be midnight. Trent would answer shortly. It rang again and again. Finally, a click – it had connected.

“Hello”, a groggy half asleep voice answered.

“Hello, were the hell are you?. Where am I more to the point. I have no idea where I am or what I am doing in hospital. They say it is a secure ward. Why am I here? I am not feeling quite right and they are just not letting me out”, I screamed down the phone. “And, why are you not here with me?”

“Whoa- hang on. I am half asleep. Are you OK? I have been worried sick, you have scared me half to death. We did not know what was wrong with you. Half the time you did not make sense and you

were not eating at all.” He let out a sigh of relief.

“What – what happened?”

“We have no idea what happened”

“Why are you not here?”

“I have been there half the night. They told us to go home and get some rest. There was nowhere for us to sleep in the hospital. I have only just got to bed” he replied.

“You need to get here – here right now, I have no idea where I am or what I am” – I was starting to get frightened now. What did he mean they did not know?

“I will be right there. Give me an hour or so and I’ll be there with you”

“Why an hour???” There would be no reason for him to take so long and I wanted him there that minute. “It only takes 20 minutes to get to Memorial from home – why not now?”

“I have to get showered, I’ll be there as quick as I can .”

“Well hurry up. I need some questions answered for me. I don’t know what or where I am”

“I’ll be there – and I love you.”

“I love you too”

The phone clicked off. I felt relief. Trent would give me answers to my questions – the million or so that I had. He had been half asleep, I could tell. I wanted him to hurry to help alleviate this fear that was growing inside of me. I felt tied in knots and it was not getting any better. There were still no answers for me. I was sitting on the bed, the white crispy sheets, hospital corners, heavy blankets. I was still holding the phone grasped in my hand for dear life. I felt it was the only connection I had to the outside world.

“You need to take your medicine now,” the nurse interrupted my thoughts – thoughts that were riddled with uncertainty.

“What medicine is this, will it harm the baby? I am pregnant”

“No, it is fine. You have been taking it for a number of days now, on approval from Prince Edward Maternity Hospital in town. It is given to you to help you out in this hard time”

I was uncertain what she was giving me. Had I been taking it for a number of days?? I could not remember taking pills or people even giving me pills. This was so unsettling, I did not know what I had even eaten. How did I survive? Here I am in a hospital, being given pills and not being able to get out of here, and as far as I am concerned, I was just eating a fish dinner five minutes ago. Perhaps this was all a big dream. A nightmare, but this all seemed so real, so unbelievably real that it was frightening.

“You are required to take the pills Cara, is there a problem with the pills?”

My thoughts raced. It was all just too much to handle. Where was Trent? Why was he not here to handle this for me? For goodness sake, I had just woken up as far as I was concerned.

I felt on the verge of crying. I started to knot one of the sheets in desperation. Why was this happening to me, of all people. My world was falling to pieces. This type of thing just does not happen to ordinary people. Was I mad or insane?

“I just don’t know what is happening to me”, I said to the nurse. Everything is just not right.” My voice cracked and tears welled up in my eyes, threatening to tumble over down my cheeks. My thoughts were racing a million miles per hour.

“Its OK love”. She sat down next to me on the bed, patting my arm in a slow motion, comforting.

“Cara, these things happen love. We see this all the time. My name is Aliah, but most people just call me Ali – as in the boxer you know – the greatest!!!”

“I am here to help you Cara, all the nurses are. The pills are just a mild sedative, all natural, nothing to be worried about at all love. You have had a number of nurses fussing over you in the last few days. I am on nightshift at the moment, I am off in an hour or so and then the day nurse, relieves me.”

“We are concerned because you are in your last trimester of pregnancy and you are not yourself. We wanted to keep you safe, and someone needed to be watching over you. That’s why you are in a

secure ward – there is no other reason”

“You are free to walk around, we will go and get breakfast shortly as I can hear the rattling of the trays and trolleys, love, so take these quickly and we will go out to the cafeteria.”

I was hungry. So hungry I could eat a horse, and I did not have much choice. I held my hand out for the pills. I took two small white ones and swallowed so quickly that I did not taste them.”

“Here, I’ll sign off on your chart to say that you have received this mornings dosage. Each time we sign off on your chart to avoid a mix up. The doctors will also review them.”. She was pointing to the hospital chart which she had taken off the end of the hospital bed. The chart was attached to a plastic clipboard and hung at the bottom of the bed. There were a number of signatures over the past few days, I could see from the chart. This was all too much.

Where am I, and what am I doing here? I thought. I started shaking my head involuntarily at the situation I was in. It all did not add up. I had been at work just hours ago. It was just a normal day, which ended in dinner, in front of the television. I had not been feeling all that great recently but I would never consider that something like this would happen.

“Lets go and get some breakfast Cara. Follow me, you must be hungry”

Just the words I wanted to hear. I was up, off the bed and following the nurse down the hall I had gone down previously. Ali put the code in, too quickly for me to see and then opened the door, and let me through.

“Just hold it there Cara. I have to deactivate security in this section”

She dodged in front of me, and with her security badge that had been hanging around her neck, she held it up to a white security pad mounted on the wall to the right.

“Beep”, the second door in front of us opened with a click – the locks disengaging.

“There is added security to this section, I have cleared us through, our breakfast awaits us announced Ali.