

# RUPTURE

MAY 2014

If you're talking pie, it's all about the crust

**So Rupture is back** once again and we'd like to thank everybody who helped out at such short notice! Creating our own free DIY media has been neglected too much recently, while people fuck around taking pictures of their genitals and cats to post on Facebook – the biggest voluntary snitch network ever established. But enough about that shit, Rupture is for people out in the real world putting on and coming to parties, social spaces, demos etc. This weekend is mega, what with the Artcore exhibition, Squatters Football, Scumfest and loads more happening.

We have to say that the situation in London has deteriorated a fair bit the last few years, a combination of the squatting ban, Olympics, the property bubble, runaway development AND the rise of a new generation of slum landlords in the shape of property guardian companies like Camelot have squeezed us hard. Almost everyone's living situation has suffered, with squats fewer and further between and renting often being an expensive nightmare which can be even more precarious. Only in such a shitstorm could paying rent, while being expected to act as a security guard to a company that is double-dipping both sides, be so prevalent. Guardians often

live under the tyranny of bastards who deny them legal protections (which do apply), while searching their possessions and prohibiting them from having pets, children or friends to stay (among other idiocies), acting like bad parents high on their own position of power. More has to be done to both help guardians themselves and challenge the companies who exploit them.

Despite all this there's still plenty to be positive about; squatting is still battling on with many places and crews putting on events and providing free services; supported by all the amazing stuff done by the north and south squatters networks, the Squatters Legal Network and the Advisory Service for Squatters.

Anyway, this year London's annual squatters' football tournament returns for the usual family fun day out in the park and, as always, people are welcome to bring their teams and whatever else to add to the day (except tents/structures coz the parks' people, who are sound, hate them... and of course don't bring homophobia, racism, sexism etc coz everyone hates that shit!!!).

We wanna give people a heads-up that next year some friends are gonna come

across from Europe for a Bike Wars tournament to happen alongside the football, so start practising your tall-bike jousting!!! Also this year, in solidarity with the people in Brazil, who are facing raids, evictions and massive state violence because of the World Cup, we're gonna send comrades some money to help with their struggle. There'll be a bucket for donations on the day and look out for, or organise yourself, some demos at the embassy, ACAB. Finally, we wanna send a big shout out to Clapton FC and their ultras who are a welcome relief in the ocean of pigshit that is modern football. Go check out a game next season – it's super-cool like St Pauli ya?!

## SOME LINKS:

houseofbrag.wordpress.com (london queer social centre); claptonultras.tumblr.com aboardthemineweeper.blogspot.com www.56a.org.uk (social centre and bike workshop); squatter.org.uk (Advisory Service for Squatters); network23.org/squatterslegallnetwork; freedompess.org.uk/news/bookshop; www.londonarc.org; South London Squatters Network – 07583033085 North London Squatters Network – destroyedukupbillboards.tumblr.com antifascistnetwork.wordpress.com

## Squatting update

**Thanks almost exclusively** to the indefatigable efforts of the Evening Standard we all heard *ad nauseam* about the 'scourge' of squatting that apparently 'plagued' London for a brief period between late 2011 and 2012, for which we seemingly had 'criminal gangs' of Eastern European immigrants to blame and the Tories to thank for the ensuing criminalisation. There's no need to insult the reader's intelligence by detailing the demonstrably fatuous nature of this state sanctioned outbreak of racist property speculation/paranoia mixed with good old-fashioned lying to the public for money and power. Instead, this article will outline some

facts about the changes to the law before looking at some ways that people have got around the Tories' hastily conceived, need-less piece-of-shit legislation.

### THE NEW LAW

On 1st May 2012 the Legal Aid Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 (LASPO) received royal assent and became law. The Act made enormous changes to the provision and scope of legal aid which will undoubtedly have disastrous effects for the UK in the long run. Section 144 of the Act – a last minute addition to an already massively overweight bill – has absolutely nothing to do with Legal Aid but has even-

rything to do with punishing a new type of criminal offence: 'Squatting'. Whereas before squatting was not, in itself, a crime, s.144 of LASPO changed that by making squatting residential properties a criminal offence, punishable by imprisonment for up to 6 months or a maximum fine of £5000. Whilst this news was very fucking serious for squatters, it was not catastrophic – commercial buildings were left untouched by the Act meaning that it is *NOT* a criminal offence to squat them, and some resourceful squatters have managed to squat residential properties despite the new law.

### COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

This change in the law meant that the old and much-loved 'Section 6' legal warning was transformed overnight from a docu-

ment that provided some practical defence for squatters into an advertisement of their criminal activity in residential properties – if you're squatting a residential property and you still have a Section 6 in the window you might want to think about taking it down ASAP! But all the old protection afforded by the Section 6 still applies to commercial, non-residential properties since the new law doesn't apply to them. There is now a new legal warning for squatters of commercial buildings (you can find it here: [goo.gl/8dxEse](http://goo.gl/8dxEse)) that explains that no criminal offence is being committed, and 'reminds' heavies/owners that forced entry into your home is itself a criminal offence and if they want you out they'll have to take you to court the good old-fashioned way.

### LIVING OR INTENDING TO LIVE

Dirk Duputell was found by police super-glued to a wooden beam of a disused pub near Brighton on 3rd September 2012 and arrested for committing a criminal offence under s.144. In an important victory for squatters, a judge recently ruled in his favour on the grounds that the police had failed to demonstrate that he was living there or intended to live there. This is relevant because s.144 says that a criminal offence is committed if, and *only* if:

*(a) the person is in a residential building as a trespasser having entered it as a trespasser; (b) the person knows or ought to know that he or she is a trespasser, and (c) the person is living in the building or intends to live there for any period.*

Since the judge ruled that the police had failed to provide evidence that Mr Duputell actually lived there or intended to live there he got off scot free. To be fair to the police, they managed to cobble together some nonsense about "a sighting of a man fitting Mr Duputell's description with a distinctively shaved head and blond Mohawk spotted on the roof of the building hours before", as well as some video footage of a mattress and some food. But what's interesting about this case is that the judge was clear that 'evidence' like this is simply nowhere near adequate to show that Mr Duputell was living or intended to live in the property: "his presence could have been because he was a visitor or someone who had gathered in support with this group making a political point". Case dismissed. And having set a

legal precedent, this case can now be cited by other squatters who find themselves arrested in similar circumstances – if the police turn up and say "oh look there's a mattress and some food here, you're nicked" the arrestee can rely on the judge's ruling in the case of Mr Duputell which suggests that if they want to prove you live there, or intend to live there, then like the judge says, the police will have to provide "evidence gathered through forensic work, surveillance and door-to-door inquiries", not just cobble together some rubbish about seeing you a few hours before the arrest. It's worth adding though that this only worked because there



was no admission of guilt. If, as in the unfortunate case of Alex Haigh (the first person to go to jail for squatting in the UK), you say to the police that you *are* squatting in a residential property you're basically fucked and you can go to jail just like he did. As always, if you do get nicked for squatting the best thing you can do is go for "no comment officer" all the way, DEFINITELY DON'T SAY YOU'RE A SQUATTER, and sort the rest out with a friendly lawyer and/or the ASS & Squatters' Legal Network ([www.squatter.org.uk](http://www.squatter.org.uk)) once the filth let you out.

### PROTEST

The judge in Dirk Duputell's case flagged up the possibility that Mr Duputell might have been there to make a political point, and this has since been seized upon by other squatters who've defended their occupation

of residential buildings in the name of protest, but with varying levels of success. The police evicted a squat in a commercial/residential building in Camden on 25th February 2014 using battering rams and arresting two people on suspicion of criminal offences under s.144. This marks a new phase in the repression of squatting under the new law, since no similar actions were taken with a similar 'protest-squat' in Southwark the year before.

### LICENCES

A curiosity of the new law, as yet insufficiently tested in the courts, is that the government made some exceptions even if the property in question is residential. Specifically: "The offence is not committed by a person holding over after the end of a lease or licence (even if the person leaves and re-enters the building)". What this means for squatters is that if you can convince the police that you're not squatting but instead have or had a licence or tenancy agreement entitling you to occupy the place, then the police should back off because the new law doesn't apply. So with a bit of a blag and perhaps something you concoct together to look like a tenancy agreement you might be able to convince the police that this is simply too complicated for them (and let's face it, they're not that smart). This has worked for some squatters in residential properties since the new law came into effect, saving them from criminal conviction and forcing a good old-fashioned court case for possession. Interestingly, there is some pressure building from angry lawyers on

this point – recently an unwitting family got conned into signing a dodgy tenancy with someone who unbeknownst to them wasn't the rightful owner. When the actual landlord found out he tried to evict the family under s.144. You can read about it here: [goo.gl/FGAM7I](http://goo.gl/FGAM7I). That this kind of debacle so easily ensues from s.144 has led to lawyers calling for it to be abolished, and that can only be a good thing for squatting in the UK. Squatting now is harder than it has been, but the law is poorly written and easily accommodates abuse from unconscientious landlords like this guy, so with a bit more pressure and a bit of *nous* there's a good chance that the police will back off a bit, finding the whole thing a little too complicated for their tiny warped minds. **Know the law, know the blag and keep on squatting!**

# REPLACEMENT PARTS

I'd injured my leg after a nasty fall. I'd torn the ligament in my knee and was in complete agony. It seemed like the sensible thing to do, we'd all seen the adverts, and wasn't too expensive – nothing is if you get it on credit. The difference straight away was amazing. I could feel more power, more flexibility, and no pain whatsoever. I had the new knee set on 'low' but soon enough the other one went; a human knee can't stand up to a bionic one. I had been warned that might happen but hey, I was happy to take the risk. It's better to have two 'super-knees' fitted instead of just the one anyway.

I'd caught the bug by then, of course, and had my ankles and feet done as well. For the first time in my life I could really run – I never was too athletic at school but now I could out-run a car! It wasn't long before I'd had one whole arm done, all the way up to the shoulder, and then, of course, the other one to match. It was easy. The credit arrangement had already been set up and signed off so all I had to do was apply.

I'd worn glasses all my life. I quite liked them: the way you could alter the look of your face with them; all the different, colourful, fashionable frames; and the way people told me they made me look more intelligent. But when I lost my last pair after a drunken night out, I thought: 'Why not get my eyes done too?'

It was the best decision I ever made, or at least it seemed that way at the time. My eyesight went from poor to extraordinary. All the little add-ons and effects meant I could do things with my eyes that normal people could only dream of. Once I realised how good it was I went straight back to the NuYu clinic and got my other senses upgraded too: smell, taste, hearing, the lot. I can now smell someone's perfume from across the street and can overhear someone talking at the other end of a room. Of course you never know who else might have had work done, so you have to be careful about what you say – and how often you shower.

Everything was great. That was until the day I saw the mail icon appear in the upper-left hand corner of my vision. It was a mes-

sage from the nice people at NuYu Corp.:

Dear Mr Smith,

According to our record you have been unable to keep up repayments on your Auxiliary Replacement Bodily Upgrades (ARBU). Due to the nature of the product, ARBUs cannot be returned. This is why we offer our customers the opportunity to pay off any outstanding debt by loaning their bodies to the NuYu Corporation for a limited time. Due to the amount owed by you to NuYu Corp. you will be required to give your body up for



requisition for the next 24 years, 36 days, 4 hours and 20 minutes.

Yours sincerely,

Abbie Hoffman

NuYu London Rep.

I immediately opened the file on my Eye-Drive where I keep all my old contracts and receipts and frantically began searching through them. They were all simply tagged 'contract' or 'receipt.' I never bothered to put them into any kind of order. Near the bottom was my old NuYu credit agreement.

I hadn't really looked at it all those years ago, just ticked the 'agree' box. I know they say that you should always read the small print, but who does that? I opened it and read down the list of small bullet-points and there it was, in the font and colour of my choosing and overlaid upon the kitchen surface I was looking at:

16.2a:

Any customer unable to repay fully the amount borrowed under a NuYu credit agreement shall have all rights to the use of the ARBU, and any flesh connected with the ARBU, requisitioned for a time that shall not exceed 20 minutes per Universal Credit owed.

The tiny letters danced around my retina, taunting me with their meaning, until I blinked hard and shook my head. This was supposed to close the file, but I've never quite got the hang of it so it took a few goes before the words disappeared.

I tried desperately to think of a way out. But what could I do? I'd ticked the box; it was all on, and in, my own head. I went to bed that evening and thought about how I was going to get my life in order and what this would all mean. I needn't have worried. The next morning I got out of bed on autopilot, went downstairs, made and ate breakfast, and then headed straight out to the train station. All fairly normal, only I wasn't in control of my body at all. I was moving as if under the control of someone or something else. I had no idea where I was heading, or what was going to happen once I got there.

I arrived at the South East's largest NuYu factory and was set to work producing new NuYu body parts. A part comes in, I check it, polish it and then package it. A machine could do it really. There are loads of us here; mugs like me who all bought new bodies on the never-never but now never get to use them. We give each other the nod and a wink when we pass – keeps our spirits up. All in all it's not all that bad. I just try my best not to think about it too much. Luckily my neck's one of the few things I can still control so I just keep my head down and get on with it.



# music day

21<sup>st</sup> JUNE

**Music Day** is a connected set of free and public events celebrating music in all its forms. This is something that has been big in France for over 30 years and been kicking off in hundreds of countries around the world since. The UK has been slacking big-time and some people with their roots in the free-party scene have been trying to remedy that.

It's the same date every year – 21st June, our midsummer solstice – and this year it falls on a Saturday. We are looking to take advantage of the weekend dates in the next couple of years to really try and kickstart things and hopefully it will roll on, getting bigger and better from there.

We are only a very small team fitting in the work where we can. Our goal is to make this a national holiday, much like it is in France and elsewhere, where there is a tangible presence of music throughout the

day, with sound systems and stages on the streets in every town up and down the land.

Apart from going to enjoy an event near you we also need people to organise their own events on the day. We can help out where we can – whether that be admin, getting people for the lineup, promotion etc. You can register on our website and add your event to our listings and event map. We promote all events equally.

Most people reading this here may be turned off by the idea of tidy legal events, but this doesn't have to be the only contribution. What we really need are the renegade sound systems, pedal-powered rigs, squat-ten venues and buskers to get involved. So don't wait for 2015 – get on it this year.

Furthermore, one of the things we will be campaigning for is a relaxation of the licensing laws and whatnot on Music Day – they did it for the royals/Olimpicks and so on in recent years, so it can be done!

Yours in music,  
the Music Day UK team  
[info@musicday.org.uk](mailto:info@musicday.org.uk)

## SOME EVENTS TAKING PLACE...

### Shoreditch Park

The crew behind Music Day UK stage their own event at Shoreditch Park with a stage of solo acts, bands and DJs in the amphitheatre space of the park. 12pm – 9pm.  
Poole Street, Hackney, London N1 7EJ

### Markfield Park

Crew from IRD and the Brufut Education Project welcome bands and live acts to this great little park in South Tottenham.  
Markfield Road, London N15 4RB

### T Chances

Tuneless Promotions and Dissident Sound Industry present a day of punk bands and drinking. 399 High Road, Tottenham N17

### The Birds Nest

Hosting a line-up of artists, bands, performers and DJs during the afternoon and the evening, starting from 2pm till 1am. Special Guests for a special day. Jam session outside. Buskers welcome. 32 Deptford Church Street, London SE8 4RZ, UK  
To find out about other Music Day events go to [WWW.MUSICDAY.ORG.UK](http://WWW.MUSICDAY.ORG.UK)

## All hail the baby prince!

**Unlike other developed** nations we haven't got round to cutting off the noggins of our heads-of-state. Instead we have to cope with the embarrassment of watching them parade around the antipodes as though they own the place – do they *still* own the place? Although a few morons clapping like French seals in front of a guillotine were present during Little Prince George's visit, it's a wonder the monarchical trio weren't pelted with rotten vegetables. Exactly what they represent apart from colonialism and authoritarian power is unclear, but what is clear is their endless drain on the resources of hard up individuals in any of the countries they claim to be the head of.

At home all it takes is for one of these over privileged leaches on the economy to get married or bang their wife without protection before there is an impromptu bank holiday on the cards. At the drop of a hat, hysterical citizens reach for the ceremonial tea-towels and drape a union flag over their shoulders before heading into the street to praise the annual squandering of £40m+. While the NHS is in crisis, legal aid is getting cut faster than a bag of Essex coke and the disabled unemployed being forced to work to pay for

the room they keep their wheel chair in, is there any defence for the existence of this out-dated institution? "Of course there is" I hear the Daily Mail cry. "Think of the tourist revenue" they say. "She's an old woman and still works a four-day week" some argue.

But seeing as she's only ever done a four-day week and is one of the most privileged people on the planet, I for one won't be happy with less than a eighty-hour week for what is now a forty-five year working life, as is probably the case for the midwife that pulled little George out of the royal womb. This would put her in arrears and she's got a lot to catch up on.

Additionally, the tourist thing is getting old. The French lopped off the head of Marie Antoinette in 1793 and they seem to do OK tourist-wise. Why we can't just hang them, stuff them and prop them up in Windsor for the camera-wearing American tourists to ogle at is a mystery. It's not even as though the vacuous patriots or the zombified tourists are worshiping a national family. With lineage originating in Germany, Greece and, over history, a plethora of other sources who the hell are these people and what right do they have to claim to be the head

of our state?

"It's only a ceremonial position" is often punted by the terminally oppressed, but not that long ago it was revealed Charlie has regular meetings with government and he holds a veto over parliament; as does his old dear. Doesn't sound too ceremonial to those who can see past the confetti now, does it?

The reason darling George is being paraded round like a gift from Ra is so that the masses are clear who it is that they and following generations are subjects of. There's no difference between this pink, fleshy dependant and the next. However this one has more power at his barely-functioning fingertips than the majority of the country will ever have. In years gone by, when presented with these visits, Maori people dropped their grass skirts and presented their grubby starfish to these frauds in a display of contempt. Closer to home in Europe, toffs of this calibre came to much more sticky conclusions. Britain has been the front-runner in politics globally for centuries so why do we insist on perpetuating this ridiculous parade? Who is our Robespierre? When will be our reign of terror? Until then join the call: off with their fucking heads!

# Water Wonderful World – Will Phuq

## POLICE HOPE TO MAKE A SPLASH AT THE NEXT RIOTS

In the months following the 2011 rioting, the cross-party Commons Home Affairs Select Committee (as well as the Home Secretary Theresa May and various former senior officers) opposed police plans to use vehicle-mounted water cannons and rubber bullets against the public, saying that such measures would be an indiscriminate and dangerous way of further inflaming passions. The boys in blue also wanted other increased powers such as the ability to declare instant “no go areas”.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE'S REPORT

*“We cannot recommend any increase in police powers as a result of the August disturbances without seeing specific evidence of a need for such powers and none came our way during this inquiry ... It is our view that in the situation then prevailing, it would have been inappropriate as well as dangerous, to have employed water cannon and baton rounds. We agree with our witnesses, including senior police officers that such use could have escalated and inflamed the situation further ... Water cannon in particular are an indiscriminate weapon and could have affected innocent bystanders, as well as rioters.”*

## FAST FORWARD TO THE PRESENT

Predictably, the police are still pushing for the ability to use water cannons against us. They've been angling to add them to their arsenal for years – travelling to Belfast after the 2005 Gleneagles G8 protests for a demonstration of the technology, asking to borrow some from Belgian police during the 2011 London riots (they couldn't get them over quick enough by ferry and they wouldn't fit in the channel tunnel) and considering their use during the Carnival Against Capitalism in 1999, the Countryside Alliance protests in 2004, the London G20 and Israeli Embassy protests in 2009 and the Millbank student protests in 2010. An investigation by the Independent on Sunday found that “Scotland Yard first began training officers to use the weapons in May 2008, a year before [the] G20. The same month senior Met officers considered a plan to buy six water cannons for ‘quelling or moderating violent disorder’ at a cost of £5m.” Police have also been increasing the number of officers trained in the

use of baton rounds (‘plastic bullets’), and now, disturbingly, say that they need water cannons because “ongoing and potential future austerity measures are likely to lead to continued protest”, with the qualifier that the weapons would have given them an “operational advantage” in the 2011 riots.

Previously opposed to the introduction of the cannon, stating in 2010 that he didn't want to get into an “arms race”, Mayor of London Boris Johnson now claims that police need to “come down much harder” in order to prevent more riots; calling for the deployment of water cannon in London, and saying that it's time to get “medieval” on rioters. Comparing the cannon to nuclear weapons, he promises that they would be “very, very rarely used if ever”, but argues that it's important they should be in the police's arsenal, suggesting that he as Mayor would hold veto over their use (police insist that this is not the case and that they would retain ultimate operational control).

A poll carried out on behalf of the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) suggested 68% of Londoners were in favour of the introduction of the cannon, although this hardly seems representative of the truth, given that only 4223 people were surveyed – not to mention that at least 40,000 UK residents have now signed petitions against their use, as well as the 16 MPs who have so far backed Early day motion 984, calling on Johnson and the Met to abandon their plans. Regardless, in January Boris wrote to the Home Secretary in support of the police's request for water cannon. The Home Secretary herself has previously rejected calls for the deployment of cannon, saying “I don't think anybody wants to see water cannons used on the streets of Britain because we have a different attitude to the culture of policing here”.

The cannon have long been utilised in Northern Ireland (police purchased six in 2002), but only now look as if they will be permitted to be used on the UK mainland. The Association of Chief Police Officers, Boris and the Met have proposed buying three second-hand Ziegler Wasserwerfer 9000, at a total cost of approximately £200,000. When bought new, the cannon “cost from £600k to £1 million [each]. It is anticipated that a cannon would last between 25 and 30 years”. The German-built 30-tonne ve-

hicle-mounted cannon can fire up to 18 litres of water a second, heated to 41F (5C) to “prevent the onset of medical conditions associated with the shock of being exposed to cold water”. Its tanks hold 9000 litres of water, which it can “get through ... in just five minutes if it is running at full pressure, although ... operating for this length of time would be difficult to justify in terms of use of force”, and which can be replenished from either hydrants or open water sources. The vehicles carrying the cannon are equipped with searchlights and CCTV cameras and “can travel at speeds comparable to an HGV”. Reportedly only three such vehicles are needed to ensure full operational capability across the UK. Senior officers at Scotland Yard want to take delivery of the weapons within months, which will be paid for by the Mayor after the Home Office refused to supply funds for the purchase.

The cannons have been linked to causing broken bones, blindness (in Germany in 2010, a pensioner attending an environmental protest was permanently blinded), damage to long-term balance (caused by direct hits to ears) and other injuries. A report by the Association of Chief Police Officers notes three types of possible injury; a) those caused by the stream of water impacting the body, b) those caused by debris or other obstacles, and c) those caused by other objects hitting the body. The Ukrainian government recently lifted a ban on using water cannons in sub-zero temperatures, resulting in hundreds of injuries and at least one reported death from pneumonia, the Met themselves admit the cannon are capable of “causing serious injury or even death”,



and a 2013 report by the government's Defence Science and Technology Laboratory found *"good evidence ... to indicate that serious injuries have been sustained by people subjected to the force of water cannon"*. Furthermore, the vehicles on which the cannon are mounted have themselves been responsible for deaths and injury caused by impacting or running over civilians.

Water cannon as crowd control evolved from fire hoses, with the first truck-mounted versions appearing in Germany in the 1930s. A typical modern cannon's high-pressure pumps require a large reservoir (commonly 9000 litres), and hence they are usually mounted on/in a large vehicle. Designed to withstand attack from projectiles, from the sides and above, these vehicles are ex-

tremely well armoured (although one German water cannon was reportedly disabled by a concrete-filled washing machine tipped off a building). Effective range is suggested to be between 50 and 90 metres, but the cannon are often used at closer quarters. Most of the modern cannon can also be fitted with alternative payloads – around the world it is becoming increasingly common to mark protestors with coloured or UV dye, and many models are also capable of adding tear gas to the stream. Indonesia and Turkey have used chemical solutions (such as ammonia) to attack targets, and the company Jaycor Tactical Systems has experimented with using salt and other additives to reduce the breakup of a water jet's stream into droplets, allowing electricity to be conducted through

water (delivery was demonstrated delivery from a distance of up to twenty feet, but as of writing the company had apparently not yet tested the device on humans). Those petitioning for the addition of the cannon to the police arsenal claim now that any use would be restricted to the 'basic' technology of firing plain water, but can the present or future iterations of the powers that be really be entrusted to resist the temptations of increased function-creep and the resultant weaponisation of such technologies, especially when they have failed to do so time and time again in the past?

**CHANGE.ORG PETITION** – "Refuse to allow the use of water cannons by any Police force across England and Wales to deal with anticipated street protests." [goo.gl/EBGFjK](http://goo.gl/EBGFjK)

# HOLE INSIDE

**Claudia Bianchi and Davide Nero** were deeply in love. Davide was a strange man; he studied black magic and the kabbalah; he called himself a magician. Claudia thought of him more as a small timer who dabbled in tricks and conjuring.

Claudia was a sight to behold, a beautiful woman with long curly hair. Physically, Davide was an odd fellow with an elongated face and, to his misfortune, a crooked back. He had suffered from Tuberculosis on a trip to India in his youth and was unable to move his neck. Despite this he was however generally found to be in good humour. Although they were both fascinated with darkness, gothic creatures and so forth the lovers found many moments of brightness in each other's arms.

One day Davide decided he needed to conduct one of his experiments, a week-long ritual in the middle of the forest. Claudia begged for him not to go; she was terribly depressed and didn't want to be left alone. The day after he left a terrible storm blew up and Claudia was worried the shutters would come off their frames. She called Giorgio, Davide's brother and confidant. Giorgio arrived within the hour. He was unlike his brother – tall, dark and handsome. The storm got stronger and she ordered him to stay. After that it was not long before they were sexually entwined on the kitchen floor. At this precise moment Davide returned, with

his experiment being rained off. Without uttering a word he picked up a knife and cut his brother's throat.

Davide marched up to Claudia, her heart beat faster and faster. She feared for her life but Davide dropped the knife and touched her once on her chest. Immediately she was filled with an insatiable appetite and ransacked the cupboards. She ate everything she could find but yet was still famished. Sitting down, she felt hollow inside. She lifted up her top to find that where Davide had touched her there was a hole in her chest. She had no pain, only an odd sensation of longing. She screamed at Davide, asking what he had done and begged him to undo her. He did not say a word but sat watching her as if he was staring at a long buried tomb. That night she made a decision; she no longer wanted to live. She threw herself out of the window. She hit the floor but did not die and instead traipsed away from her house bemused, cursed and undead.

Wandering through the woods she was drawn to a man out on a morning stroll. Beseet by her beauty he was entranced enough to lay himself at her mercy. She had none; she ripped open his chest and devoured his heart. For a brief moment her hunger was abated. Some hours passed and her hunger returned – had she found a solution or a path to a fresh addiction?

Eventually she found somewhere to hide. Her intoxicating beauty brought many men to her door. Every time she would lay her eyes on each of them she would hope that she would be able to give his heart a good home. Every time she had a heart in her hands she could do nothing but to gobble it up. She knew that if only she could accept a man's heart without taking it from him that she might be free of Davide Nero's curse. Yet she could never stop herself.

She knew not what drove her and though she would always deny it, it was not a man she desired but his strong red pulsing muscle.





# WORLD CUP FOULS

**Less than a month** before the FIFA World Cup, Brazil was once again **shaken** by strikes, protests, police repression, and promises of federal intervention to ensure public safety.

Just like the massive demonstrations of **June and July 2013**, the discontent these latest demonstrations express cannot be easily summarised – neither in terms of political intention nor ideological values.

As the **presidential election of October 2014** approaches, various segments of Brazilian society are voicing different kinds of dissatisfaction. Among the protesters, there are teachers campaigning for better salaries, organised movements of the homeless fighting for their rights, and anti-World Cup groups protesting against the waste of public money in the construction of multi-billion-dollar football arenas.

This widespread sense of discontent springs from the persistence of dire economic inequality, police brutality (including murders, disappearances, and torture), rising pressure on incomes from inflation, and the government's failure to improve Brazil's health and education systems.

The traditional political parties, both left and right, were shaken by the 2013 protests' spontaneity, the depth of mistrust in institutional politics, and the protesters' tactics, which defied the norms of political organisation.

The fact is that the protests have not forced a clear political response from the Brazilian government. But they have provoked unexpected reactions from the poorest members of Brazilian society, who live in slums or in peripheral and degraded urban areas.

Human rights violations and indiscriminate violence are **nothing new** for the residents of these areas, yet their reaction to recent incidents has been more vocal and public than ever. While the 2013 demonstrations didn't have a specific focus or earn any specific concessions from the state, they did give voice to a population that has so far seen its demands

disregarded.

The protests have also had unexpected consequences in the Brazilian Congress. The violence of some protesters was identified by the mass media and mainstream politicians as mere vandalism. This reinforced the idea that the "correct" way of protesting is to do so in peaceful and organised marches, as opposed to "undemocratic" ways of demonstrating discontent with violence.

Based on that, much of the population began to support a harsher punishment for such acts. This support was echoed in the Brazilian Congress, and a new proposition of a law against "terrorism" was presented in July 2013.

Despite being condemned by the national constitution, the use of "tools of terror" is not proscribed in Brazilian law, and the country has no anti-terrorism legislation currently in force. The legal definition of "terrorism" is a highly sensitive subject in Brazil, since the concept was so abused in the "dirty war" waged by the country's military rulers against political opposition during the **dictatorship of 1964-1985**.

That "war" was legally supported by the National Security Act of 1969; the same law quoted by some supporters of a new anti-terrorism act. Despite of the international centrality of this theme since 9/11, the

debate in Brazil had been stuffy – until the demonstrations began last year.

To deal with them, various government spheres resorted to the National Security Act, invoking as a justification the urgency of preparing the Brazilian state to face possible public safety problems during major events, such as the World Cup and Olympic Games in 2016.

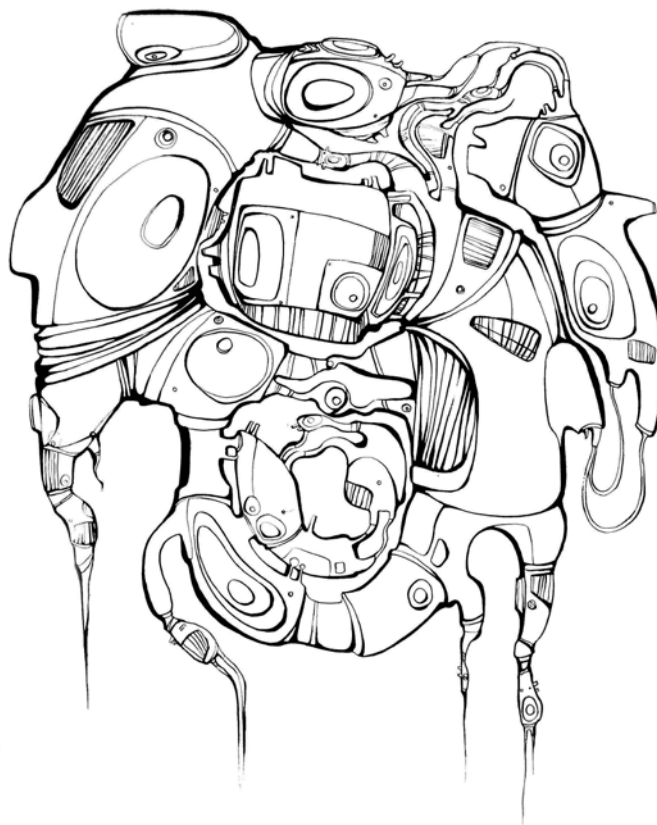
The term "terrorism" is highly open to interpretation, and it is telling that it could unify a large number of distinct groups, among them social organisations. It is not lost on them that a new anti-terrorism law could rehash the old practice of selective repression justified by labeling specific social groups "internal enemies".

This chimes all too well with the rhetoric of the "war on terror", with its post-9/11 suspensions of basic human rights and "exceptions" to international law. In the case of the World Cup, it is expected that the police forces will use all means necessary to stop large protests from happening, probably with the support of the armed forces.

That prospect was reinforced on May 15 2014, when **dozens of demonstrations** took place in Brazil's major cities. These protests were violently repressed by security forces and were seen as an example of what people protesting during the World Cup should expect.

Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff has **stated** that she expects Brazilians to show visiting fans the happiness and hospitality for which we are known worldwide. Meanwhile, the mass media and merchandising initiatives promote the **same old image** of a sunny country with a beautiful, tolerant and joyful people, madly in love with football and ready to be as nice as usual.

But the expected protests during the World Cup will reveal another Brazil to foreign visitors (and even to Brazilians themselves): a country of deep social, political and economic complexity, full of unpredictable potential and democratic promise, but with a population less and less willing to accept State violations of any kind.



# John Bowden On His Parole Application

March 2014

**“Like slavery,** prison is an inhuman and anti- human system, and in any genuinely civilised society would be relegated to a museum piece, an example of man’s inhumanity to man.”

Imprisonment as a human experience probably has it’s closest parallel in slavery. People in prison are systematically stripped of basic human dignity and bodily integrity and reduced to the condition of caged animals. In terms of their relationship with the state and those who directly oversee and enforce their captivity, prisoners are disempowered to the extent where even their most elemental of human rights are frequently treated with contempt and are in reality non-existent. By its very nature and intrinsic purpose, imprisonment denies the imprisoned their very humanity. As a system and institution, prison is incapable of being reformed and it most definitely doesn’t ‘rehabilitate’ those held within it, and neither is it intended to; how can degrading and humiliating a human being improve the condition of their minds and characters? How can imprisoning and de-socialising someone make them more able and inclined to integrate back into ‘normal’ society when they’ve emerged from such a brutalising and alienating experience?

Prisons prime purpose is to punish and suppress and enforce social and political control – it is nothing more than a weapon of the state. It derives it’s legitimacy as an instrument of ‘law and order’ or ‘public protection’, when in fact it manufactures anti-social behaviour; as evidenced by high rates of re-offending and the transformation of young petty offenders into seriously alienated, angry and violent criminals. In that regard, prisons are actually a danger to public safety, and in any case only imprison working class people, leaving untouched and unpunished the behaviour of corporate criminals that has a far more socially and economically damaging effect on society and the lives of ordinary people.

Like slavery, prison is an inhuman and anti-human system, and in any genuinely civilised society would be relegated to a museum piece, an example of man’s inhumanity to man. Instead, neo-liberal

capitalism has created a prison-industrial-complex that feeds on the suffering of prisoners as a source of profit and corrupts any basic notion of prison as a ‘public service’.

I have been imprisoned for 34 years. Originally I was sent here as a violent and extremely damaged young man from the slums of South London, who with two other men brutally killed a fourth man. All existed on the margins of society and on the edge of existence. I remain imprisoned long beyond the length of time stipulated by the judiciary and twenty years after the release of the two men imprisoned with me, not because I continue to represent a risk to society but because the prison system or some of those enforcing it believe I should be detained indefinitely because of my activities during the 1980s and 1990s in organising prisoner resistance and creating struggle in prisons.

They demand that I now surrender my political integrity completely and unquestioningly comply with their power and authority. When reviewing my continued imprisonment last year the Parole Board said there was no question that I had changed fundamentally as a human being during my long imprisonment and now embraced the cause of prisoner’s rights; but it refused to order my release because I continued to question and challenge the authority of the prison system, which it nevertheless conceded was often characterised by a clear abuse of power. The board refused to order my release because it considered my defiance of prison system abuse an inappropriate response from someone who should, on the contrary, be completely

broken and compliant to official authority; no matter how corruptly it is administered. It also condemned my use of the internet through radical groups on the outside to expose and highlight abuses of power against prisoners and publicly name some of those responsible for it. I remain in prison therefore exactly because of what the Parole Board described as my “impasse” with the prison system, or my refusal to remain silent in the face of it’s abuse of power. I am told by those responsible for my continued detention that unless I acknowledge and accept the total authority of the prison system over me then I will remain here until death. So the price for my release is total and abject surrender of the very thing that has provided me with the strength to survive the last three decades of my imprisonment – my personal and political integrity. I must effectively die as a principled and thinking human being before I am granted physical freedom. That I cannot and will not do.

Solidarity is the only effective weapon that prisoners possess in their struggle against a system that treats them as something less than human, and the solidarity of those who while not sharing their physical captivity nevertheless share a common desire for freedom is absolutely crucial if the state violence that prison represents is ever to be significantly resisted and overcome. I therefore ask all those who identify with the prison struggle to add their names to the petition supporting me; by doing so they are making a statement to the prison system that it’s authority is by no means universally recognised and that I am not completely alone and isolated.

By isolating prisoners and surrounding it’s treatment of them with secrecy as well as walls and bars those operating the prison system believe they possess an almost omnipotent degree of power that is accountable to no one. By publicly supporting those prisoners targeted by the prison system and victimised by it, groups and individuals on the outside can significantly challenge that power. Just by adding their name to this petition supporters are making a significant contribution both to my own struggle and that of prisoners everywhere whose isolation and powerlessness is significantly diminished when solidarity is extended from those beyond the belly of the beast.

**You can sign the petition at Avaaz here:**  
[goo.gl/gtb6EJ](http://goo.gl/gtb6EJ)





