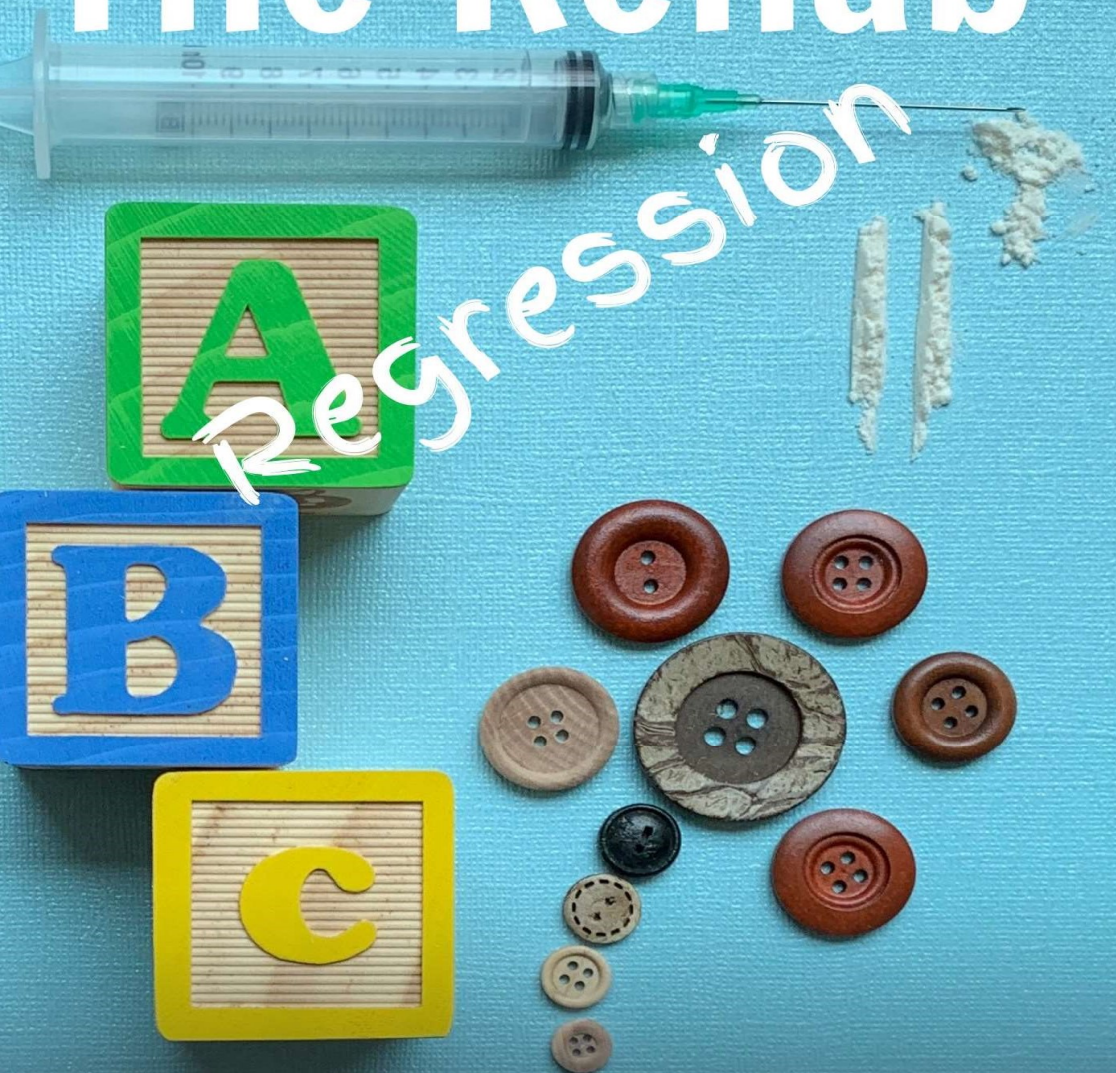


AN A B DISCOVERY BOOK

The Rehab



BARRY OLIVER

The Rehab Regression

The Rehab Regression

Barry Oliver

Copyright © 2019

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, transmitted in any form, by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the prior written permission of the publisher and author.

Any resemblance to any person, either living or dead, or actual events are a coincidence.

Title: The Rehab Regression

Author: Barry Oliver

Editor: Michael Bent

Publisher: AB Discovery

© 2019

www.abdiscovery.com.au

Other Books from Barry Oliver

The Daycare Regression

The Aeviternity Gateway

Other Books from AB Discovery

There's still a baby in my bed!

So, Your teenager is wearing diapers!

Where Big Babies Live

Home Detention

Adult Babies: Psychology and Practices

Coffee with Rosie

Being an Adult Baby

The Three Chambers

A Brother for Samantha

Mummy's Diary

The Hypnotist

Chosen

The Snoop

The Washing Line

My Baby Callum

A Baby for Felicity

The Regression of Baby Noah
A Baby for Melissa and her Mother
Baby Solutions
Discharged into Infancy
The English Baby
A Mother's Love
The Psychiatrist and her Patient
The Reluctant Baby
The Book Club Baby
The Rehab Regression
A Woman's Guide to Babying Her Partner
The ABC of Baby Women
Overlapping Stains
The Babies and Bedwetters of Baker St
The Bedwetter's Travel Guide
Me, Myself, Christine
The Joy of Bedwetting
Diaper Discipline and Dominance
The Adult Baby Identity – coming out as ABDL
The Adult Baby Identity – Healing Childhood Wounds
Living with Chrissie – my life as an Adult Baby
The Adult Baby Identity – a self-help guide
The Adult Baby Identity – the dissociation spectrum
Six Misfits
Six Misfits – A man and his dog
The Six Misfits – the seventh misfit
Becoming Me – The Journey of Self-acceptance
The Epitome of Love
Australian Baby: a life of nappies, bottles and struggles
Fear and Joy: a life in and out of nappies
The Fulltime, Permanent Adult Infant

Contents

The Rehab Regression 2

Chapter 1 7

Chapter 2 29

Chapter 3 43

Chapter 4 63

Chapter 5 88

Chapter 6 104

Chapter 7 129

Chapter 8 150

Chapter 9 172

Chapter 10..... 190

Chapter 11..... 212

Chapter 1



Toby knew exactly what he wanted to be when he grew up, starting from his first memory at the age of three. His parents had given him a puppy for his birthday, and from that first hyperactive puppy face-licking moment, Toby knew he wanted to be a Veterinarian. Well, at that age, he just wanted to be a puppy doctor, but as he grew older, he learned that puppy doctors are Veterinarians, and Veterinarians take care of more than just puppies. They could take care of any animal in the world, and that suited Toby just fine.

Unfortunately, Toby was not born to parents who believed in animal doctors or doctors, for that matter, of any small things to include animals of the humankind. So, Toby never saw a doctor for any reason, until he was old enough to no longer need his parents' permission. His parents had not based their decision on religious or political conviction. Toby might have preferred that reason, even though he still would never have seen a doctor. At least it would have meant they had any conviction at all. Not even poverty was their excuse - his parents worked, and they saw doctors whenever needed. No, the answer was plain and simple neglect. Toby's parents just did not have "time" for him, and he would eventually come to understand that his very existence to them was a "mistake".

Even a broken bone did not earn him a trip to the doctor. Toby broke two of them during his childhood - once falling out of a tree, the other being pushed against a car by his Dad. Neither brought him medical care, especially the second.

The Rehab Regression

Little did Toby know at age three, but his birthday puppy would be the last meaningful present he would ever receive from his parents. After that, it would be clothing (the used kind from second-time-around stores) and school supplies. No bikes at age five, no video games at age ten, no car at age sixteen. Not even books about animals, that would have at least provided food for his Veterinarian dreams. Just the one dog, and he loved it as his best and only friend for the next eight years until a passing car would randomly take him away (at least that had not been his parents' doing).

Thus, Toby's childhood was mostly about waiting for it to come to an end. He saved every scrap of money, once he was old enough to start working, so he could leave home for good when his childhood at last ended.

Finally, it did come to an end, and Toby's life was looking up. He was nineteen and nearly done with his first year of college. He didn't live with his parents and was loving every minute of his new-found freedom. True, his school was only a community college, but it was cheap. Combined with the money he had saved from a part-time job, and a small student loan, he was making ends meet, however meagerly.

Toby planned on Community College for two years, followed by a transfer to State where he could take the pre-med courses he would need for Veterinary school. How he would afford Veterinary school seemed a problem for the distant future, but he was confident he would find a way. Toby went to school all day, worked nights at a bar called Casey's Pub (thanks to a fake ID proclaiming him to be twenty-one), slept occasionally on the weekends, shared a piece-of-crap, one-bedroom apartment with two other roommates, and attended parties whenever he had the time.

Life was good at last! He deserved this.

The Rehab Regression

Unfortunately for Toby, it didn't take long for him to discover other consequences of working at a bar at age nineteen and attending college parties — namely drugs. Toby started out with a little marijuana and Ecstasy but was then introduced to heavier stuff. He only did it on the weekends, and couldn't afford to do much, though his friends were always there to provide. He didn't have the money to get addicted to this stuff, so he thought. Still, it was more and more on his mind, and his grades, though not bad, were a little off target.

Grades were not on Toby's mind tonight as he stepped out of Casey's Pub on a Friday night. It was only 1 AM. Casey had let him out early and he knew about a party just down the block. The March air was cool and invigorating, but not as invigorating as what awaited him.

"Hey Toby, perfect timing. Party's just starting to kick!" It was one of his college friends, Justin, standing guard and taking money.

"It's cool," said Toby, slipping Justin some cash.

Justin immediately handed the money back. "For friends," he said.

"You're the best," Toby lightly punched him in the arm as he walked into the party room.

The rush was as intense as usual, like taking off on the Space Shuttle (hadn't they stopped flying?). Toby had already taken an Ecstasy before arriving, then an unnamed dancer handed him something to smoke, which he did without asking. His heart raced and his mind exploded into the most heightened awareness. He joined the other dancers on the floor in a frenzy of chemical energy. Toby loved the dance floor. It felt like flying. He felt he was literally flying through the air.

The Rehab Regression

Life was now even better - no, it was the BEST!

"HEY MAN, YOU SHOULD TRY THIS." It was Chris, another of his college friends. He had to scream to be heard over the deafening music.

"WHAT IS IT?" Toby yelled back.

"JUST SMOKE IT. DON'T ASK."

What the hell, he was invincible now, so Toby took a puff. Now he was the Space Shuttle with a nuclear bomb under its ass.

"WHAT THE FUCK WAS THAT?" he screamed back.

"CRACK. YOU JUST SMOKED CRACK."

Toby pretended to be more upset than he really was. "DAMN IT CHRIS, I SAID I DON'T DO THAT STUFF."

Chris shrugged. "WELL, NOW YOU DO. WHAT DO YOU THINK?"

Toby couldn't go on pretending. He smiled from ear to ear. "I LOVE THIS SHIT. GIVE ME SOME MORE."

Chris handed over the pipe. The next few hours were spaceships and explosions.

And life got even better if that was possible...

...until re-entry.

By 5 AM, Toby wasn't feeling so good. The explosions, instead of launching him higher into space were now blowing up in his head. He vomited a couple of times (everyone was too high to notice), but it didn't make him feel better. Now, his eyes were blinded by the explosions and the dance floor kept racing up to meet him. Suddenly, he was on the floor looking up. His friends *did* notice that but were laughing hysterically. Toby tried pushing

himself up from the floor, then BANG! One final thermo-nuclear explosion cleared the room, his friends, and Toby's consciousness away.



Toby awoke in a hospital bed. He recognized being in a hospital but didn't know which one or how long he had been there. He had the worst sore throat of his life, and he felt almost too weak to lift his arms.

"You have a visitor," his nurse told him. She looked to be about middle age, but still slightly attractive in Toby's mind.

"Wha...Where am I?" He croaked. His voice didn't work well either.

His nurse patted his shoulder reassuringly. "You're at University Hospital. You had a drug overdose and they brought you here by the squad. You were in the ICU for a few days, on a ventilator. That's why your throat is sore. Now you're on the Floor. Remember?"

Toby shook his head. Everything before this moment was clouded in fog. "Sorry, I can't remember much."

"Not to worry. Your memory will get better as the sedation wears off. But right now, you have a visitor. Is it okay if he comes in?"

A few minutes later, a man much older than Toby's nurse walked into the room and sat on the corner of his bed. He looked to be taller than Toby, heavier set, too, and he was wearing a dark blue business suit.

"Hello," he said, extending his hand in a friendly gesture. "My name is Miles. How are you feeling?"

The Rehab Regression

It took a Herculean effort to lift his arm and shake the man's hand. Toby was a little embarrassed by his own weakness.

"I feel weak and sore everywhere." He couldn't remember anyone by the name of Miles, but then again, he couldn't remember much of anything at the moment. "Where am... No, I know where I am. But, how did I get here? And who are you?" he almost forgot to ask.

The man answered in a serious tone. "Well, you arrived by ambulance. They found large amounts of methamphetamine and cocaine in your system, a really bad combination to have."

"My nurse told me I overdosed. I know. Man, I feel like death." Toby could barely lift his arms to hold his aching head.

"Funny you should say it like that," the man continued. "After all, you died in the ambulance."

Toby's eyes popped open wide. "I what?!"

The man smiled weakly. "Yes, you died. They obviously got you back, but for about ten minutes according to the record, your heart stopped, and you were dead while they performed CPR." He paused for a moment to let this sink in. "You were then in intensive care for five days. They just transferred you out today."

Toby was shocked. That amount of time seemed impossible.

"I've been here for five days? What about school? Casey's going to kill me." He thought about the bar owner and how he did not tolerate missed shifts.

The man nodded. "Your school has been notified. I'm sorry, but it had to be done. You've been expelled." Miles paused a moment to let this information sink in. "And, no need to worry about Mr. Casey. You are underage and should never have been working there."

Toby groaned.

No school and no job. What the hell will I do next?

Miles continued. "Almost a week of your life has been taken from you. You probably have some level of brain damage, being without oxygen for so long. The doctors don't know the full extent of it. Only time will tell."

Was this why my memory isn't working so well? Will this fog ever lift from my mind, or is it permanent? What hospital am I in? Didn't my nurse tell me?

"Tell me again, who are you?"

The man leaned closer. "Ah, now for the purpose of my visit. As I said, my name is Miles. I am the Director of a unique drug rehabilitation center called Forever Free. I was given your name as someone who might benefit from our program."

Toby held up his hand. "Hold on, who told you about me? It wasn't my parents was it?"

Director Miles' face saddened a little. "Not directly. You see the University contacted your parents, but they didn't seem interested. They said something to the effect of 'it would have happened sooner or later'."

Director Miles gave Toby some time to react. Toby was visibly upset. Yes, he hated his parents, but still, he was their KID! They should care a little. Instead, they had abandoned him, like always. His voice shook on the verge of tears.

"They're not my parents anymore."

"I get it," Miles continued. "So, then the University reached out to us. We have a very special therapy program that helps - "

The Rehab Regression

“Stop!” Toby cut him off. “I don’t need rehab, that’s for addicts and old people. I just overdid it this one time. I’m not addicted.”

Director Miles gave him a scolding look. “But you’ve been in trouble with drugs before.”

Miles had been referring to the one time in high school Toby got caught smoking marijuana.

“Dude, that was in high school and it was my first time and it was just pot. They dropped the charges.”

How did you know about that anyway? Toby wondered.

Director Miles scolded again. “They have an excuse for everything.”

“They?” Toby spat out.

“Addicts,” Miles quickly followed.

Toby was starting to feel pissed. “Hey buddy, fuck off, okay. It’s not an excuse, it’s the truth. I’m not an addict and I don’t need rehab, so you can leave now, thank you.”

The Director leaned away from Toby. “Such colorful language they teach in college these days. You must have paid good money to learn how to say, ‘fuck off,’” he repeated mockingly. Then Miles leaned in close. “But I’m not going to leave just yet. I’m going to give you a dose of reality. You see that man, just outside your door.”

Toby had to lean forward in bed to see him, then he saw the man in a shirt and tie sitting outside the door. “Yeah, so what?”

“That nice gentleman is a cop, or rather, a detective. After I leave, he is going to have a little chat with you, too. Seems your buddies have placed the blame on you. They told the cops that you

The Rehab Regression

sold them the drugs. There was a nice sum of money found in your pocket when you arrived at the hospital. As soon as the doctors discharge you from this place, that nice gentleman will immediately escort you to jail.”

Toby was too stunned to react. Why would his friends, whose names he couldn’t remember, stick the blame on him?

“That’s right, jail. You are nineteen, not a kid anymore. You go to the BIG house. I, on the other hand, can make a deal with the Judge. He knows me and the success of our program. If you agree to enroll, you won’t go to jail. He may just give you a suspended sentence, he may even let you off, considering it’s your first offense and considering the reliability of your friends.” Miles made air-quotes around the word ‘friends.’

The Director handed Toby a business card. “Think about it but make up your mind before they discharge you. You have to go straight from the hospital to rehab.”

“Or else...?” Toby felt like a little child daring his parents to punish him.

“Or else jail, and no parents to bail you out or send you cookies.”

With that, Director Miles stood and walked out of the room. The detective looked into the room but didn’t come in. He had plenty of time. Toby looked at the card, then tore it up and tossed it on the floor.

“No way, man. I don’t need rehab. I’ll get a lawyer. They can’t throw me in jail.”



The Rehab Regression

A woman joined Director Miles as he walked away from Toby's room. She was dressed in a business suit as well.

"Don't you think he's too young?" she asked.

Director Miles chuckled. "An ironic choice of words. Why would that make a difference, considering the end result?"

"We've never tried it on someone so young. We don't know if it will work. What if he doesn't react the way older adults do? What if he gets hurt?" The tone in her voice was not one of genuine fear, but more of professional concern.

"Silvia, didn't you hear me in there. His heart stopped for ten minutes. He died. I don't imagine he could be more hurt than that. Maybe an intervention this early in an addict's life will have a more magnified effect."

They passed the hospital information desk and walked outside. Silvia continued. "Well, I still have my doubts. We need to be cautious with him. Maybe not go all the way at first."

"We will treat him the same as any other client. He will be safe," Miles assured.

"I certainly hope so." Silvia stopped at their car and unlocked it with her key fob. "But do you think he'll agree to come? Toby didn't sound enthusiastic."

The Director paused. She had a point. "I have no idea. I think he tore up my card as I was leaving. Maybe your concern is for nothing."

Once in the car, Silvia changed her tone, one more personal and caring.

"Toby. It's rather a cute name." She smiled.

The Rehab Regression

Director Miles grinned. "Yes, you always fall for the cute names. Toby is a good kid. I can always tell. He deserves better. He deserves what we can give him."

"Toby, Toby," Silvia kept repeating the name. "He'll make a good client. It will be better for him if he agrees to come." The two of them drove away from the hospital. "Toby, little Toby. What a cute name."



"Hello, I'm Lisa. I'm 38 years old and my parole officer said I have to come here... you know... or go back... you know... to jail. So, that's why I'm here. Oh, I do crack, marijuana, Percocet... you know... alcohol, smokes, everyone does that. Anyway, that's why I'm here."

At 38, Lisa was so far, the youngest person to introduce themselves to the group. It was Toby's first session at *Forever Free* and it was off to a bad start. Yes, he had decided to avoid immediate jail and come to the rehab center at least for one day. He noticed there weren't any guards at the door, so he figured if he didn't like it, he would bolt out of there.

The group had already heard from a 45-year-old man named Jimmy who was on parole for robbing a liquor store while on PCP; a 50 year-old man named Bubba (yeah, that's what he called himself) also on parole for too many offenses to count, and a 52 year-old man named Frank who looked like a prune after 40 years of regular smoking (yes, 40 years! Toby did the math) and more jail time than Toby had been alive. *All* of them are old, *all* of them on parole or having done Time, *all* of them losers.

Then there was nineteen-year-old Toby, college student, future Veterinarian, no criminal record, no lung disease, no skin disease, and no rotting teeth. It was his turn to speak.

The Rehab Regression

“Ummm... my name is Toby, I’m nineteen, I’m pre-med in college.” That one stuck out like a sore thumb, “and I got busted at a party.” Toby paused.

What more could he say? That was it, really. He wasn’t about to tell them about his parents abandoning him, or that one time he got caught in high school doing pot. So, he decided to be a wise-ass instead.

“And, I’m not an addict, and I don’t belong here with you losers.” He stood up from his metal folding chair and headed for the door. “You all can go on talking about the 1960s or wherever you’re from. I’m getting a lawyer.” With that, he was out the door and suddenly face to face with Director Miles.

“Leaving so soon?” Miles folded his arms in a gesture of authority.

Toby started to step around him, but Miles blocked his move. “I said I would give it a try, and I did, and it didn’t work. I don’t belong with those old people. It’s creepy.”

The Director shook his head. “You were in there for all of thirty minutes. I would hardly call that trying. Besides, if you would listen to them, you might be surprised by how much you do have in common.”

Toby shook his head. No way, I’m not hanging out here anymore. I’ll take my chances with the cops. I’ve got a buddy who has a friend in law school. I’ll take my chances.”

Director Miles acted surprised. “Wow! You have a buddy who knows someone in law school. You’re *very* connected, I can tell.”

Toby caught the sarcasm, but the truth stung. He had no clue about how to get a good lawyer, and he had almost no memory of

The Rehab Regression

the night in question. How was he supposed to defend himself when he couldn't remember any of the details?

The Director put his hand on Toby's shoulder inviting him to walk along. "Please, give it a little more time. I would like to explain a little more about what we do here at Forever Free. Can you stay for that? Just sit down a few minutes longer and let me explain?" Miles had lost that authoritarian, sarcastic tone and seemed almost genuine to Toby.

Toby's confidence cracked a little and he reluctantly agreed. Miles led him to a small conference room with a rectangular table and chairs. The Director sat on one side of the desk and motioned for Toby to sit at the other. Toby elected to remain standing.

"Suit yourself," he said with a pleasant smile. "Where should I begin?" It was more a question to himself than for Toby, but Toby chose to answer instead.

"Well, for starters, why do I have to be in a room of old people? I mean look at them! They're losers. Burned out, old losers. And, what's wrong with their teeth?"

Director Miles just stared at Toby, not angry, not pleasant, merely neutral. The silence grew uncomfortable.

"What?" Toby broke the silence. "What are you staring at me for? Aren't you going to say something?"

The Director took a dramatic breath. "Are you finished with your tough guy act? Because if you aren't, don't let me interrupt. But, when you're finished, I might answer some of your questions."

Toby's confidence wavered. "Yeah, go ahead and talk, but five minutes, that's all you have."

The Rehab Regression

"I have a story to tell you, a rather long one, so I hope you might forgive me if I go over the five-minute limit. Will that be a problem for you?" Sarcasm once more, and that solid, almost parental authority.

Toby caved even more. "Sure, man. Just talk. Just tell me what I'm doing here, okay."

Director Miles leaned back in his chair. "Oh, you are about to hear the whole truth. But *no* interrupting! You may think this story crazy, a fantasy, that maybe I'm insane. But no interrupting!"

Toby didn't speak and just nodded his head.

"Tell me, do you believe in time machines?"

Toby had not expected that.

Am I allowed to speak?

"When I ask you a question, yes. Only then."

Toby was confused. "Like in the movies? Like when they go back in time to stop a war or something?"

Miles clicked his teeth, calculating. "Not like the movies, at least not one you've ever seen. I'm talking about moving in the reverse time direction. Like walking backward."

Toby didn't get how "time machines" had anything to do with the Rehab center. "No way. That stuff's just science fiction. Kid's stuff. It's not real."

Director Miles nodded. "Kid's stuff, exactly. But let's just pretend, for the sake of my story, that we at *Forever Free* actually possess a time machine. However, this hypothetical time machine doesn't create a bubble around a person and take him and his bubble back in time to some date in history. Instead, it moves that person's body entirely in the reverse time direction, while the

world stays put. He gets younger, the farther he goes. What would you think about that kind of time machine?"

Toby did not have a clue where this was going. "I don't know what I'm supposed to think. It's just fantasy."

Miles went on. "Suppose a client came to us – an 'old loser' as you put it - his life ruined, unable to fight his addiction. We age him backward to a time before he became addicted. Sounds like it might work, doesn't it? A 100% cure, right?"

Toby shrugged, "Sure, whatever."

"Well, that's where you're wrong. You see, if we could successfully age a person backward, but his mind and memories remained intact, it wouldn't work. We could put a fifty-year-old in a twenty-year-old's body, but he would still have his fifty-year-old mind with all of its previous addictions. He would go right back to using his substance of choice, albeit as a healthier twenty-year-old man. It wasn't like starting over, as we had hoped.

"Then someone said, *'Why not keep going back just to see what happens?'* So, we tried it, more of an experiment than anything. We took our clients through their teens, even into their childhood. And what do you think happened then?"

Toby threw up his hands, "I don't know. Did they start wetting the bed? What the hell?"

Miles lost no enthusiasm. "Well, they still retained their past memories, but we began to see something new, in addition to the bedwetting."

The Director paused to consider how to explain his discovery in a way Toby would understand. "How many times have you been told to 'act your age'?"

"From my parents? Like, every other sentence."

The Rehab Regression

“That doesn’t surprise me. But to our surprise, that’s exactly what people do. They begin to act their age. You make someone ten years old, and before long he is acting like a ten-year-old. He may still remember his past life, but he handles those memories as a ten-year-old would. Adult memories, ten-year-old behavior. So, how do you think our clients did? Do you think we cured them?”

A blank stare from Toby.

“I see you’re dying to know. Well, we hadn’t. They were miserable. Not only did they still remember drugs, now they *really* acted like children. It was the worst of both worlds. We took terrible adults and made them into even worse children. We began to believe that our experiment was a failure. We almost ended the project. One-by-one, we dismissed all of our clients, all except for one – Timmy. Timmy had a history of multiple overdoses and multiple cardiac arrests, much like your own.”

Toby rolled his eyes.

He’s teaching me a lesson, great. And the moral of the story is, don’t end up like Timmy. What kind of name was “Timmy” for an adult anyway? Shouldn’t it be Tim?

“We were sure he would be dead in less than a year if we let him out. Maybe even a month. So, we kept him here, for his own safety. But what were we to do with him? Then someone – that same brilliant someone who had suggested taking our clients back to childhood – suggested ‘Why not go all the way?’ I mean, if we could take a person to *any* age, why not go all the way back?”

Toby’s attention started to wander. He didn’t care about this man’s crazy story. He wondered if the five-minute mark had passed. It probably had.

The Director’s expression cheered up.

The Rehab Regression

“What an incredible idea that was. We saw our first success. You see, the very young brain is physically unable to retain its adult memories in any meaningful way. If you go back far enough, even language begins to go and soon you don’t have the words to describe those memories. Very young children live in the moment. They can hardly remember what happened yesterday, much less a week or a year ago. Timmy was finally cured. He had no memory of his drug addiction. He was free of it! He was happy again!

“But we now had a new problem. What to do with Timmy. After all, we are an adult rehab center, and Timmy... well, Timmy was a toddler. We couldn’t just put him in an apartment or get him a new job. He needed to be taken care of, exactly like a young child.”

Toby couldn’t help it, he had to interrupt. “Look, I know what you’re talking about and it won’t work with me.”

The Director was surprised. “Oh,” he paused. “I know what I’m talking about. What is it that *you* think I’m talking about?”

“Hypnosis,” Toby said. “You hypnotize people and make them think they are children. You could also make them bark like a dog or cluck like a chicken. Big deal, it won’t work. I can’t be hypnotized. I don’t believe in that stuff.”

“Hmmm... hypnosis,” Miles pondered. “There’s an interesting idea. Maybe we should try it. Which would you prefer to be, a dog or a chicken?”

“Listen, asshole, I said it won’t work on me. I don’t know why you’re telling me all of this crap.”

“*That* counts as an interruption. If you will let me finish, maybe you’ll understand.”

“Whatever makes you happy.” Toby folded his arms defensively.

Director Miles cleared his throat and continued. “So, where were we. Oh yes, what to do with Timmy. In retrospect, the answer was obvious, but once more our man with the brilliant ideas came up with the solution. We would open an employee daycare center across the street where we could house our regressed clients, side-by-side with actual children. Technically it would be an orphanage since our clients would live there, but you get the point. We reopened the rehab side of our business, renamed it *Forever Free* — clever name, don’t you think? — and one-by-one transformed all our clients into young children.”

Toby tried to stare the Director down. “I suppose you are the brilliant guy who imagined all this crap.”

This made the Director laugh. “Oh no, no. I wish it was me, but it wasn’t. No, that man no longer works for us. He moved on to bigger and better things. So, I took over as Director.”

“You are right, about one thing,” Toby said, sarcastically. “Your story is crazy. Delusional.”

Director Miles looked up to the ceiling for a long, uncomfortable moment as if making up his mind about something, then snapped his fingers, stood up and walked to the conference room door.

“Congratulations, you are done. Per our agreement, you listened to my story. You are now free to go.” He opened the door and stepped into the hallway. When Toby did not immediately follow, he stuck his head back in. “Yes, I’m serious. I’ll show you the way out.”

Toby moved toward Miles, cautiously. “What about the cops?” The jail threat was still real.

The Rehab Regression

“No cops,” Miles assured. “Unless you are an immediate danger to yourself or others, Confidentiality Laws prevent me from reporting you to law enforcement. I’m serious. You’re free to go. Follow me.”

He turned and walked rapidly down the hall. Toby took a few running steps to catch up.

They rounded a corner and just a few yards ahead, was a door with a red Exit sign over it. “Right through there,” Miles pointed at the door. “It’s not locked, I promise.” Then he turned abruptly and walked away.

Toby stood in the hall alone for a moment, going over the Director’s delusional story. He wanted nothing to do with this place. Toby went to the Exit door and put his hand on the knob, expecting it to be locked – it wasn’t. It opened into a small anteroom, and there was another door a few feet away with a small window through which Toby could see the outside parking lot. He left the first door open, in case the outside door was locked and walked over to it. It was locked. Then, the first door slammed shut behind him. Toby jumped. He rushed back to open it. Now, it too was locked. Toby was trapped in the anteroom.

He pounded on the door.

“Hey!” he yelled. “Let me out of here!” He beat on the door. No response. “You said I could go! The door is locked! You lied! Let me out!”

Still no response. He gave the door a kick — it didn’t budge. He backed up and ran at the door with a kick. Still, it didn’t open.

Toby scanned the anteroom looking for any possible escape. The room was hexagon shaped about five feet wide. On one

of the six walls, there was a square-shaped window looking into a darkened room. Toby beat on the window.

“Hey! Is anyone in there?” he screamed. “Let me out!”

Suddenly, a light came on in the room behind the glass, revealing a desktop computer and four large screens. A moment later, Director Miles entered the room and sat at the table.

“Hey, asshole!” Toby screamed, beating on the glass. “Let me out now before I come in there and fuck you up!”

Director Miles spoke into a microphone on the desk. Toby heard his voice from a speaker in the ceiling. “I don’t think you are in a position to do that.”

He appeared to be typing something on the computer. The four screens turned on, opening several application windows.

“What is this room? And what are you doing?” Toby yelled, panic creeping into his voice.

“Why, isn’t it obvious?” he again heard the Director’s voice from overhead. “You are standing in my time machine.”

Toby’s anger exploded. “Don’t fuck with me or I’ll kick your ass! Asshole!”

Unfortunately, all he could do was beat on the inch-thick plexiglass and scream obscenities.

The Director gave his usual scolding look and waved his finger. “Such limited vocabulary. You really should investigate a better college. But I guess it’s too late for that. Pretty soon you won’t be worried about vocabulary.”

That threat sounded ominous. A chill went down Toby’s spine. Toby pounded on the plexiglass window uselessly.

The Rehab Regression

"You can't do this! This is illegal! I have rights!" he screamed. "I told people where I was going! They'll come looking for me!"

Director Miles entered a few more commands into the computer, hardly aware of Toby's screaming. Then he spoke again into the microphone.

"Toby, I want to tell you what's about to happen. Don't be frightened and I promise it doesn't hurt. You are about to go on a time trip. It will feel warm and bright, and you might feel like the room is falling. Don't worry, it won't be falling. You will be shrinking. It's perfectly safe."

"Screw you!" Toby screamed again.

"At some point, you will pass out. Again, you won't be harmed. When it will be over. When you wake up, you will have a new life, a better life, a safer life. You will eventually be happier."

The Director slowly lowered his finger onto a button as if saying a count-down in his head.

"We are taking you back in time now, Toby, way back. You're going all the way back to diapers..."

With those last words, Toby did feel a warm sensation spreading all over his body, as if he was being lowered into an invisible hot tub. This was followed by a light that seemed to radiate evenly from all directions. Gradually, the chamber became brighter and brighter, its features blurring away. All sound vanished. The light was now blinding, though strangely his eyes did not feel pain. Even closing his eyes did not affect the brightness. And yes, the room now felt like it was falling. Toby braced himself against the wall. Then, just like the explosion in his head the night he overdosed, everything was gone, and Toby passed out.

Chapter 2



During his unconscious state, Toby dreamed. He saw himself as a very young child, a toddler playing in a nursery. Just like dreams often are, he observed himself from above, detached, mildly interested, but completely passive. He watched his toddler-self pick up toys, put them in his mouth, bang them together, then toss them across the room. He watched himself suck his thumb. He watched himself taking a nap.

From time to time, a woman would come into the room. She would pick him up, sing to him, tickle his tummy, and sit on the floor to play with him. He watched himself in a highchair, smearing food on his face. The woman laughed. He watched himself being given a bath. He watched her put him in a diaper after the bath. It was vaguely pleasant to watch, yet he remained above it all. Soon it would be morning and Toby would wake from his dream, as all dreams end.

Also, similar to a dream, time didn't seem to make a difference. Days might have passed in dreamtime, but Toby experienced no sense of urgency or boredom. Most of the time, he saw himself from above. Other times, he felt like he was observing through the child's eyes, watching his hands and legs being moved as if by remote control. Sometimes, he observed the woman cuddling him from afar, other times he felt he was in her arms being cuddled. Still, he remained a passive observer of his infantile dream.

Gradually, Toby's thoughts wandered to other memories, as he watched himself toddle around his nursery. He remembered once sitting in a classroom in college taking notes. He remembered

The Rehab Regression

cleaning glasses in a bar. He thought it merely interesting that he could remember these things while dreaming. Yes, he began to understand that he *was* dreaming after all. Still, it didn't bother him to act and feel like a toddler. It was a most comfortable dream.

A man entered his nursery one day, walked over to Toby, picked him up, said a few words that he didn't understand, and put him back down. The man said some more words to the woman. She smiled, he smiled. Then, he walked out of the nursery.

Toby's toddler-self put down a rattle he had been chewing on and placed his thumb in his mouth.

I remember that man! He talked to me in the hospital once. He helps people addicted to drugs. His name is Director Miles.

At that moment, Toby achieved a rare dream state known as "lucid dreaming". He became fully awake within his own dream. He could now control his child's body and make it do anything he wanted.

This is awesome, he thought, never having experienced a lucid dream before. I know I'm dreaming. I can do anything I want.

He imagined what he might try.

I wonder if I can fly?

He ran across the room and imagined himself lifting into the air. It didn't happen. His child-self tumbled onto the floor.

Darn! I've always wanted to fly in my dreams.

Even now, being completely lucid, Toby wasn't the slightest disturbed. It was mildly disappointing that he did not have superpowers, but he otherwise continued happily in a toddler's body. He even liked it when the woman (he now understood her as his babysitter) tickled his feet while changing his diaper.