

The Life of Reginald Carter-Jones



Richard Lawrence

Edition 1

Introduction

Philosophy is defined as the study of the fundamental nature of knowledge, reality, and existence, especially when considered as an academic discipline. A particular system of philosophical thought, the study of the theoretical basis of a particular branch of knowledge or experience. A theory or attitude that acts as a guiding principle for behaviour.

There are several ways to achieve all of the above. There is the academic study of the great philosophers, there is guidance through professional tutorage and there is simply living life and learning from your mistakes. Another way is to learn from the mistakes of others, the great figures of the past and from the shared experiences of ordinary men, like Reginald Carter-Jones.

The image on the front of this article is the inside of the Basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Rome, Italy.

This Book is for Charity

This book has been written for charity and if you find it interesting, please consider a small donation to my charity of choice, [‘The Sick Kids Friends Foundation’](#) who support the Royal Hospital for Sick Children (RHSC) in Edinburgh which was the first children's hospital in Scotland. It was built on its present site in Sciennes Road, Edinburgh in 1895 and opened by HRH Princess Beatrice of York, the granddaughter of Queen Victoria.

The current patron is HRH Princess Beatrice of York, granddaughter of Queen Elizabeth II. Every year over 100,000 children pass through the doors of the hospital, ranging in age from just a few hours old to aged 16 in some specialities. The majority of the patients come from Edinburgh, the Lothians and Fife, but the hospital treats children from all over Scotland.

Acknowledgment

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The Life of Reginald Carter-Jones

I was born up in Skye, Scotland during a holiday; an only child. My mother went into labour and I was delivered by a policeman in the backseat of my father's car. During my childhood, we holidayed a great deal in Scotland. We travelled in the car and went camping. I loved camping out in the open air and we slept under a big tent and my mother cooked bacon in the morning. There were beautiful dawns, those incredible landscape views, and we sat around an open fire, scoffing bacon rolls and washing them down with mugs of tea. Those holidays in Scotland during my childhood were happy times and my parents were very happy.

My father was a banker in London and we lived on a modest estate in the Cotswolds; our home was a lovely cottage surrounded by about 10 acres of ground, consisting of fields, trees, a meadow and there was a river running through it. Our home was quite secluded and I enjoyed the wildlife; I saw it as my sanctuary; a place I felt safe in and I was very content and happy. My father was away during the week and home at the week-ends. He had a flat in London and his offices were nearby. I had many friends and we played in the meadow, climbed trees and we caught small fish in the small pools of the stream. I loved the winter time; the thrill of presents at Christmas and the snow, the wonderful snow. I had a sledge and my father painted the name 'Buttercup' on the hand rail. He said it was like the sledge called 'Rosebud' in 'Citizen Kane'. My mother pulled me along in the snow and she sat behind me as we swooshed down a hill; we had so many laughs. Our dog, 'Charlie Sim', ran after us, barking for all he was worth. I loved hearing my mother laughing.

God, what went wrong; I did nothing wrong. When I came of age, my father shipped me away to a 'boys only' Catholic boarding school and everything changed. Life at the school was hell. I was a small little person, I still am; and I was bullied. I felt so alone, lost, and for a long-time, I was frightened of being hurt. The education was excellent and driven by strong discipline, I learned a great deal, despite the hardships. I liked history, especially the 'Jacobian Rebellions' during the Scottish struggles with England for independence. Near the end of my time at the boarding school, I met up with Cameron McDonald and we both moved onto university at Cambridge. We were ardent left-wing; we studied Marx behind closed doors, kept ourselves to ourselves and joined the debating society. We both attended mass and became known as those Catholic poofers. We were not the only left-wing activists and homosexuals at Cambridge, there were lots; so, we fitted in without much trouble. Yes, I struck up a sexual relationship with Cameron, he had become my protector; he was tall, handsome and quite capable of handling any rough types that tried to bully me.

Cameron and I travelled a lot during summer breaks. We visited Rome and the Vatican and I especially like visiting the Basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli with its connections with St. Benedict

and Giovanni di Pietro di Bernardone, known as Francis of Assisi. My Catholic faith was all important to me, and so was Scotland. I had come to see myself as a modern-day Jacobite, an activist for just causes, a strong disciple of the Catholic faith and a yearning to see Scotland free from the yoke of England and gain its Independence. Perhaps it was all a bit misguided but when you appear to be a small person of little importance to the majority, you strive to become important or at least noticed; becoming an activist, seemed to make sense. Cambridge was a breeding ground for activists and communist sympathisers who walked its halls. Grand debates were held and very often within the haze of cannabis smoke. Activist marches became the norm and despite our privileged positions in society, we railed against the establishment; we thought ourselves as anarchists. Despite our modern day 'rankism' I graduated with a 'Degree in History' and Cameron with a 'Bachelor's Degree in Sociology'.

I invited Cameron down to the Cotswolds for the week-end and introduced him to my parents. We sat around the table for our evening meal when Cameron became somewhat drunk and started to belittle the bourgeois elite and spouting quotes from Marx. I made the grave mistake of joining in and my father did not take kindly to the remarks; he saw us both as ungrateful brats; brats who were privileged with a fine education. My father tongue lashed me, and I began to cry. Cameron began to argue with him and it nearly came to blows. My mother managed to calm my father, and we all retired to bed. Cameron was given the guest bedroom but shortly afterwards, he sneaked across the hall and slipped into my bed. We were making love on the bed, naked and clearly visible, when my father entered the room; I suspect he had come to make sure I was not upset at what had happened at the table. He became incandescent with rage at witnessing our act of sodomy and we were both thrown out of the house.

Cameron and I made our escape to Edinburgh in Scotland. We both found work and we rented a flat in Ravelston, a prestigious part of the city. I loved Edinburgh, we spent our nights eating out and drinking at a pub in Rose Street that was frequented by the homosexual community. We joked; it was our San Francisco; drugs and homosexual sex were common place. I cannot remember how it started, but our cannabis smoking became replaced by heroin and its smack gradually took hold of our senses. To add grist to the mill, our activism was on the rise, as was the rise of social media over the internet.

Pretty much anything was getting up my nose, especially the protestant English and the anti-LBGTQ brigade. Cameron had warned me to keep calm in social surroundings, but I never listened. I hated those high and mighty heterosexuals that mock the LBGTQ fraternity, we were just the same as everyone else. I disliked the English because they infected Scotland with their protestant beliefs. Hell, according to them, I was a disciple of the Anti-Christ, a good old Catholic boy; well screw them protestants; what did they know? Everyone requires an outlet, I required a purpose to live, I

required to exist and to gain some form of admiration for my existence. I am a human being and no matter how I tried, my course was always one of trial and tribulation. In the daylight or in the fog of drugs, I could not see the world anymore, it eluded me and my place in it; I began to withdraw from it all.

We had a computer in the flat so I enrolled on Facebook and Twitter; I became hooked on social media. I never saw my father again; I hated the fact he was a member of the bourgeois elite, a banker; one of those parasites that encourages debt and bleeds the working man. I posted about those elites every day on Facebook; they all stick together, just like they did at boarding school. Anyway, there was this account on Facebook and this guy was going on about banning abortion and that killing an unborn child was a sin. I posted that he was a Nazi and should be terminated. I encouraged people to seek him out and let me know where he lived. I know now that it was a bit over-the-top and apparently many people complained to Facebook and the police. How was I to know that the guy was a Catholic priest and the account belonged to a Catholic Church. Christ, I should have looked more closely at the account. Anyway, the police managed to trace me, and me being me, I refused to contradict my activism and so I admitted my threats. They gave me 6 months in jail.

While I was in jail, my mother used one of my father's shotguns to shoot herself in the face. She was found some days later by the cleaner. She had found out about my drug abuse and jail but I think it was all my father's fault; he had a bitch stashed away that he was plonking. I think my mother found out? I had grieved at being sent to boarding school and homesick; now I grieved when my mother died; my heart endured so much pain, I thought it would kill me. Loneliness is a terrible burden to bear and I felt so alone and fragile. I kept myself to myself and kept my head down; fortunately, I was not bullied or bugged by the inmates. Of course, I had lost my job and so had Cameron; the drugs had been his nemesis and brought about his downfall. He had moved to a more down trodden part of Edinburgh and into a little scrap of a flat.

When I was released from prison, I went to live with my common-law husband Cameron in his flat. He was growing cannabis plants under UV lights in the back room. He had tinfoil on the walls to reflect the light onto the plants to aid the growth. We were both unemployed and on benefits but we made good money selling cannabis to the local druggies. Anyway, it did not last long because we moved onto selling heroin. We started to fence stolen goods for cash, then sell them on in pubs and over the internet for a profit. We purchased bulk heroin at a lower cost and sold the 'baggies' onto the drug addicts and very often in exchange for their stolen goods. Of course, we peeled off some drugs for ourselves. The flat became like St Pancras Station; what with guys bringing us stolen goods and other guys buying drugs.

The heroin was starting to gain a serious hold on me, my upper arms were purple with numerous black spots from the needles and I was starting to inject the heroin directly into veins in my groin. I was becoming scared as one of our customers had been found dead in a back alley. I had noticed a few days before that his leg had become infected; he had shown it to me when he was shooting up in our flat. I think he died of sepsis; you know, gangrene; his leg smelled awful. I once visited a drug addict mate of ours and I found him dead in his flat. He was lying naked on the bathroom floor and most of his body was covered in horrendous black sores due to his immune system failing. He was like a black beetle.

Cameron and I continued to visit our favourite pub; we had money to purchase drink but even with the sales we made from pushing heroin, we never seemed to have enough. One night, in the pub, this guy called me a poof, so I took a swing at him. I felt a trickle of something down my face and he ran away. The barman came over and held my face together with a bar towel. The guy had apparently slashed me with an open razor. It took thirty staples to close up the wound and I looked a real sight, even when the wound healed; I was never the same again. Cameron seemed to drift away from me after that incident; although we still slept together, the sex was less frequent.

We became informants for the 'Police Drug Squad'. We were guaranteed immunity from police drug raids, provided we gave them information on certain criminals. It was easy; druggies are only too happy to gossip about their criminal friends and their criminal activities when they are shooting up in the flat. Anyway, Janice, who lived in the next door flat, got even more gossip. She was a madam and ran a brothel there. You would be amazed at what her girls gleaned from the villains who paid for their sexual services. Janice's father was a Minister of the Scottish Parliament? I quite liked him; he was a nationalist like me.

One night, and it was becoming more frequent, Cameron went out on his own and I followed him from the shadows. He went to another pub in Rose Street and through the window, I saw him kissing another guy. I felt so hurt and yet a rage rose up in me. I know now, how the quote, 'a woman scorned' and the fury unleashed came about. When Cameron came home, I made out that everything was fine and we eventually retired to bed. As he slept, I struck him with a hammer, over and over again on the face, until it was completely smashed; the brains were splattered all over the bed and the walls. His face was none existent; it had disappeared inside the brain cavity. One eye was still intact and it stared up at me as if to question; and I cried, I cried so much. Of course, they gave me life in prison with a minimum of thirty years for a murder, so pre-meditated, so carefully planned and so terribly executed with horrible violence.

I am that bird in a cage, I once knew the freedom, the happiness of flight but now my wings are clipped. Most days my head is drooped, and I remain trapped, unable to escape. One becomes accustomed to a way of life and the mind accepts it as normal. Distant memories sometimes break

through and I cry; the tears run down my face. I was never really happy, except for that 'Citizen Kane' moment when my mother pulled me along in the snow and she sat behind me as we swooshed down a hill; we had so many laughs. Our dog, 'Charlie Sim', ran after us, barking for all he was worth. I loved hearing my mother laughing and I miss her, I miss the dog and 'Buttercup' my sledge.

There is no laughter, no joy, and I rise each day to face another day, in my cage.

Synopsis

The famous philosopher Epictetus taught that philosophy is a way of life and not simply a theoretical discipline. To Epictetus, all external events are beyond our control; we should accept whatever happens calmly and dispassionately. However, individuals are responsible for their own actions, which they can examine and control through rigorous self-discipline.

Both the fictional Charles Foster Kane (Citizen Kane) and Reginald Carter-Jones were torn from their mother at an early age; plucked from the love and comfort of a good home life, to be sent to a boarding school. Kane went on to become a man devoid of expressing love and built an empire and great wealth, with little compassion for his fellow man. On his deathbed, he stated his last word 'Rosebud' which was his sledge that he played on in the snow when he was a little boy. A memory of a lasting moment of happiness; perhaps, his only real happiness.

Reginald Carter-Jones went on to become a man seeking love and happiness. Unlike Kane he was small, frail and to a certain extent, frightened by the world and those around him. It is questionable whether his homosexuality was a result of genetics, the apparent abandonment of his mother and father's love (in his mind) when he was sent off to boarding school or his desire to find love again by bonding with Cameron McDonald, the only friend he had. Carter-Jones' life was a downhill never-ending spiral through drug addiction and finally prison for killing his friend, his partner, who betrayed his love. Perhaps this second betrayal was too much to bear? Like Kane, Carter-Jones clung onto the memory of those moments on his sledge 'Buttercup' which brought him such happiness, perhaps the only real happiness he ever knew?

My apologies to Herman J. Mankiewicz and Orson Welles who co-wrote the screenplay for Citizen Kane.