

**The Real - Honest to Goodness - True Story of Ned Kelly.
(As Related by a Remote Viewer).**

Techno-bland was a good description for the chamber. Twenty-one consoles with twenty seats inhabited by naked and bald obese men and women. They were naked because they were sub-human and yet to prove their worthiness to be promoted to human. The empty seat's owner stood staring at a wall screen the size of a scenic window in a penthouse overlooking an unpolluted beach. He wore a prim royal blue uniform over a wafer-thin body. His hair was silver, and he wore sunglasses in the dim light. A jumble of fragrances permeated through the chamber as each sub-human dialled up their own air freshener in an attempt to rid their space of the smell of stressed fat.

"What the frig is that?" Even when agitated Jolson remembered not to say hell or fuck as both words were officially obsolete. 'Hell', because science had proven such a place did not exist and 'fuck' because most people no longer fucked. In the nine hundredth millennium, if a sub-human wanted to orgasm they plugged into a virtual world where a sensitive and sharing neo-person would make caring love to them. Unofficially, 'hell' and 'fuck' were still part of the language, because the maladjusted still worshiped deities and fucked.

Jolson marched over to the screen, which displayed a mixture of shades of grey broken by cracks, and pointed a big stick at it. “What the frig is it showing us?”

None of the twenty technicians answered, because they did not know the answer. (Rule number 1: If you do not know the answer to a question, do not theorise, hypothesise or guess.) If a sub-human wished to rise to human level they must not break any rules. Especially rule number one. Number Six, who controlled the screen’s picture, had no idea what it showed. He tried to adjust the receiving frequencies from the remote viewer. The picture stayed the same. He fiddled with the focus control, still a grey nothing, then the contrast; that did not help either. The screen went blurry, fuzzy and then lost vertical hold as the remote viewer technician randomly touched icons on the console in front of him.

The other 19 techs breathed a sigh of relief as they no longer had to ponder the thing on the screen and risk breaking rule number one.

“Brilliant Number Six. Did you receive any training before you got here, or did they just force feed you jelly in the academy?”

Luckily Number Six remembered not to answer a rhetorical question and break rule number 748. He swivelled a joystick and a bearded face with

wild hazel eyes and tangled dark brown hair appeared on the screen. Six forced down a shout of triumph.

“Is Pigsarse inhabiting that body?” Jolson asked.

Number Six sighed and shifted his tense body in the moulded plastic seat. The pressure of performance had shifted from him to Number Eight.

“According to the remote viewer he is,” Number Eight answered

“Good. Whose mind has he transported into?”

“The computer recognition prog is 96 percent sure it’s Ned Kelly,” Number Eight answered intelligently. (Rule number two, never take personal responsibility for anything, especially when you can blame another person or a computer).

Number Six especially liked rule number two. He almost revered its creator, George W. Bush, who blamed the near total destruction of the earth in a war started by his Missile Defence Shield on computer error.

“Who’s Barry Jones?” Jolson asked.

Everyone looked up from their consoles to focus their attention on Eight. Jolson stood behind her with his big stick ready.

“According to the computer he was an Australian Science Minister who was good at picking boxes.” Number Eight eventually answered.

“Picking boxes?” Jolson rubbed his chin.

“That’s what the computer says.”

“So, the computer is 96 percent sure it is Ned Kelly and is placing a side bet of four percent on Barry Jones?”

Was that a rhetorical question? They waited in anticipation of Number Eight’s response.

“That is what the computer says,” Number Eight answered uncertainly.

Jolson smirked. “Number One, did Pigsarse indicate any preference for Barry Jones before he went tripping?”

Everyone looked at Number One, who broke out in a Niagara of perspiration. She needed only to get through this mission without breaking any of the 42,000 rules in the McDonalds, and she would be reclassified as human. She had already been on 99 missions, moving up a rank after each one, but would she crash and burn on the 100th? She had looked pale and

nervous at the mission's briefing and even more pale and nervous when they were told they were going after a rogue mind-tripper.

Scientist Pissoff Pigsarse (you choose your own name when you become human) had illegally used a mind projector to travel into the past. What's worse, he overrode the retrieval mechanisms so that his mind could not be forcibly pulled back to the present. Another scientist, Dropdead Gorgeous, had volunteered to help in his retrieval by becoming a remote viewer. On locating Pigsarse, Gorgeous would latch onto Pigsarse's mind and pull it back to the present with her.

Number One appeared industrious as she waved her fingers over the many icons on her board. While they waited, in one explosive burst Number Six defecated into his seats built in toilet and then released some jasmine air freshener. Number Five replied with a release of petrol freshener.

"Petrol-head," Six mouthed at Five.

"Hippy," Five's abundant lips mouthed back.

"According to the information provided by his family, friends and experts as well as all other witnesses questioned about his unauthorised use of mind-tripping, Barry Jones was not a preferred location for a Pigsarse mind trip," Number One finally answered in voice indicating she was two nano-seconds from a nervous breakdown.

“So we can safely assume this fellow is Ned Kelly?”

Number One did not answer. She was sub-human and therefore, according to rule, 621, not allowed to assume.

“Can I take your silence as a agreement?” Jolson toyed with Number One. “According to Number Eight, the computer recognition prog, is 96 percent sure it’s Ned Kelly.” Number One deflected responsibility magnificently.

“Well answered Number One, you might just make human after all. Number Six, who is Ned speaking to?”

Six’s head jerked up so he could focus on the main screen. Kelly’s lips were moving. Six touched the audio icon.

“Ned, do you seek absolution for your sins?”

A siren went off and ear plugs sprung out of the back of the seats and were inserted into every technician’s ears except for Numbers One, Six and Eight. “Religious Alert,” flashed devilishly across Six’s personal monitor.

“Numbers Six and Eight will accompany me to a religious debriefing after this session,” Number One ordered.

“Number Six, who is he talking to?” Jolson repeated.

Six fiddled with the joystick again. The remote viewer scanned around the primitive, minimalist cell of roughly cut grey stone walls, cracked with age. There was another man in the room, sitting on a decrepit wooden stool. He was dressed in black, with a funny stiff round collar, which contained a white insert just under his chin.

“Zoom back so they are both in the picture.”

Six complied. The bearded one was sitting on a lumpy mattress on a steel cot.

“And turn the sound back on.”

“Ned, it is too late for an insanity plea. So why don't you just confess your sins and seek absolution in the forgiveness of the Lord.”

“He is a priest,” Jolson interrupted.

“God doesn't exist you dog bait,” Kelly replied.

The priest looked stunned, then said viciously, “repent Ned or you will go straight to hell.”

“There's no such place you Welsh Squirrel.”

“You’re a fool Ned.”

“I’m a fool,” Ned waved his manacled hands in front of the priest. “No, you’re the fool to believe in your superstitious crap, just because you fear dying. In the future, when we live forever and there is no fear of dying, what do you think will happen to your stupid religion?”

“We will never live forever, laddie.”

“Yes we will slug eater.”

“Don’t you want God to forgive you for all your foul crimes? For your murders....”

“I quite enjoyed killing them.”

“Frig, he’s killed people.”

There goes the space time continuum. But they were all still here. Control still existed, so whatever Pigsarse had done so far had not affected the future. Maybe it was just as well that Bush’s Missile Defence Shield had malfunctioned and caused the death of 99.999999% of the earth’s population. Obviously none of the descendants of the victims of Pigsarse’s rampage had made it past 2010.

“I especially enjoyed killing Sergeant Kennedy, you could almost feel his terror as he waited tied to the tree. We made it abundantly clear that we were going to kill him and when Joe shot him in the testicles, his screams were just, just excruciatingly pleasurable. I could feel his agony and his terror as he realised we were going to leave him there to slowly bleed to death. The sensation was awesome, something I wish everyone could experience, watching someone die in agony.”

The priest paled.

“That’s why I went to Glenrowan. To shoot more people in the testicles.”

The priest shook his head in disgust. “Perhaps, hell is the only suitable place for one like you.”

“Oh, I’m not going there Father. Firstly, because there is no such place and secondly when you kill this body I currently inhabit, that will end my mind trip and I will return to Utopia.”

“There is no hope for you then.” The priest stood up.

“Will it hurt?”

“Will what hurt?”

“When they hang me.”

“Not if they do it right. It will break your neck instantly.”

“Oh, and if they do it wrong?”

“Then, unfortunately it may take a few minutes.”

“Of pain?”

“Yes.”

“Father, who do I need to speak to ensure it’s painful?”

The priest looked appalled. “You may indeed be insane, but I don’t think we can stop your hanging now.”

“Don’t even attempt to stop it,” Pigsarse yelled.

“Sir according to the computer, Ned Kelly was hung in November 1880,”
Number one bravely interrupted.

“Guards,” the priest called.

“So Pigsarse will soon be back with us.” Jolson smiled.

The cell door squealed open.

“Father, why the glum face?” Ned asked as the priest moved towards the door.

“Ned, I implore you to use the next hour to seek redemption.”

“An hour, is it that long? How am I going to fill in the time? I can’t wait to feel that rope go around my neck.”

“He’ll be back in an hour,” Jolson said almost cheerfully.

The priest shook his head as he exited.

“Cut the link to the remote viewer,” Jolson ordered.

Six complied and earplugs were automatically removed.

“Well done everyone. We will soon have Mister Pigsarse back to face the ultimate punishment.”

The ultimate punishment: sentenced to an eternity in a self-contained bubble floating in space. Pigsarse better enjoy the sensation of hanging, as he would not be feeling anything much after that.

“Before I forget,” Jolson continued, “Number Six has breached the rules twice.”

What? Six’s mind ground to a halt, clanked and then the gears raced as he tried to think where he had gone wrong.

“Can anyone tell me when?”

Number One put up her hand.

“Yes, Number One.”

“He broke rule 621, twice. When you asked him who Ned was talking to, he assumed you wanted him to turn the audio on.”

Six’s shoulders slumped.

“And second, again when you asked him who was Ned talking to, he assumed you wanted him to reposition the remote viewer.”

“Well picked up Number One. You deserve your promotion.
Congratulations on becoming human. Number Six, you are demoted 40
positions for each offence.”

Number Eighty-Six hung his head in shame.