

## **Paul Buckberry**

### **"Dirge For David"**

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It was a week before Christmas, another day without a drop of rain; I was changing the ute's oil and the wife was unblocking a drain. Round two o'clock we sat on the veranda sharing cake and tea and then the telephone rang and I wondered who could that be? Turned out to be old Terry Hicks who lived out Salisbury way, through tears he told me, "My boy David's been imprisoned by the CIA."

I sat down and listened with my elbows resting on my knees. Terry said, "It's hard to cope..." then thanked me for my empathy." It started in Japan, training horses, not that long ago, David saw the reports of the Serbian slaughter in Kosovo. He joined the KLA which was supported by UN aid... and now I can't believe that David's been imprisoned by the CIA."

David and me were fishing buddies for close on thirteen years; sometimes we drove to Moonta or caught the bus to Largs Bay Pier. I know after Kosovo he studied Arabic and Islam, then took off down the old silk road, well at least that was the plan. But how he got from Pakistan to Afghanistan Terry couldn't say. "No one seems to know why David's been imprisoned by the CIA."

As a student of Islam, his chores involved border patrol. He called Terry after 9/11, but just to say hello. He'd no idea of the attacks when he spoke from Kandahar; the Northern Alliance was attacking Kabul pretty hard. The NA captured David and the Yank's shipped him to Camp X-ray, interrogated but not charged, he's just imprisoned by the CIA.

Christmas came and went and on New Year's Day it finally rained. David remains uncharged and indefinitely detained. Whether David's committed a crime is not for me to say, but the abuse of his human rights can never be explained away. Sometimes on the farm fixing fences I think of Camp X-ray, but only briefly least my thought crimes strike a dischord in the

CIA.

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