

## Our Last Exploration.

Urban Exploration *-for those who don't know-* is the exploration of man-made structures, usually abandoned ruins. I took it up at the age of twelve, so unlike most teenagers *-who sit in their houses playing video games and on their phones-* my friend Miles and I were out exploring decrepit houses and out of use factories. My grandfather mentioned a town in which his father had learnt about in school, South Queensferry, he said it had been a lovely little town a few hundred years ago. The town had also been a tourist attraction, *"People from all over came to visit their famous three bridges"* my grandfather had said. This sounded like the perfect place for some -or a lot of- urban exploring. So Miles and I arranged to go on our most exciting and biggest exploration yet, but what we didn't know, is that it would also be our last...

We were seventeen, Miles and I, when we set off on our exploration. It was Summer, the perfect time for road trips. South Queensferry was in the East of Scotland, it would take roughly seven hours to get there from where we lived in Wales, but we decided to spread the journey across two days, stopping to eat, sleep and visit some interesting sites along the way. We finally arrived in *-what used to be-* South Queensferry, and we found a house to camp. We spent the day exploring the surrounding houses, shops and schools, it was fascinating to see how people used to live. The sun started to set as we walked down to the **'HIGH STREET'** *-as it said on the very worn away, but just readable street sign-* this was evidently the oldest street in the town as the road was made out of cracked grey bricks and the buildings had mostly collapsed. There was a clock tower but the clock was permanently stuck at quarter too eight. There was a few non decaying shops in which we managed to look around, nothing really interesting caught my eye, just a few leaflets about their three bridges, **The Queensferry Crossing**, **The Forth Road Bridge** *-the two youngest but no longer existing bridges-* and **The Forth Rail Bridge** *-the oldest but the last one standing.* There was also a museum that we managed to get into. This was amazing, we got to find out tonnes of information about the history of South Queensferry, about a man who paraded around South Queensferry wearing a suit of burs, a fair where they chose children from every primary school in the area to play part in a coronation that everyone who lives in South Queensferry went to watch and there was plenty of information about the bridge.

We continued on towards the bridge, but as we were walking Miles spotted it... In the distance was a little building just under the bridge named **'The Hawes Inn'**, but what was most peculiar about this little building, is that all the lights were on. We slowly approached the little building and as soon as my hand gently grasped the door handle the lights shot off. Every single light, at the exact same time. I entered first *-after a whole lot of arguing, coin tossing and rock, paper, scissors-* the place looked as though someone was living in it. There was no dirt or dust, as if it had just been cleaned and it smelt like freshly cooked meat and women's perfume. We decided to take a look around, we found no one. By the time we got back outside it was pitch black. We decided to climb up *-The supposedly haunted staircase-* **'Jacobs Ladder'**, as we started our climb up the stairs the hairs on the back of my neck slowly raised and for the first time this whole Summer, I felt cold. We were being watched. But I looked around and saw nobody, but Miles. It was about a ten minute walk to the train station, we walked there in silence both with the same feeling, we were being followed.

The train station was a ruin, there was rubble and wood everywhere. We wanted to explore the bridge as well as the station so we both climbed down onto the tracks, and began to walk.

Apparently the bridge was painted red to hide the blood of the workers who died whilst building the bridge, the paint was now peeling and flaking everywhere. I bent down to pick up a flake when a high pitch scream came from behind me, but no one was there, not even "MILES!!" I screamed sprinting back to the station. "MILES!!" I was screaming so loud that my throat was raw, then it started again, the screaming, was a woman definitely. It wouldn't stop. I collapsed. Knees to chest, eyes firmly shut and my hands covering my ears. I laid like this for what seemed like hours, until I finally plucked up enough courage to open my eyes, and what I saw was unforgettable. Standing just a few feet in front of me was a woman, her face covered in tears, mascara and blood. I could smell her perfume, the same perfume I smelt in '**The Hawes Inn**' and before I could, she started to scream. I jumped up and ran, faster than I ever have. I ran and ran and ran until I got back to the house Miles and I had been staying in, and I jumped in the car and drove. I drove straight home to my parents, it took me six hours. I didn't stop once.

That was the last time I ever went urban exploring. I still don't know for sure what happened in Queensferry that night, but there is one thing I'm sure of... They never did find Miles' body.