

Saturday, May 2

Hello My Bun Bear!!

What a day this has been! By the time you read this, I will have already told you all about it, but I spent part of today in jail. Yes, that's right. Can you believe it?! Here's what happened:

Two weeks ago, when I went to visit the dam wall (where I had to leave my passport at the border post), I asked the border guard if he could extend my visa, which was expiring in a week. He said no and told me I could only extend it on the day it expired or the day before. I wrote it in my schedule book and then on the days I should have gone in, I was at Bumi and totally forgot about it. I did remember here and there, but there was nothing I could do about it at the time and then I forgot about it all this week in Harare. Frankly (and stupidly), I didn't take it all that seriously. I finally remembered today and when I flew into Kariba (I got on again standby), I drove over to the border post to confess I had been a bad boy, accept the tongue lashing, and get the visa renewed. Except it didn't work out that way. The man started lecturing me, saying I had been in Zimbabwe illegally for eight days and that this was a very serious matter and that he was going to have to detain me until his boss came back and might even have to call in the police. I made my first big mistake by laughing in disbelief and he said, "It's not a joke." I replied, "I know it's not. I just can't believe it's such a big deal," which hardly enamoured me to him. Then, he started filling out forms and asked me how much longer I wanted to stay in Zimbabwe. Here is where I made the huge blunder; he was probably ready to stamp my passport and send me on my way, but I, with spontaneous diharria of the mouth, proceeded to try and win sympathy from him by telling him I was doing a project for National Parks and would probably need another three weeks to finish it. A day-long disaster ensued: he said, "Do you realize your visa is for a tourist and does not allow you to work in Zimbabwe." Realizing my error, I tried to tell him I wasn't really working, it was a volunteer project, etc., but things got worse and worse. He didn't believe I was working for free, asked me what I was doing driving the Zim Sun car, and then said I was in fact being compensated because they were providing me with free services. He concluded by saying that I was going to have to remain there until his boss came back and that I might have to remain in detention until Monday (yes, two days away!) until a judge could hear my case. A mightily unhappy two hours of waiting followed until I was asked to come in and I told my story to a seemingly-sympathetic policeman. All to no avail--they said they were going to have to take me to the police station and hold me there until Monday. At this point I got rather desperate and started begging with no shame. I said, "You're going to put me in jail for two days because I forgot to renew my visa. I'm not a criminal!" I proposed that I leave my passport and a security deposit and come back on Monday, but again, all to no avail. The boss finally came in and showed no sympathy whatsoever, he said, "You've broken the law and we're going to detain you until we can investigate this further."

I swear a huge lump came into my throat and I nearly cried, but I wasn't going to give the bastards the pleasure. As I was leaving, the Zim Sun guy I'd given a ride to to the border was on his way back through and saw that my plight hadn't gotten any better (he had tried to talk the first guy into letting me go when I'd first arrived three hours ago). I gave him the car keys and asked him to tell Bill Bruce, the manager at Caribbea Bay what happened. Then, they loaded me into the back of a police truck and drove me to the police station. My, was I unhappy. I sat around for an hour and told the police chief my story. I said my project was a favor for a friend and that I was receiving no compensation. He said, "Were you working." I said, "It depends on how you define work." He threw up his hands in disgust and sent me away. I was making lots of friends today, wasn't I? Then, Bill Bruce showed up and god, I have never been so happy to see anyone in my life. I explained what happened and he went in to talk to the chief. As 20-30 minutes crawled by, I guessed that things weren't going so well. I was right. Bill emerged and said the guy was very suspicious because I had tried to get my visa renewed, was told to come back, and didn't and therefore I must be hiding something. Figure that one out...

Bill said my actions of initially trying to renew the visa and then coming of my own free will to renew it even after it expired showed that I wasn't trying to hide anything, but the guy said he didn't have the authority to release me, even if he wanted to. Then, he called his boss on the phone and after tons of yammering, reported that he wasn't willing to do anything either. To compound the bad

news, the guy then said I would be locked up until TUESDAY (!) until the next session of court (court only operates on Tuesday and Friday here). Bill left, promising to do what he could and saying he would send over dinner if he couldn't get me out.

Then, things really started to get grim: they registered me in the prisoners book and we went through the whole check-in procedure. I had to take off my shoes and socks and everything I had on me except my shorts and shirt, including my watch, wallet, and any money. This posed a real problem since I had brought my waist money pouch--with U.S.\$360 undeclared cash in it--with me because it had my passport in it (I've been leaving it in my room). At the border, before all this started, I had transferred this money into to secret inner pouch of my blue backpack. I also had U.S.\$640 (mainly cash) of undeclared money in the belt around my waist, which he asked me to remove and put on the counter. I initially only declared my travelers checks and the \$11 cash I'd declared and held my breath as he started to go through and write down my possessions. I was panicking about the money in my backpack, sure he would discover it if he opened it. At the last minute, seeing that he had no interest in my currency declaration form, I decided to declare the \$360, pretending I'd forgotten it was in my bag. Using the same logic, I should have also declared the \$640 in my belt, but for some stupid reason I didn't, despite the fact that the belt was sitting one foot in front of the guy. Perhaps I feared that seeing money so secretively hidden would lead to asking to see my currency declaration form, which would have revealed my failure to declare \$1,000. If he found the money, I was going to swear I'd forgotten about it, but that's hardly plausible. I've never seen a zipper (the one on my belt) look so huge and obvious, but he missed it, even though he picked up the heavy, stiff belt at least twice before giving it back to me to put in my backpack. Phew!!

Then, they took all my stuff, including my shoes and socks and put it into a bag. They weren't even going to leave me with a magazine, but I managed to convince the guy to cut me a break. Then, I was taken into a cage which had three cells off it. The guard opened one of the doors, put a wooden frame on the floor with a thin felt pad and a couple blankets and told me to go in. I asked to be allowed to remain in the tiny courtyard so I could read in the sun, but was refused, so in I went to this cell, with the heavy, 3-inch thick door double bolted behind me. The cell has perhaps 12 feet square with no washbasin and a horrible little toilet behind a low wall in the corner (with no toilet seat or toilet paper). There was no electric light in the cell--the only illumination was from one window on the far side of the cell measuring about six feet wide and 1 1/2 feet high and two 1 1/2 feet square windows on the wall by the door. All of them were covered in heavy steel mesh and steel bars, which left the cell rather dark and gloomy (which matched my mood). By this time it was about five in the afternoon (the ordeal started just before noon). Needless to say, I was bummed though by this time I had managed to find a silver lining in the very dark cloud. The worst that could happen was that I would spend three days there and then maybe have to pay a fine. I said to myself, and Bill, "I came to Africa for an adventure, and I'm getting it!" I also felt then and still do that it was a good learning experience. Lastly, I kept thinking of Nelson Mandela, whose biography I'd just finished that morning; hell, if he could survive 27 years, what was I pissing and moaning about.

The best part of the detention was that I got put in a cell with a similarly unfortunate chap. He was driving his car back to his home in Zambia and was stopped because his temporary import permit for his car was issued in Harare, not one of the border stations where his car had entered the country. Unfortunately, his friend had been driving the car, so he knew nothing about the whole issue and could only guess that his friend had lost the permit and had it replaced in Harare. Of course, the bureaucratic idiots at the border post detained him too and he's still there, probably until Tuesday. Gordon was a great guy and we talked non-stop for the two hours I was in detention. A colored guy originally from Zambia, he had lived in Zimbabwe since 1968 and had become a very rich man importing steel from SA to Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Botswana. He had three daughters ages 12, 8, and 1, though he didn't look much older than 30. He had gotten sick of all the B.S. in Zimbabwe and had been thinking about moving back to Zambia for a while, but didn't want to send his kids away to school in the UK (schools in Zambia are very poor). He joked that he was glad this had happened because it finalized his decision to leave. The two of us were actually in remarkably good spirits considering our ridiculous and outrageous situation and we chat-chatted away about healthcare in the U.S. and Zimbabwe, his business, my report, Winnie Mandela, the economics of Zimbabwe and

Zambia, the current situation in Zambia, the stupid bureaucracy in Zimbabwe, and a bunch of other things.

After about half an hour, the guard came for me and convinced that I was finally going to be let out, I grabbed my books and went out. But no... It was just Bill on the phone, giving me the latest. He had gone back to Immigration to show them the letter of introduction Brian had written for me to Alistair Wright (the Managing Director of Zim Sun), which showed that I was working for free, and the report Pete did last summer, to show I was really doing something worthwhile. The guy agreed with Bill that I should be released, but said he was the #3 in command and didn't have the authority. Of course, the top two guys had gone home. Bill said he was still following up some other possibilities and in the meantime, asked what I wanted. I said toilet paper, so he said he'd bring that, along with dinner, a mattress, and a pillow. I went back into my cell, rapidly losing hope that I'd be out that night, though I still felt I'd get out the next day. Maybe half an hour later, the lock rustled and my hopes soared, but then nothing... The guard continued on, leaving me cursing him for playing games with me, though it was probably inadvertent.

After another hour, the door opened again and the guard called me. Not wanting to get my hopes up for naught again, I asked, "Am I coming back?" He said no!! Oh joy!! I shook Gordon's hand and wished him the best as I floated out to the desk on cloud 9. There was a black Zim Sun guy I'd never met named Mupita at the desk who'd arranged for me to be released into his custody. I swear I nearly hugged him! I quickly collected my belongings and we walked away. He stopped and told me what a pain in the ass I'd been, but after I apologized profusely and compared him to an angel coming down from Heaven, he laughed and was very cool thereafter. He calls himself "the Mafia." I wonder why. I heard him on the phone talking to Bill and he said something about taking the police chief something. I'm sure a bribe of some sort was paid to the police chief--I'll have to ask Bill so I can compensate him and also maybe give Mupita something. Anyway, we drove up the hill, where Mupita still had to talk to the police chief, and then headed back to Caribbea Bay. I hung out with Mupita, his family, and Bill for a bit while we laughed about the day's events and told our stories. I had a brief scare when a policeman showed up to collect my passport, but I didn't have it. They had confiscated it at Immigration and though I saw it at the police station, it had never been returned to me. I told him this and he was skeptical, but eventually he radioed back to the station and they said they had it. I had visions of being dragged back there... Later, Bill told me he saw it when he went to Immigration, so apparently it was returned to them (I hope so they can extend my visa). I had a nice dinner and headed back here to my room where I've spent the last hour and a half describing this adventure/ordeal to you.

Tomorrow, I'm off to Bumi for one night, hopefully to see Mike Murphy and Andy Searle, the guys at Matusadona, and maybe get up to Tiger Bay. I have to be back by Monday in case I have to go to court on Tuesday. Mupita thinks he can get the whole thing dropped, but I have to be back just to be sure.

It's Sunday now and I'm at Tiger Bay, one of the five main lodges over on this side of the lake and then only one I hadn't visited yet. Today started off not so well as I went to the airport to catch my flight to Bumi and at the last minute was bumped off by two unexpected arrivals, so I had to wait around for a couple hours, but I'm getting used to that. At least I wasn't locked up! I actually got a lot of work done and arrived in Bumi at about one. Things started to go right for me (finally!) as I had a good meeting with the manager to get some additional info, reached Andy Searle (the Warden of Matusadona) and set up a meeting for 8 am tomorrow, and arranged to get up here to Tiger Bay. It looks like I'll be able to take care of everything I'll need to in one 24-hour trip. What efficiency!

It's now Tuesday, and the excitement over this visa thing didn't end until 1:00 this afternoon. How ridiculous! Let me pick up where I left off: I got everything I needed to at Tiger Bay and went to see Andy Sunday am. We had a great discussion for at least three hours. He is really in an impossible situation: his budget is only 1/3 of what it was (in real terms) three years ago, while tourism in and around the Park is booming. To give you some numbers, the users of the Park and its waters took in about \$55 million (Zim) last year, while his budget was \$78,000. With his help, I have drafted a proposal for an experiment: impose increased fees on the users of the Park, and then distribute the

new money to the government and the Park. I've estimated that a 1% fee would generate \$1.3 million, of which roughly \$500,000 would go to the Park. What a difference that would make! I'm going to pass my proposal around, get feedback, modify it, and hopefully it will go somewhere and make a difference, just like what I did with the boating proposal.

When I got back to Bumi, I got an urgent message that I was wanted by immigration in Kariba. "Oh God, here we go again!" I thought. When I flew into the airport, Mupita met me and we rushed to the police station. Apparently, immigration had contacted the police and asked for me. When told I'd been released, they said, "What the hell did you do that for?" (in Shona, I'm sure). The police said, "Who are you to be telling us what to do?! He's right here in town at Caribbea Bay." Except that when they called Caribbea Bay, and were told I was at Bumi, immigration said, "You see, I told you he was going to flee!" Fortunately, Caribbea Bay knew I was coming back on the afternoon flight and told the police I'd come right over, temporarily averting disaster. It turns out that they just needed to fill out some paperwork and take a statement from me, prior to my court appearance the next day. So I sat around another couple hours as an incompetent and illiterate typist tried to get various information from me and take a statement. Fortunately, he was so stupid that when I said that I was not working here illegally and explained why, he had no idea what I was talking about, threw up his hands, and only typed up the charge of overstaying here. Thus, through sheer blind luck, the most serious charge against me was dropped. As I was walking out, the head of the local CID (Central Intelligence Division) asked me if I was working here, and I said "No." Fortunately, this time I was smart enough to keep my mouth shut and he didn't press the matter further. I was told to reappear the next morning at 8 am.

When I showed up, I saw my buddy Gordon, who was still in there and said hi. Thank God (I'm becoming very religious, aren't I?) I hadn't been in there with him. For the next two hours, I sat around mostly, helped the same typist fill in yet more forms in triplicate, and was fingerprinted in quadruplicate. Then, the magistrate finally showed up around 10:30, and I was locked up in the cage--though not the cell--pending my appearance before the judge. There were about 10 people in the cage with me, and about 50 outside. Perhaps they were witnesses or relatives.

I chit-chatted a bit with Gordon. Mupita thinks he's guilty as hell, a member of the colored Mafia, "a hardened criminal", and muttered something about, "you just can't trust those colored guys." I still think he's innocent, but then again, I tend to trust people too much. Mupita thinks he could get 6-7 years if convicted. Gordon still hasn't been able to contact his friend who drove the car in, so Bill Bruce and Mupita think he's got big troubles. Gordon thinks his lawyer can get him out on bail, so he can prepare his defense over the next few weeks. His case still hadn't been heard by luck today, so I don't know what happened.

Finally, they called my name and I went into an office with a couple desks that served as the courtroom. I stood the entire time, which was only 5-10 minutes (time flies when you're having fun). First, the prosecutor read the charges: a whole bunch of legalistic "section 3, bracket b, etc" and finally concluded with: "In other words, overstaying your visa. Do you understand the charges?" Thank goodness there was nothing about working illegally! "Yes," I replied. "How do you plead?" "Guilty," I replied. The judge then took over. He asked me if I had any reason for overstaying. I said, "No, it was a mistake." He then asked me a variety of random questions: Was I married? Did I have any savings in Zimbabwe? Did I have any money? Finally, he said "I find you guilty. Do you have anything to say on your behalf to mitigate the sentence?" I was sweating bullets (and shitting bricks too) as I said (pleaded?), "Your honor, I tried to renew my visa a few days before it expired, but was told I could not and to come back the day it expired. I then forgot all about it, as I was traveling around. As soon as I realized it had expired, I went immediately to immigration to tell them about my mistaken violation, and unfortunately was taken to the police." He nodded and scribbled and pronounced, "I hereby fine you \$50, or if you cannot pay this, to serve 20 days in jail." (\$50 or 20 days in jail?! What the fuck?! Is a man's freedom only worth \$2.50 a day?! Either the value of freedom or the value of money is seriously screwed up in this country--I suspect both.)

Phew!!!! I paid the money right away (actually, Mupita did) and off Mupita and I went. Oh, I

forgot to mention that I asked Bill Bruce if I could pay Mupita for his trouble and Caribbea Bay for all the money it must be costing in bribes, favors, etc., but he said no, that he was terribly embarrassed about the whole thing, and that Caribbea Bay would pay for everything.

I thought I was a free man, but of course my passport was still at immigration. We rushed back to the courtroom to ask the judge if he would allow me to stay another month or two, but by then, he was hearing the next case and we would have had to wait until tea time (whenever the hell that is), so we decided to try our luck at immigration. When we arrived, the boss wasn't around (of course), so we had to sit around for at least an hour. Meanwhile, the bureaucrats got busy filling out forms and fingerprinting me (but only in triplicate--how efficient!). Then, a man came out and asked me to sign a form that said "PROHIBITED PERSON" at the top. I said, "Wait a minute, what does this mean?" After a bit of confusion, the man assured me that I was not going to be deported, and that I could re-enter the country (though if my fine had been \$200 or more, I would not have been able to). I also had to pay a \$200 fine (\$160 paid by Mupita before he ran out of money--I paid the rest). At long last, the boss came out and asked how much longer I wished to remain. Mupita said two months. He said he could only allow two weeks. I said I needed more time (which is true) and asked for three weeks. He granted it, stamped my passport, and I was finally free!

What a total mess! I had wasted roughly 15 hours, Mupita had wasted six, Bill Bruce at least six, not to mention far more man-hours at immigration, the police, and in court. At four points, I could have avoided the whole thing: 1) by asking for a two-month visa when I entered the country (I even remember thinking about it--don't ask me why I didn't ask); 2) by renewing my visa on time; 3) by telling Bill and/or Mupita about my violation before going to immigration myself (Mupita could have taken care of it without any problem); and 4) by not mentioning to the immigration officer that I was doing a project, which is when the fireworks really started. God, am I a fool any which way you look at it! Thank goodness it's over--I suppose it could have been a lot worse.

I had an interesting conversation with Mupita on the way back. I asked him how much corruption there was in Zimbabwe, and he said "about 40%." Whatever that means--he wouldn't elaborate. We had an interesting conversation about bribery in the U.S. and Zimbabwe. I got the feeling that he does not outright bribe people in the sense of giving them cash, but rather he says, "I do favors for them. They're my friends." Ironically, as we sat down to lunch at Lake View (the other Zim Sun hotel in town), who should walk in but the two chief of police and the head of CID, who were greeted by the obsequious manager of the hotel, and escorted to an elegantly set table, with the best view in the place. I didn't ask whether they were paying, but I don't think it was necessary. I also told Mupita about various stories I'd heard about the corruption of the Lake Captain and Town Council. He was pissed when I told him stories about the Lake Captain and said, "Why do people pay those bribes. If I had evidence, I'd go after him myself. He is a bad African." However, he tended to defend the Town Council when I admitted that there weren't many stories of outright corruption, but rather of favoritism. He was almost happy when he heard about how they gave themselves and other blacks land, etc., while being a royal pain in the ass to the white-owned businesses. He said, "Whites in this area generate 100% of the wealth--and keep it all for themselves." I think that pretty much sums up the attitude of most blacks, and hence the difficulty whites have with the Town Council.

It's Wednesday now, and despite having every intention of calling you today at 1:00, I didn't get back until 5:00, missing lunch in the process. I'm faint with hunger, but had a great day. I'm finally starting to talk to the safari operators and learn about canoeing on the Zambezi, safaris in the area, and the Kuburi, a nearby wilderness area that may have great potential for tourism if the Wildlife Society (the non-profit organization put in charge of the area by National Parks) gets its act together. Currently, there is only chaos--maybe I can help... I spoke with two safari operators at length today and learned a ton. One of them is going to take me on an all-day 4-wheel driving safari through the Kuburi next week so I have at least some sense of the place I'm writing about. I also spoke with a guy on the Kuburi Management Board, who confirms the chaos. God, do I have a lot to do, and so little time! I also have to speak to a bunch of people in Harare, but I can't decide if I should do that at the end, or whether I should go down there and then come back here again.

When I got back--much to my overwhelming joy--I got your second (and you say, last) letter to me here at Caribbea Bay. Didn't you say you sent three here. If this is in fact the last one, then one is missing. I have the one mailed April 16th, with the B&W photo of your that mentions the phone bill in the first paragraph. The one I just got was mailed April 25th (11 days to get here--not bad) that had all the sports and law school controversy clippings plus the wonderful photos. Thank you so much for sending all that. The photo of us in front of the flowers is now in the fron of my wallet (the one of us by the Charles is bumped to page 2). Of course, now I'm dying to get the Globe sports section every day--see what you can do... What a fascinating controversy at the law school. Good thing the B-school is so peaceful and enlightened (ha ha). I agree the students who wrote the parody are idiots, but I tend to feel that they have only broken the rules of common sense and decency and should not be punished by the school. I do agree that their insensitivity is reflective of the law school and lawyers in general and to the extent that the furor makes men more sensitive to women's feelings, I think it's a good thing. Regarding the more general issue of women and minority hiring, I would love to see some statistics on the same figures at other schools, and learn a little bit about Harvard's recent history with regard to this issue. It's a tough balance to strike: you must maintain high standards, but at the same time, I agree that it's important to have more women and minorities on the faculty. I think the long-term solution lies not in stealing away tenured people from other schools to placate the radicals in the short term, but rather to aggressively recruit people for tenure-track positions, and then bust your ass to keep them and ultimately tenure them. I suspect this is where Harvard's main failing lies. I remember an article I read about the Corning Glass company; they had a terrible time retaining women and minorities they had hired, so they set up a committee or department to address this issue. It identified the needs and problems of these people, and recommended changes that were then implemented. Why don't you pass this letter along to Neil...

Oh by the way, thanks for the letter. It was nice. Ho ho--just kidding! It was wonderful and you are very sweet. It's sort of funny because most of it is out of date. You told me you were plugging away on your paper, but I already knew it was done. You mentioned talking to Bruce Patton and planning to see Fred and my mom, but you already told me all about that. Well, either we have to stop talking by phone, or don't waste your energy writing. JUST KIDDING! I love your letters and there's always tons in there that I didn't know about. Keep writing and let me know everything that's going on. Lots of gossip will be much appreciated.

It's Thursday now and I just talked to you last night, which was wonderful--my batteries are charged for another week without talking to you. I checked everywhere for the first letter you sent, but we couldn't find it. Damn! It'll probably arrive soon--Bill Bruce told me that some letters take a month, while others only take a few days. Crazy!

I had tons more meetings today. I'm focussing on two things right now: going to every harbor to get a count on the number of boats, and talking to everyone related to the Kuburi. God, the Kuburi is a mess. What total chaos! National Parks may just take the area back and say forget it, which would be very sad--the area has so much potential, but what a bunch of incompetent, squabbling, nincompoops!

Well, this letter is reaching an unmanageable length, so I guess I'll end it here and start another one tomorrow. I love you very much and miss you tons.

Love,
Whitney