

Europe Is The Soil

Step Out Of The Story

The SoulJahm story from October 2010 until February 2011.

"Life and Jah are one in the same. Jah is the gift of existence. I am in some way eternal, I will never be duplicated. The singularity of every man and woman is Jah's gift. What we struggle to make of it is our sole gift to Jah. The process of what that struggle becomes, in time, the Truth." - Bob Marley

[Welcome Onboard The EUROPA Zion Express!](#)

[EXODUS: Movement of JAH People!](#)

[Thursday 7th October 2010 - The Parable of the Raft](#)

[The Apartment](#)

[10/10/10 - A Thunderstorm](#)

[Water Blockages Begin...](#)

[Barcelona](#)

[The Little Boy, The Sweet Lady & The 'Game Over' T-Shirt](#)

[Paris Is Calling](#)

[Somewhere Over The Rainbow...](#)

[A Bus Called Suzanne](#)

[Fawlty Towers](#)

[Paris - The First 7 Nights \(part II\)](#)

[Europe In Paris](#)

[Feeling Musique](#)

[Europe - The Final Countdown?](#)

[3 Hotels In 3 Nights](#)

[Parc Monceau](#)

[The Truffaut Days](#)

[The Wise Frying Pan](#)

[From Paris To The Amsterdam Hilton...](#)
[From Atlantis To Yo-Yo's](#)
[Got To Have Kaya Now](#)
[Hash Adam & Jesus \(complete with poseable arms and gliding action\)](#)
[Winter Wonderland](#)
[The Train To Now Here](#)
[Welcome To Berlin - Citadines](#)
[Berlin - The Heart](#)
[Checkpoint Charlie](#)
[A House Don't Make Home](#)
[Musical Chairs & Puzzling Crayons](#)
[Berlin - After The Wilderness](#)
[Mr. Wollkopf, Mr. Golz, Magic Energy Pods & The Toaster](#)
[Moving East](#)
[Friedrichshain](#)
[Human Hibernation](#)
[Vincent](#)
[The Night Of The Living Dead](#)
[Roses & Rainbows](#)
[11/01/11](#)
[Kunst](#)
[Music & Fashion](#)
[Look To The East!](#)
[Dresden](#)
[Lean On Me](#)
[Dreads In Dresden](#)
[The Return Of Prague](#)
[Wiener Straße, Prager Straße & Budapester Straße](#)
[Eric](#)
[Soundtrack To The Zion Europa Express!](#)
[ApartHotel Susa](#)
[Prague](#)
[Vienna](#)
[From Elisabeth Straße To Bösendorfer Straße](#)
[Dark Clouds The Music](#)
[The Rose](#)
[Eckertgasse](#)
[The Music of Vienna](#)
[After Vienna](#)

Welcome Onboard The EUROPA Zion Express!

On Sunday 3rd October 2010, Dave and Kate took a walk around Edinburgh for the last time with Brother Mark. The journey felt strangely like a trip in a time machine that stretched back 10 years or more. At the end of the day a rainbow appeared in the sky.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [4:19 pm](#) Saturday, December 25, 2010

Before Boarding



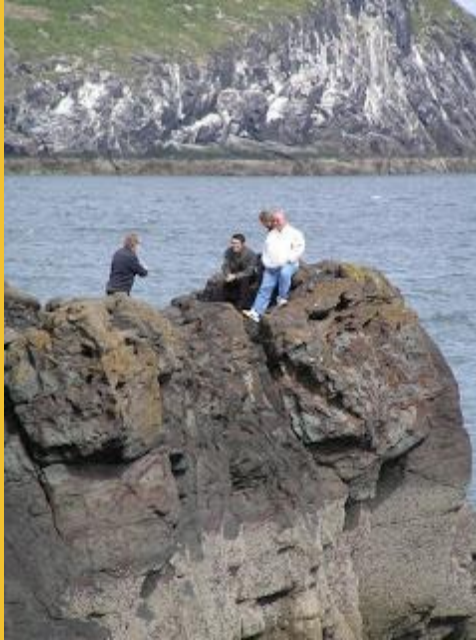
The story of how Dave & Kate came to board the Zion Europa Express stretches back to late 2006. Back then they were living a life much like anyone else. Then again, maybe not.

Dave was out of work and devoted to music, somehow trying to make a living out of it. Kate was in work, doing an admin job she didn't hate but wasn't fulfilling either. The underlying feeling was "there must be more to life than this". They had gradually found themselves withdrawing from the world... losing contact with friends, not interested in going to the pub every weekend as their peers did, questioning all of the usual stuff people do, and instead found themselves searching for something else. The trouble was they didn't know what they were looking for. They never chose to be like this, to feel this way, to search for anything, it just seemed to happen by itself.



During the winter of 2006 the 'search' brought them to a variety of spiritual sources which had the effect of shattering their world view. The world as they knew it up until that point had collapsed and what was left they didn't really know. The attention turned inwards and from seeing that the world around them was not what they had believed it to be, they began questioning their own identity.

The person creates the world as he/she sees it and the world creates that person.
Which is first?



On this realisation all hell broke loose! The year of 2007 was a year of endings and a new beginning. Dave's mother died suddenly and completely unexpectedly in March, aged 47, which in turn caused a chain reaction of events... too many to mention but in November Dave & Kate were forced to move from the flat they'd been in for 4 years and this seemed to mark the beginning of a period of calm after the storm.

Kate continued to work as she had while Dave found himself going deeper and deeper into himself. Everything dropped away, including the desire to make music, and for the next 2 or 3 years it remained this way.



In July 2009 they moved flat again and this now seemed to mark a new phase. Pretty soon after moving in Music started to announce itself in their lives again. Europe was also now on the horizon. They had no explanation but they couldn't see themselves remaining in Edinburgh once they left this flat. Italy felt like it might be a possibility.



Still they carried on as normal until in the spring of 2010 Kate started to feel increasingly trapped and frustrated in her work. One day in the kitchen expressing this, the words came out of Dave's mouth very casually - "why don't you just leave then?". A few months later and that's exactly what happened.



Europe was calling them and they knew this was the time. They had somehow known this was coming for a long time. There had always been something about Europe and particularly since a trip they had made there back in 2002.

This time was very different...

Posted by [Souljah](#) at [7:44 pm](#) Sunday, December 26, 2010

EXODUS: Movement of JAH People!



On Mon 4th Oct, Dave and Kate handed over almost all they had - house, job, possessions, personal security - to life, said goodbye to those around them and with only enough money in the bank to last them a month, fell further into the Rabbit Hole.

All they knew was that they *MUST* go to Europe. They didn't know why, for how long, where exactly, nothing... only that an urging was calling them to continental Europe.

Using Kate's HP Intel Dual Processor Widescreen raft to cross the North Sea, they landed on the shores of Barcelona that same night. They were welcomed by a grumpy bus driver and a smart-arse Russian at the hotel reception.

Barcelona was the chosen destination (or did it choose them?) after Barcelona football strips frequently showed up around Edinburgh in the weeks leading up to their departure and references to the city seemed to appear on tv at timely moments. One day in Edinburgh Dave found himself roped into the first game of football he'd played in about 10 years with some Spanish students.

As they sat eating tuna paninis in a fast food place that night in a foreign land, the song on the radio sang out:

*"Here I am, this is me, there's nowhere else on earth I'd rather be
Here I am, it's just me and you, tonight we make our dreams come true
It's a new world, it's a new start
It's alive with the beating of young hearts
It's a new day, it's a new plan, I've been waiting for you
Here I am..."*



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [5:21 pm](#) Tuesday, December 28, 2010

The Empire Strikes Back

They hadn't been there a day before dark forces started to disrupt their plans. The money goblins and their overzealous security halted access to their bank accounts and so Dave & Kate's money was so secure even they couldn't get to it.

Back in Edinburgh the idea was to book an apartment for a month in Barcelona but the right one never showed up. At the very last minute, on the day they left, they booked a hotel for the first night and would attempt to book further accomodation once they got to Barcelona. Internet banking security soon put a halt to that.

So after checking out of their hotel the next morning, with nowhere to stay and backpacks strapped to their backs weighing close to 15kg each, not to mention their widescreen laptop raft, they wandered for a bit in the Spanish sun looking for somewhere with free wi-fi access. They were standing outside Starbucks on La Ramblas, reluctant to give in and go there, when Dave realised he was staring straight across the road at the Citadines apart-hotel sign... "How about we go there?"

It wasn't the cheapest option but looking like a couple of tired turtles and with limited means of getting to their money, it seemed the only option. They checked in for 2 nights and laughed at the amazing views of Barcelona from their room - two people who aren't really interested in grand views.



The stay gave them a perfect place to get back on their feet with free internet access so they could look up apartments and facilities for them to eat in and save money.



Kate felt so at home that she got a job at Citadines...



All of this wasn't exactly what they had in mind when they landed in Barcelona.

Posted by [Souljah](#) at [7:09 pm](#) Wednesday, December 29, 2010

Thursday 7th October 2010 - The Parable of the Raft



The 7th October 2010 turned out to be a pivotal day for Dave & Kate. Only 4 days in and as they found themselves about to check-out of Citadines, they only had two real options for apartments. One was down the road, on La Ramblas, a small basic studio flat with no internet access. The other was in the Eixample district, which they weren't familiar with but was a little bigger and did have internet access.

As Kate was on the phone to the woman who owned the latter apartment, there was a recognition this was the right one. It could be heard in Kate's voice during the phone conversation. They both agreed it had to be this apartment, even if it cost a little more. The woman's name was Susanna, a Spaniard, who was currently working in Oman (an omen perhaps?).



So they attempted to secure the apartment by emailing Susanna just before they were due to check-out of Citadines when they were hit with internet trouble and couldn't connect. After check-out they took advantage of the free wi-fi in the lobby to attempt to sort things out but still no luck.



The Raft

They made their way towards Susanna's apartment anyway and Kate tried to reach her on the phone. Susanna was surprised to find they were just streets away from her apartment when they finally confirmed things and she arranged a cleaner to come and gave them a check-in time. The only money she wanted in advance was for them to pay the cleaner 30 Euros. It was the day before they left 3 weeks later before she took any rent from them and she had none of their details other than Kate's first name.

As they had all their bags with them and nowhere to drop them off, they sat for a few hours on a park bench nearby. They had been there for over an hour, relaxed in the afternoon sun, when a young man approached them on his bike. In need of directions and apparently in need of a raft more than them, he didn't bother introducing his friend who was behind them. In one swift moment they were now without their laptop, U.G. Krishnamurti and a bottle of olive oil.



The Park Bench

A young woman had also approached them not long before that for directions as they sat in a cafe with their bags around them. She left with a smile but took nothing.

What is that famous parable of The Buddha, The Parable of the Raft...

The Buddha then asks the listeners a question: "What would you think if the man, having crossed over the river, then said to himself, 'Oh, this raft has served me so well, I should strap it on to my back and carry it over land now?'"

The monks replied that it would not be very sensible to cling to the raft in such a way.

The Buddha continues: "What if he lay the raft down gratefully, thinking that this raft has served him well, but is no longer of use and can thus be laid down upon the shore?"

The monks replied that this would be the proper attitude.

The Buddha concluded by saying, "So it is with my teachings, which are like a raft, and are for crossing over with — not for seizing hold of."

Posted by [Souljah](#) at [7:41 pm](#) Wednesday, December 29, 2010

The Apartment



For a minute or two some noise rose up - "shit, that's us finished, we'll have to go back", "what else was in the bag?", "what are we gonna do now?"... as it disappeared back into nothingness very quickly they found themselves feeling unusually calm with a peaceful feeling in the background and the words "this is all good" ringing out inside them.

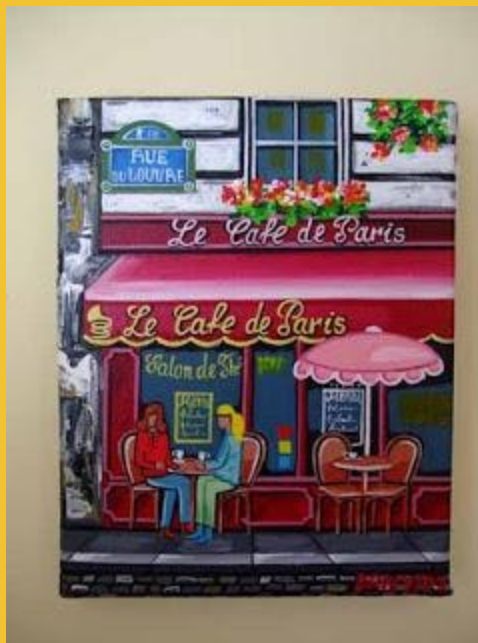
They didn't have much time to dwell on it anyway. They had to be at the apartment at 6pm to meet the cleaner and check-in. She was having trouble opening the gate to the terrace when they arrived and a phone call had to be made to Susanna to sort it out. As Susanna told Kate the wi-fi details, Kate told her it was no longer necessary.

With no insurance and almost zero chance of getting the laptop back, they reluctantly made the trip to the police station to report it but the police were as useless as police always are.

Clearly, this Europe journey was going to take a new direction from this moment and everything from now on would have to be organised via internet cafes like the old days.

The apartment itself was great and provided everything they needed to sink themselves into Barcelona. As well as Susanna's certificate in accountancy on display, there were Vogue images around the flat and two little paintings of Parisian street scenes in the kitchen. The only book Dave picked up and flicked through amongst Susanna's many travel books was a guide to Amsterdam.





Paris had already been showing itself as the most likely contender for next destination. Just down the road from Citadines they had spotted the Paris Hotel a few times and during their time in Barcelona Paris would present itself in many forms on many different occasions.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [5:24 pm](#) Saturday, January 01, 2011

10/10/10 - A Thunderstorm

After a week of constant sunshine, on the night of 10th October 2010, Barcelona threw up a thunderstorm. As Dave & Kate lay in bed that night they couldn't determine whether the storm was coming from inside or outside themselves.

Each rumble of thunder was felt as a 'pop' inside their stomachs and each flash of lightning seemed to be going off simultaneously inside their brains. The realisation that the Fatherland Europa was welcoming and integrating them into the landscape came.





Posted by [Souljah](#) at [2:43 pm](#) Monday, January 03, 2011

Water Blockages Begin...



The next day the shower stopped as Dave was under it. No hot water due to the boiler blowing a fuse. This brought about a week of encounters with Antonio, Susanna's friend, and The Electrician (who spoke no English). By the end of the week they had it fully operational again but this was only the beginning of water troubles.

A few days after the boiler was fixed the toilet stopped flushing. When Susanna heard of all their troubles - stolen laptop, broken boiler and now toilet not flushing - she could only laugh and say "it must be your turn for a run of bad karma". Maybe.

At their next destination in Paris, they would be moved hotel rooms due to water-related issues, find themselves in another hotel where the plug for the bath was jammed bringing about an amusing encounter with the hotel staff member on duty (he had to lock the doors of the hotel as he was so busy at reception to attend to their room where he appeared and then reappeared with a knife to sort the plug) and finally in Amsterdam had a luxury bathroom with two sinks, one which was leaking water and unusable.

It also didn't go unnoticed that Barcelona, Paris, Amsterdam and Hamburg (the first 4 destinations on their journey) were all cities where water was prominent to the landscape.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [2:56 pm](#) Monday, January 03, 2011

Barcelona



Dave & Kate spent the 3 weeks there taking long walks with no particular purpose in between time at internet cafes and shopping for groceries. When they could they'd stop off for a coffee. Shopping for groceries usually involved trips to several stores as they could rarely get all they wanted from one.



Sometime each afternoon they often found themselves *reasoning* (satsang?) with coffee and Catalanian biscuits while out on the terrace or sitting inside. These talks were spontaneous and random, whatever needing to be said voiced out loud to clear the air and keep things fresh and moving along. This would also happen back in Edinburgh and usually always took place around coffee and cakes or biscuits.



At nights their only form of entertainment was the radio, so in-between more reasoning sessions they would listen as songs presented themselves as signs and often explained what was going on better than they could. When in one song the singer screamed out "Paris is calling!" they knew they were definitely on to go there next.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [3:06 pm](#) Monday, January 03, 2011

Faul McCartney and The Terminator?

Somewhere in the middle of their time in Barcelona Faul McCartney made an appearance...



Or was it Fave?

The Terminator was also spotted looking a bit lost at the harbour area wandering around completely naked amongst the fully clothed tourists. Thankfully, they never heard him say to anybody "your clothes... give them to me... now!". *(Sorry, no photo)*

Posted by [Souljah](#) at [3:15 pm](#) Monday, January 03, 2011

The Little Boy, The Sweet Lady & The 'Game Over' T-Shirt



Strange encounters began to happen. One day walking through a busy street, a little boy with his mother saw Dave and headed straight for him, stopping him in his tracks with a huge smile on his face. It was as if they were old friends. Perhaps they were.

This would also be the start of a number of incidences where they would encounter somebody who'd leave them smiling inside. It often seemed to happen in the middle of challenging times as if some sort of reminder to keep on.

Towards the end of their time in Barcelona as they were visiting an internet cafe each day with little luck in finding appropriate accommodation for Paris, the woman at the counter began to recognise them. On their last visit there (she didn't know this) and feeling a bit worn out, she offered them a sweet from the packet she was eating as they paid up and left the cafe.

The 'Game Over' t-shirt is something else. A few weeks before they left for Barcelona, it caught Dave's attention from a tourist shop window as he and Kate were filming on the streets of Edinburgh. It didn't seem to mean much at the time but then fast forward to Barcelona where they would continually see the same t-shirt in a variety of souvenir shops there. What does it mean? Maybe nothing at all?



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [3:21 pm](#) Monday, January 03, 2011

Paris Is Calling



They felt it was the right time to commit and book a flight to Paris. They had no reason to go there and didn't even particularly want to go, plenty of other destinations were more appealing. Around that time Paris was hit by strikes and protests over changes to the retirement age. There was also violence in London over student protests.



They had to cut their stay at Susanna's apartment short by 3 days as their flight to Paris was for Mon 25th Oct. There was no reason to do any of this but all they knew was the time was right to leave Barcelona and Paris was showing itself as the next place to be.



They had a week or two to sort out accommodation and didn't anticipate it being so difficult and expensive to find an apartment in Paris. Eventually they had little option but to book themselves into an Ibis hotel in the 19th district, just on the outer edge of Paris city centre, for 7 nights. After that, who knows?

The intense energy of Barcelona - good in short doses - was starting to feel a bit much and remembering their previous visits to Paris, they thought it might have a cooler, more open energy that was right for them now.



Before they left Barcelona they took a walk to the Font Màgica. They had fond memories of it from their first time in Barcelona but this time arriving around 9pm and looking over the city waiting for it to begin they discovered it was broken (more water blockages?).



They found themselves walking home late that night along Carrer de Paris.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [7:04 pm](#) Wednesday, January 05, 2011

Somewhere Over The Rainbow...



Dave & Kate flew out of Barcelona around midday on Monday 25th October 2010. The fondness they had for Barcelona remained and they knew it wouldn't be their last visit. On arriving at Paris Beauvais airport and hopping on the bus to the city centre, as they waited on the bus to leave and wondered what Paris would have in store for them, they looked out the window and another rainbow was in the sky...



Once they'd found their bearings and got the metro to the Ibis hotel, they were welcomed by a guy hanging out his window as they walked down the street saying "bon soir!" and holding his hand out. All credit to him for finding a new way to beg. They would find him there with his hand out most days they went down that street.

Everything seemed ok at check-in and although being on the outskirts, in an ethnic area, was new to them, they never felt threatened. Maybe they hadn't anticipated being such a long way from the centre - they forgot just how big Paris is. Setting out to get something to eat that night it must have been close to a 2hr walk before they found anything. They got the metro back at about 11pm that night.

Posted by [Souljah](#) at [7:18 pm](#) Wednesday, January 05, 2011

A Bus Called Suzanne

On being dropped off at Porte Maillot, Paris by the airport bus, Dave & Kate were sorting out their luggage and just as Dave looked up a coach passed right in front of him with the words 'Suzanne' emblazoned on it and three eyes.

They would encounter this same bus 4 times in total during their stay in Paris. The next two occasions were in the heart of Paris; once as they were walking past the Louvre at the end of an intense discussion (you could call it a satsang of sorts) and the next time as they sat in a cafe during another intense discussion, feeling a bit lost. The discussions would end for a moment and one of them would look away in silence and there would be this bus going by.

The last time they saw it was on their final day in Paris. Standing outside Galeries Lafayette, watching the window display and feeling a little strange on realising their time in Paris had come to an end, they turned to walk away and the bus passed on the street right in front of them (see image).



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [5:55 pm](#) Thursday, January 06, 2011

Paris - The First 7 Nights



As far as Dave & Kate could see, they were in Paris for 7 nights and then who knows after that... if something kept them there longer they would remain, otherwise they were certain they'd move on - or back to Edinburgh if money ran out - as they had no desire to be there any longer than necessary.

Each morning they'd be up and out of their hotel around 10 or 11am and breakfast would be a baguette to share and a pain au chocolat each, which they'd buy from a local patisserie and eat as they made the long walk into the centre of Paris. They never knew where they were going, they would just walk and see where they ended up. It was usually different ways of arriving somewhere along the River Seine.





These walks would last up to 10 hours a day with very few breaks. First of all, their hotel was so far from the centre that they couldn't go back throughout the day. Secondly, they were running out of cash and forgot how expensive Paris can be and how difficult to get cheap food.





So during these walks, they'd stop off for a seat at various spots around the city, try the different pastries for lunch when they could afford them and then usually without fail find themselves sitting in a Subway for their main meal (it was better than McDonalds!). They would also use Brioche Doree. In between all of this they would try to locate internet cafes to arrange their next move after the Ibis stay was over.



Paris seemed to be having them walking all over the city, draining them of money and wearing them out and yet the aliveness remained throughout. They never felt hard done by and enjoyed all of it with no regrets. They visited Montmartre, the artistic area near Sacre Coeur and were unimpressed by it. They went by all the main tourist attractions without feeling like tourists. At the Eiffel Tower, they sat on a bench and while all the tourists were doing what tourists do, Dave & Kate found themselves watching a rat scuttling about in the bushes behind them.



They had been to these places before and so this time they also found themselves discovering parts of Paris the tourists don't usually see. This all happened by default of them having to wander around to find basic essentials, not through their own will. They were literally like leaves being blown around this city and it certainly was grinding them down.

Winter was also approaching and they still had their summer clothes with them. Even there, life took care of its own as it never produced really bad weather during the days while they were forced to be out all day.

Every night they would get the metro back to the hotel, usually about 10 or 11pm, or sometimes if they had a fresh burst of energy come upon them, they'd walk all the way back.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [6:21 pm](#) Saturday, January 08, 2011

Fawlty Towers

Their stay at the Ibis was a bit like Fawlty Towers.



In the 7 nights they were there, they stayed in 4 different rooms. The first one, a non-smoking room, had a stench of cigarette smoke coming through the air vents and so they asked to move. They were moved to a room with dampness in it and asked to be moved again. The 3rd room was fine as far as they were concerned but arriving home one night their keycard wouldn't let them in. They went to the desk and were informed work was going to be carried out on the room in the morning and there would be no hot water (water problems again!). By this time the hotel was almost full and there was a bit of drama and tension as the hotel staff tried to find them a suitable room to move to (2 vacant rooms were stinking of smoke again).



The little French-Morrocan guy at reception was sweating as they sent him into a panic trying to find a suitable room. His buddy in the background would just offer a wry smile at proceedings. Dave & Kate were given a free breakfast the following morning for all the trouble.



Then there was the typically French Jean-Pierre, who remained snooty and aloof whenever they dealt with him. All these characters amused Dave & Kate and it seemed they amused, bemused, confused and caused havoc wherever they went and whoever they dealt with. This amused them further. The Upsetters upsetting the Babylon System without effort.

One guy working at the Ibis hotel was different. He was a tall, slender, black man and each time he encountered Dave he would just break into a big grin and start nodding his head. Few words were ever spoken between them but something seemed to be understood.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [6:35 pm](#) Saturday, January 08, 2011

Paris - The First 7 Nights (part II)



With two days to go until they were due to check-out the Ibis, they were running low on money and nothing was showing up.

Kate had been trying her luck at the Spanish lotto and now the French one but no luck. Logically, it looked like they were soon going back to Edinburgh. But there was no room for that in the vision they saw.



Paris had ground them hard, they'd been all over the city and didn't feel an affinity with any part. Still whenever the question of what to do next came up, it seemed they weren't to leave yet.

That night at the internet cafe up Jah came up on top and delivered them a very nicely priced hotel in the 8th district of Paris, much closer to the centre. They got 2 nights and so they took a chance that *something* would show up in that time to keep alive this Europe thing.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [1:54 pm](#) Monday, January 10, 2011

Europe In Paris



On Monday 1st November 2010 they checked out the Ibis. They were surprised to be offered another free breakfast for all the trouble from the smirking guy in the background. Pity they'd already eaten out that morning. Still, they took up the offer and sat and had a coffee before leaving. They wondered why it was so busy so close to check-out time in the breakfast room. They found out later the clocks had went back so it was 10.45 when they thought it was 11.45.

Nearby was a launderette they stopped off at. They'd been once already but this time they chose the wrong (or right?) machine. The water got blocked and the machine kept on spinning. Kate asked the few people in there if anyone spoke English and a very kind French guy saved the day by offering to call the caretaker on his mobile.

While they waited a little girl in with her mum wanted to play with Kate. They were noticing a pattern of having lots of these kind of encounters with children.

Eventually they got to leave the launderette and discovered the only metro stop they could get off at on their route to the new hotel was called Europe. This seemed significant.



Their hotel was on Rue d'Amsterdam and they soon discovered why the metro was called Europe... all the streets in the area were named after European cities - Moscou, Liege, Naples, Berne, Vienne, Madrid, etc...

Immediately they felt much lighter in this area. For the first time in Paris they felt they had found *The Place*.



It wasn't just because of the Europe connection. They liked the buildings, could see themselves living there, and the general ambience of the place. It felt much more relaxed than some parts and not as arty-farty or pretentious as say Montmartre.

That afternoon after they checked into their hotel they felt a strong energy shift within themselves and could only lay there on the bed unable to move for a few hours until they 'came round' again.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [2:14 pm](#) Monday, January 10, 2011

Feeling Musique



As they stepped out to explore the area for the first time, not only did they find everything they needed close by (including a Subway!) but walking down Rue de Rome there were all these luthiers and musical instrument shops. For the first time two elements of their long-held vision together - Europe and Music.



Surely all this was a sign they weren't going back to Edinburgh?

Posted by [Souljah](#) at [2:17 pm](#) Monday, January 10, 2011

Europe - The Final Countdown?

On their second and final night at the hotel on Rue d'Amsterdam, no money had shown up and neither had anywhere else to stay for the following night. Edinburgh was almost certainly on the cards now.



That night they didn't feel to even bother looking for hotels on the internet. Instead they stayed in and checked out the following morning, leaving their bags at the hotel reception, and headed straight to an internet cafe. No luck.

All they could think to do at this point was what they'd done before 8 years ago on their first trip around Europe... go on foot round hotels in the area and enquire. They knew they couldn't leave this part of Paris yet.



They made an error (or was it?) straight away by going into the third hotel enquiring, getting the guy to take the rate down from 95 Euros a night to 60, and paid by credit card for 3 nights... before seeing the rooms.

They knew they couldn't stay there for 3 nights and didn't care if they had a hard time finding somewhere else. The guy reluctantly refunded the card but that money would now not be available for 30 days while the refund was processed. Things weren't looking good.

After they'd wandered around for a bit, everywhere far higher than they could afford, Dave suddenly felt a rise of righteous anger at what they were doing - "we shouldn't have to beg like this! we have every right to live like kings!!". This outburst broke the momentum, it all felt too much of an effort wandering around like this.



They recognised it was going nowhere and all they could do was return to the internet to see if anything new had shown up. And there it was. The one they'd been waiting on. Just along the road from their last hotel - a great deal on a 4-star hotel for the night. They would live like King and Queen for a night afterall.

Posted by [Souljah](#) at [2:35 pm](#) Monday, January 10, 2011

3 Hotels In 3 Nights

It felt like Jah had delivered a real treat for them that night. They were so grateful.



Although it looked increasingly certain they'd have no choice but to book a flight back to Edinburgh the following day, it didn't matter, for now they were fine.

That night as Dave brushed his teeth he saw he was staring at a rainbow in the sink. The light was reflecting off the running water in such a way it had created a rainbow. He began to laugh. They had also noticed that there were three random tiles in the bathroom each with a butterfly on them.



Yet again they checked out in the morning with nowhere to stay that night. They managed to book a Best Western hotel on Rue de Moscou after another internet trip. The internet rates in Paris were really swallowing up their finances.



That afternoon Dave sent an email to the folks back in Edinburgh to let them know they'd almost certainly be on a flight there in a day or two. Dave & Kate felt they weren't to ask for money from anyone, no matter how strongly they felt about remaining in Europe. They had to put all their trust in Jah.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [2:44 pm](#) Monday, January 10, 2011

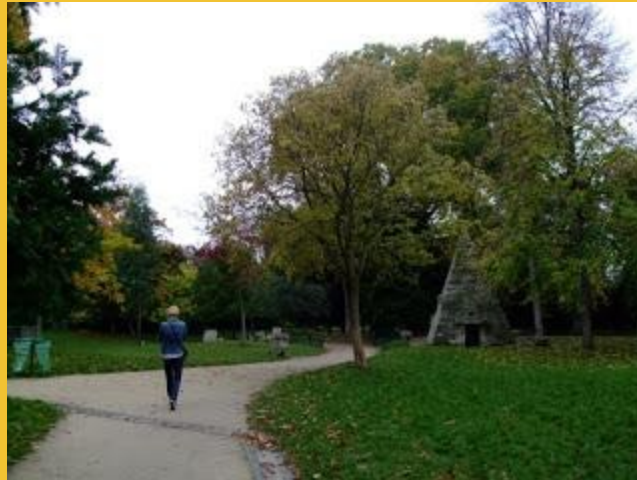
Parc Monceau



Dave & Kate had discovered a nice little park in the area during their time there called Parc Monceau. It was probably their favourite and they preferred it over the more famous Luxembourg Parc.



As they took a walk around it trying to understand how their head and heart could be in conflict like this they eventually sat themselves down on a rock opposite a small pyramid. A little French boy soon appeared in front of them playing on the rocks. He was singing to himself and kept looking up at them with a curious smile. This made them smile. When he eventually ran off to his mum he kept looking back at them shouting "au revoir!" and waving. They wondered if this was an omen Paris was saying goodbye to them.



That night they took a longer route to a different internet cafe much further away from their hotel. They were going there as one last throw of the dice, so to speak. If something showed up (they couldn't see what) then it was still on, if there was nothing they would book a flight back to Edinburgh as they simply didn't have enough to last any longer.

They never spoke about it to each other at the time but both felt they were sure they'd be staying. Edinburgh just wasn't an option - it was as obvious as this to them even if it made no logical sense. They couldn't conceive that this thing was about to die.



A miracle did come. Jah had put his troops Brian, Agnes and Brother Mark into action and there was an email waiting for Dave & Kate with an offer of financial help to sustain them a few days longer. It had only been a few hours since Dave notified them about possibly returning. If they had went to the usual nearer internet place they probably would have booked the flights before the emails had come through.

At the very last minute Europe was brought back to life - if only for a few days more.

Later that night as they sat eating a Subway again, the song on the radio went "I need a dollar, a dollar, a dollar is what I need... if I share with you my story would you share your dollar with me".

Posted by [Souljah](#) at [3:03 pm](#) Monday, January 10, 2011

Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?



On Friday 5th November 2010, Dave & Kate stepped out of their hotel with the task of finding themselves a room for that night and some kind of accomodation which offered them a few days of stability. An apartment was the preferred choice but its not easy to book an apartment a day in advance.

Nothing much was showing up and so they'd take breaks from the internet cafe, going out for walks to give the mind a rest, and then coming back. Sometime in the afternoon Dave came across an apartment not too far from the area they were in and as a bonus it had a PC with internet connection. This would be a massive help in saving internet costs. They emailed the owners, David & Elizabeth, about checking in the next day.



Luckily, they were able to email back quickly and put things into action - 5 days in this apartment sounded good and after that they felt sure they would leave Paris one way or another. David & Elizabeth wanted a 100 Euro deposit before arrival and accepted paypal which suited Dave & Kate perfectly. The remainder was to be paid in cash on arrival.



At this point on their travels, Dave & Kate seemed to be plagued with money issues. They couldn't use their euro currency cards as they'd intended until a bank statement from their UK banks arrived at the family residence they had provided (since they had no permanent residence of their own now). This was another security measure from the Babylon Shitstem which seemed intent on halting things. They could only transfer money by direct bank transfer to their cards and this took a few days to process each time.



So they were relying on directly withdrawing money using their UK debit cards and they didn't even know if they were going to work since the bank had already froze their accounts after seeing attempted foreign withdrawals.

At 5pm they eventually found a hotel for the night... the same one they'd stayed in for 2 nights at the beginning of the week on Rue d'Amsterdam. After nothing showing up for their budget all day, it popped up on offer late in the day and so they once again were saved at the last minute.



They moved their luggage from the previous nights hotel to this one again, checked in and then went back out to hopefully finalise the apartment for tomorrow.

The dark forces were out to stop them yet again. When Kate attempted to make the paypal deposit payment she got a message from paypal saying they had frozen the transfer until further security checks were completed. This was going to take 5 days - they'd be checked out by the time it went through. No good.



Kate got in touch with David and explained and he very kindly agreed to cancel the paypal transaction and accept a cash deposit on arrival. Only thing was, the cancellation didn't free up the money back into Kate's bank account. So 100 Euros was unavailable to them for 5 - 7 days.

They were left that night having agreed to this apartment and not even sure whether they could get any of the money out their banks for it. At 11pm that night they made their way to a cash machine where Dave tried to use his UK debit card to take out a chunk of the money. He almost expected Chris Tarrant's face to appear on the screen and ask if he wanted to phone a friend as they waited those long seconds while the transaction was being processed.



Jah didn't let them down. The cash came out and they were able to go back the next morning and withdraw the rest. Finally it looked like they were about to have 5 days of stability in which something could happen to keep Europe alive.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [4:56 pm](#) Wednesday, January 12, 2011

The Truffaut Days

Dave & Kate arrived at the apartment on Rue Truffaut on Saturday afternoon and were soon met by David and his little boy, who they learnt had never heard his dad speaking English before and had never been to the apartment before, hence his shyness.



After showing them around he surprised them by saying he had decided he didn't need a desposit from them as he trusted them and wouldn't be around on the Thursday when they checked out anyway. They recognised this as another little bit of help coming their way and were able to use that cash now for groceries for the week.



The apartment itself was great, with everything they needed, but at this stage they would have felt grateful for pretty much any apartment. The fact it had a PC with internet, was close to the Europe area they had been in, and had all amenities close by was amazing. Still they were faced with returning to Edinburgh on the Thursday if money didn't arrive from somewhere.



They weren't even sure where they'd go after this if it did come. Belgium, Luxembourg and Netherlands seemed the most likely destinations, although they had no reason to go to any of them.

The weather responded to their movements too. The previous 2 weeks in Paris it had remained dry, while they were in hotels and out for much of the day. The day they moved into the apartment it began raining heavily and did so for most of the days they were there. They had seen most of Paris anyway and didn't need to go too far.



Instead a lot of time was spent utilising the free internet and writing emails.

During this time help now came in the form of Will & Georgie, who kindly stepped in and provided new funds for them to remain in Europe. Dave & Kate had been more more confident it would come this time than the previous week but they didn't know from where. They felt blessed yet again still not really knowing what the hell was going on.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [6:42 pm](#) Thursday, January 20, 2011

The Wise Frying Pan

Sometime in the middle of their time in the Truffaut apartment, while making tea one night, a wise frying pan had an announcement to make to Dave... "Berlin Go". So they did. But not yet.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [6:44 pm](#) Thursday, January 20, 2011

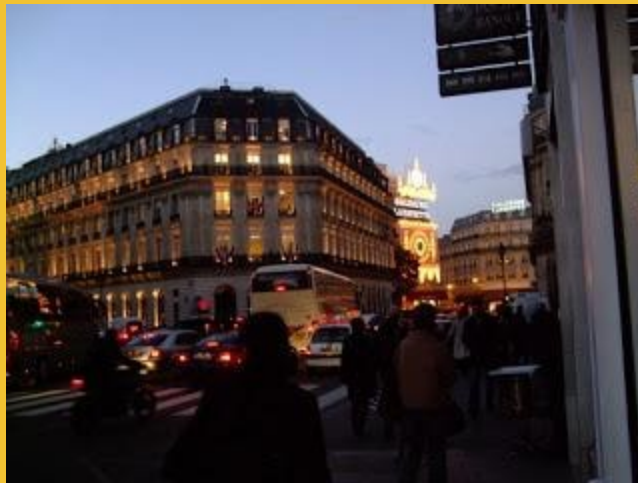
From Paris To The Amsterdam Hilton...

Not quite but close enough.

It became clear with a few days left that Amsterdam was the next place to be. They had no reason to go there and in fact, again, didn't really want to. Their last visit to Amsterdam several years earlier had not been so great and although they didn't dislike the city, they had memories of a hard time in a bustling, slightly crazy place to burn. Maybe that was as good a reason as any to go.



The signs had been presented... they stayed TWICE in the same hotel on Rue d'Amsterdam and while they were there, Dave remembered hearing the Lloyd Cole song "Lost Weekend" and feeling it was significant somehow - "I spent a lost weekend in a hotel in Amsterdam..."





When they arrived at the Truffaut apartment what did he find in the small CD collection but a Lloyd Cole album. And then one day Kate put on a Beatles album from the collection and they heard John Lennon sing the lines "from Paris to the Amsterdam Hilton..."

With a day or two to go, Kate managed to find and secure an apartment there for 11 nights.

During this period they were also feeling it was time to shed their shells (backpacks). They were slowing them down and too inefficient for all this moving. Nearby the apartment they would find a lot of luggage shops, looking in, knowing suitcases were the way.

They bought a train ticket the day before they checked out and said goodbye to Paris in the early hours of the morning.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [6:53 pm](#) Thursday, January 20, 2011

Hazy Days



Arriving in Amsterdam around 11am and with little sleep, they made their way to the apartment they'd booked from Paris - an upmarket townhouse flat not too far from the Van Gogh museum. It was bigger than they needed but the only option with a few days to spare. This time they were glad not to be right in the heart of the city centre.



They met the guy from the agency at check-in, Chris, who had cycled to the apartment to meet them and then had to cycle back and return with the right set of keys. Nice start but it gave Dave & Kate a chance to pick up some groceries while he was gone.

Chris was a full-on, enthusiastic English guy who had been on his way travelling elsewhere 20 years earlier, arrived in Amsterdam and decided to remain there and live on a houseboat. Kate was touched when he came round one day with some of his own teabags he'd been sent from England.

Once all checked in and sorted, Dave & Kate slept for a good chunk of the day... and for a good part of their first 4 days in Amsterdam. They had immediately felt a very different kind of energy here than in Paris and it seemed to be making them very spaced out and hazy. And that was before anything was smoked.



Yet again, they were thankful for the apartment that had come their way. There was an Albert Heijn supermarket 5 mins down the road, Vondelpark was 2 mins away, a tram stop right outside the flat (they only used it on arrival and departure) and everything else they needed was close by.



In the apartment they found various Buddha statues, photos of elephants and some spiritual books, including 'A Course In Miracles'. They never read any but this type of thing would repeat itself and indicate something was going on.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [2:10 pm](#) Saturday, January 22, 2011

From Atlantis To Yo-Yo's



On the 4th night Dave & Kate felt the time was right to revisit an old friend, Kaya. It was pouring down and as they walked the streets in the area not too far from their apartment they spotted a coffeeshop called Atlantis. It seemed apt that they try and find Kaya in there. They did and left, heading back to the apartment for a pleasant night.



Amsterdam with all its canals was also continuing this strange water-related theme that seemed to be significant. Pretty soon they discovered their luxury bathroom with its two sinks only had one in working order - the other was leaking water at the base. Chris and his Dutch friend Ron arrived but couldn't fix it so one sink it was.



As Dave & Kate walked into Atlantis the girl at the counter misheard Dave and thought he was asking for "Jamaican", a strain of their friend Kaya. Bob was certainly around. The next day in a headshop for papers and any old lighter, the middle-aged lady specifically pulled one with Bob Marley on it from the shelf for them. They would find him looking down on them from above in La Terturia, the only coffeeshop they sat in at other than Yo-Yo's.



They had heard Yo-Yo's produce was organically grown and since it was out of the city centre, was much more relaxed, for the locals rather than tourists. It sounded like their kind of place. La Terturia was more well-known, but still relaxed, run by two elderly women, a mother and daughter team.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [2:28 pm](#) Saturday, January 22, 2011

Got To Have Kaya Now



The whole 11 nights spent in Amsterdam was a very relaxing and rejuvenating time.

They hadn't known what to expect and this was a very different Amsterdam experience from their last one. A lazy, hazy atmosphere pervaded each day and so Dave & Kate went with it. They didn't really need to go out much, had no reason to, and so found other than supermarket trips they'd find themselves heading to Yo-Yo's or La Terturia, having a smoke, and then wandering wherever or heading back to the apartment.



After the manic time in Paris this was exactly what they needed. Amsterdam also seemed the perfect place for Dave to dispose of his rasta trainers (in a park bin) which had been falling apart for some time.

Posted by [Souljah](#) at [2:36 pm](#) Saturday, January 22, 2011

Hash Adam & Jesus (complete with poseable arms and gliding action)



Midway through their time in Amsterdam, they received a package from Edinburgh with winter clothes which they were very chuffed with. It had been getting considerably colder all the time and they still only had summer clothes and jackets.



On their way back from buying train tickets for Hamburg (their next destination), they collected the package from the agency, and then in a gift shop nearby Anne Frank's house, they found a friend in Jesus. He ended up leaving with them and so that day they arrived for a coffee and smoke at La Terturia with their winter clothes and Jesus alongside them.



There was a young guy just leaving at the table next to them but he spent a few moments staring at them before he got up and left.

The next day they returned there - this time without Jesus and clothes - but the young guy was there. He soon introduced himself as Hash Adam, a young Dutch/English outlaw, his weapon of choice being a camera. He was a freelance photographer apparently. He didn't appear to recognise them from the day before although they recognised him. Instead after asking to borrow the Bob lighter, he got straight down to the benefits of hash, which he was smoking, and spent the first 20 mins telling Dave & Kate in great detail all about hash and how to make it.



He offered them a toke of his joint and was determined to find out if they enjoyed it as much as he did. They were neither this way or that about it. It was nice, but so was the weed they were smoking. They continued chatting, mainly about the system, and when Dave & Kate explained their situation and what they were doing, and how much money they had left. He looked on in wonder. Then a long pause....



His face suddenly creased up and he burst out laughing with the phrase "have you guys ever thought about getting jobs?!" They all cracked up at this but as he left it looked like a guy who had contemplated some of what was spoken.



Meanwhile, Jesus remained with them. He was supposed to depart and head to Edinburgh from Amsterdam but the bastard wouldn't leave and ended up following them on to Hamburg.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [2:54 pm](#) Saturday, January 22, 2011

Hamburg or Berlin?

During the period in Amsterdam it wasn't totally clear whether the next stop would be Hamburg or Berlin.

Coming into Amsterdam Dave & Kate had been feeling Hamburg was next and this seemed confirmed by the freight train they passed as they arrived at Amsterdam Central with 'Hamburg' painted on the side. They seemed to know they had to go there at some point for whatever reason.

Just as with Amsterdam they hadn't overly fond memories of Hamburg and their impression of it was a gritty, northern port town not too dissimilar to Glasgow. It was also approaching December and getting colder.

They had also been in touch with Mark and Brian around this time with the possibility of meeting up somewhere in Germany. Berlin seemed the most likely place.

Berlin was growing and seemed to represent the Heart. If the land of Europe was a physical body (maybe it is?) then Berlin was the Heart. They knew they were on their way but didn't expect it to be so soon.

It looked likely a meeting with solo Mark was on the cards but it wasn't to be for now and a decision had to be made and so Hamburg it was. For 3 nights. A train ticket for Berlin after that was also bought.

After the laziness and comfort of Amsterdam, they were ready for going back onto the battlefield...



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [1:46 am](#) Friday, February 04, 2011

Winter Wonderland



Arriving in Hamburg on Monday 22nd Nov 2010, Dave & Kate certainly didn't expect the Winter Wonderland scenes they were confronted by. The Christmas markets were all up and running and after checking into their hotel near the train station, they went out for some food and passed a busker singing Bob Marley's "Roots Rock Reggae" song.



They weren't going to have much trouble getting meals here. How did two people who don't even bother with Christmas end up in a Winter Wonderland, eating sausages for tea, drinking gluhwein and watching the Weihnachtsmann gliding above them on wires? Only Jah knows.





They didn't mind staying in hotels but the only issue was food. It meant being out most of the day and having to eat out and in places like Paris that became difficult to do cheaply. Now they were in Germany at Christmas time there was plenty of reasonably priced food available.



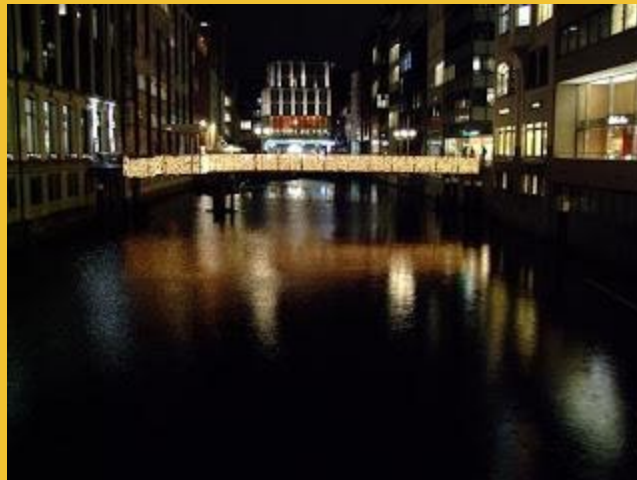
Coffee was also more suited to them here. In Paris they found mostly pompous over-priced table service cafes - not their scene. In Germany they could get their own and just sit without all the fuss to keep out of the cold for an hour or so. Their particular cafe of choice was called World Cafe and in it was a Rasta turtle painted on the walls.

Posted by [Souljah](#) at [2:01 am](#) Friday, February 04, 2011

Europa Passage



Just round the corner from World Cafe was the shopping centre, Europa Passage. On the floors were the names of various European cities. This felt like the Paris Europe thing all over again. Yet it was no joke.



Money was fast running out, time was ticking and they now had a train ticket to Berlin but with nowhere to stay there. They played the lottery scratch cards and then put all hope on the Wednesday night lottery, knowing that on Thursday morning their train left for Berlin.

Was it a passage to Europe or a cruel joke?



With all this going on, they wandered around the markets, took a walk down the Reeperbahn and to the harbour area where the water at night really seemed significant and somehow necessary to be around again.



During this time the rainbow appeared for them again. Going down the stairs in the hotel, one day Dave spotted a painting on the wall with a rainbow on it. Then sitting at the computer at reception trying to find a place to stay in Berlin, the song 'Somewhere Over The Rainbow' was playing on the radio in the background. This song would follow them around, appearing at auspicious occasions.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [2:15 am](#) Friday, February 04, 2011

The Train To Now Here



Wednesday night came and went with no lottery win. They really were screwed. They had to get up the next day, check out and catch a train to Berlin at 12.45pm.

If they were lucky they might get a brief chance to look up the internet at the hotel before they left. Only trouble was they only had enough money for maybe 1 or 2 nights at a cheap hotel in Berlin.

They checked out Thursday morning and left their luggage at the hotel, and with a bit of time to spare, took a walk to the area near the train station, and tried buying a scratch card. They kept winning 2 Euros and buying another with it. This went on and on until they had to go back to the hotel for their backpacks resigned to showing up in Berlin and looking for a place to stay there.

With about 15 mins to spare they hopped onto the PC there. Kate discovered her debit card had been refunded the money that morning from the Paris hotel they'd cancelled a month ago and then within minutes of looking, their old friend Citadines came to the rescue with a 50% reduced rate. There was no decision to be made.



So with 30 mins till their train departed they now suddenly had a place to stay and Berlin was back on.

As they boarded further help came when a German lady abandoned her knitting, jumped out of her seat to get off the train before it departed and help find the correct carriage for their seat numbers.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [2:28 am](#) Friday, February 04, 2011

Welcome To Berlin - Citadines



When Dave & Kate arrived at Citadines in the Kurfürstendamm area to check in the manager happened to be behind the desk and saw they had booked through a last minute website. She revealed to them her amazement that she had only just put the offer up that morning when 5 mins later their booking came through.

The offer was so good and all the staff so welcoming it was 4 nights later before they could leave. Each morning they went down to the lobby to check the internet and each time they saw the offer still on they booked again. The woman behind the desk was amused by this and they joked about how they were the guests who wouldn't leave.



When the offer ran out and the time came to go, it was the first time Dave & Kate had felt a tinge of sadness at leaving a hotel. The staff were the friendliest so far, they had Kaisers supermarket across the road and could go down to the lobby to make themselves a free cup of tea or coffee whenever they felt like it. All of this felt like a real treat. The Buddha also appeared 3 times within the area.



Before they departed they had a few things they had to do. First of all, there was no longer any room for Jesus at the Inn and so he had travelled with them from Amsterdam to Hamburg and was now shipped off from Berlin via DHL to Edinburgh where he would eventually be told he didn't look like himself. Secondly, Dave & Kate felt the time had come to finally abandon their backpacks and buy some suitcases. They had spotted some in a luggage shop near Zoo Station.

Spending money on new suitcases at this time when they were almost out of cash seemed totally illogical and yet they had to do it. They may be going back to Edinburgh with the cases but at that time they knew they couldn't go any further forward with the old backpacks, which increasingly represented a weight on their backs. Why carry a load on your shoulders when you can let the earth take the weight?

The Rasta turtle from World Cafe in Hamburg seemed to think so, showing up next door to Citadines...



And funnily enough, the perfect place to dump their shells was round the corner from Citadines. Kate had spotted this big charity bin that the backpacks could fit inside. They zipped them up into their black body bags and disposed of them there.

Posted by [Souljah](#) at [5:35 pm](#) Friday, February 04, 2011

Berlin - The Heart



Their next move was to a small, basic apartment a little further east but still in the Kurfürstendamm area. For 2 nights they stayed there and again a Kaisers supermarket was just around the corner.





It felt good to be back in Berlin. They could never put their finger on what it was about this city but it had a certain energy about it that felt like 'home'. Back in Barcelona they had spoken about seeing themselves in Berlin over the winter. It didn't make sense. They had been increasingly growing tired of the cold, damp winters in Edinburgh and now that they were in Europe surely spending winter in the southern regions made more sense. And yet they still saw themselves in Berlin - for 2 or 3 months.





It was the beginning of December but that vision was still very unlikely given their financial position. Still, this was the Heartland and they knew they must remain here for some time.

As they took a walk to Alexanderplatz for the first time they heard the familiar sounds of "Stir It Up" and "No Woman No Cry" ring out from the steel drums of a busker. Bob was still with them.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [5:45 pm](#) Friday, February 04, 2011

Checkpoint Charlie



Yet again they found themselves looking for a place to stay at the last minute. A good price came up for a 4 people dorm-style room at the Meininger Hotel, next to the Hauptbahnhof (Central Station) in the Mitte area of Berlin.





They booked 2 nights there and during this period the winter really kicked in. The coldest temperatures Dave & Kate could remember (about -11C) and they were stuck out, wandering between the Christmas markets and internet points, trying to discover where they were going next.





Checkpoint Charlie started to become a focal point. There they would stop off for a coffee at Einstein's - where Madonna's song 'Like A Prayer' ("life is a mystery...") always seemed to be playing - and reason through things as they were increasingly becoming aware of a movement from the West to the East through the city. At this point they were in the middle (Mitte) and it felt like there was a struggle to get to the East.





After much searching they couldn't find a suitable place after the Meininger and so their only option seemed to be to remain there. So they booked a further 2 nights, changing rooms and now with a different view.



During those 4 days they would use the Hauptbahnhof for internet and food. The energy in the place wasn't easy though and they often felt waves of confusion in there and this manifested as difficulty in finding the right things to eat. They started to consume lots of bananas and drink numerous cartons of orange juice during this period, a strange thirst coming upon them each night.



It literally felt like they were stuck, waiting to cross the border to the East. Then the night before they left the Meininger they stumbled upon a great last minute deal on a 4 star hotel. It was a mystery hotel so they had to book first before they found out exactly where and what it was but it had to be done.



It turned out to be the Winter's Hotel right in the heart of the Mitte area, close to Checkpoint Charlie. Again, they felt truly blessed, appreciating the comfort even more so coming from a minimal dorm room with bunk beds. The photo on the wall opposite their beds seemed to be a symbol...



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [6:06 pm](#) Friday, February 04, 2011

A House Don't Make Home



During these days, the airports around Europe & the UK were closing as winter chaos was setting in and so even if they had no choice, returning to Edinburgh at this time was not necessarily possible. Money was running so low they didn't even have the fare for a flight anyway.

For the first time, the prospect of actually having nowhere to stay and being out on the streets of Berlin was a real possibility. Rather than weaken them this had the effect of bringing out a courage and strength they hadn't yet seen in themselves. The certainty had never been stronger - they couldn't leave Berlin.





On Sunday night at the Winter's Hotel they had just enough money to book one more night at a basic hotel/hostel in the Kreuzberg area of Berlin, contemplating homelessness. By Monday afternoon money had incredibly come in and on Tuesday they checked out of the Jugendhotel in Kreuzberg heading for Friedrichshain where they now somehow had got together an apartment for 2 weeks.





The night before Dave & Kate had been chatting about the system and being kids and how parents have to dupe them into feeling excited about school by bribing them with new crayons, etc...



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [3:51 pm](#) Sunday, February 06, 2011

Musical Chairs & Puzzling Crayons



Dave & Kate were to pick up the keys for the apartment, near Straße der Pariser Kommune and just behind Karl-Marx Allee, from a local restaurant. Finally they had made it properly into east Berlin. When Kate realised she had left her passport with the guy at the restaurant, they returned to the guy who with a wry smile on his face said "vie have no passports here!" before handing it over.



It was nice to have 2 weeks of stability and yet they also knew they were never really stable. On entering the apartment and exploring the terrain like animals they knew they were in the right place when Dave opened the cabinet to find this...



Wölfgang was the owner of the apartment but he was away in Munich. Paintings with his surname hung on the wall. Was this guy an artist or someone in the family one? Whatever the case, something strange began happening as they sat on the couch.



Dave found himself speaking intensely about music again. They had hardly spoke of music since arriving in Barcelona - survival being the main priority - but now each time they sat down for a bit on the blue couch, the musical vision started to express. Kate now also discovered a new conviction in the music, surer than ever she had to play her part in bringing this out.



Their second night in the apartment, December 8th 2010, marked the date John Lennon was murdered 30 years earlier. German TV showed a few Lennon programmes and concerts that night as Dave & Kate watched from the blue couch.

Never had they felt more strongly than the time was coming, the pieces of the puzzle were starting to become clearer. The seed of Music was beginning to stir within the soil of Europe.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [4:10 pm](#) Sunday, February 06, 2011

Berlin - After The Wilderness



By now Dave & Kate were starting to get the hang of this way of life - walking the tightrope.

It's like learning to ride a bike - all about balance. Enough future to make the next move and no more. Start looking too far ahead and life has a funny way of disrupting your plans. Do the next thing as fully as you can and make the jump and life has a funny way of catching you.



The fear of the fall is greater than the fall itself. Nobody wants to take that perceived risk and so we have a world full of grown men and women still on stabilisers.



This wasn't new to them, they had known it in their heart for some time, but its one thing to sit in a house you're almost certain you'll still be in tomorrow back in Edinburgh with a job to go to each day and regular money coming in. It's another thing to actually experience the living fact of not knowing where you'll be staying tomorrow or where yor next meal is coming from.



Dave & Kate were beginning to glimpse some order in the chaos... even if they held off to the last minute with nowhere to stay tomorrow, Jah would always deliver the goods. At other times Jah would afford them some time in one place and it would always come at the right time.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [4:22 pm](#) Sunday, February 06, 2011

Mr. Wollkopf, Mr. Golz, Magic Energy Pods & The Toaster

Pretty soon after settling into the Pariser Hof apartment, Dave & Kate began to find themselves feeling whacked out with the energy. It was clear why they were here now and not moving around in hotels. Each day they found they could do very little.



They would make the long walk in the snow along Karl-Marx Allee to the internet points at Alexanderplatz each day to deal with emails and on the way back they'd buy groceries from Kaisers and sometimes pick up a cake from their favourite Bäckerei.





Each afternoon they'd slip into their magic energy pods and disappear off to god knows where for an hour or so. It wasn't sleep as such, they would be conscious but so deeply gone, as if withdrawn from the bodies. They'd return feeling refreshed and maybe listen to the radio for a bit (Chris Rea's "Driving Home For Christmas" seemingly a favourite in Germany) in between making tea and spontaneous reasoning sessions. Later at night, they'd maybe watch a bit of German TV.



There was a bit of a mix-up due to the delay in emails with the owner, Wölgang. The heating took a few days to kick in and as Kate had contacted him about it (and then told him it was now fine) he had already been in touch with the caretaker of the building, Mr Wollkopf, who had been trying to get hold of them.

Dave & Kate returned to the apartment one afternoon - their clothes hanging to dry all over the place as the drying line above the bath was loose - to find a note from Mr Wollkopf. He had fixed the clothes line, taken away the broken toaster (replacing it with his own for now) and had opened the windows as he said the place was like a "bio-tape" due to the condensation from all the clothes drying.



The next day it was Mr Golz turn to pay them a visit. They opened the door to find a big, jolly, German Santa Claus type figure who had apparently been informed to check the heating. He came in and they told him the heating was now fine and he seemed rather disappointed as he'd brought his "special key". He walked over to the radiator anyway, put his hand over it and said "easy!" and let out a roaring, hearty laugh.



During their second week there, they were sound asleep in their magic pods when the doorbell went at 11am. They couldn't get up quick enough to answer and then they heard a key going in the door. A knock on the living room door and then a head in a beanie appeared and as he saw they were still in bed he apologised and whispered: "a new toaster", before slipping a brand new toaster down at the door. They had finally met the mysterious Mr Wollkopf!



Dave got up shortly after this to have a shower and then the door went again - a young German to read the gas and electricity meters. Only problem was Kate was still in bed in the living room. Dave tried to explain to him that someone was still in bed, rushing between the living room to check if Kate was ready and back to the front door. All he succeeded in doing was making the guy suspicious as to what the hell was going on. Eventually he agreed to come back in 5 mins.

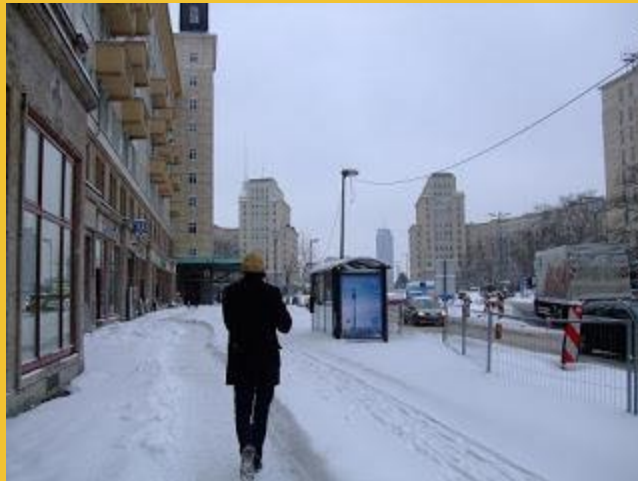
This time Mr Wollkopf was with him who introduced himself properly and apologised for his entrance earlier, saying Wölfgang had instructed him to buy a new toaster to replace the broken one. Dave & Kate hadn't lost the knack of making friends in unusual ways.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [4:56 pm](#) Sunday, February 06, 2011

Moving East

The long walk along Karl-Marx Allee each day seemed to be becoming more and more significant somehow. It is a fairly sparse, huge open street with few shops dotted along it, one being a musical instrument shop that Dave & Kate would pass each day. They'd look in the window at the guitars and also the small selection of ukuleles caught their eye.



By the second week of their stay in Pariser Hof time was ticking down on finding a new apartment. This time they had money to last them till after Christmas & New Year but actually securing a place at a reasonable price was becoming increasingly difficult. They had prepared well, enquiring about lots of apartments the previous week, but most of them were coming back fully booked or out of their price-range. It was looking as if they might have to stay in a mix of apartments and hotels over that period but even the hotel rates were often triple over the festive days.

One day walking by the musical instrument shop Dave noticed the Shure logo in the window. He'd seen it before but this time it seemed to jump out at him.



The following day they were seriously running out of apartment offers when Kate just happened to check her junk mail. A reply from an apartment she'd enquired about the previous week had slipped in there. The woman was saying she'd had a last minute cancellation and her apartment was now available for almost a month at a great rate including Christmas & New Year. Dave knew it was the right one when she confirmed it for them, her otherwise word-perfect email containing the mistake "you can be *shure* the apartment is yours".



It was a close-call again, the apartment not being finalised until Saturday afternoon due to the owner being on holiday in America, with Dave & Kate due to check out of Pariser Hof 3 days later on the morning of Tuesday 21st December 2010.

That Saturday afternoon they paid a visit to Einstein's coffee place at Checkpoint Charlie. Looking at the chocolate cake they decided it was a bit too much to pay and ordered two coffees only. As they were about to sit down with their coffee the woman behind the counter handed them two pieces of chocolate cake, insisting they were free. Madonna's 'Like A Prayer' provided the soundtrack.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [1:13 am](#) Tuesday, February 08, 2011

Friedrichshain



The new apartment they had secured, from December 21st 2010 until January 16th 2011, was just down the road from Pariser Hof and further east into the the bohemian heart of Friedrichshain. It had narrowed down to two possible apartments they could have chosen - one back west in the Mitte area and this one. The Mitte one was unavailable for a few nights over New Year and so they'd have to move out, get a hotel, then move back in. Plus it was more expensive. There was no choice really. Further east it was.

Before leaving Pariser Hof they put together the puzzle. There were 7 pieces missing...



On arriving at the apartment (building number 11 as they were going into the year 2011) they discovered yet again Kaisers was just round the corner but more significantly, the apartment turned out to be on the ground floor and facing into the courtyard. This wasn't clear from the description and although new to Dave & Kate (they had never stayed in ground floor flats), something was very right about it. Although slightly bigger than Pariser Hof, this was the sparsest apartment they'd stayed in yet. The TV had no English channels and the reception was erratic anyway. There was little light in from the windows. This would also be their longest stay in an apartment so far. Could they hack it?



The nice German guy who checked them in asked where they were from. When Dave replied "Scotland", there was a few moments pause before the guy simply said "Paul Gascoigne". Dave nodded and laughed.

Once he left Dave & Kate stood around and surveyed the apartment for a few minutes. They didn't say anything, they felt like a couple of cats dropped into a new house, acquainting themselves with this unfamiliar environment. It felt bare but *right*.



They knew this had been coming. Months earlier when they spoke of Berlin over the winter, the term that kept coming up was "hibernation". They were about to hibernate for the winter and this was the perfect apartment to do that.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [1:33 am](#) Tuesday, February 08, 2011

Human Hibernation



In the run-up to Christmas Dave & Kate spent even more time inside, often only popping out to Kaisers nearby for food. They were finding they were sleeping long into the afternoon and it was as if everything was shutting down. At other times the same energy would leave them unable to sleep all night, especially hitting Dave hard as they entered the New Year. This would lead them into a period of napping, sleeping for 3 - 4 hours at night and then taking 20 - 30 min naps throughout the day.



On Christmas Day they took the long walk to check out the Christmas markets at Alexanderplatz and came across some wallets for a good price. They had been considering getting new ones for some time and this was the time. On returning to the flat, Dave switched the radio on and was stopped in his tracks by the song playing:

*"Right now I feel - just like a leaf on a breeze
Who knows where it's blowin'
Who knows where it's goin'
I find myself somewhere I - I never thought I'd be*

*Following a star - has led to where you are
It feels so strong now - this can't be wrong now*

*Nothing I have ever known - has made me feel this way
Nothing I have ever seen - has made me want to stay*

*Here I am - ready for you
I'm torn an', I'm fallin' - I hear my home callin'
Hey - I've never felt something so strong - oh no
It's like nothing I've ever known
It's like nothing I've ever known*

*Right now I feel - just like a leaf on a breeze
Who knows where it's blowin'
Who knows where I'm goin'"*

It felt like arriving in Barcelona all over again - another Bryan Adams song - only this time it was for *these* times.



On Monday 27th December 2010, Dave & Kate took a walk into the Kreuzberg area and passing over the River Spree, Dave realised it was the perfect place to discard his old wallet.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [10:05 pm](#) Tuesday, February 08, 2011

Vincent

Ever since the end of their time in Paris, there was a growing empathy with Vincent Van Gogh. Kate had begun noticing sunflowers around back then and then their apartment in Amsterdam turned out to be close to the Van Gogh museum.

When they arrived at Citadines in Berlin their room contained two Van Gogh paintings...



Particularly going through the possibility of nowhere to stay in Berlin, Kate would remember how Van Gogh tried to express something which no-one really wanted to know in his lifetime and yet he was lauded as a genius after his death. They both could relate to that sense of knowing you must do something and sticking to it despite what the world says.



Sometime between Christmas and New Year in this apartment, as they sat down to eat, the song on the radio brought a tear to Dave's eye:

"And now I understand what you tried to say to me
How you suffered for your sanity
How you tried to set them free
They would not listen, they did not know how
Perhaps they'll listen now"

Posted by [Souljah](#) at [10:23 pm](#) Tuesday, February 08, 2011

The Night Of The Living Dead



On Friday 31st December 2010 Dave & Kate entered Kaisers at 3.10pm to stock up on some groceries for the next few days. The Zombies were all out buying their zombie juice and each check-out had a queue stretching to the back of the store. It was 4.20pm before they got out and only 5 mins of that was spent selecting food.



That afternoon their neighbourhood in Friedrichshain resembled a war-zone. Loud bangs and explosions going off all over the place as the menacing atmosphere of the living dead grew.



Dropping their groceries off at their bunker they made their way through the streets like nervous animals not sure when or where they might be bombed. MacBeam, the nearby internet cafe they used, was closed so they headed back down the streets.

One moment summed up the collective insanity of the human race. A grown man walking towards Dave, Kate and another young couple in front, lit up a firecracker, watched them come towards him, threw it on the snow in front of them all and walked past with a manic grin on his face.



Dave, Kate and the young couple stopped, waited for it to explode like a bomb before walking on. More explosions assaulted their ears as they quickly retreated to the safety of their bunker. Later that night they watched the madness continue on tv, some guy singing "What A Wonderful Life" in front of the Brandenburg Gate and then David Hasselhoff sing "I've Been Looking For Freedom". Dave & Kate were too, with the amount of legal explosives going off in the courtyard and all around the neighbourhood. What a wonderful world.



As they sheltered themselves in their bunker, watching the crowds on tv, the irony didn't escape them that those very people who were setting off explosions and getting all excited about it were probably the same people who would be out on the very same streets again protesting the next war.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [10:41 pm](#) Tuesday, February 08, 2011

Roses & Rainbows

Shortly after all the festive mayhem had been and gone, Dave was again stopped in his tracks by a song on the radio. It went:

*"Some say love it is a river that drowns the tender reed
Some say love it is a razor that leaves your soul to bleed*

*Some say love it is a hunger an endless aching need
I say love it is a flower and you it's only seed*

*It's the heart afraid of breaking that never learns to dance
It's the dream afraid of waking that never takes the chance
It's the one who won't be taken who cannot seem to give
And the soul afraid of dying that never learns to live*

*When the night has been too lonely and the road has been too long
And you think that love is only for the lucky and the strong
Just remember in the winter far beneath the bitter snows lies the seed
That with the sun's love in the spring becomes the rose"*

He had never heard the song before but the last two lines in particular seemed to speak to him about what was happening during these times.

A few days later Kate noticed roses on Karl-Marx Allee and also Will & Georgie had just sent her some photos of roses.



A few weeks later, the day before they checked out of the apartment, Dave was making porridge and while drying the bowls, he began laughing at what he was staring at. Kate walked into the kitchen at that very moment and exclaimed "a rose!".



They hadn't clicked until now that the bowls they'd been eating out of everyday for the last month had a rose design on them. That day as they sat eating their porridge the song 'Somewhere Over The Rainbow' came on the radio. Later, as they walked up to check out the area where their new apartment would be the first thing they saw as they turned onto the street was this...



That night on tv a programme called 'A Portrait of Bryan Adams' came on German tv and in the background while he was being interviewed was a single rose in a vase...



The following morning, January 16th 2011, as they sat down to eat their breakfast of porridge, the song on the radio was 'The Rose' - only the second time in their lives they had heard it... just before they left the apartment to move into a new one.

Posted by [Souljah](#) at [10:56 pm](#) Tuesday, February 08, 2011

11/01/11



On Tuesday 11th January 2011, the signs were abundant.

The song 'Somewhere Over The Rainbow' came on the radio 3 times in the space of 2 or 3 hours, on two different radio stations. Dave & Kate had been listening to the radio on and off in the space of that time and it seemed each time they turned it on or changed stations, the song would be there.

Later on, another old friend in the form of song made an appearance - 'I Need A Dollar' - followed by 'Lean On Me'.

Shortly after that, Kate found a small orange butterfly sticker in the bottom of her toiletry bag (with no idea where it came from). When she came through to the living room to show Dave, he had a huge grin on his face as Bob Marley's 'Is This Love' was playing on the radio.



They had just enough money left after this apartment to secure one more apartment in Berlin for a week or two. They were sure after this there time in Berlin had come to its natural end for now. With little effort, the right apartment appeared on the following day, 12th January, with just under a week to go and again, it was slightly further east. The title of it had the word 'Kunst' in it - German for art. They got it for 7 nights.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [12:22 am](#) Wednesday, February 09, 2011

Kunst



At check-in to their new apartment, the guy from the agency mentioned to them that the owner was a German cameraman/filmmaker who travelled a lot. He would be returning to the flat on the day Dave & Kate were due to check out.





Whether it was the artistic energy, the two Buddha statues, or just the layout of the apartment itself, they immediately felt very comfortable here. Some places take a little longer to settle into but a few rare ones have that 'right' feel immediately. It was a lot brighter than the last apartment and had more things in it, plus a raised platform where the couch and coffee table sat and underneath a pull-out double bed. They had never seen that type of thing before and liked it.





They were now about as far east in the city as you'd want to be without going into the outer districts of Berlin. A clear sign the next move could only be out of the city itself. The next sign was when Dave opened the kitchen cupboard and pulled out this mug...



Naturally, a Kaisers supermarket was nearby and now they were really in the heart of east Berlin. Frankfurter Allee (formerly Stalin Allee under the old regime) was the main shopping street, 2 mins up the road. They hadn't used a Subway takeaway place since Paris but with everything closed on the Sunday they checked in and no groceries it was there again to get them by. For the rest of the week they ate potatoes for tea.





Money was just about out (they had enough to last the week) but the prospect of a new influx was promising. Or so they thought...



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [3:34 pm](#) Wednesday, February 09, 2011

Music & Fashion

Out on the streets nearby the apartment there seemed to be suggestions there was a growing harmony between Music and clothes...





Posted by [Souljah](#) at [3:44 pm](#) Wednesday, February 09, 2011

Look To The East!



Dave usually received royalty payments from the music around this time of year. For the last few years they had been coming in. Perhaps both of them were counting on it too much this time. On Tuesday, a few days into their stay, he discovered the payment he'd received was much lower than usual and certainly not enough to get them anywhere after this week.

Straight after leaving MacBeams they stopped off at a nearby b kerei. Bob Marley's 'Buffalo Soldier' was playing as they entered.



It was a blow but never affected them too much. They had been through this scenario enough times now to not be phased by it. More than anything they were simply curious to see what would happen now.





The following day on turning up at the MacBeam internet cafe Kate received an email from Will. Some money had come his way unexpectedly and he had passed it onto Dave & Kate. It would keep this Europe thing alive for another week.



By now Dave & Kate were sure it was either Vienna or Dresden next. Vienna felt more powerful, they knew they must get there soon but for some reason it seemed like they had to go to Dresden first. They had never been before and knew little of the place. By the end of the week they had a train ticket for Dresden and a hotel there booked for 7 nights.



Berlin had done its work on them. On the Saturday, their last full day in Berlin, they spent some time at the internet point using up their remaining credit. Kate felt a strong urge to start looking up and enquiring about apartments in Vienna for 1 month's stay after Dresden. They only had enough money to see them through the week in Dresden. As she was going downstairs to exit the internet place wondering why the hell she was looking into apartments in Vienna when they had no money this sign jumped out at her...



That night Dave and Kate felt very powerful energies working through them. It felt as if there was an exchange of energy between them and Berlin, that these energies were being brought out and established for the future and what is to take place there.



The next morning as they left the apartment and walked down to the nearby Ostkreuz train station, Dave turned and looked straight at some graffiti. It simply said "I love you". While they were waiting on their train at Ostkreuz and Dave was mentioning this to Kate, she turned and saw the following message...





So the struggle from West to East was overcome. The map below shows the journey through the city. The letter 'A' being their starting point of Citadines, the letter 'H' being their final apartment and the letter 'I' being the Ostkreuz train station they left Berlin from. The red line shows where The Wall once stood.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [3:55pm](#) Wednesday, February 09, 2011

Dresden



Arriving in Dresden's Neustadt Station on Sunday 23rd January 2011, Dave & Kate made their way along the to the hotel on the outskirts of the Neustadt area.



They were soon back in the world of takeaway Subway's for tea each night (they did try some chilli con carne from this place called Cafe Europa as it was only €4.40 but were reminded of why they don't bother going to these places usually - annoying music and table service).



Luckily they found a cool cafe for coffee, called Dreißig, early on which would become their resting place each day for an hour or two.





They had no idea what the hell they were doing here but it didn't feel wrong. On their first full day they walked down Königsbrücker Straße onto Hauptstraße and crossed the River Elbe on Augustusbrücke and into the Altstadt. It was Monday midday and the place was deserted but they liked this - being in the tourist part of Dresden without the tourists.



On their way back to the hotel that night they walked a slightly different way and accidentally found themselves in the musical area of the Neustadt, passing by 3 musical instrument stores. In the window of one they were taken by a Zoom Handy Digital Recorder. They hadn't seen one of these before but it immediately struck a chord inside.





The following day they took a different route into the Altstadt crossing the River Elbe over Albertbrücke this time. They carried on walking alongside a big park, Volkspark Großer Garten, and after a while Dave pulled out the map to check how to get to the Hauptbahnhof (Central Station) where there was an internet terminal. The only road they could take to the station was Wiener Straße, where they were immediately greeted by a wee guy with some flowers...



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [2:24 am](#) Sunday, February 13, 2011

Lean On Me

Vienna was now growing undeniably strong as the next signpost...



While at the internet point they also checked out two other places, more out of curiosity than anything else. They couldn't remember if Czech Rep. and Hungary were part of the Euro currency now. They discovered both were not. They had a curious feeling about Budapest, that it might be on the cards sometime. With the hassle of changing currency they weren't so sure anymore.



So Vienna it was... at the same time facing the prospect of nowhere to stay again come Sunday if no more money showed up.



Each day in Dresden they walked into the Alstadt and towards the internet terminals at the station. They'd do what they had to do and then sit in Dreißig's for a bit before either returning to the internet or returning to the hotel. On the way back they picked up a Subway and some stuff from the supermarket - usually some crisps or chocolate, juice, bread and cheese for breakfast and sometimes they'd grab a bottle or two of the local beer.



For the rest of the night they'd sit in the hotel watching the tv or listening to the radio where signs would continue to present themselves. One night Kate was joking about how Dave should go down to the piano bar in the hotel and play 'Lean On Me' and then she changed the channel on the tv and couple of minutes later there was a trio of women singing 'Lean On Me' as accompaniment to a guy playing a grand piano.





The same night Kate was flicking channels and landed upon a show with two presenters, one of them grabbing a ukulele. Dave announced he'd just been thinking about ukuleles.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [2:37 am](#) Sunday, February 13, 2011

Dreads In Dresden



It was now past the middle of the week and nothing had shown up. Dave & Kate carried on as usual, fully aware of their situation, but not overly phased by it.



When it came to Friday morning (they were due to check-out on Sunday) they took their clothes to a launderette down the road. There was still no room for this Europe thing to fail. They weren't doing anything from their own will to keep it afloat, they simply had seen enough times that something was going on.



They arrived at the internet terminal in the afternoon after a brief period of confusion and turmoil and discovered a gift had been given to them yet again. A couple of SoulJah's, Brian & Agnes, had come to the rescue with funding to take them on to Vienna for a week or two.





Dave & Kate returned to the hotel that night not overly joyous but just extremely grateful for what had been given. It still didn't change their situation. As there was only effectively a day to sort out accommodation and travel to Vienna, they felt they still may be checking out the hotel on Sunday with nowhere to stay. They knew they would not rush themselves just for the sake of it.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [3:10 am](#) Sunday, February 13, 2011

The Return Of Prague



On Saturday 29th January 2011, Dave & Kate spent most of the afternoon and evening in a newsagent within the Central Station perched on stools at 1 of the 4 internet terminals, hearing the chants of the Dynamo Dresden football fans, on their way and returning from the match, echo around the train station.



Not the most pleasant setting for trying to get down to the business of figuring out where and how they could stay the next night somewhere. It was becoming increasingly clear that going straight to Vienna was out of the picture. The train tickets from Dresden, which had been around €58 all up at the beginning of the week, had now more than tripled in price.



They began looking at alternatives... maybe stopping off in Munich for a night or two, or somewhere else in Germany. Each place they looked at there was a brick wall as they were so last minute in booking all prices were way out of their league.

Yet again Life narrowed it down to no choice to be made - the only option was to go to Prague for a few nights and then onto Vienna.



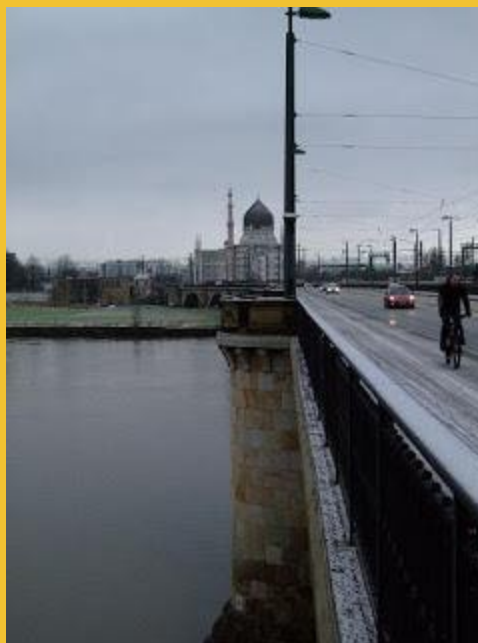
They had ruled Prague out after finding out it wasn't in the euro currency zone. It was still going to be a lot cheaper than anywhere else in Europe at this point. Pretty soon they started to come across very cheap hotels and then they saw this aparthotel at €20 Euros per night. It was basic but importantly had cooking facilities. Still they weren't sure about committing, continuing to look for a bit longer. They were so absorbed in this that they forgot all about tea and when they finally got round to getting something to eat all they could find open was a shopping centre with not-so-nice bratwursts.



Then the right one made its appearance. Kate spotted another aparthotel called 'Apart Hotel Susa'. It was a few euros more per night but looked more comfortable inside with better facilities. They made the booking and then set about looking into how to get to Prague from Dresden. The train was something like €68 all up - great in relation to other fares. But there was also the bus now an option. It took the same travel time as the train and cost more than €20 less. Only trouble was it was too late now to book online and the ticket centre within the train station had also closed for the day.



The tourist info girl told them their only option was to turn up in the morning at the bus and buy a ticket from the driver. When they asked if the bus was usually busy she replied yes.



The bus station was just behind the train station and so they turned up early on Sunday morning in an attempt to catch the bus and if not they'd hope they could still buy a train ticket. Luckily, it all worked out and they were on their way to Prague now by bus.

Posted by [Souljah](#) at [3:34 am](#) **Sunday, February 13, 2011**

Wiener Straße, Prager Straße & Budapester Straße



As they sat on the bus on their way to Prague they began to realise yet again that it was all there, presented for them, even when they felt totally lost.

That second day when they found themselves walking along Wiener Straße to the Hauptbahnhof they did wonder if this was a sign that Vienna was next. What didn't quite fit was they had arrived in Dresden at the Neustadt station as this was nearer their hotel. It made sense to leave from this station to wherever they went next. But they only saw themselves leaving by train...



They hadn't anticipated going anywhere by bus. Now they actually had left from the very train station Wiener Straße ran along. In fact, the square directly in front of the station is called Wiener Platz.



Not only that but the main shopping street perpendicular to the station and leading up to it, which they walked along everyday, is called Prager Straße.



Close by is Budapester Straße. Was Budapest on the horizon? They couldn't see anywhere else in the frame after Vienna. Before they were gone Dave left a message for the maid service at the hotel...



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [3:45 am](#) Sunday, February 13, 2011

Eric



Waiting at the bus station in Dresden a young middle-Eastern looking man appeared from a puff of smoke, approached them and asked if this was the stop for Prague. Then a long pause as he looked at them. Then whether the journey took 2 hours, which they confirmed. He again gave them the 'stare' - a look they were becoming familiar with.

They never got used to this look. Each time they'd wonder if they had a mark on their face, their hair looked funny or if they were being understood at all.

When they got off the bus in Prague, after getting a map and some directions from the tourist info people, they exited the bus station and again bumped into Eric. He simply asked them "so... where do I get my euro currency changed to Korunas?"

Kate actually had the answer to this as she'd just noticed the currency buro on their way out the station.

Oddly, Eric had no luggage at all with him and disappeared as fast as he had appeared never to be seen again.

Posted by [Souljah](#) at [3:52 am](#) Monday, February 14, 2011

Soundtrack To The Zion Europa Express!

Way back in late summer 2009, in their Jordan Lane flat in Edinburgh, this became the 'theme song' of what was coming - a new vision. Dave & Kate had just moved into the flat and Music began to stir again, this time to do it right:

"its gonna take plenty of money to do it right... its gonna take time... its gonna take patience and time to do it right..."

Brian, Agnes, Will, Georgie & Brother Mark can already testify to that!

Got My Mind Set On You - George Harrison

The return of Europe & Music! This song became very significant during the summer of 2010 when Europe was turning into reality:

"...it all makes sense to me somehow..."

"...and its not what it used to be, no, we're suddenly free to let go..."

"...these are times that come, only once in your life, or twice if you're lucky..."

Twice If You're Lucky - Crowded House

Another song that found them back in the 'incubation period' of Jordan Lane and which Brother Mark reminded them of in January 2011, Berlin.

Get It Right Next Time - Gerry Rafferty

The song of Movement! In the last few weeks before leaving Edinburgh, this became *THE SONG*!

"...Let me tell you if you're not wrong then everything is alright..."

"...We know where we're going, we know where we're from, we're leaving Babylon, we're going to our Fatherland..."

Exodus - Bob Marley

"...Oh people if you're ready me say get on board now... and then you praise 'fari"

"...Here you're going in the same direction"

"...And where there's a will, there's always a way..."

Zion Train - Bob Marley

Back in the 1980s, when Dave was 7 years old, he used to be fascinated by maps and was especially intrigued by the Eastern Europe area and places like Berlin.

He'd listen to the radio with his friends and they'd study the atlas... they could name the capital cities to most countries in the world. This song was a hit at that time and for some reason it always made Dave think of Berlin and wonder what it would be like. To suddenly hear it come on the radio in January 2011 in Berlin was like deja vu.

In The Army Now - Status Quo

Dave & Kate laughed as they began to realise they were in the army Now! They were SoulJah's on the frontline of a 7-strong army and on the look-out for new recruits. Jah Rastafari!!!

Many a time when Dave & Kate were feeling stuck and helpless this song would appear...

Sit And Wait - Sydney Youngblood

The money song...

I Need A Dollar - Aloe Blacc

First heard back in Barcelona and has been a companion to Dave & Kate ever since...

Somewhere Over The Rainbow - Israel Kamakawiwo'Ole

Posted by [Souljah](#) at [7:32 am](#) Tuesday, February 15, 2011

ApartHotel Susa



Dave & Kate checked into the ApartHotel Susa in Prague on Sunday 30th January 2011 for a 3 night stay. When they entered their room they were taken aback, but not really surprised, by the main picture on the wall opposite their bed...



It was like a confirmation again that they had landed in the right place. The apartment served all their needs for those few days and even had free internet so they could sort out Vienna. Inevitably, there were a few hiccups, confusion seemingly following them around wherever they went. The woman at check-in, although pleasant enough, appeared to have been spellbound by them and then they found the room had only been set-up for one person and so had to be made up for two.

**APARTHOTEL
SUSA**
Jana Masaryka 49
Praha 2 - Vinohrady 120 00
Telefon: +420 222 524 611
Fax: +420 222 524 612
E-mail: hotelsusa@susam.cz
web: www.susam.cz
skype: aparthotel.susa
facebook: aparthotel.susa

Room: # 104

Mr / Ms: DAVID WILLIAM

Arr: 30/01/11

Dep: 02/02/11 Check out 10:30

Breakfast: 2x 07:00 - 10:00

Info: 1 FLOOR





Later at night when Dave asked for a plug for the kitchen sink the guy took him through to the staff kitchen, rummaged around for about 5 mins looking for things, before eventually opening one of the cupboards and asking Dave "is what you are looking for in here?". Dave pointed to the plug at the sink and said he was looking for one of those. "Ahhh!" the guy said and handed Dave a new plug from a drawer. What exactly he was looking for in those 5 mins remains a mystery!



Still it was a worthwhile visit as it confirmed to Dave & Kate that they wouldn't bother with the free breakfast in the morning - exhibit A) dusty-looking cornflakes lying uncovered in a bowl being the main culprit.



Better news was when they took a walk to the supermarket that Sunday and bought all the groceries they needed for their time in Prague on debit card. Other than this, the only money they spent was on coffee at Costa and their bus ticket to Vienna, and both could also be purchased by card. This meant they didn't need to change currency in cash, spending exactly what they needed and no more. It left them with a confidence that somehow things could work out smoothly even in circumstances that didn't look so favourable beforehand.



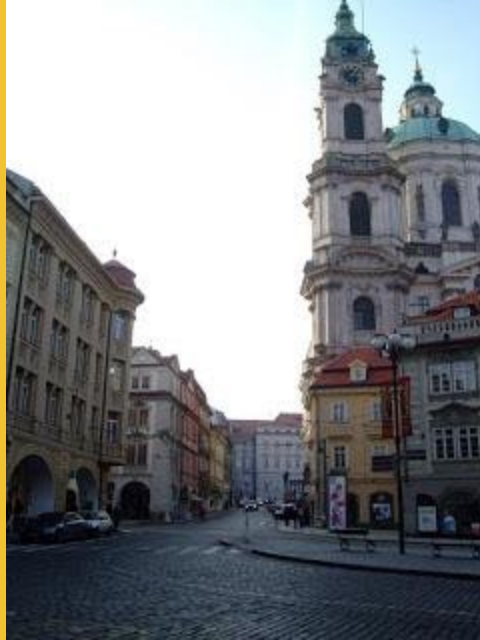


Posted by [Souljah](#) at [11:03 pm](#) Tuesday, February 15, 2011

Prague



Right from the beginning, when Kate said "it feels like we're here on a business trip", it went that way. The 3 days became a blur and the whole focus seemed to be on getting to Vienna.



This was a new experience for them as even back in Hamburg where they stayed only 3 nights they were able to immerse themselves into the city. In Prague it felt very different.



It is probably one of the most beautiful cities they've been to but as they strolled around in the cold the urgency to get to Vienna was palpable. They had no idea why, except that it might be the Music - it was like Vienna had sprung up into the consciousness and made its voice heard, calling them on.

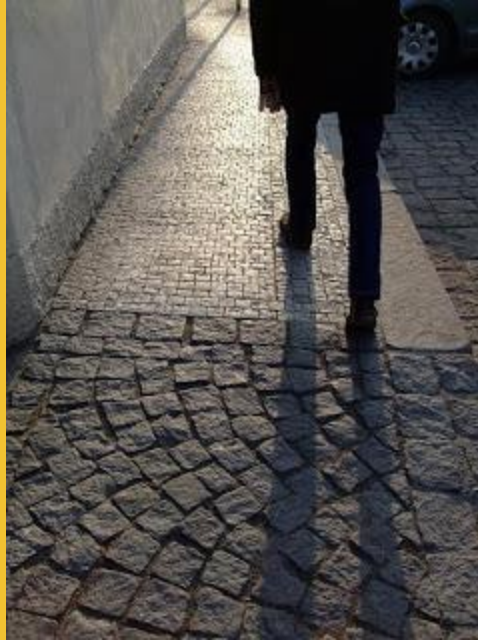


Kate's feeling to enquire about Vienna apartments back in Berlin served them well. She was able to go through the list and write to them again with new dates. The cheapest offer was EUR 400 for 2 weeks. They were happy with this one... or so they thought. The reservation was made but Dave felt very restless that night about the apartment situation and so at 1am they went back down to the PC at reception. The next best offer was from the same woman - another apartment in the same area for EUR 450. Only this time Dave spotted that a PC with internet was listed. They hadn't seen that first time around. They quickly wrote to the woman and switched apartments. Now they could rest as the right one had been uncovered.



Another night in the aparthotel Dave was sitting on the bed absently singing away to himself when the next minute he found himself humming some classical music - a rare occurrence. He turned to Kate and said "that's Strauss isn't it? Wasn't he Austrian?" and they were sure it was The Blue Danube - titles of classical pieces not being their forte. And it was. An anthem of Vienna and Austria.





Posted by [Souljah](#) at [11:15 pm](#) Monday, February 21, 2011

Vienna



Everything in life is happening in cycles or seasons. It started to become clear to Dave & Kate in Prague that there was a pattern to what was going on. This period was feeling very much like a previous period they'd went through back in Paris.

Back then they'd come to the end of the money they had, they were staying in hotels and there was a lot of confusion and misunderstanding around. Towards the end of Dresden it began to feel like this all over again.



This was more than simply a feeling. After the storm in Paris, an apartment showed up for them which had a PC. Perfect for emailing, of which they had a lot to do. Now this apartment in Vienna also had a PC at a time when they really needed one. The Truffaut apartment in Paris was in the 17th district. This apartment was in the 17th district of Vienna. The owner of the Truffaut was called Elizabeth, the owner of this apartment was called Elisabeth.

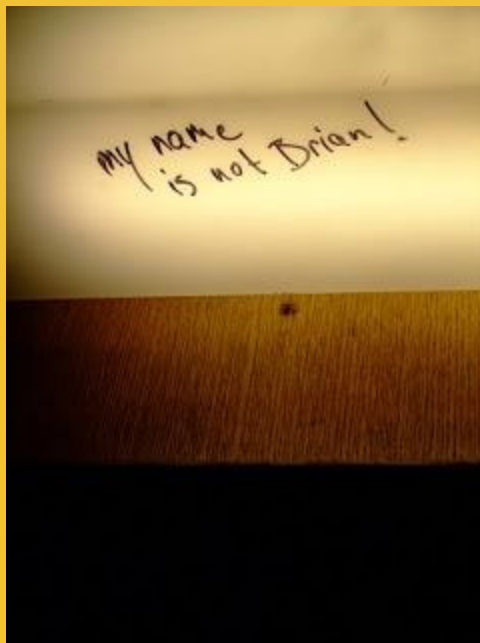




As they entered the apartment they were both struck by how it reminded them of the Truffaut one. Yellow and orange colour scheme, about the same size overall, the bedroom was arranged almost identically, there was a glass coffee table in each apartment with a guest book on it... these features weren't in every apartment they had stayed in. The 3 butterflies of Paris had also returned, this time on a mug which Kate would drink from...



Maybe more bizarre was the message graffitied on the light in the lift...



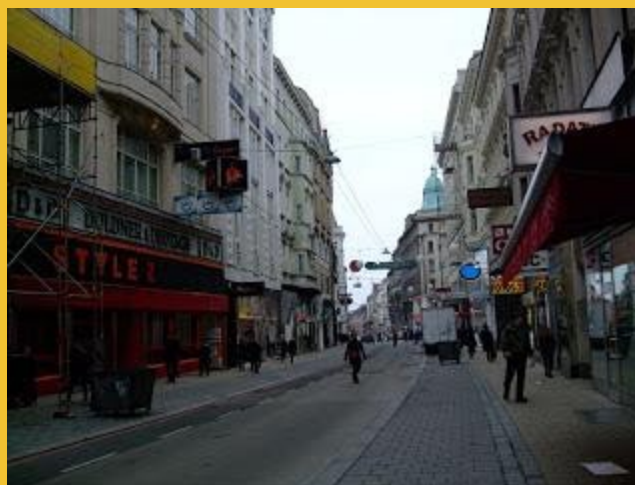
On the last day in this apartment they would walk a different way down the street
it was on and pass this sign...



Without Brian & Agnes, Dave & Kate wouldn't even have been there.

Just like with Kaisers in Berlin, they were super close to a supermarket. In fact, this was the closest they'd been, a Spar literally 2 mins round the corner. They would understand why later.

As they walked the short distance in this area they already could feel a different energy in Vienna. It was very serene. They were just off a busy main street with shops but there was an unusual quietness to the place and they found this everywhere they went in Vienna. It immediately felt good to be here.



The first night in the apartment they went to bed around 3am. As Dave was drifting off to sleep he thought he could faintly hear some music he recognised. It sounded like a ukulele strumming. Then he heard a familiar voice. Was this real or a dream? The upstairs neighbour was playing "Somewhere Over The Rainbow" at 4am!

Posted by [Souljah](#) at [8:12 am](#) Monday, February 21, 2011

From Elisabeth Straße To Bösendorfer Straße



The first few days were spent emailing. They would nip down to the Spar, buy their groceries and do the *Work* they had to do, taking turns on the PC. Going out and about exploring Vienna wasn't on the agenda.



Pretty soon Music began to show itself. They had checked in on the Wednesday and on Sunday 6th February it was the birth date of Bob Marley. Late night Saturday going into that Sunday morning Bob appeared for them in the form of an interview with The Wailers on youtube they hadn't seen before. They watched it all the way through and it felt as if what was being spoken was happening now.

Going into the next week Dave & Kate found themselves watching something music related every night. They didn't have to go looking, something would always appear and stir their enthusiasm for Music. The cable TV in the apartment even had a bunch of music concerts on-demand for free. They watched The Bee Gees and then they watched an old BBC documentary on music presented by Sir George Martin called 'Rhythm Of Life' on youtube. Dave had this on tape from years back but watching it again brought new meaning. Much of it was analytical mind stuff but whenever someone spoke truly of Music it would please Dave & Kate.

Their enthusiasm for Music was growing in intensity each day and then a gift was presented to them. Will & Georgie, two of the SoulJah's, came along with a very generous offer of financial help. Initially, Dave & Kate were just delighted and grateful that Europe wasn't coming to an end yet. They hadn't been worried about the fact they would again be checking out of this apartment with nothing (they were so immersed in Music) but they were aware it was on the cards unless something came. Now that it had they began to realise a further aspect was opening up for them. For the first time since arriving in Europe they were in a position to look further than survival.



They realised that this could bring into reality what they had spoken of back in Berlin. In that period, it became clear to them what they needed to take things further. All that was stopping them was money. They had felt it was coming and then felt slightly confused when royalties never appeared. They couldn't see another way the amount of money they needed could come to them. Maybe they had been a little too eager and premature. Jah delivered it a few weeks later.



The first 10 days in the apartment they had been out into the centre of Vienna ONCE. They didn't feel they were missing anything. They knew they'd come to Vienna for Music but had anticipated being out and about, soaking up the musical heritage of the city. Instead they found Music was coming to them direct through their apartment via modern technology.

As Dave sat staring blankly at the map of Vienna one day, he laughed out loud as he spotted a street called Elisabeth Straße which ran into Bösendorfer Straße (named after the famous Austrian Bösendorfer piano).



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [8:44 am](#) Monday, February 21, 2011

Dark Clouds The Music



Often the way of Life seems to be that when you are down and out, feeling vulnerable and confused, if you don't panic, something will eventually come to cushion you and lift you up again. A gift appears and everything seems to come together for a time. It is often also around this time that trouble comes knocking - "dark forces" which seem to be intent on retaining the status quo at all costs.

Those "dark forces" can take many forms, from the ordinary to the extraordinary, but Dave & Kate (and many others before them) are well aware that something seems to not want anything truly new to be born into this reality.



Their second week in Vienna, once they'd recognised now was the time for Music to come into the picture and that a new phase had begun, was fraught with challenges. It seemed as if a dark cloud had come to rain on their parade and wouldn't budge. It was all designed to throw them into chaos and make them doubt themselves, sucking the enthusiastic energy in the same way it was sucking money from them.



Almost every item they knew they required ended up costing more than they'd anticipated through a bizzare series of events and even when they got a break - a free tram ride from Sam the Tram Man - pretty soon they'd be stung from another direction. The flow of the previous week had certainly been obstructed in some way now that what they had envisioned back in Berlin was becoming a reality.

There was also a familiar pattern emerging here. Just as in their first week in Europe, back in Barcelona, they seemed to be under attack from all directions, as if something didn't want Europe - the first phase - to happen, it now felt as if that same thing was now trying to prevent the second phase - Music - happening.

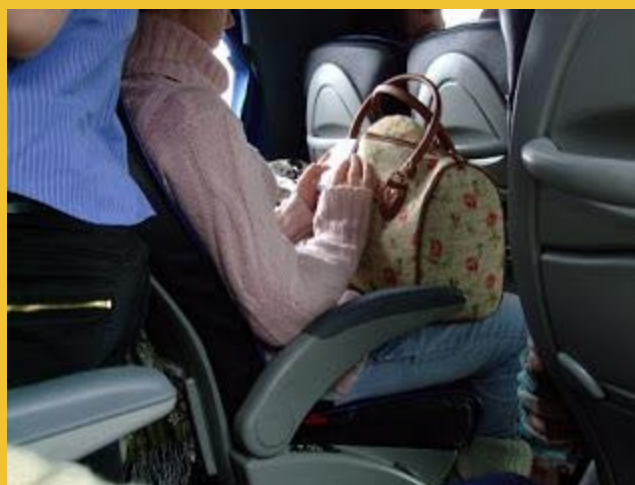


Posted by [Souljah](#) at [9:11 am](#) Monday, February 21, 2011

The Rose

The symbol of the rose continued to follow Dave & Kate.

On the bus from Prague to Vienna a girl sitting just across from them had this bag...



On their first stroll out in Vienna they passed a shop with this displayed in the window...



And on 14th Feb, Valentine's Day, not only did a new computer appear, but as they returned to the apartment via Spar the woman at the check-out handed out a fresh rose. It sat on the glass coffee table for the rest of their time in the apartment...





Posted by [Souljah](#) at [10:16 am](#) Saturday, March 05, 2011

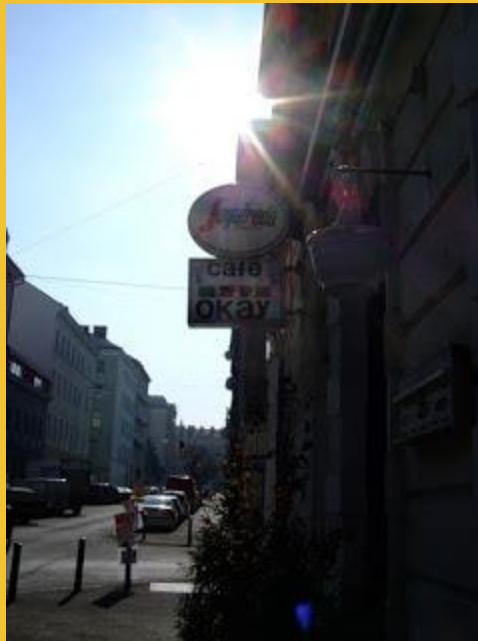
Eckertgasse



Just as in the first apartment in Barcelona, the second apartment they moved into in Vienna wasn't plain-sailing. They arrived at the apartment on Eckertgasse in the Favoriten district to find Tanja, the owner, a very nice Austrian woman who somehow reminded them of Susanna, with the windows wide open and apologising for the stink of cigarette smoke.



Later that evening as Dave was "gone" lying on the bed and Kate in the bathroom, there was a knock on the door and two guys entered with Ikea bags and fresh linen ready to change all the linen in the apartment. They had figured the cigarette smoke would have already got onto the bed and couch and had thoughtfully come to replace it. They quickly dismantled what they needed to and before you knew it, the duvet and pillow cases were fresh again and they were gone. Dave stood there watching still coming round from wherever he had been.



The next morning Dave noticed the stove top had only one hob working. The kitchen was the tiniest they'd had to negotiate with yet. A call was made to Tanja who came round and had a look. She left pliers out for them to turn the broken knob with and promised to sort it out properly in a few days. When they arrived back from their walk that afternoon they found a new plug-in stove top sitting in the kitchen.



A Viennese Waltzing Washing Machine

The night before Kate had received an email newsletter from Eckhart Tolle, their first night in the Eckertgasse apartment. These words were in it:

"One day, something else wants to be done that needs doing. You might perceive it as something that you need to do. Suddenly you know what it is that you need to do. It comes from within, or it comes from without – some situation in your life.

Then, "awakened doing" begins to happen. That doing is not the egoic doing, where whatever you do is a means to an end. There is deep enjoyment in the doing. There is not an excessive desire to achieve, but you achieve actually more - because there's so much enjoyment in the doing that the end result looks after itself. A very different kind of doing arises, that is not motivated by desire. The normal way is thinking "I need to achieve this"."

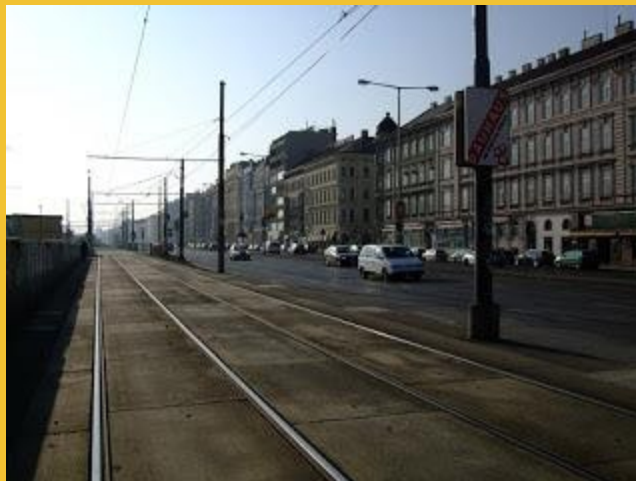


"As Presence moves through you, it's not based on desire anymore, it's based on enjoyment. It's not based on wanting or needing anything, because you're coming from fullness. The action is not designed to fulfill you. It's not designed to add something to you. The action is coming out of the fullness in which you already dwell – so there's no neediness in it.

Obstacles arise, as they will, especially if you do things that go against the conditioning of the world – you may find obstacles. You also may find enormous power helping you.

Obstacles may come in the form of uncooperative people, or situations, but enormous power will also flow into what you do and help you in many ways. Just the right thing, just at the right moment, just the right person. When obstacles do arise, they are not regarded as enemies. The ego regards any obstacle to its course of action as an enemy.

An obstacle is accepted for what it is, and you work with it – not against it. Or you work around it, or you take its energy and turn it around. It becomes incorporated into what you have to do. You don't see any more enemies in the form of unhelpful situations, uncooperative people. Everything is embraced for what it is, accepted for what it is, and transformed. It's not so much that you are doing it, you become a vehicle for the doing. It happens through you. The power comes when it wants to come."

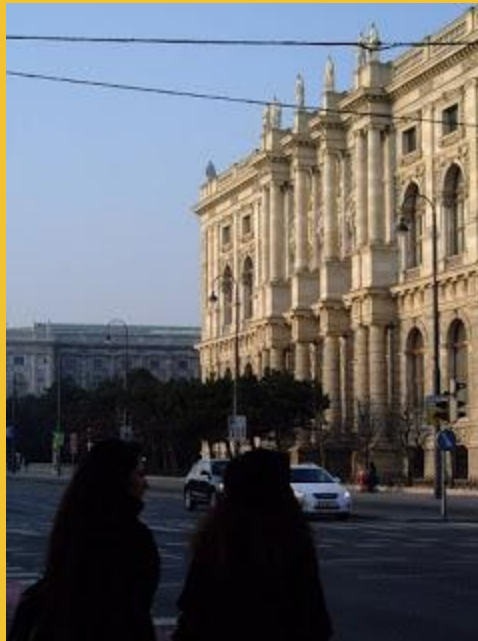


Posted by [Souljah](#) at [7:18 pm](#) Saturday, March 05, 2011

The Music of Vienna



Yet again in this apartment they were kept inside for most of the 2 weeks, allowing the chaos that had been in the air to die down and sort itself out.



Gradually everything began to fall into place. The laptop finally all set up and running in English, some instruments to travel with arrived by post, and anything else that was required to allow a more efficient way of functioning in this new creative era began to appear. Vienna had delivered the Music as Dave & Kate felt it would when they arrived but in a totally different way to how they might have imagined it.



There was no need to wander the streets soaking up Vienna's musical heritage as the Music was delivered to them through modern means without them needing to move much from the apartments they stayed in.



They definitely recognised an old phase had died out and a new phase was being born and that was enough. Vienna had given birth to the Music and now it was about to hand them over to Budapest armed with their weapons of mass destruction - ready to take apart the old and let something new shine in it's place.



Posted by [Souljah](#) at [7:26 pm](#) Saturday, March 05, 2011

After Vienna



During the final 2 weeks in Vienna another thing became clear...



The blog in this form had come to it's natural end also. Words and still images alone can only go so far.



Armed with their new weapons, it became clear there was something else to be expressed in ways that words felt too clumsy to carry out. So with the beginning of the Music, so it is the end of the blog in this form.



If Berlin is The Heart of Europe, then Budapest may be the Belly, where the fire of creativity burns, and so from here on we say goodbye to these words and images...





Now is the time for... The Sketches of Europa

Posted by [Souljah](#) at [7:35 pm](#) Saturday, March 05, 2011

* From the blog '[Europe Is The Soil](#)' which was started in December 2010, between Christmas and New Year, and finished in March 2011. The idea for this blog came because with no laptop, no instruments and no entertainment other than the radio to amuse ourselves in a bleak bunker-feel apartment in the Friedrichshain area of Berlin, it was one way to remain creative. I would sometimes write notes on paper at the apartment then type them up on a PC at an internet cafe in Berlin, and at other times type them up spontaneously at the cafe. Later on we got a bit more comfort and luxury and I was able to continue the blog from our apartments/hotels. I stopped just as we'd moved to Budapest with new instruments and a new laptop, the name SoulJahm came, and creativity expressed through the Music, as was always intended.

Later on, I would occasionally document our travels in a new blog called '[The Sketches Of Europa](#)'.

- [David William](#)
- <https://souljahm.bandcamp.com>
- <https://davidwilliam.bandcamp.com>
- <https://www.youtube.com/user/SouljahSounds>
- <https://odysee.com/@DavidWilliam:f>

-