

## The New Captain

"If you want to join 'The Peace Movement Group' you have to do something really big!"

Carl nodded, in awe of 16 year old Seth.

"Yea, of course. Err do you have something in mind?"

Stroking the teenage stubble on his chin, Seth paused for a second,

"I want you to get our message out there. I want you to spread the word to as many people as possible. You show me you can do it and you're in the group man."

Carl lay in bed that night unable to sleep, he wanted to belong. He'd been bullied for so long, people always laughing at him especially when his dyslexia came to light. This was a fresh start, a new school, new friends and the chance to join a group for a cause he believed in. The buzz of the motorway hummed through the night, at 4.00am the idea came to him. Dressing in a black hoodie and jeans, he crept out of the house and opened the garage door. Armed with Dad's roller for painting and a tin of white emulsion, Carl made his way to the disused viaduct over the M25. His mission took him nearly an hour, there was hardly any traffic and fortunately no police around at that time of the night. He hung over the side of the bridge and completed the task as daylight broke. Rubbing sore arms and with an aching back, he made his way home, not waking anyone as he slipped back into the house.

At lunchtime, Seth put his arm around Carl's shoulder.

"Any thoughts?"

"Yes" Carl blushed "Err, I've done something and it is pretty amazing."

"Wow, you're a quick worker." Seth smiled.

"I can show you after school."

Seth and the rest of the 'Peace Movement' waited at the school gates. Carl was excited, about 30 of the supporters gathered, then followed him and Seth to the field by the edge of the motorway. He didn't look up at the bridge, but turned his back to it. Mustering a new found confidence, holding his arm up high, he proudly announced to the gathered group,

"Members of 'The Peace Movement', my contribution to spreading our message to everyone that travels along this motorway every day." He pointed to the bridge, waving towards the grey bricks painted with white letters.

Scanning the assembled faces, he saw strange looks, then heard sniggers at the back of the crowd. Seth shook his head. The throng were laughing out loud now.

Seth slowly smiled.

"Brilliant Carl. You are our very own Captain Birdseye."

Confused, Carl turned and looked at his graffiti on the viaduct, to his horror he read,

GIVE PEAS A CHANCE