

**Bourne**  
**toWrite...**  
creative writing  
workshops

## Harold

by Elda Abramson

Harold's the name, yeh, Harold.  
Harold by name , Harold by nature- heh,heh.

How long did I work for Mr James?

Now you're asking... hmmm, I guess over forty years, man and boy.

Til he got this crazy notion to go off to a place called Mexico- Mehico he sometimes said.

Me, I've never gone further than Chichester, just down the road.

Chi, we locals call it. That's enough for me.

Anyway, off he goes to this far off place and builds a tower-like thing right in the middle of a jungle. Walking around with a parrot on his shoulder.

I saw the pictures of him in the magazines.

The wife was fierce mad with me for ages.

Him leaving me high and dry.

She was missing the money coming in, the perks of the job and the extras.

With those extras, I'd take her up to Chi for a slap-up meal. So I don't what she was complaining about.

I worked as personal assistant to Mr James, looked after the locking up and kept an eye out he was ok.

The Missus said I should have a proper job. She never liked Mr James and his ways, but she sure liked the money.

In the old days, Mr James entertained all manner of folk.

He even bought, I mean bought, a strange-looking guy with a funny accent and a moustache like a cow's horn.

He paid him to stay for a whole year.

Mr James said because he was a famous artist but I didn't see much art going on.

Only thing, they covered a tree with something like fibreglass, course it died.

And they made a little hut with the floor made out of horse's teeth, those big back ones, molars.

Don't know where those teeth come from, but there's race track down the road, name of Goodwood.

Pure shenanigans.

When he married a pretty little thing, could not speak our language, a Ruski.

He saw her dancing up in London and brought her back. Fell for her, the proverbial hook line and sinker.

He bought a whole ballet company and brought them here just so she could dance.

He even had a carpet made with her little footprints in the pattern.

Mad for her— bad times for me up at the hunting lodge when she ran off with a Count So and So from her home country.

But he paid well, I'll give him that, as long as I kept schtum.

Generally, if I do say so myself, folks trust me with their secrets, like Mr James did.

Me, wouldn't never know who'd I trust with mine.

When Mr James went away, they knew me here around the place and gave me a proper job as security guard on the estate.

Mr James came back from time to time and he wasn't liking what he saw, not at all.

Just before I retired from being security, he came back with this whole new brown family, kids and all, that he said he'd adopted.

He brought them here, I reckon, just to wind up the people at his Foundation he started before he flit away.

It was supposed to pay for kids to learn the old stuff, things like flint knapping, blacksmithing and such like.

But it had ended up being a place for rich white-haired ladies to do embroidery.

He couldn't stand it.

So he wanted to shock them with his Mexican family and trailed them around all over the estate.

He didn't fool me though, I knew what he was up to with the father.

The old goat.