

**another pSecret pSociety pshort pstory**



The Well by Mike Bozart (Agent 33) | JUNE 2016

October in 1588. Almost dusk. The northern tip of Roanoke Island (in present-day North Carolina, USA, between the Outer Banks and the mainland). Englishman Gerald Smith, 34, is one of the 118 settlers that make up the Roanoke Colony (later known as the Lost Colony).

Gerald is running through a maritime forest. He arrives at a clearing of sand dunes. He is being chased by several Croatoans (a Native American tribe of this area).

Mr. Smith scurries into some brush in an attempt to elude his pursuers. *I'm safer in this understory. They can't get a clear arrow or spear shot at me in here.*

He carelessly trips over a cypress root and goes sailing through the air. Gerald jumps back up as he hears the Croatoans gaining on him. He looks backward as he runs forward ... and falls ... into an abandoned well.

Gerald is lucky: He lands feet-first on some soft, damp sand, after falling only sixteen feet. His only injuries are a sprained left ankle and a scraped-up right elbow.

After a few seconds, he realizes what has happened. *Holy shite, [sic] I've fallen into a goddam well!*

Two minutes later he hears footsteps near the top of the well. *Oh, fock [sic] me, John White! [the appointed governor] This has gone from bad to worst. I'm going to end up like George Howe. [a Roanoke Island colonist who was killed by a Croatoan while searching for crabs]*

Suddenly, three tan-faced Croatoans were peering down at him. No one said anything or even made an utterance. Everyone was frozen. Time hung on the moss-covered stones. *I'm royally screwed. Make that, natively screwed. They've got me. They know it. So, what will be my fate?*

Then the presumed leader smiled as a feather fell from his long, shiny, black hair. The Croatoans all stood back up and walked away. *I guess they know that they really don't have to do anything to me at this point. I'm doomed here. This is my vertical sarcophagus. The walls are way too slippery to climb. The diameter is too wide to 'back up'. I'm going to die of dehydration in a couple of days. And they are fine with that scenario.*

Twenty minutes later, it was dark. Incredibly dark. It was a new moon night. Fortunately for Gerald, it wasn't cold (61° F / 16° C at sunset).

He became uncertain of his gauging of time. *Is it midnight?*

Two hours later at 8:28 PM, a lone star appeared. Gerald's mind was a mile a minute. *Well, little star, I have one big wish. I think you know what it is. Dearest God-star, I never aggressed those Indians! Never. Not once. John and William deserve this fate for what they did with that girl. Wait, maybe John and William were killed in the raid. If so, they deserved it. Hell, they brought all of this on us. I wonder if anyone survived. Surely they didn't kill the women and children. Gosh, I hope Mary is ok. Will I ever see her again? I sincerely doubt it now. This is about as grim as it gets. It would have been so much better to have just been killed*

*while trying to defend the compound. This is bollocks! Why does my life have to end like this? Death by dehydration? Nothing noble in that. You must be having a laugh, Chief Powhatan. And you, Raleigh, [Sir Walter Raleigh, the landed gentry-man who dispatched the expedition] I didn't sign up for this. I should have stayed in England. Why? Yes, why? What was I thinking? The great New World, where gold is for the taking. What an idiot I was. Now I will die in a slimy well. Why the hell couldn't someone cap this well? Probably too rushed. Or, just couldn't be bothered. Well, no longer working, just abandon it. In fact, that seems to be the motto in this New World: Things not working out where you are? Abandon and move on. Jesus Christ, you never leave a well uncapped. I could strangle the focker [sic] who was too lazy to cover this column of death. I wonder what my last thought will be. Does it even matter?*

He eventually sat down in the cool sand and leaned his back against the stone wall. Gerald actually fell asleep shortly after midnight. He got in five hours of broken slumber before awaking just before dawn. Luckily for him, the temperature in the bottom of the well didn't dip below 54° F / 12° C.

The birds were already chirping and cawing. He could see the gray sky. It was very cloudy. *Probably the last sky I will see. The dulling color of lead. The dullness of my demise.*

Gerald was now feeling the motor-skill-debilitating effects of dehydration. He was lethargic and unsteady. When he stood up, he almost fell down. However, while upright, he noticed a missing block that had allowed sand to fill the bottom of the well. *I wonder who forgot to put that block in properly. If he*

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