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DON'T ASK FOR SUGAR - A TRUE STORY

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DON'T ASK FOR SUGAR - A TRUE STORY



ABOUT WORLD TRAVEL, FREEDOM, LOVE,
ADVENTURE AND A NEW BEGINNING

THE COMPLETE TRILOGY

BERNHARD CHRISTOPH LICHTINGER



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**WHY THIS BOOK
BELONGS IN YOUR
BACKPACK**



Because my stories, drenched in sweat, tears, and road dust, show how to travel, fail, and survive, - and still maintain a sense of humour :)

For example, when you:

- escape the harsh winter, pale, exhausted, and fall asleep under a Sinhalese coconut palm,
- fall in love with a Kiwi in Bangkok, of all places,
- then wander aimlessly through Australia's arid desert,
- speed through the tropical rainforest with shady characters in a stolen rental car,
- wake up from a deep coma in a South Indian hospital,
- hike through lush marijuana fields in the magnificent mountains and valleys of Nepal,
- and then coming up with the brilliant idea of taking some "agricultural products" home with you.

My "home" back then was West Berlin, - that's where I bought that cheap Aeroflot ticket to India at the end of 1986, departing from Russian-occupied East Berlin. And, of course, that's exactly where I ended up, in East-Germany. Not a good idea-believe me!

*Learn from my countless mistakes and missteps, feel the pain - and
laugh your head off.
But don't get caught !*

ONLY THE VERY LAST SHIRT HAS NO POCKETS.

A short note before you begin
The day before this train journey, I had been discharged from a hospital in South India after a severe case of food poisoning.

My brother Ralf was on his way to Nepal and time was running out. Instead of recovering, I boarded the train with him.

It turned out to be one of the worst decisions of my life.

PENG! THE LITTLE PLUG HIT RALF AT THE VERY MOMENT HE SHOUTED "Bhopal" out of the window. Leaning out as far as I could, I saw the back of the sign and heard the classical music for as long as it took the platform to dissolve into the darkness of the night. Afterwards I visited the little room of ease; soap and toilet paper still hadn't been delivered, nobody had been in to clean, and when I got back to our bunks, Ralf's walking stick was hanging down.

"Let go of my leg at once!"

"Sorry, Ralf, that's my vision playing up," I said, having climbed back onto my bunk again. "How far is it actually from Bhopal to Kathmandu?"

"Ten hours to Lucknow," Ralf estimated, "and then another

ten hours on the bus to Kathmandu, plus waiting around - but then we've made it."

"I can sit twenty hours out on one cheek easily," I claimed, wanting to impress Ralf, though I was already looking forward to the next relief.

"Don't worry, Baba," my brother said, "you've got the best guide."

"Hail, Ralf."

The unimaginably long train journey had shrunk to a bearable third, just like my stomach, which was already playing up again. Climbing down from the bunk, I saw Ralf sleeping deeply and soundly like a yogi on his bed of nails. Normally I could sleep anywhere too, but coming back from the toilet yet again, my bag chafed under my knees. For what felt like the hundredth time I cursed my own stupidity and that wretched restaurant. What wouldn't I give now for the big soft bed in Kerala; Marie-Louise was wearing her sexy negligee but when she smiled over at me with that expectation, the air smelled of curry and so we fell asleep.

Rabamm Rabamm Rabamm

Had my bag just moved? Eyes open, Chris, the bag is still there! From up above I had a good view of the aisle: let him just try anything, since Bhopal they had all been asleep and my own body lay twisted on its side like an embryo.

Rabamm Rabamm Rabamm

Again something, just a small movement, like a tug or a pull. I immediately looked around for the culprit but everything seemed in order - except for the rubbing bag, which was getting on my nerves. But what could really happen in here anyway, we were in a sealed tin can and as long as it rattled along fast enough, nobody could get in and nobody could get out.

Rabamm Rabamm Rabamm

The third time I woke it was another false alarm: vibrations, jolts and swaying movements on ancient rails - nothing but illusions - though my stomach cramps were very real and the toilet was usually free, no surprise there. Dead tired, I peered down from the bunk until my eyes no longer wanted to look.

Rabamm Rabamm Rabamm

Woken for the fourth time, I noticed the change in the rhythm of the wheels and then the brakes screeched. I yawned, glanced at my watch and stretched my limbs. Wonderful - I had slept through almost half the night. Should I close my eyes again or go and queue for the toilet? That was when I realised my legs were fully stretched out - oh my God, my bag is gone!

It wasn't lying in the aisle and no one was running for the exit. Adrenaline shot through my veins - it had happened, someone had stolen it! Forgetting the illness, I punched a hole into the plywood ceiling and leapt down into the aisle with a bleeding fist.

If it had happened after the last stop, the thief would still be on the train - but where was he hiding? My pulse was racing; the toilet was empty and when I flung open the heavy iron door opposite, there were only the many tracks. The sun was rising, we were still going too fast and jumping off would have been too risky.

WUMMS - somewhere a door slammed. Like a wounded animal I charged down the carriage, sobbing, but nobody was hiding there either. Keep calm, Chris, you mustn't overlook anything now! The train was slowing and without thinking any further I jumped onto the sparsely lit platform, ran up the wide staircase and looked down at the tracks. No one was getting on or off, the station was deserted, and back in the compartment no one claimed to have seen anything.

"Shit," said Ralf, trying to calm me down. "The bag's gone, Chris, forget it, you should have been more careful."

"More careful?" I shouted at him, almost bursting with rage. "It was under my legs the whole time!"

"You should have a stainless-steel chain as well ..."

"Shut your stupid mouth!"

My brother was no help at all, yet had I missed something - and if so, what options were left? The train began to move again. Should I jump out once more or was the thief still in one of the carriages?

"If he threw your bag out of the window," Ralf remarked, "his mates will have picked it up long ago."

The train was now gathering speed and my last chance of finding the bag before Lucknow, the next stop, was the next half hour. I searched the neighbouring carriages again but it was nowhere, and when, after what felt like a jump in time, the train slowed and all passengers had to get off, I slipped into my prematurely greyed shirt, Australian desert sand trickling out of the breast pocket - nothing else remained.

"Shit, Ralf, I want to go to Nepal too!"

"We'd better file a report," Ralf suggested. "There'll probably be a police station in the station hall."

I ran ahead and actually found one, because every now and then signs and wonders do still occur.

"I've been robbed!" I screamed at the policeman, although he wasn't to blame. There was no one else in the room but us, yet he merely glanced up briefly and then carried on writing in his file.

"Sir, my bag has just been stolen on the train!" I shouted again.

"One moment," he said.

"Sir, don't you understand? I've been robbed!"

He glared at me and simply carried on, so I took a look around his station, which smelt exactly like the train toilet - something that clearly didn't bother him. Only then did I notice the solid stone wall behind him, with a rectangular opening blocked by a jumble of bars, too short, too long and criss-crossing one another. Someone behind them blew his nose and when my brother came in, a shadow moved.

"You can forget about that guy," I said in German.

"Good morning, officer!" Ralf called loudly and clearly, and when he tapped his walking stick against the desk, the policeman instantly sat bolt upright.

"Please take a seat, Sir," said the officer.

Ralf sat down on the only visitor's chair.

"My bag is not going to appear again."

"Wait and see, Chris, first we'll make a report."

The policeman cleared his throat.

"Why is his hand bleeding?"

"My brother fell over."

The officer didn't even look at me when he asked for identification; at least I still had the copy. My outburst had achieved nothing, but Ralf's imperious manner hit the mark. Respect was the key. The officer even asked questions without Ralf having to bribe him with ballpoint pens, though whenever I, as the directly affected party, tried to add something, he cut my pointless babbling short with a brusque wave of his hand.

As nobody had seen the thief, it was all the same anyway - nothing more than a futile bit of theatre. At least I still had my wristwatch.

"Look at the bars," I whispered to my brother, as more gaunt, unshaven faces gathered behind the iron rods.

"They all **** in the same bucket," Ralf muttered.

"Is that a prison?"

"More like a hole."

What had these men done, and how long had they been rotting in that hole? What about their families, their children, their dreams? Was my culprit perhaps among them? No, that was hardly possible, there hadn't been enough time. And yet here it was, misery on both sides.

So this is what it feels like when you suddenly own nothing but the clothes on your back - broke in India, no documents, and a ruined stomach. My last spark of hope fizzled out when the officer decorated the report with date, variously sized stamps and his signature. The facts were now duly recorded, neatly in English and Hindi, and with everything filed away, we left the station - at least I hadn't been arrested.

On the way to the buses, the familiar scent of ginger, cardamom and curry hung in the air, pots were steaming everywhere, travellers got on or off, and a starving Indian stumbled across the roofs while orange-clad Bhagwan followers and long-haired hippies embraced one another tenderly for perhaps the

very last time. Then Ralf set his rucksack down on the dusty ground, bought his bus ticket to Kathmandu and treated us to a chai.

"Real shame, Chris, Nepal would have done you good."

"You'll have to eat my warm apple pie with custard."

"Yeah, man, what a run of bad luck - things are really going badly for you!"

The bus driver started the engine.

"At least I still have the flight back to Frankfurt."

"Good luck with that, Chris, but first you have to get to Delhi, to the German embassy, they'll take care of you."

"I'm cold."

Ralf took a waistcoat out of his rucksack and placed a ball-point pen, a BIC lighter and various banknotes on top.

"Try it on, Chris, it should still fit. The rupees will last you a while and you'll need the fifty marks for the train in Germany."

"Thanks, brother, I'll pay you back everything."

"No stress, Chris! Don't lose the money, and you can keep the waistcoat - it's too big for me anyway."

Black waistcoat over white shirt - hahaha, I looked smart enough, and he no longer wanted his chequered blanket either. With all the passengers already on board, Ralf supervised the loading of his valuable cargo while I buttoned up the waistcoat, tucked away the money and pulled the blanket over my shoulders.

"One last tip, Chris, listen carefully now," Ralf said. "Once you're in Delhi, take a tuk-tuk to Connaught Place and ask for the Ringo Guest House, the rooms on the roof are the cheapest. In the mornings the Mongolian bloke cooks porridge and there's an outside shower as well."

"Will I see you at the Ringo Guest House?"

"Sorry, Chris, I'm flying out of Kathmandu."

Ralf climbed aboard and I stood there watching his bus until it disappeared into the chaos of traffic - then I was on my own.

YOUR OPINION HELPS OTHER READERS



If you enjoyed this book or if it gave you new insights, I would be very grateful for a short review.

Reviews help other readers discover the book - and they support independent authors enormously. Even one or two sentences can make a real difference.

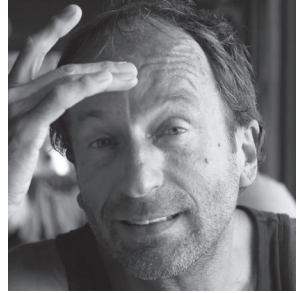
Thank you very much for your support.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Bernhard Christoph

Lichtinger, here simply referred to as Lichtinger, was born on 21 July 1961 in Stuttgart, West Germany, the fifth of six sons. His father was a paediatrician, his mother a nurse. The household was strict, and life serious from an early age. Ten different schools meant



constantly new faces, new teachers, new friends - and the early need to repeatedly prove himself.

Lichtinger worked in many different professions, including in a brewery, as a parcel delivery driver and in a photo laboratory. He later completed a skilled trade apprenticeship as a mechanical engineering technician. These years shaped his view of practical relationships, responsibility and the often invisible work behind functioning systems.

After completing his training, Lichtinger travelled the world and eventually ended up imprisoned in the former GDR. Because he refused forced labour and declined to cooperate with the state security service, he spent repeated periods of weeks in solitary confinement and darkness. On Friday, 13 November 1987 - two years before the fall of the Berlin Wall - he was expelled from the GDR to West Germany. This experience permanently changed his understanding of freedom, dignity and inner independence.

After his imprisonment, Lichtinger began to bring his own inventions into reality, among them the idea of a horizontal, sarcophagus-like vibration sauna for use in the living room,

intended to support physical and nervous system regeneration. He later developed a specialised thermometer for green tea that emitted a short signal when the optimal brewing temperature was reached. He also envisioned a warning system for people wearing headphones in traffic, designed to alert them acoustically to approaching trams or electric vehicles before it was too late. Economic constraints, high protection costs and dominant providers, however, set clear limits.

From 1988 onwards, Lichtinger worked autodidactically as a freelance collaborator for a successful architect, until he founded his own property development company in 1995. The business grew over many years until the financial crisis of 2008 left its mark. In the years that followed, he lost almost everything: apartments, savings and financial security. He managed to save his old villa from the bank through a strategic manoeuvre. As he was obliged by the bank to complete two unfinished construction projects without pay, he additionally worked as a lifeguard and at times as a taxi driver to support his family.

Afterwards, Lichtinger was employed by the Stuttgart-based real estate agent Steffen W., who sought to benefit from Lichtinger's many years of experience as a developer. When Lichtinger succeeded in brokering a large development site to an investor, Steffen W. had the office lock replaced and took over the project himself, thereby depriving Lichtinger of his commission. This experience once again sharpened Lichtinger's understanding of power structures, loyalty and the fine line between trust and exploitation.

After renovating and selling his old mansion, Lichtinger settled matters with his former wife, Dorothee, and eventually followed his longtime love, Suzanne, to New Zealand, driven by the determination to begin once more entirely from scratch. There, he found stillness, vastness and a new inner rhythm.

Today, after spending two years on New Zealand's North Island, Lichtinger has returned to the South Island, where he lives with Rosie, his loyal dog. His books draw on a lifetime of experiences, observations, setbacks, new beginnings and encounters that continue to shape his understanding of people, freedom and the world around him.

Further thoughts in text and video:

 [instagram.com/bernhardchristophlichtinger](https://www.instagram.com/bernhardchristophlichtinger)

 [tiktok.com/@clichtinger](https://www.tiktok.com/@clichtinger)

 [goodreads.com/bernhardchristophlichtinger](https://www.goodreads.com/bernhardchristophlichtinger)

 [facebook.com/chris007185](https://www.facebook.com/chris007185)



MORE BOOKS

Bernhard Christoph Lichtinger writes not from theory, but from lived experience. His books combine observation, psychology and personal growth - clear, calm and free from melodrama. He writes for people who are not looking for quick answers, but who want to gain a deeper understanding of what moves us, wounds us and helps us heal.

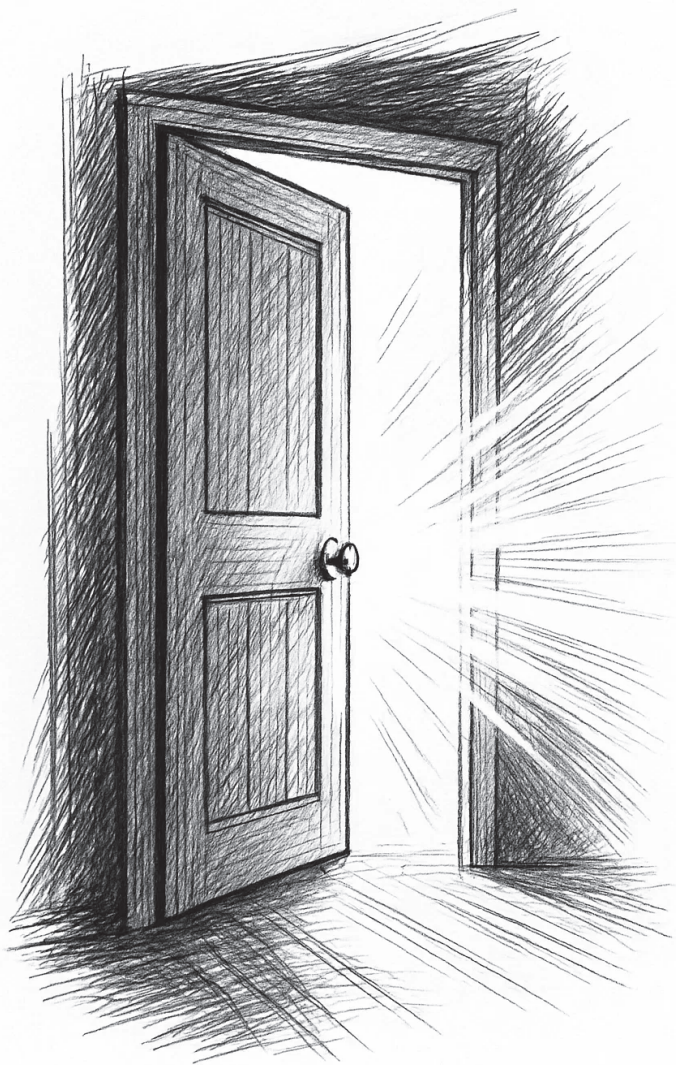


His books emerge from personal experience. From journeys, encounters, losses and new beginnings. From the very things that shape a life and change it.

Rosie features in many of these stories. Sometimes out on the road. Sometimes asleep beside the manuscript

pages.

On the following pages, you will find my works published through Amazon Kindle Unlimited - stories that stay with you, organised by series and themes.



NOVELS

DON'T ASK FOR SUGAR

The complete Trilogy (Volume 1-3)

*A true story about travel, adventure, love and freedom - and survival
in an East German prison.*

*Volumes 1, 2 and 3 tell the complete story of "Don't Ask for Sugar"
From Australia and a great love to Nepal, East Berlin and an East
German labour camp. A story about freedom, loss, imprisonment and
the determination to remain true to oneself.*

HOW IT ALL BEGINS

Volume 1

*About youth, first decisions and a path that begins earlier than we
realise. About work, new beginnings - and the first journey that sets
everything in motion.*

NOTHING REMAINS AS IT IS

Volume 2

*When the familiar came to an end and the world became larger.
Often, we only understand it later.*

ANTI-CYCLICAL THINKING

Volume 3

*West Berlin - Nepal - East Berlin - Labour Camp. A true story about
arrest, interrogation, imprisonment and the struggle to preserve inner
freedom when everything else has been taken away.*

ALMOST NORMAL

*Sixteen short stories from a real life. At first glance, they seem
ordinary.*

*Until a prison cell, a hitchhiking journey across Australia, an
unexpected encounter or a small decision suddenly changes
everything.*

NON-FICTION & GUIDES

BETWEEN DOORS

Finally stepping forward. When you feel that you too often remain one step behind. And want to know what happens when you move to the front.

PURE JOY FOR LIFE

Living without noise. A guide to calmness, humour and inner vitality. For you, if you want to become calmer without becoming less alive.

AFTER THE BREAKUP

*A New Beginning:
How to Find Direction Again After Loss,
Separation and Life Crisis.
For you, if something has broken
- and you still want to keep going.*

TRUST ON SILENT PAWS

A dog who trusts you needs no commands.

If you want to feel how quiet leadership arises - through trust rather than volume.

THE BUBBLE WE LIVE IN

A reflective guide about why we so often fail to understand one another - and how it can still succeed. For you, if you want to listen before you judge.

SERIES: KETO / OMAD

If you want to regenerate your body - without dieting stress, performance pressure or constant self-optimisation - you will find a clear path in this series.

MEDITATION, KETO AND CLARITY

Volume 1

A practical guide to clarity, health and inner calm.

For you, if you want to bring body and mind back into balance.

KETO EXTREME

Volume 2

OMAD. One meal a day. When less food brings greater clarity.

For you, if discipline is not compulsion, but a decision.

SERIES: THE ANATOMY OF POWER

A trilogy about psychopaths, sociopaths and narcissists - about their strategies, their mechanisms of power and how you recognise them in everyday life.

WHEN THE DEVIL SMILES

Volume 1

How to recognise manipulation, protect your mind and reclaim your power. For you, if you want to learn to recognise manipulation early - and remain inwardly independent.

WHEN THE MASK FALLS

Volume 2

Why humanity disappears when power decides. For you, if you want to understand what happens within people once they gain power.

WHAT REMAINS WHEN YOU LEAVE

Volume 3

Inner orientation after emotional entanglement. For you, if you are seeking distance and want to find yourself again.

SERIES: BETWEEN THE YEARS

*Four books about the drugs of everyday life. The joint in the evening.
The glass of wine to unwind. The constant functioning. And the
question of what actually remains hidden beneath.*

DRUGS OF EVERYDAY LIFE

Volume 1

*Why we believe we have everything under control. And why that is
not true.*

WHEN NUMBING BECOMES NORMAL

Volume 2

*About habituation, functioning and the quiet disappearance of
closeness. And why we often notice it only when it is too late.*

WHEN NOTHING NUMBS ANY MORE

Volume 3

*Orientation in an unnerved world.
How you remain standing when nothing protects you any longer.*

AFTER THE NOISE

Volume 4

About life after the illusion.

Not everything was wrong.

But much of it was loud.

SERIES: THE QUIET PATH

A four-volume book series about inner orientation, balance, overwhelm and the quiet path back to oneself. Beyond optimisation, comparison and self-overexertion.

BACK TO REAL LIFE

Volume 1

About self-optimisation, comparison and the quiet path back to yourself. If you are tired of comparing and want to return to yourself.

KEEPING YOUR OWN MEASURE

Volume 2

About limits, overwhelm and inner order. For you, if you want to learn to say no without feeling guilty.

WHEN EVERYTHING SEEMS POSSIBLE

Volume 3

*About speed, success and the quiet loss of orientation. If you notice
that speed
does not replace direction.*

ALONE, MOVING ON

Volume 4

*On continuing to live after farewells. If you have to learn to keep
going, even though no one walks beside you any more.*

SERIES: A CLEAR CONSCIENCE

*A four-volume book series about sleep,
conscience and the quiet boundaries
you do not want to cross.*

THE QUIET SLEEP

Volume 1

*A young man believes that freedom means speed. And discovers that
one cannot outrun oneself.*

GOOD REASONS FOR CLARITY

Volume 2

*Money. Love. Shortcuts. How people learn to live with almost
anything. And with themselves.*

NOT BROKEN

Volume 3

*The arrest.
A system strikes*

- and one decision changes everything.

RUMMELSBURG

Volume 4

In an East German prison.

Not broken. Only forced to look.

In the end, only what you stand for counts.

SERIES: OUR TIME

A multi-volume series about the time we have - and what we truly make of it. Between movement, stillness and decisions, a different understanding of time emerges.

OUR FEAR

Volume 1

For people who feel that life is more than just days passing by.

THE DOG CATCHERS OF BLENHEIM

Volume 2

For people who see that fear often grows beyond the moment - and who want to remain steady within it.

LIFE WITHOUT FEAR

Volume 3

For people who want to learn to live with uncertainty without being controlled by it.

THE WORLD IN THE MIND

Volume 4

*Why People See the Same World
Through Different Eyes.*

THE ESCAPE

Volume 5

*For people who sense that no place in the world can save them from
themselves - and that this is exactly where something new begins.*

THE ART OF LETTING GO

Volume 6

*For people who understand that life is shaped by farewells - and that
every ending carries the possibility of a new beginning.*

IN THE TIGER CAGE

Volume 7

*For everyone who wants to discover what remains of a person when
almost everything is taken away.*

THE BORROWED LIFE

Volume 8

*For everyone who has ever wondered whether they are living their
own life.*

Volume 9
Not yet published

FURTHER INFORMATION



If you would like to learn more about my books, current projects
and new releases, feel free to visit my website:
<https://www.bernhardchristophlichtinger.com>
Thank you for reading.

