

CollabOrate

Justice #6

Jesus

LADY JUSTICE, JUSTITIA, GOES TO HER FIFTH PSYCHIATRIC APPOINTMENT. *When Justitia enters, a smelly, dark-skinned, oily man sits in peasant clothes, waiting for Justitia. His eyes lock on hers, and a supple smile tickles his face. The man rises and kisses Justitia's cheek. Oddly, his gesture seems appropriate. Justitia sits.*

JESUS: I was elsewhere. Now, I am here. I do not know why.

JUSTITIA: This is my psychiatric appointment. You are here to help me. Did you not read the previous sessions' notes?

JESUS: I cannot read. I do not write. Are you unwell, Justitia?

JUSTITIA: Not exactly. I am confused No, that is not entirely correct either. I am troubled in my heart, by an absence. I can tell I am missing something, but cannot put my finger on exactly what that something is.

JESUS: I have observed the hearts of friends closely. Perhaps that is why I am here. Tell me of your heart.

JUSTITIA: I am a statue, just carved rock. But I also dwell in every person's feelings. So, a lot of folks' agendas get attached to me. I get confused over what I am about, in my deepest self. I feel like I am missing something. I have my toga, the sword of retribution, the blindfold of impartiality, and the scales of equity. But a piece is missing.

JESUS: Tell me what bothers you most.

JUSTITIA: That's a good question. I am most bothered when I peek from behind my blindfold and it seems that my sword falls more heavily on poor people than rich, more on dark people than white, more on men than women, and more on immigrants than citizens. I am also bothered when I find heavy little magnets on the bottom of my scales with the names of gigantic businesses on them, making my scales tip against common people. I remove those magnets fastidiously, but they just keep showing up. Oh, yes. I am nonplussed when god and I get saddled with drumming up rationale for the most recent war.

Jesus laughs.

JESUS: You have not changed, Justitia. You are exactly as I remember you from Palestine.

JUSTITIA: We knew each other? In the Middle East?

JESUS: You were younger then. King Herod kept you locked in his closet, and made you dance for his friends. But we spoke. I met you by the River Jordan when you were having a walk. My friend John introduced us. We spoke of deep things.

JUSTITIA: I am embarrassed. I have utterly forgotten this exchange. Forgive me. What did you tell me?

JESUS: I told you what I believed at the time. I told you that things will never be right in your heart until a new world breaks into this one. The world must be transformed. Only unimaginable power could work such a change. I thought the big event would happen on my watch. Then I thought it would come to pass just after I died. It turns out I was wrong.

The black box of conscience slides open. Judas Iscariot stands, a six-inch simulacrum of a man whose neck is slightly askew. "I told you. You were wrong, Jesus. You could have ruled Jerusalem, if you had encouraged Peter's sword. Instead, you let those bastard Romans crucify you. How did that help? With you gone, we disciples were useless. It all came to nothing. I checked out early. I was the only wise one." Jesus nods and settles Judas back in the box.

JESUS: Judas is right, at least partly. But he lacks faith, except for his faith in coercion.

Jesus sighs.

JUSTITIA: I am remembering bits of our conversation at the Jordan now. You said something about the poor being in charge.

JESUS: Yes. Hearts matter most. People who have suffered have the best hearts. They shine. They make the world taste better. If broken people were in charge of human relations, you would have a better time of it, Justitia. Humans would find sympathy and give compassion. Humans would kill and brutalize less often. Judas was so very wrong in his convictions. One cannot compel good faith by cunning and murder. The future belongs to peacemakers and those who seek forgiveness. Money and frenzy and public praise ruled the past. The future I value belongs to humble people. One wins this battle by patient non-violent resistance. One can wield good faith as a sword.

JUSTITIA: That sounds so right to me. But your kingdom has not happened. Aren't you a tad disappointed?

JESUS: No. I was wrong about timing. I may yet be vindicated. We will see, eh?

A muffled voice from the black box of conscience hollers, "Naivete. Damned foolishness."

JESUS: Judas could be right. Still, I hope.

Jesus wept.

Justitia turns to comfort Jesus, but the Palestinian has vanished.

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