

# ANALYZING JUSTITIA

## CollabOrate Justice #1 Analyzing Justitia

*(This is the first of a twelve essay series exploring our fractured concept of justice. I welcome your comments and thoughts concerning these essays and the state of justice in Snohomish County.)*

Concepts of justice proliferate. Justitia, seated in her toga, fitted with blindfold, and armed with scales and sword, suffers multiple personalities. Justitia, the marble statue, promises impartiality (hence, the blindfold), deliberated equity (hence, the scales) and onrushing vengeance (hence, the sword), all packaged in a sturdy, sane-looking woman. But Justitia is an immigrant with a history. She found a first incarnation in Maat, the Egyptian female deity representing truth, balance, order, law, and morality. On her scales, Maat weighed a decedent's soul against the feather of Maat. Souls unfreighted by evil failed to tip the scales, and won eternity. If laden, Ammit the god-lioness devoured defective souls, who exit the Hall of Two Truths mid-bowel, to become toxic compost in Duat, the Egyptian underworld. Later, Justitia found limestone existence in Isis of Egypt, as well as Themis and Dike of Greece, before Romans legions captured her. Justitia's tenure in the Eternal City worked narcissistic vindication of aristocratic privilege, seasoned with contempt for slaves and commoners. The Brits taught Justitia some morals and religion, but fractured her sanity. America gave English Justitia a visa, ill-aware of her ranting demons. So, who is Justitia, really? Can one catch a glimpse of a sane Justitia amid the improbable theatrics of courts and lawyers?

I have spied Justitia wandering Puget Sound court houses, disoriented.

More than a decade ago, I stood before a King County district court judge (who has proved, as the years have passed, to be a very fine human being). My client stood accused of violating his ex-spouse's order for protection. The ex-wife offered to put her teenage daughter (from a previous relationship) on the stand to confirm the ex-wife's tale. The judge unexpectedly accepted the ex-wife's proposal, commencing an impromptu trial of the matter on the spot, over both parties' objections. The judge took the daughter's testimony, as well as my client's and his ex-spouse's, doing some of the cross-examination himself. The judge adopted as fact all the allegations of the wife and daughter, despite my client's receipt showing that he was, at the time of the reported incident, ordering coffee with his credit card at a Starbucks twenty miles from the ex-spouse's location. The judge solemnly ordered no consequences for my client's now-adjudicated violation. Everyone, except me, stormed out. I shot my jurist quizzical eyebrows. The judge said to me, "I don't feel like I have done my job unless everyone slams the door on their way out." One might call this the "universal unhappiness" theory of justice. Justitia dispenses disappointment. Denying parties what they want; that is justice.

Around 1000 B.C., Solomon became king of Israel. Solomon was the son of King David, who captured the throne by coup, and Bathsheba, David's plural wife, whom David wed after he peeped her naked, relished the view, and commanded her husband Uriah to a suicide mission. Solomon executed his half-brother and rightful heir to the throne, Adonijah. In Jerusalem, two housemate prostitutes bore. One infant died when its mother, unaware, rolled upon her baby during sleep. The bereaved mother exchanged her dead baby for her roommate's infant. The two came before Solomon, who, hearing their tales juxtaposed, drew a sword and offered each half of

the living newborn. One mother approved the plan, but the other withdrew from the contest. Solomon awarded the child to the reticent mother. Solomon tricked the fraudulent harlot into betraying her deceit. Justitia set a cunning trap. I worked for a time prosecuting misdemeanors in King County. Some juries proved Solomonic, wrangling truth from behind an interposed shrubbery of lies. Justice lay, for those panels, in distilling truth from the putrid nectar of lying lips. Ferreting beclouded facts; that is justice.

In courthouse hallways, opposing counsel and I sometimes settle cases. Frequently, we split the baby, using Solomon's language, now distorted from the king's sense. I offer to split the difference between respective positions; counsel nods and rushes off. Justitia waxes pragmatic. Favoring finality over facts; that is justice.

Perhaps, given her fluctuating personalities, Justitia requires some psychiatric intervention. Over the course of a year, I invite eminent analysts to diagnose Justitia's troubled psyche: Rawls, Nozick, Hitler, Jesus, Confucius, Gandhi, Locke, Moses, Marx, the Amish of Nickel Mines elementary, and a monkey. Perhaps others may join the fray.

Imagine Justitia prone on a psychiatric divan. Her sword, scales, and blindfold lie ajumble on the coffee table. Justitia pours her troubled, stony heart into the ear of scribbling philosophical shrinks. Each extracts his pathologic nutcracker, smiling ever so faintly.

## **CollabOrate**

### **Justice #2**

### **Capuchin**

LADY JUSTICE, JUSTITIA, GOES TO HER FIRST PSYCHIATRIC APPOINTMENT. *When Justitia enters her psychiatrist's office, there sits a skinny monkey in a nicely-styled black business suit. An equally skinny necktie, also black, snakes down his tiny starched white shirt. The monkey removes his mini-fedora, and nestles it on a cherry end table to his right, where a half-eaten banana waits further attention, and small black box rests. The capuchin's tail strokes his left ear.*

CAPUCHIN: Have a seat, Justitia. Name's Capuchin. Lost your toga?

JUSTITIA: Oh, the toga? I'm off today. My analysis appointment is a sick day for justice in America. Jeans and sweatshirt for me. The whole Lady Justice gig. Yuck. Everyone's always kibitzing. If I were not made of marble, it would wear me down. . . . Capuchin, you say? Nice to meet you, Capuchin. I must say I am surprised to see a monkey working as a psychiatrist.

CAPUCHIN: Market's been tough. Got downsized when the organ grinding business fell off. Tried the tracks, riding as a greyhound jockey. Did a few movies in Hollywood. Entirely too wacky for me. Grad school worked. Besides, this is fiction, Justitia. Don't make too much of a psychiatric monkey.

*Justitia smiles comfortably and settles onto Capuchin's divan. Capuchin sips his itty-bitty latte.*

CAPUCHIN: Tell me why you have come to see me, Justitia.

JUSTITIA: I am a bit confused, mostly about myself. I have one thought; it seems good to me. I hear another concept; then that idea seems preferable. I am constantly waffling. I cannot stay any course.

CAPUCHIN: Tell me more about this indecision, Justitia.

JUSTITIA: I might have post-traumatic stress disorder, you know. You see, every time a judge fails to grasp details, or a lawyer lies, and every time the law contradicts common sense, I get blamed. The ranters get out their sticks and chase me, screaming, "Commie anarchist!" or "One Percenter!" or "The Sky Is Falling!" Seems no matter what I do, someone scolds. I am not sure I can take this battering any more. It's just too much.

CAPUCHIN: I see. You sound distressed. Is there more?

JUSTITIA: I can't address a hundred cultures. Can one theory encompass maritime trade and pet law? How is divorce like predatory lending? How do transgender morality and Islamic Shariah mesh? I am asked to do so much with so little.... I am just a country girl from Egypt. You know, some days I feel a twinge of tenderness. Then, wham, just like that, I slash and gore with my sword of retribution. I am plainly unhinged. Do you have any insights, Capuchin?

*Capuchin strokes his chin hairs, and squints a bit. Capuchin puffs his mahogany burl pipe, aping Freud. A shiny black box sits next to Capuchin on the coffee table. It pops open. There is nothing inside. The box closes as mysteriously as it had opened. (What is that about?)*

CAPUCHIN: Perhaps we should try to simplify things a bit. Let me recount some research. Sarah Brosnan, from Georgia State University, paired up some of my people and offered them cucumber slices in exchange for little rocks. If either capuchin partner traded with a researcher, both got cucumber. Capuchin pairs were situated in cages where they could see the exchanges of other pairs. Researchers began upgrading some of the trades. A trader's partner would get a grape instead of cucumber, while the trader got cucumber. Or a trader in the next cage would get a grape, while the observer continued to get cucumber. The capuchins objected. When non-identical rewards were proffered, the capuchins stopped trading altogether. They refused to eat their treats. Some flung rewards back at researchers. Inequity offended the capuchin sense of justice. At root, the human sense of justice emerges from deeply rooted brain structures that humans share with complex animal life generally.

JUSTITIA: So, it should be simple. Look to the primitive brain and there lies the gold nugget of justice?

CAPUCHIN: Not likely. Humans build cultures. In cultures, social groups cope with specific problems and answer unanswerable questions. Every group embellishes the root sense of fairness uniquely, with rules and thoughts specific to themselves. The rudiment of justice is not, however, mere local invention. Justice has murky neurological foundations in cooperative survival and empathy and social mirroring.

JUSTITIA: Okay. So, that's not nothing. Humans may share some fundamental emotions about justice.

CAPUCHIN: And capuchins share them also. Our time seems to be up.

JUSTITIA: You are little, but I just love you. Would you like to get some dinner?

CAPUCHIN: No, thank you, Justitia. Your affection for me is just transference. Besides, I am given to capuchin ladies. Stone women never really rock me.

JUSTITIA: I see. Next week, I'll have a different shrink?

*Capuchin nods. Justitia drags her confused self out the door. Her lower lip trembles.*

### **CollabOrate**

#### **Justice #3**

#### **Rawls**

LADY JUSTICE, JUSTITIA, GOES TO HER SECOND PSYCHIATRIC APPOINTMENT. *When Justitia enters, a tweedy professorial-type, suffering severe comb-over, perches on a chair. He sports eyeglasses with dated domey lenses. A black-lacquer wooden box with a hinged lid sits next to the academic. Justitia hesitates.*

RAWLS: Sit, Justitia. I seldom bite. My name is John Rawls. I used to teach political philosophy at Harvard. I wrote *A Theory of Justice*. Then I died. By means I do not entirely grasp, I am resurrected today as your psychiatrist. You appear a solid, eminently-sane lady.

JUSTITIA: That mask is pure courthouse game-face. All my friends find me deeply confused. And lonely.

RAWLS: How so, Justitia? In what way are you jumbled?

JUSTITIA: I have been so hashed over, tweaked, ignored, and regurgitated, I never know what's up. Lawyers and courts relegate me to the rules of civil procedure and precedent, there to moulder. Anarchists invoke me when they bomb children. Politicians pound their fists about me when getting their friends sweet deals. Most ignore my heart. My heart is stony, but not cold.

RAWLS: Tell me about your heart, Justitia.

JUSTITIA: That is my problem, Dr. Rawls. I cannot articulate my fractured heart. The Mediterranean toga, sword, scales, blindfold, sitting around courthouses all day. Where is my heart in all that? My deepest self has something to do with children, sick people, the ignored. Yet, every day I slash. My sword of retribution skewers criminals and wrong-doers. The gore I make feels right—but also wrong. I am torn. I sometimes peek past my blindfold. I gag. Often, I crush poor people who have nicked rich people's sense of entitlement. Most days, I suffer intense self-loathing.

*Justitia cries, wetting a lachrymal trail down limestone cheeks. Rawls waits silently, offering a Kleenex.*

RAWLS: I spent most of my life thinking about you, Justitia. I am one of your admirers.

*The black box on the coffee table pops open. A six-inch tall human stands up from his miniature La-Z-Boy within. "No, John. You are not Justitia's champion. You want Justitia to coerce every person into unchosen uniformity under a government-mandated leftist morality. For you, good behavior lacks consequences; all citizens are theoretically identical, especially regarding property. Your advice is just thoughtful neo-communism, a closeted knock-off of Marx. No offense, John. You know I am your buddy." The mini-man winks. Dr. Rawls beams at the vocal little creature, and asks him to sit again. Rawls closes the box top.*

RAWLS: That was Robert Nozick. Robert inhabits the black box of conscience wherever I go. He was harsh in critique but dear as a colleague. Well-intentioned critics become a man's conscience. I am grateful for Robert, though he is a dreadfully misguided libertarian.

JUSTITIA: Tell me how you think I should sort myself out, Dr. Rawls.

RAWLS: As you wish. The big problem in conceiving justice is self-interested rhetoric. That is your problem, Justitia. Every person argues for what serves him, and calls it justice. That confuses you. One must, in fabricating a just society, duck into an intentionally amnesiac mindset. One forgets one's situation and gifts, one's self and personality, one's culture and its history, classes and prejudices among persons—quite literally, everything vanishes behind a veil of ignorance. From this "original position," one joins with other amnesiacs to fabricate rules for society that will apply to all. In the coming realm, one never knows whether she will be a queen or a pauper. Two principles moderate all original position deliberations. First, individual freedoms must be as expansive as is compatible with the equivalent liberties of others. And, second, opportunities (and the skills necessary to capitalize on opportunities) must be open to all. Social and economic inequalities can be tolerated only to the extent that they benefit disadvantaged persons. That's it, I think.

JUSTITIA: What about little Nozick? Would you have me drag people kicking and screaming to a just society they do not want and for which they will be required to pay?

RAWLS: Robert is right. One cannot countenance a just system that prioritizes community well-being and simultaneously does full justice to individual autonomy. One must choose an emphasis and make compromises. I focus on the community and the plight of those getting demolished by society's malformations. Nozick tolerates politically-induced suffering in favor of insulating individual liberties from communal erosion or obliteration.

JUSTITIA: How should I work out my mental troubles, in your view, Dr. Rawls?

RAWLS: A psychiatrist draws maps. The patient chooses her destination.

JUSTITIA: Shirker. And you think my heart is made of stone.

*Justitia squeezes Rawls's hand and flutters her eyelashes at the professor.*

RAWLS: I have affection for you, but love lies elsewhere. I've a nice wife, four children. Gotta go.

*Justitia pouts.*

## **CollabOrate**

### **Justice #4**

#### **Nozick**

LADY JUSTICE, JUSTITIA, GOES TO HER THIRD PSYCHIATRIC APPOINTMENT. When Justitia enters, a tall, handsome, plainly elegant man, with a shock of graying hair and an infectious smile, rises to greet her. The black box of conscience remains on the coffee table next to the psychiatrist's chair. Justitia leans onto the divan.

JUSTITIA: I got an email this week. You are Robert Nozick, another Harvard political professor. You wrote *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*.

NOZICK: That's right. I heard you spoke with my colleague, John Rawls. He and I often come as a boxed set. You also spent a session with Capuchin, that funny little tuxedoed monkey. Tell me what you learned.

JUSTITIA: Both were kind to me and listened well. Capuchin taught me that justice wells up from deep parts of the mammalian brain. Dr. Rawls believes my sanity may improve if I stack society's economic deck so those dealt losing hands get better cards in future games. I told them both about my identity struggles. I am sure you have read their notes.

NOZICK: I read what Capuchin and Rawls heard you say in previous sessions. Can you add anything?

JUSTITIA: I had another frustrating moment this week. I sat statuesque with my sword, scales, and blindfold at the back of the Bar Association's CLE center downtown. The Bar convened a member town meeting to address a "legal technician" rule that the Supreme Court will consider in June. The proposed rule would allow paralegals, in some areas of law (to be determined), to complete pre-approved forms for their clients without attorney supervision, upon passing an examination, gaining years of experience, providing mandatory pro bono service, and insuring themselves. The proposal arose from a Bar study of civil legal need in Washington State that indicated 87% of civil legal needs go unmet because the citizens in need either will not or cannot hire an attorney. The Bar Association has thrice opposed the legal technician rule. The vast majority of speakers agreed with the Bar's Board of Governors, each citing some ding their own practice area might suffer if legal technicians were permitted. I was disheartened by the spectacular failure of imagination of some of the lawyers present, and the abject collapse of moral concern about the ugly role our legal monopoly plays in the welfare of our neighbors. That unserved 87% represents a gigantic market of potential clients (at admittedly lower rates of payment). These unserved many constitute most of Washington. I pray the Supreme Court will spank the Bar Association for its retrenchment by passing the legal technician rule, and require of Bar members qualifications at least as stringent as those proposed for legal technicians.

NOZICK: Wow! Frosty! Do you follow all the politics of the Bar Association in such detail?

JUSTITIA: No. But when most people cannot get meaningful access to the court system for everyday conflicts, I think my good name is compromised. What are your thoughts, Dr. Nozick?

NOZICK: First, I think you are feeling a bit better. You have not been so eloquent with my predecessors.

*Just then, the black box of conscience flies open on the coffee table. Up pops John Rawls, now half a foot tall. "Don't listen to Nozick, Justitia. He'll whack you with his libertarian*



schtick: minimalist states, respect for individual liberty. It's good for the competent many; not so for the limping remainder. Nozick's peddling a dame hooked on Adam Smith and social Darwinism. He got her lipstick and a new hair-do. Yo, Bob. No offense. I'll sit now." *Tiny Rawls pulls the lid back over himself.*

JUSTITIA: So, your "libertarian schtick"?

NOZICK: It is not too complex. If one respects individuals, one imposes minimally. How much interference do you want from your neighbors? Interfere with others no more than that. This is just Kant, or Jesus, or Mencius. You work that out for masses of people, and one conceives the minimal state. The legitimate activities of a just society consist in protecting citizens from crime and foreign invasion. Possibly, a society should provide courts.

JUSTITIA: What about everything else? Schools, poverty, pollution, regulation, social security, Medicare?

NOZICK: Leave those needs to private institutions and individuals, acting in a market context.

JUSTITIA: So, my job would be downsized.... Hey! I'll bet you oppose the legal technician rule?

NOZICK: It's government intermeddling. In my world, your job would be mostly outsourced, Justitia. Governments would abandon their monopoly and let other individuals and social institutions do things that governments attempt now. The world would be more chaotic, but more creative.

JUSTITIA: So, that's my problem. I suffer megalomania. I need to do less, in a principled way. I should work less in courts and governments, and hang around homes, churches, and volunteer associations?

*Justitia licks her lips and leans toward Nozick. He throws up his hands.*

NOZICK: The file says you're looking for love. I am not your man. Time's up. I've got to run.

### **CollabOrate** **Justice #5** **Nietzsche**

LADY JUSTICE, JUSTITIA, GOES TO HER FOURTH PSYCHIATRIC APPOINTMENT. *When Justitia enters, a dark-haired man of penetrating eyes waits. His profuse moustache, to which a portion of a recent meal clings, projects from his lip. He averts his gaze from Justitia. The German philosopher taps a tuneless rhythm on the black box of conscience that rests on the coffee table at his left hand. Justitia settles herself. Silence ensues. Justitia clears her limestone throat.*

JUSTITIA: Are you Friedrich Nietzsche? An email said Nietzsche was coming, the author of *Genealogy of Morals*? Are you that Nietzsche?

NIETZSCHE: I died in psychiatric lockup. Now I find myself resurrected as a psychiatrist. I thought I was irony's master. I am humbled.

*Nietzsche resumes his silent reverie, staring at his knees. Justitia waits. And waits. Finally, she speaks.*

JUSTITIA: The others have been anxious to talk. Is silence a new kind of therapy?

NIETZSCHE: I do not wish to converse with the Great Harlot. In your name, history's giants have fallen.

JUSTITIA: Perhaps I should leave...? I do not intend to perturb you.

NIETZSCHE: Utterly clueless, aren't you? You are a marble statue and I am dead. Some power fabulously greater than either of us has arranged this little session. That door will not open until we have suffered this hour.

*The lid of the black box of conscience rises a bit. Nietzsche slaps it down. A tiny voice squeaks, "Mein Gott."*

JUSTITIA: I am accustomed to psychological discombobulation. I am seldom, however, hated.

NIETZSCHE: An oversight of the middling many. If the ruck saw with clarity, they too would despise you.

JUSTITIA: Explain yourself, sir. And wipe that cheese out of your moustache.

*Nietzsche chews his lip hairs, extricating cheddar. The lid of the black box of conscience flies back and Adolf Hitler, now six inches tall, leaps up. A drop of blood trickles from a little Luger hole in Adolf's skull. "It is I. I am the explanation. I rid Germany and her neighbors of imbeciles and homosexuals and dissidents and communists and the Jewish Menace. The pure blood of the Germanic peoples coursed unblemished. Until you intervened, witch. The sad herd of Jew-loving weaklings gathered itself, all doped up on your opiate of justice, and ruined the best nation in human history. And her best leader. Me! Der Führer." Hitler daubs at his leaking skull. Nietzsche firmly closes the lid and sighs.*

NIETZSCHE: Adolf dogs me. He is my conscience. He reminds me that stupendous ideas become sewage in the mouths of tiny souls. My insight has been forever sullied by Hitler's gargantuan fractured ego, and my sister's betrayal.

JUSTITIA: That must be hard for you, Friedrich. Tell me more about your sister.

NIETZSCHE: Don't psychobabble me, Lady Justice. Hitler's confusions compare favorably to your own. You miss the most obvious thing. Great people differ from normal people. The few are eagles. But the milling millions are lambs. Proud, soaring raptors pick off kids at will, tearing them limb from limb for food or entertainment. Still, the mutton-horde cannot bother itself even to look up. They are tame, so weak-minded they adopt customs and adhere to those impositions without bleating. The flocks dwell in slave morality and suffer bad conscience. Knowing that eagles soar effortlessly above, they nevertheless praise resistance to raptors in putrid morality tales. Eagles invent the universe as they go. No one and nothing binds them. The will-to-power of great men supervenes, subjecting all. Great men stare into a god-free abyss. Eventually, the abyss stares back, sucking the mire of humanity from each giant's innermost depths. Supermen exude pure, distilled nothingness. In Übermenschen lie the hope of, and the only value in, mankind.

JUSTITIA: You exalt maniacs! Are you not praising Agamemnon, Alexander, Augustus, Khan, Innocent III, Napoleon, Stalin, Mao Zedong, Pol Pot, Amin, and their ilk? They caused cascades of death and untold suffering.

NIETZSCHE: Silence, Harlot! You berate your superiors. You utter the mind of muddlers.

JUSTITIA: I will speak! You have helped me today. I recognize an opponent. That clarifies things for me.

NIETZSCHE: As I said when we started. Raw irony. Forced to "clarify things" for the confused stone woman.

*Justitia opens her mouth to rejoin, but the clock ticks. Nietzsche vanishes in a puff of vapor.*

*Justitia puts her hand to her heart. Yawning absence aches there. She knows Nietzsche cannot fill her void. She wonders what might.*

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**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, "Naiveté. Damned foolishness."*

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

*Jesus wept.*

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

### **CollabOrate**

#### **Justice #7**

#### **Confucius**

LADY JUSTICE, JUSTITIA, GOES TO HER SIXTH PSYCHIATRIC APPOINTMENT. *When Justitia enters, a ramrod straight-backed Chinese man, impeccably dressed in fine silks, waits. His long salt-and-pepper hair has been pulled severely to the back of his head, and dangles in a braided queue. The gentleman rises and bows silently. His hand subtly points to the divan for Justitia.*

CONFUCIUS: I am K'ung Ch'iu of a venerable Chinese family. Your people call me Confucius.

*Justitia lays her blindfold, sword, and scales on the floor next to her divan. She reclines, sighing.*

JUSTITIA: You wrote *The Analects*? The work is still widely read. You're famous.

CONFUCIUS: I am humbled. I must note, gracious lady, that my students wrote most of that book. My fame is perhaps now limited to fortune cookies. As during my life, most who read me, forget me.... I have perused your session notes, though there were none from that peasant, Jesus. Tell me how this process is going for you so far.

JUSTITIA: Jesus urged me to hope that Yahweh of Israel, his god, will intervene dramatically to set straight the jumbled pieces of this fractured world. I guess I have to say, I am just not that religious.... It seems to me that righting the global social world is a messy job that belongs to the human community. Their greatest challenge, actually. Mankind is presently wandering dazed in a bramble of ill-deliberated change and rampant overpopulation. Malthus vindicated.

CONFUCIUS: I agree. Why do you focus on human conduct, Justitia?

JUSTITIA: Because humans control conduct, at least to some extent. Humans do not command earthquakes, the sun's diurnal transit, the generational cycle of butterflies, or even the price of tea in China. Forces beyond us govern those. But, at least occasionally, humans control their actions. I focus on doing the do-able. On good days, humans can choose useful new conduct, and by diligent practice embed new habits.

CONFUCIUS: I see. Tell me more. *Confucius strokes his sparse chin hairs.*

JUSTITIA: All modern societies have grown ponderous and impersonal. Institutions crush meaningful community life in favor of supposed efficiency. We compel people to waste away performing robotic economic activity. Families have shrunk--from vibrant bushes brimming with third cousins and laughing uncles, to hard-pruned nuclear husband-wife-children bonsais, to scraggly single-parent-family poles, and now to lone people living in twiggish isolation. Humans must redirect themselves.... How do you see these matters, Confucius?

CONFUCIUS: In my time, I urged all to seek heaven's path. A man strives to grow benevolent, to tame himself for insight and utility, and to stop being small. One honors one's parents. One performs rites punctiliously. I taught....

*The black box of conscience, on the coffee table next to Confucius, creaks open. Another dignified Chinese man stands, barely topping six inches. "I am Mo, a student of Confucius a century after his death. With all due deference, I do not see matters as does my esteemed Master. One owes filial devotion not just to one's parents and one's own elders, but to all mankind. What matters is not so much what is just and right, but love. Heaven requires that our love should lack boundaries. Honor and esteem must extend to all. I apologize for my hubris in contradicting you, Master." Mo bows and sits. The ebony lid closes over him.*

CONFUCIUS: Mo may be right. I worry, however, that love of all may become esteem for none. Still, I never really questioned the class structure of my time. To honor men of lower classes....

JUSTITIA: And women?

CONFUCIUS: Now you push me too far. Women are...

JUSTITIA: Never mind. Mo interrupted you. Please continue. How would you have me make the world just?

CONFUCIUS: In my time I would have advised: Your rulers have lost the Mandate of Heaven. Small men repress gentlemen of benevolence and insight, seizing control of matters for which the small are ill-equipped. So, the people suffer. One must rely on the best people. The gentleman helps others find and do the good; small men seek profit. Deeds count more than words. Care for and esteem your elders. Perform those tasks the culture deems worthy. Seek *jen*, which is human-heartedness, benevolence, virtue, love, magnanimity. Cling to what is good in the past. Embrace the helpful new thing. Spit out evil. Be wise enough to recognize each when you encounter it.

JUSTITIA: You are sage. The Chinese kings must have valued you greatly.

CONFUCIUS: Regrettably, my kings rejected me. I hoped they might seek my counsel. But, alas, I was reduced to eking my living from students' fees.... Back to you. The session notes indicate you are seeking companionship.

JUSTITIA: I once thought so. But this psychoanalysis is teaching me. The absence I feel lies within me. A consort will not help. I must fill my gaps myself. So, I am searching.

CONFUCIUS: As are we all. I see our time is up.

*Justitia gathers her sword, scales, and blindfold. She hikes her jeans up stony hips, and departs.*

### **CollabOrate**

#### **Justice #8**

#### **Moses**

LADY JUSTICE, JUSTITIA, GOES TO HER SEVENTH PSYCHIATRIC APPOINTMENT. *Justitia arrives early, to find an empty office. From nowhere appears a wild-haired ugly little man of piercing eyes. A smell of burnt flesh wafts with his pungent body odor. Justitia begins to sit, but the hoary oracle gestures for the marble icon to remain standing. Moses juts his hands over his head. Loud Hebrew bursts from his mouth. His blessing complete, the prophet points where*

*Justitia is to sit. She removes her sword, and stashes her blindfold and scales near her feet. The black box of conscience sits on the coffee table next to Israel's divinator.*

MOSES: I have read your file. You have been talking with some tremendously confused people. Small wonder your mind is a mess.

JUSTITIA: Perhaps you can help me. I seek guidance.

MOSES: My message is simple. The hard part lies in your will. You are stone statuary. But does your constitution match your physical stuff, or are you yet one more among billions of flabby wafflers.

JUSTITIA: I see so many alternatives! They muddle me. Shall I believe Rawls or Nozick, Jesus or Nietzsche? And there's that cute little capuchin. The issues are many, and solutions elusive.

MOSES: Cease whining! Your troubles spring from delusions of competence.

JUSTITIA: I, sir, have been revered by a hundred billion humans.

MOSES: Idiots all. Your troubles, Justitia, are not psychological. They are voluntary. You rebel.

JUSTITIA: Me? A rebel? I have been working my stony little butt off sorting myself here....

MOSES: To what end. You rummage through conceptual trash, a starving mongrel gorging on rancid pork. Humans cannot fathom justice, much less sort its myriad issues. Yahweh has spoken: 613 mitzvot (that is, commandments) given once for all men and times. Your job, Lady Justice, is to enforce those rules. If you imagine otherwise, you err.

JUSTITIA: As I recall, your idea of the administration of justice is monosyllabic. Murder—death. Fornication—death. Burning a pigeon instead of a dove—death. Parking tickets—death.

MOSES: I have occasionally winked at peccadilloes. But overall, you get the picture. Why would any community suffer those who flout its strictures? Tolerance amounts to communal suicide....

*The black box of conscience flips open. A six-inch tall Mohandas Gandhi arranges his tiny little towel to obscure his bits. "Moses, yours is not the lone conception of god. Multiple divine perceptions tickle human fancies. Yours is not widespread. Neither is it terribly coherent. Justitia, resist my friend's absolutist bill of goods. He means well. He really does. But his approach to divine ethics makes war, not justice. It is peace that matters, not theological conformity. Moses, my beloved brother, make room in your heart for the rest of us." Gandhi sits. The ebony lid closes over him.*

MOSES: Blasphemer.... You know, I love Gandhi, but would be rid of him, if I could. If he lived in my time, we would stone him. Cast his fractured corpse upon a heap of dung.

JUSTITIA: Harsh. Is there no room for compassion, understanding, flexibility, inclusion?

MOSES: I include those who conform. Ours is a harsh world, Justitia. In morality, latitude breeds lassitude. Are your abundance of confusions not the fruit of your journey toward ethical subjectivism? Yakking of many beckons cacophony of all. Would people not prosper if they knew boundaries, rigidly enforced limits?

JUSTITIA: Rugged specificity would help some, but crush others. Millions or billions would die.

MOSES: As generations passed, survivors would wax obedient. Rebellion would drain from human fiber. Tractability to divine command would set the habits of billions. There are those of other times who sing my tune. There was that scrunch-faced little senator from Wisconsin, McCarthy. And the evangelical proponents of American Prohibition. And Seyyid Qutb, al Qaeda's Muslim Brotherhood theoretician. And those eremitic desert monks. And Calvin. I just love Calvin. I am not the lone voice of divine rigor.

JUSTITIA: This conversation leaves a black pit in my rocky stomach, Moses.

MOSES: And therein lies the problem, Justitia. Look in a mirror! You are the henchman of Hobbes's Leviathan. Buck up. Get a grip. Execute those who merit termination. Make the world safe for the obedient. God has spoken.

JUSTITIA: I feel the same intensity from you I found in Nietzsche--dark and scary.

MOSES: The dung heap for him too. Nietzsche was insane. He believed himself to be god.

JUSTITIA: Are you different? You quake with absolute conviction, and suffer adamant certainty how others must live.

MOSES: Yahweh scorched me in unquenchable fire, spoke from his Sinai bush. Do you not smell the cinders?

*Justitia opens her mouth to object, but Moses vanishes. His smoky stench lingers.*

**CollabOrate**  
**Justice #9**  
**Locke**

LADY JUSTICE, JUSTITIA, GOES TO HER EIGHTH PSYCHIATRIC APPOINTMENT. *Justitia opens the heavy oak door to find a finely-dressed Englishman with a gaunt triangular face. Prominent, thoughtful eyes peer from below a high forehead and neck-length white hair. The gentleman smiles warmly. Justitia removes her sword and sets her scales and blindfold on the end of her divan. She settles her toga on her sturdy marble thighs. Justitia had no time to change to jeans and sweatshirt this harried afternoon. The black box of conscience jostles a bit of its own accord on the coffee table.*

LOCKE: My name is John Locke. I am denominated your counselor this session, though I fail to see how *Two Treatises of Government* and *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* qualify me for this task. My education makes of me a philosopher. I am no priest.

JUSTITIA: I know your work, Sir. I am American these days. You influenced Jefferson and others.

LOCKE: Your constitution drafters wracked my ideas. Spawn oozes from their distortions.

JUSTITIA: You surprise me. Thanks at least in part to you, we remain free and loud. I have come this afternoon from protests. A menagerie of semi-employed citizens in tents makes shrill demands for income redistribution and environmental reform. A rabble of opponents, having tea it seems, rankle just as loudly about spiraling government debt and taxation and loss of liberties. My ears are ringing. America splits down her middle: urbanites against rural folk, evangelicals against secularists. Who is right? How can I decide? You have pondered my file. I am confused.

LOCKE: Indeed. You seem to believe you possess the luxury of time to deliberate. Would that be correct?

JUSTITIA: Well... I cannot decide rashly. I must find some measure of certainty before I....

LOCKE: You can be replaced, dear creature. The American people have inherent liberty to throw off your yoke. Rightful government proceeds from the people; it is their natural and inalienable right. The people therefore possess a natural right to rebellion. They form government; they can substitute another as easily. You must hear and respond. Now! Not when you feel comfortable doing so. My entire theory aims to produce government responsive to its people.

*The black box of conscience springs open, revealing Plato. The ugly, little man in his dirty toga stands a full five inches. "Ever, John, you spout democratic obscenities. Socrates*

taught me, as I reported to you in my *Republic*, the true structure for government. Philosopher-kings must rule. They alone harbor the requisite wisdom. Justice legitimates the commands of carefully-groomed rulers. The people, as you rightly note, are blank slates. But the Good imprints itself upon the rabble's mind dimly. Only a philosopher-king achieves clarity. Lacking regal acumen, governments fester like brimming spittoons." *John smiles wanly at the contentious Greek. Plato sits and the black box closes itself.*

LOCKE: Plato may be right, Justitia. I taught that human brains become beacons of light if benefited by careful education. But see what has come of America! Trash in, trash out. Minds shaped by Cialis and *Survivor*.

JUSTITIA: We Americans are certainly suffering some behavioral dysfunctions. Congress cannot seem to find its way. Some lost souls, guns in hand, come wholly unhinged. Too many Americans revel in vapid materialism. Still, most Americans are productive, caring people. And the world is really a very much better place than it was in your own day, John Locke.

LOCKE: That is perhaps so. We suffered the Great Fire and the Great Plague of London. And we gave ourselves to colonial frenzy. Nevertheless, the United States Constitution surrenders every American's independence to representative government. So, "representatives" travel to swampy Washington D.C., where they rule like French despots. It is scant improvement when a people overthrows one fractured king in favor of 535. Plutocracy is nothing more than tyranny in a party mood.

JUSTITIA: What would you have me do, John? Is there a way out of this forest of confusion?

LOCKE: Certainly, Justitia. Do less. Government, including the courts, must abandon its sentiment to do everything for everybody. Limitations, my dear. Circumspection born of observation of the human condition. Frame laws to protect property and liberty. Make utterly certain that education works. Crush crime and foreign invasions. Step aside and let the planet's future emerge.

JUSTITIA: You sound like Robert Nozick. Nozick undoubtedly cherished dog-eared copies of your works.

LOCKE: Robert and I are intellectual kin. Our philosophical family enjoys little applause in America, I fear.

JUSTITIA: It is worse than that, John. America has forgotten you and Nozick. When I learned that John Locke was today's visiting psychiatrist, I thought I would be chatting with the bald guy from *Lost*.

LOCKE: What? Who...?

*Before Justitia can explain, Locke vanishes. The limestone lady gathers her things and trudges back to the courts.*

### **CollabOrate** **Justice #10** **Marx**

LADY JUSTICE, JUSTITIA, GOES TO HER NINTH PSYCHIATRIC APPOINTMENT. *Justitia removes her blindfold and bumps open the door with her shoulder, to avoid scraping its fine surface with her sword's scabbard or her scales of equity. A face framed in an integrated bush of graying black hair, moustache, and beard sits atop a stocky frame. Justitia settles herself, and scratches a bit of limestone scale from her right elbow. Marx, the German Ashkenazi Jew, smiles broadly. The black box of conscience hunkers on the coffee table, boding a pregnant intrusion.*

MARX: I cannot stop smiling. Your beauty so reminds me of Jenny, my departed wife—the love of my life.

JUSTITIA: I am glad for our resemblance. You still grieve. Has she been gone long?



MARX: Time is a bit confused in this psychoanalysis. My time was the nineteenth century. Before I lost her, we lost four of our seven children. She parented. I wrote and I agitated. I got us expelled from country after country. Times were hard for the Marx tribe.... But let's talk about your family, Justitia.

JUSTITIA: There's a topic.... My father was Chaos, and my mother Power. I am born of their union. Every member of papa's family was an anarchist and never deigned to cooperate. Every member of mama's tribe marched lockstep to grandfather's whim. My parents charged me, from my earliest days, to structure human society with a balance none among their own families had ever managed. I was their hope. And I am a huge disappointment.

MARX: I doubt that. Parents seldom feel that way about their children. Your task, as a demi-god, brims with complexity. So, what of your siblings? They must be a handful at Thanksgiving dinners.

JUSTITIA: That they are. Goodness, of course, prospers. He is the heir apparent. My sister, Truth, has, frankly, suffered a nervous breakdown. One just cannot count on her these days. My younger siblings, Kindness, Beauty, Rationality, and Community struggle through these difficult financial times. But let's talk of my confusions. You know, some deem you, Karl, to be the most influential thinker of the last two centuries. Do you have ideas you believe I should mull? Your dialectical materialism wowed global politics for a century, and still....

MARX: Pahhh! I aimed not to talk about the world, but to make it a better place. That, I see, has gone poorly....

*The black box of conscience bursts open. Chairman Mao Zedong rises to his full six inches. "You err, Comrade. In my hands, and those of our brethren Stalin, Lenin, Pol Pot, and the many champions of peoples oppressed by capitalist pigs, your glorious insight governed half the planet. We inspired billions and silenced dissenters. We realized the dictatorship of the proletariat. You dreamed. We implemented. You have our gratitude." A tear rolls down Marx's cheek and into his bramble of beard. Marx shuts the black box of conscience firmly, shaking his head despondently.*

MARX: I advocated short-term violence. I embraced socialism as an interim stage, foisted by revolution, leading, so I dreamed, to a classless and stateless society of utopian sharing. Unintentionally, I threw open the doors of government to homicidal sociopaths. Chairman Mao squeaks as my conscience because he remains the most vicious of mankind's murderous maniacs. Seventy million died in that idiot's Cultural Revolution. I designed the bullets. Mao and his ilk pulled the trigger.

JUSTITIA: The road to communist utopia held more switchbacks than you imagined?

MARX: Many more. I found capitalist abuses damnable, but I missed so much. When I discarded the foibles of capitalism, I also tossed the baby of global trade. It is now obvious that expansive trade creates a positive-sum game in which every nation prays fervently for the prosperity of every other, despite the pains of recessions and class oppressions. The impulse to war has plummeted. What's more, I tossed out god as an opiate stupefying the masses. The divine stands more firmly rooted in human affections than I ever imagined. I overstepped in projecting my atheism upon the human canvas.

JUSTITIA: Still, a world without class distinctions or states.... A world where people give their skills freely and take only the measure they lack. That all sounds so right to me.

MARX: Toward the end of my life, I devoted less energy to revolutionary rhetoric and more to ethical argument. In the *Gotha Program*, I urged communists and people of good faith everywhere to live by this principle: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his need." My ideology is little more than pedestrian family structure telescoped to include all people. In families, children and elders and the disabled work little, but consume much. Healthy adults produce and share with kin less able. We all believe that arrangement quite natural and desirable. So, too society.

JUSTITIA: So communism is just family values writ large? The global homestead?

MARX: I think that captures my gist, Justitia. Too bad my speculations did not come to fruit as I had imagined.

JUSTITIA: That may be the understatement of the last half-millennium....

*Marx raises his eyebrows, and shrugs his shoulders. A frown teases his lips. He vanishes.*

*Justitia chews the inside of her marble cheek, deliberating her several psychiatric conversations. She can feel insights tickling marble folds of her stony cerebrum.*

## **CollabOrate**

### **Justice #11**

#### **Naomi**

LADY JUSTICE, JUSTITIA, GOES TO HER TENTH AND FINAL PSYCHIATRIC APPOINTMENT. *Justitia finds the door ajar. A young girl, possibly seven years old, sits in the psychiatrist's armchair, her black leather shoes swinging four inches off the floor. The juvenile's white linen bonnet and black ankle-length long-sleeved dress with its blue apron identify her as Lancaster, Pennsylvania, Amish. A small blood stain dampens the front left of her starched bonnet. The black box of conscience rests quietly beside the child. Justitia smiles. Justitia lays to one side her sword, scales, and blindfold, and settles herself on the divan. The woman's eyes meet the girl's. Both relax.*

NAOMI: My name is Naomi--Naomi Rose Ebersol. What's yours?

JUSTITIA: I am Justitia. I work in the courts and around town. Are you my psychiatrist for the day?

NAOMI: I do not know what that is. I am supposed to talk to you. Do you want to talk?

JUSTITIA: That would be very pleasant, I am sure. My email said you are from West Nickel Mines School.

NAOMI: Uh-huh. I got hurt. In October 2006. A man hurt my head.

JUSTITIA: Someone hurt your head? Can you tell me about that?

NAOMI: A bad man came to the school just after morning recess. He blocked the front door with his pickup. He had a gun. The bad man forced the boys to haul in lumber, guns, chains, and toilet paper from his truck. He made us girls line up against the classroom chalk board. He made all the boys and adults and babies leave. He kept eleven of us girls. We heard the police come in a few minutes. They had loudspeakers. We girls knew what was happening. Marian and Barbie asked to be shot first, if the bad man would let the rest of us go. The bad man shot them, and then the rest of us. All in the head. He shot some of us over and over. Blood was everywhere. Five of us died. Six survived. Some of the girls who lived are not healthy still. The bad man was Charles Roberts IV. He died too. When he saw the police would get him, he shot himself. When Mr. Roberts was hurting me and my friends, I wanted to hurt him back. I wanted to....

*The black box of conscience slides open. No little person stands, but a voice wafts over Naomi and Justitia. "Naomi, this is your muttie. Amish do not talk, or even think, in this way. Mr. Roberts did a very bad thing. God will speak with him; God is just. Our task is to fix what can be fixed, and to forgive the bad man. You remember, we have talked about this at meeting and at bedside prayers." Naomi nods. A little tear wets her cheek. "Yes, mama. I remember. I am sorry." Mutie soothes, "Do not worry, Naomi. You are a little girl. You are just learning." Justitia hears kissing sounds from the box. The lid of the black box of conscience shuts silently.*

JUSTITIA: Was that your mother?

NAOMI: Yes. Mutie and the Amish ladies and all of the Amish people forgave Mr. Roberts right away. They comforted the Roberts family--the bad man's wife and three children

and relatives. They collected money for them. Many attended the bad man's funeral. The Amish surrounded the families of us girls, the dead and the living, and paid our medical expenses. That cost a lot of money because God does not want us to have health insurance, momma says. They helped Muttie--all the mutties and papas really—to get better. All our families miss us terribly. And everyone else misses us too. The people tore down the school house. They built a new one in a different place.

JUSTITIA: Why did the bad man attack you, Naomi? Do you know?

NAOMI: He was sick. He left suicide notes. The notes said Mr. Roberts molested children. Mr. Roberts named children he molested. But when the police checked with those people, there was nothing. Mr. Roberts wanted to hurt girls, and thought he had hurt them. But he was wrong. At least, until he came to our school. He did not touch us in private places. But he hurt us. Mr. Roberts was broken in the head, momma says.

JUSTITIA: You are a very brave little girl. Thank you for telling me your story. My job is to help people decide what to do when people hurt one another. That's what justice is about. Do you have advice for me?

NAOMI: They told me you would ask that. So I have thought about it a lot.

JUSTITIA: Go ahead, then, Naomi. How should I change?

NAOMI: The Amish think you are confused. You try to fix the past. The past cannot be fixed. You can change the future, but not the past. Make the future better. And you spend too much time deciding about money. Money does not make hurts better. Money distracts everyone from what is wrong. People's hugs get broken. Momma says that love mends broken hugs. Not feeling love. I do not have lovey feelings about Mr. Roberts. Neither do any of the Amish. I mean love as doing stuff. You have to work to forgive bad people, work on yourself—just like momma said. People who suffer need help. They need real hugging and weed-the-garden kind of help. Put away your sword. Leave your blindfold at home. Fix your scales. Momma says that justice should restore people's community, not hurt bad people. I like what my muttie says. Do you?

JUSTITIA: I do, Naomi. Of all my psychiatrists, your story cuts deepest. If I heed you, everything will change. I am thinking about the things all the people who sat in your chair have said to me. Thank you, Naomi.

*Naomi smiles, a dazzling toothy beatitude. That grace lingers, as she vanishes. A Cheshire cat moment....*

### **CollabOrate** **Justice #12** **Numen**

LADY JUSTICE, JUSTITIA, IS SUMMONED TO HER PSYCHIATRIC DIVAN. *Justitia lays aside her blindfold, sword, and scales. No psychiatric stand-in awaits her. Alone, but not quite alone, Justitia sits. She folds her marble hands in her limestone lap. She smoothes her stony toga. The black box of conscience on the coffee table slides toward Justitia. A depression in the seat cushion of the psychiatrist's armchair shifts. Justitia perceives a presence, but sees and hears nothing. Suddenly, a gravelly voice interrupts Justitia's reverie.*

NUMEN: Tell me, Justitia. How do you imagine god?

JUSTITIA: God is a social construct that augments cohesion in human groups. I am not religious.

NUMEN: You blather what god is and state your orientation. I asked, How do you imagine god?

JUSTITIA: You mean, like a photo....? Well, I suppose god looks like Charlton Heston in my mind.

*Air swirls, rustling. Charlton Heston sits in the psychiatrist's armchair, beaming his patented smile.*

NUMEN: I bring a gift for you. And I come to hear the fruit of this psychiatric regime I orchestrated.

JUSTITIA: Are you....god?

NUMEN: I am me. People name me. Those names always mislead. Humans know nothing of me. They see my acts, but I elude them. Human confabulations about gods amuse. The very best humor is theological.... Enough of me. Tell me how goes this introspective and conversational process for you, O demi-god of justice.

JUSTITIA: Well, I have loved the talks. I was repulsed, chided, fascinated, and challenged.

NUMEN: Decisions. I need decisions from you, Justitia. You require a quick review.

*The room enlarges and darkens. A stage appears, and a band. Her several psychiatrists march in from stage left. The band strikes up a breezy tune. The drafted shrinks begin an intricate tap dance, shoulder to shoulder. Except for the capuchin. The monkey skitters across the stage before the queued tappers. The assembly breaks into song: "To heal confusions and make them few, We sing our thoughts in brief for you!" Sequentially, each master steps forward, falls to one knee, and belts out a three-word lyric summary for Justitia.*

*Capuchin:* Deep mammalian feeling.

*Rawls:* Micromanaging societal malformations.

*Nozick:* Markets amidst freedoms.

*Nietzsche:* Eagles eating lambs.

*Jesus:* Heartfelt divine intervention.

*Confucius:* Gentlemen ruling benevolently.

*Moses:* Commandments and sanctions.

*Locke:* Populism with safeguards.

*Marx:* Utopian wealth-sharing.

*Amish Naomi:* Restoring fractured communities.

*With a flourish, the band crescendos. The tapping psychiatrists pratfall in unison, then crawl to exit stage right. Naomi peeks around the curtain to curtsy. The capuchin, a bit lost, twirls, and climbs into the rigging overhead. Justitia laughs and applauds. Charlton smiles. He then turns his head toward Justitia, and raises an eyebrow.*

JUSTITIA: Okay, okay.... Changes. I have to change myself to be rid of divided loyalties. Those make me confused. I have to deviate from my English and Roman heritages more readily. In particular, I must change my values. *Money:* I am going to make justice less about money and more about social capital. I will start caring about people's relationships more than their pocketbooks. *Access:* I am going to make court process transparent, simple, and cheap, and dismantle the attorney legal monopoly. People will need lawyers for wisdom, but not to navigate a labyrinthine bramble. Lawyers will make less money, but be more valued. *Poverty:* I am going to open courts to the issues poor people face. The rich have resources to protect themselves. The poor have only me. *Bad actors:* I am going to restrain sociopathic bad actors without participating in victims' thirst for vengeance. I am discarding my sword of vengeance. I am taking off my blindfold and learning to recognize sociopaths when I see them. I am going to see that most corporations are sociopathic; they lack consciences, being mostly monomaniacal profit-takers. I am going to prevent corporations from using money to tip my scales of equity in their favor. *Judges:* I am going to push judges to make their rulings wise, regardless of precedent. I will tamp down "appeal aversion." Judges will let *normal* people bring cases that change society incrementally; judges will issue orders that effect those changes. *Lawyers:* I am going to encourage lawyers to be good people *before* they are advocates. I am going to punish

lawyers who do evil, inside courtrooms or outside them. *Public*: I am going to teach conflict resolution skills in elementary schools. I am going to require serious peacemaking efforts from disputants before they gain access to courts. I am going to empower disenfranchised peacemakers--religious leaders, grandmothers, and shop supervisors. Courts will be much less busy, and produce much better results. *Peace*: I am going to make the prime purpose of courts the restoration of cohesive community among disputants, not the allocation of scarce resources.

NUMEN: That's a good start, Justitia. Change yourself as necessary. You make society work. Do not forsake that vision. I installed you in every human heart for a purpose. Now, your gift?

JUSTITIA: You are too good to me. What is it?

NUMEN: A metaphor.

*The black box of conscience begins to grow. Numen and Justitia catapult through the atmosphere and into a lunar orbit. The black box of conscience expands until the earth hangs within the box. The earth glows. The penumbra of stars gleams warmly, as though showering silent applause.*

NUMEN: When all human efforts are acts of conscience,  
The earth will not be perfect,  
But mankind shall be well.

JUSTITIA: Amen.

*Numen fades, again perceived, but not sensed. Justitia falls from orbit, taking up her job at Snohomish County courthouses and her residence in the sanctum of Washingtonian hearts. Justitia commences her changes....*

*(Brad Lancaster mediates and collaborates family, elder, and probate issues. He works with his spouse/paralegal, Kim, and little dog, Sofie, in Shoreline as Lancaster Law Office. Email: [brad@lancasterlawoffice.com](mailto:brad@lancasterlawoffice.com)).*