

A SILENT DEATH: THE LAW

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I went on a journey in search of The Law went to all courts Low and all courts High, and unto the Supreme I came. With pillars that bear and arcs that bolster, I was certain I would find The Law. I was about to enter the court to find The Law, but I was summoned to the side by an elderly man sitting just outside the courtroom on one of the benches pressed against the wall. He had a white beard and held a walking stick, and almost as if he knew what I was in search of he whispered out to me and said, "Come my child, sit down, and let me tell you a story". I didn't know who he was but something about his presence commanded a certain level of respect, his voice firm and instructive almost as though anything he uttered was the decree of the day. And almost as though he could sense I was hesitant he gestured to me almost immediately to sit down beside him, something about his actions seemed like this was custom to him, almost as though he knew I would sit down, that this is how it was meant to be, how it had always been. So I sat. I remember the words he then said to me like it was yesterday, when he held my shoulder and said "I am the Law, that which you seek within the courts".

I never expected to find The Law outside the courtroom, so like any vulnerable citizen that seeks justice I was shocked that The law was unconcerned about the proceedings behind the closed doors of the court. I respectfully asked the elderly man why it was so that he wasn't in the courtroom, and he responded by saying, "There was a time when courts would not commence without my presence, but times have changed". These words confused me and he realized this because he then went on to tell me the story of what The Law was and what it became during his lifetime. I remember asking him how old he was and he said, "Centuries- Old". Several years ago when the elderly man was still in his tender ages Lady Justice tended to his care, cradling him while she had placed him in her Scales. There wasn't a day Lady Justice would walk into the courtroom without The Law. They were blood of each other's blood and could not be parted, where law existed justice thrived. As he grew up the young boy acquired certain traits. The little boy had always been exposed to the natural laws we now call customary law he began understanding that in some situations this common law would settle disputes in the court. He took note of how Englishmen had walked into courtrooms several years later in European tailored three piece suits and spoke of "equity" and the likes in settling disputes. Romans would dance in the courts bringing with them their Laws.

The elderly man had said “growing up was a sight in the courts”, at times he felt he was going insane as disputes would arise again after having being settled years before between other people, the maturing young man decided to call this occurrence “Precedents”. He looked back at the violent courtroom scenes when Lady Justice would pull out her Sword and threaten guilty parties at knife point, which was entertaining when one considers the fact that Lady Justice always wore her blindfolds fearing no one, having no favour.

I remember looking into the elderly mans eyes as he continued, tears rolled down his cheeks. He said it saddened him how the courts where changing, how Lady Justice was changing, how everything he had ever known was changing. He spoke of how the system had always protected the vulnerable, how the system always upheld the constitution, how it regulated society, how it could be held accountable, how it was so very reliable. He couldn't remember whence it came about but there was a time when Lady Justice kicked him out of the courts and said he should never come back here, she had taken off her blindfolds and thrown them at the young man. Since that day the elderly man sits outside the courtroom everyday advising the vulnerable as they go in, passing on his knowledge when he can.

Oh! But the system has changed! The old man explained how it had become venomous and corrupt, he became enraged and defined the court as a brothel and there you will find “Madame Justice” she now fears the system itself and is forced to favour who it says she must favour. The elderly man spoke of how murderers, politicians and fraudsters had walked out of the brothel with “Madame Justice” by the hand. How the innocent and the poor had walked out disappointed, how they were labelled guilty because the system pleased. The elderly man held my hand and said, “You are young my child, and I have given you all my wisdom. I am The Law which you seek within the courtroom but cannot find.” He then handed me the Blindfolds which once belonged to “Lady Justice” along with her Sword and Scales. He looked at me and said “The Law must protect society, and justice must be just” and with those words the elderly man rested his head back and closed his eyes.