

Dear Cody;

January 6th, 2018

Forests 4th birthday is in two weeks. No, I won't be there to wish her happy birthday or watch her eyes light up as she opens up presents, any more than I got to be there for the last two birthdays or the last three Christmases. Never got to hear her say her first words either. The last three Christmases and birthdays I wrote her a letter apologising to her as tears streamed down my face. How do you explain to a four year-old that I can't be in her life because people are so uncivil, class-less, and arrogant that I'm not even a person anymore. I am just a piece of meat for policemen and lawyers to "process". You see Cody, I am not the kind of person who can ignore the forest for the trees. I don't allow myself to be so delusional to believe that somehow the end justifies the means - it rarely does. I could never convince myself that it was okay to be so focused on something as abstract and essentially meaningless as the law, that I forgot I was dealing with real human beings. Heart-broke fathers, little girls not allowed to know their own fathers. Have you ever spent one day in a jail cell Cody? Ever been separated from your children? No, probably not. And yet your job is to separate people from their children every day. Your job is to take years, decades, life-times from people. Not hours or days or weeks. Months, years, decades, life-times. How many of the people you have sent away for even 5 years come back to find their children gone, never to be found again? How many come back penniless, homeless, job-less, destroyed? How many lose their mind? The worst part is not even that lives are destroyed in the name of "Justice", but that over time the people who work in your system become completely de-sensitised to the suffering they are dishing out. It all becomes so normal doesn't it? 5 years for this one, 15 to life for him, oh look! Time for lunch, lets do Sushi. 10 years for this one...

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eenie, meenie, minie, moe, eh Cody? And then the real terror: the courts no longer trying to sort out the innocent from the guilty, the mentally ill from the truly criminal, the lies from the truths. I mean really, Cody, who has the time, am I right? you should study Foucault. He was a professor at Berkeley back in the 1960's. He predicted (way, way ahead of his time) what he called "Generalised punishment". He said as the Justice System became more and more overburdened, it would do less and less truth-finding and just start dishing out a little punishment for everyone (hence the term "Generalised punishment"). Everyone becomes guilty, everyone becomes equally guilty. Everyone's a criminal, right Cody? What could be ^{more} normal than to be arrested? What could be more normal than a ride in a prison van, non-contact visits with your children (if you're lucky), bending over and spreading your cheeks for other grown men, a little off-camera ass-whipping? What could be more normal than a felony record, a prison record, a strike? Have you ever gone out with one of those guys who could best be described as a date rapist? Most women have. You know, he locks you in the car and paws you up until you give him a little somethin'? yeah, that's your "Justice" System. I'm locked in a 1979 Chevy Nova with "Dan the Man" Flynn and Stephanie "strap-on" Bridgett. There's just no way I get away without getting my leg humped on a little is there? You want some "Justice"? I'll give you some Justice. Just take a Felony Conviction and a Strike, waive your right to appeal and we'll let you out of the car. Your time to do the honorable thing is running out, Cody. There is only one honorable thing in this case:

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Time Served, No Strikes.

-R.A.G.