

JUDGEMENT ROOM

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You don't really know me...see you only really know what you hear, read and believe you see. But what you know about me...don't define me, so you don't...really know me.

My past is not a reflection of my presence in essence I exist in spiritual consistency...which has to be felt and not seen to be perceived properly, so if you are looking at me through the perception of your eyes then you won't really see me. All flesh just festers in illusion and perfection comes alive at the point of death. And that's not my experiences, that's just my fantasy, my hope, my theory. My guess for the best of the rest of life expectancy. So if you really wanna try me, I say step into my Judgement Room.

Welcome to this Judgement where there's barely room for two. But just leave your ego and your pride outside and allow the commonality of your mind to slide in. Just glide in and gleefully spare some time and take a seat for me and make yourselves at home, but be prepared to become as un-relaxed and uncomfortable as possible as we get philosophical about what it really means to be a human being living with iniquity.

So first let me apologise for my inadequacies, my insularity, the informality of an invitation to this unfurnished property 'cos' you'll see there's no mirrors on the wall so you're bound to fall short of your own reflection. So as a gesture to your guest, I'll objectively give you the opportunity to start with me, or better still, take the liberty of illuminating every nook and cranny, all the shit, the nitty gritty that life's given me and, if at the end, empathy still defies you...then you can throw your ten pence worth in as a tip for my hospitality and I'll say 'Welcome to the Judgement Room'.

You can judge me by the pigmentation of my skin but that was God given, driven down through my ancestors into my next of kin. So I say let's start again and I say 'Welcome to this Judgement Room'.

So you can judge me by my personality but the reality is...none of us are infallible. My morality is breakable and interchangeable dependent upon my circumstances and who I'm trying to impress. 'Cos' sometimes we dress up our best! So don't judge me by my clothes 'cos' I didn't make 'em. Whilst they might speak for my hygiene, they're really just a front to cover me, tailor made to suit my liabilities. 'Cos' I'm not brave enough to show you my balls. See my mouth's really big but my courage is comparatively small. We're all able and capable of wearing disguises. What I'm really trying to say is in the naked sense of this world, vulnerability is not a designer label.

You can judge me by my speech, my character, swagger, way that I walk but more fool you 'cos' even parrots can talk. So I'll never tell you to walk a mile in my shoes. I'll just say 'Welcome to the Judgement Room'. Welcome to my history, the struggle, the difficulty to find my rightful place in society! Welcome to the fundamental injustice that makes it impossible for a guy like me to gain employability. The convictions that have outcast me. This blackness that continues to darken my serenity.

Welcome to the ignorance of those in a professional capacity. All the voices of hierarchy that cry for change yet remain estranged to the concept and they say how and when will this great war be won and I say not until, not until we begin to rethink the bill. The constitution of this institution or trial and retribution. Not until we begin to refine and redefine the definition of desistance. The long arm of the law that won't let go. The rehabilitation of an offender that goes on forever. The disclosure of a closed chapter that imposes limitations on my future. But my life's worth more than a label on a piece of paper. Society keeps sticking this stigma on my assessments. This unsatisfactory CRB¹ can't rehabilitate back from this barbaric mentality that keeps me prisoner to my past. See I'm free from the jails but I still see the bars.

Intelligence, surveillance, babysat in supervision. Forced on to courses to bring about an action of remorse when it has to come of my own accord. Its then multiplied and magnified by the self-fulfilling prophecy of the labels you bestow on me. Junkie, Ex-offender, Service user, Thief! 'Cos' I don't care how many text books you read or degrees you receive. I'm telling you we are what we believe and we don't need academics to tell our story! Neither

¹ CRB refers to a criminal records check undertaken by prospective employers in the UK

does our self pity need sympathy. We welcome the treatment programmes and the therapy. What I really need is the chance to become an acceptable, responsible, productive member of my community. A voice that can be heard. A voice that can speak for its own self. The guilt, the shame, the remorse, it's made me feel worthless. Surely my solution lies behind re-evaluated self-esteem and re-directed purpose. I'll grow when I'm ready! Just help me plant the seed, 'cos' hope is the drug that every offender needs. A new identity indentation. A source of inspiration! So show me examples of the people that succeeded, so I too can believe that I'm valued and needed.

Like a soldier with vigorous valour to confront this war. The elders taught me I had to find a cause worth dying for. So now I've found a calling connected to a cause, a cause that uses metaphor to expose the flaws in our criminal injustice system.

I'm motivated and driven to have my karma reversed and my judgement forgiven. To preserve with self-worth and observe and wonder why I've been preserved! There's only one reason a guy like me survives. It must be to touch the hearts of those who still feel doomed. I'm trying to pay my dues and I say 'Welcome to my Judgement Room'.

