

Through Our Eyes

By: Kyoto Ron Seabridge

It was like getting smashed in the face with a red brick. I was traumatized, dazed, and my soul was hemorrhaging. The word guilty echoed through that federal court room in Beaumont, Texas so loudly I was sure the whole world could hear it. My mind raced, "How can this be happening?" In that exact moment of time I was completely destroyed, rendered completely destitute, physically, mentally, and spiritually. Because I was wrongly charged, wrongly indicted, wrongly prosecuted, and wrongly convicted; my lady, Mi Luv, Windy, lie in a cold silent grave. She died a cruel insidious death alone in a nursing home. As an experienced Registered Nurse of over 20 years, I know, Windy's physical pain, and profound mental anguish due to severe debilitating depression, causing her feelings of helplessness and hopelessness were without justification by any human standards. She starved to death. Windy begged and pleaded with me to come and get her. All I could do was lie in a cold, filthy steel cage, balled up in the fetal position and scream out in silent rage as guards walked past that steel cage laughing and joking. Judge Thad Heartfield said he would not help Windy. My trial lawyer, Thomas Burbank, said he would. He promised to file motions. He never did. I only know Windy was dead within weeks of my incarceration. The jury got to go home to their families, my Windy was dead. Her story, my story, our story, must be told.

My struggle begins with words. Words that will convey insight and not be seen as complaint. Words that will convey the feelings of many knowing in the final analysis it is about the one. Words that cry out for justice and not be confused as a ploy for pity. Words that carry truth, not because they are from my pen, but because the truth is indelibly etched in millions of minds of those who have been kidnapped out of their lives. Words that rationalize how the faith of our fathers is slowly leached out of a person by all manner of horrors. It is not possible to express the mental and spiritual pain people feel trapped in a system where common sense and compassion does not exist. There is no amount of paper that can hold the description of such pain. Some seek mindfulness while other suffer mindlessness. All I have spoken to lament a question I hear over and over. "Why are they doing this to us? It does not make any sense. This is insanity!" Such pain runs deep when captives feel no one is listening.

My story is, the story of thousands, millions of people caught in a net carelessly cast in deliberation to satisfy the appetite for evil. It is a promise that good people, however snared in a net carelessly cast, can become public trophies, perfect fare and fodder, for a hungry media. The ruse of propaganda is an excellent milieu to feed an ever hungry society looking for sin. My words are not just figment or feckless fantasy. My words are carved in the stone of my permanent record and legal transcript for the entire world to read. It is a story of evil, corruption, lies, confusion, coercion, innuendo, aspersions, deceptions, bias, and social pragmatism devoid of any common sense or compassion. Like so many others have experienced, it is a story about reports full of rumor, self serving opinion, and edited truth twisted into lies. All of which are intended to inflame and create the illusion of criminality, when criminality does not exist. Men, women, entire families, are being ground into the earth by a judicial system completely out of control. Our legislators are pontificating their Christhood standing at a podium pounding their fist on their Bibles, while fear mongering their tough on crime psychosis. They are demanding an eye for an eye, while our society goes blind. Jesus is my mentor, but I want nothing to do with such pharisaism. Christians are supposed to stand up for Jesus, not step on him. If this is the justice system our Christian nation wants, a system devoid of compassion and grace, a system where the ethics of the infamous Joseph McCarthy rein king, then I am out as a Christian. Welcome to the United States of "Salem".

Linda Coyle was raised in rural Rushville, Indiana. She came to be with me in Lumberton, Texas where she and I lived over my martial arts school. Linda came by way of Cincinnati, Ohio and Knoxville, Tennessee. Her manner was soft and loving. Her mind clear, crisp, and concise. She was a person of personal compassion and caring. Her confident, but submissive nature, was the prayer of so very many men, yet she chose me. She made me promise her three things. First, a new life. Second a family. Third she said, "I want to be called Windy". I freely promised all three. I could only fulfill two of those promises. They would not let me protect her, help her, reassure her. They would not let me put my arms around her and say, "Luv it will be alright".

In September 2008, my corporate business computers were allegedly compromised. It took the federal government 5+ years to decide to bring me to trial. The FBI had aggressed on me at the Beaumont, Texas Wal-Mart, where two large men came at me in a wedge attack formation. I was fearful for my life as I did not know who they were, or what they wanted. Those two agents told me to follow them back to my corporate business, Brass Dragon Karate in Lumberton, Texas. Upon arriving at my studio, they passed me off to two other agents, agents Tracy Masington, and Jason Ramsey. My whole yard was full of FBI

agents, along with the police chief of Lumberton, Texas. I was interrogated, whereas I denied, three times, my culpability in having anything to do with the compromise of my corporate computers. On my third denial, vehemently refusing to admit to their accusations, agent Jason Ramsey, a agent in training, began to badger and coerce me. He threatened to arrest my son Ron Seabridge, who was 13 years old at the time. I was terrified for myself and little Ron. I asked for a lawyer but the FBI kept interrogating me. I stopped answering their questions. Many years later my phone rang. It was my trial lawyer Mr. Burbank.

Windy sensed my dismay and confusion as a result of that phone call. It was her moment, her time, to reassure me. She spoke softly but authoritatively, "It is impossible for them to find you guilty of something you did not do". I too agreed with her logic and sensibilities. It could not possibly go any further. I trusted our judicial system to do the right thing. At my pretrial hearing I was brought before District Magistrate Zack Hawthorn. He too, in a firm admonishing way, looked at the prosecutors, then commented they must not consider me much of a threat to the community since it took the government so many years to indict me. I was placed on bond where I immediately left the courthouse to go pick Windy up at St. Luke's hospital in Houston, Texas. It was a long two hours one way from Beaumont, an eternity to think, but I felt confident that everything was going to be ok. Mr. Burbank had kept telling me, "I am going to get you out from underneath this".

Windy had a condition that manifested itself mid life causing her to undergo a liver transplant in the year 2000. Her hospitalization at St. Luke's hospital in Houston was the beginning of a odyssey and challenge even the most experienced clinicians found tedious and exhausting. Windy would slowly fall into lethargy and stupor, signaling the need for immediate blood transfusions. Her blood values would drop to dangerous levels. Once transfused she would bounce back immediately. I too was worried until one of her doctors, a professor, on her liver team at Baylor Medical Center in Houston, explained to me that her liver was not failing, it was an associated condition that they had a treatment plan for. The plan was to give her a special injection monthly that would not act immediately, but over a few months would ultimately abate her need for blood transfusions. Windy wanted to live. I told her, "Luv It does not matter how many times, day or night, I need to drive you to Houston, we will get through this". That is the way it was until my trial. The only person in the entire judicial system that cared about Windy was my pre-trial probation officer Mr. Mark Goforth. He not only insisted I take care of Windy, but did everything within his power to see that happened. The FBI and federal prosecutors Randall Fluke and Chris Tortorice, could have cared less. They were out for blood. They got Windys.

It was stressful facing twelve people who were watching your every gesture, every shift in your body position, every subtle nuance of your character. The jury had been instructed their job was to bring back a verdict. They were told not to be concerned over what kind of punishment I may face or the consequences of their decision, that the government would punish me. How easy it was for my peers to condemn Windy to death, and imprison me for 20 years, knowing they would not have to dirty their hands and souls in the process.

It was blood the FBI and federal prosecutors sought and they were willing to do anything to get their fill. Three federal computer forensics experts were tasked by the prosecution to destroy me. They spoke in computer lingo, and technocracy, as if it were taken directly from Holy scripture. In the end Mr. Burbank asked each federal forensic expert separately and independently, "Do you know who compromised the computers? Are you saying it was Mr. Seabridge?" All three forensics experts stated unequivocally, "NO", we do not know, we could not know who compromised the computers. The jury was bombarded with so much technical jargon even Einstein himself would have scratched the back of his head. I could see the jury was getting lost in the presentation. To lure the jury back, FBI agent Chris Day presented a "Hypothesis", a "Theory", how I was guilty of transgressing the law, knowing anybody and everybody had access to my corporate business computers. Our best minds know that the invasion, and compromise of computers is a crime of liability, for which no defense exists.

Before I could shake the brick dust off of my white shirt, Mr. Burbank was pleading with Judge Heartfield to let me continue to remain out on bond until sentencing. Windys life was at stake. She needed me. Judge Hearfield in a calculated, omnipotent manner said, "NO". My trial and subsequent sentencing had all the elements needed to produce a made for television movie. The only thing that was missing was the truth. I am grieved beyond understanding that legal semantics are not subject to moral responsibility and basic human values. The law demands morality, subject to draconian punishment for every citizen of this country, except for those who are surreptitiously exempt.

At my sentencing hearing I was thrown into a travesty of words. Words constructed of iron which were betrayed by the eyes, body language, and subtle glances at each other by all those who spoke them. Words that were judiciously prepared ahead of time, designed to demean, dehumanize, and destroy. Words of castigation intended to make my words, my petition for justice null and void. Words to convey absolute power, because killing a man and his loved ones takes justification however subverted. Only God, (The One), has such power, yet His compassion and grace abounds. So many think so's and zero know so's. To take peoples lives on presumption, perception, and personal opinion without the complete vetting of evidence is the greatest crime of all.

My nightmare in hell was really just beginning when they put me in chains and transported me to a private jail facility who the federal government had a contract with. The old Jefferson County Jail in downtown Beaumont, now years old, was turned into Lasalle Corrective Facility. The first word I learned was "Offender". Even those who had not been adjudicated were considered guilty and called offenders. There was an emotional tenor of darkness that penetrated your very skin, that went right through to your bones. The stench of fear, anxiety, pain, and hopelessness invaded your senses like a demon spirit sinking its teeth into your gut. I was thrown into a "Pod" where a myriad of eyes attached them self to you. Each set of eyes sized you up, each set of eyes scanned you for strength or weakness. I quickly learned that most of those eyes did not belong to predators, but to those who feared predation. Most were like your friends, neighbors, and acquaintances from church, who too, had been thrown into this pit of perdition for little or no reason at all. I had never been in trouble with the law in 60 years.

I did not get much sleep that night, worrying about Windy. In my emotional exhaustion I thought I was becoming delusional while I lie in the dark, on a paper thin mattress, in a freezing cold cage. The old rusted doors were deafening as they slammed closed. I could hear in the echo of the building, people crying, people moaning, people praying, and those just mumbling to them self. Just when I was dozing off to sleep, I heard a loud scream, "Help me, help me, help me", over and over. No one ever came to help. I knew then that it would take all 45 years of my martial arts training to get me through this. God had abandoned me. The next morning a man named Eric, sat and spoke with me. Eric was a veteran of sorts, he was there on a parole violation. Somehow he knew sharing the truth with me about what I was facing would help me better understand what was happening to me. He was right, things did get much worse and never got better. I was still thankful for the knowledge, it helped me to prepare myself for what was ahead.

In Lasalle, as well as the prison environment, knowledge is power, and ignorance is deadly. There was always muffled talk about the suicide or the rapes, that had occurred the night before. Most of my peers were plucked right out of their lives. Many on bogus charges. So many young people, so many old people, so many people who did not belong there at all. There was constant discussion and frustration over whether to take a plea agreement even when you know you are innocent. Everyone knew that refusing a plea agreement meant long punishing sentences. No one wanted to admit to doing something they did not do, but all succumbed to fear. Most everyone complained about lawyers who intimidated them into a plea agreement. I was told, for a lawyer, a plea of guilty was worth \$10,000. I was at Lasalle for six months waiting to be sentenced, and in that time I witnessed things no one should ever witness. Things that seem mundane in comparison to what I was to learn about the justice system and how the system treats people.

Trey was a young man who fell from the top bunk in his cell late one night. We all heard his body hit the cold concrete floor. He was taken to the hospital and did not return right away. We all were concerned for him. Eventually he came back, with stories of the ICU and a bad concussion. As a nurse, I observed Treys slurred speech, blurred vision, affinity to bright light, staggered walking, and nausea. Trey kept asking me over and over, "Ron what's wrong with me?" I was helpless to help Trey. A senior guard, a man almost three times Treys size, stormed down our run toward the day room screaming. We were in the day room, Trey was sitting on the floor with his back against the cell bars. He was in a state of stupor and lethargy. The senior guard stepped through the door and pointed a can of gas at us, yelling, "Get back!" No one had said anything or aggressed on this guard. We all stood there frozen. He then turned toward Trey spewing verbal filth, saying "There is nothing wrong with you, the warden said, there is nothing wrong with you". He then grabbed Trey up from the floor and slammed him into the bars. Trey was tossed around like a rag doll. We all learned later that guard was given a promotion.

It was routine to be lying in your cell when suddenly all the toilets on the entire run would erupt and over flow onto the floor, out onto the run, over the ledge, and down on the run below. Feces and all manner of pathogen would float by you. It was simply squeegeed up. Guards would drop food onto the E-coli laden floors and put it back onto the serving trays. If you got a meager, often cold meal, you were grateful. If you complained about not getting something, even something as small as a pint of milk, you were called a liar. The personal address system was used by the guards to vent their hostilities by using language that would make my elderly mother break out into tears. Guards would argue over who is going to crawl into the maintenance spaces in the walls. "They don't pay me enough to go in there with that black mold", a guard retorted. When I asked why the facility was always freezing, a guard very candidly said, "Its because of all the germs". I could not fathom how unlicensed personnel who worked in medical could make decisions only a licensed medical person could legally make.

In between the mayhem and the insanity of Lasalle, I would call Windy on the phone in the day room. The charges were gouging. At first Windy tried to act as if she was ok, but when she told me she wanted to break the law so she could be with me, I knew something was wrong. She told me the federal government had plastered my name all over the media. Windy said the internet was viciously attacking me and she was going to fight back. I emphatically told her, "NO", people were ignorant and will hurt her. The government, the media, and the evil of the internet had already damaged her. It drove her toward deep, dark depression. Windy begged and pleaded with me to come and get her. My son Ron, no longer little, could not console her. I am not sure he really tried. Windy had loved him like a son. I trusted, and had left my son Ron with power of attorney in the event the unthinkable and impossible happened.

The last thing I did on February 27, 2014 was sit down next to Windy, put my hands on her lap, and kiss her. I confidently said "I will be back tonight". It would be the last time I ever touched her. As I walked through my karate studio, I stopped at the Arc Of The Covenant I had built for God and prayed. I would never get to be there again.

After I was first incarcerated, my son Ron would come to visit me. Windy would make sure I had money for the commissary otherwise I would have gone hungry. I was always glad when Ron brought Windy to see me. Those times were few, but very precious to me. The last time I saw her, in spite of her casual manner, I knew she was declining. As they started to leave, she put her palm and fingers flat against the glass partition we spoke to each other through. I could see the tears in her eyes. She waited for my hand. We could not touch but we could still feel. I put my hand exactly opposite hers and told her that I loved her. Windy died soon after, within weeks of my confinement. Once Windy died, my son Ron abandoned me. I could not wrap my mind around the idea that he refused my phone calls. Most of all, I could not wrap my mind around the idea that he would let me go hungry. More was to come.

It was shortly before thanksgiving that I was chained up and transported to the federal prison in Bastrop, Texas. By then I had been abandoned by almost everyone in my life. Some extended family members wrote letters of recommendation to Judge Heartfield, for which I will always be grateful. The judge scoffed at those letters completely dismissing them. My former supervisor, who stayed the course with me through Windy's tribulations, and my trial, had been the only person to write me here in prison. I was ecstatic, Diana never wrote again. Lacking honor, my senior black belts and masters disappeared into the shadows. My elderly mother has been grievously hurt. She and my brother Glenn see that I am graced with some commissary money each month. People are so busy on their Facebook and I-Phones, they just do not seem to care when good people vanish into a corrupt, broken system. They presume people are ok, that things are working as they should be, that people are being properly taken care of. They would be wrong! These very same people will not wake up to reality, until it is happening to them, or their family.

Other than the word "Guilty", the only words more devastating to my ears, was when my brother Glenn told me, "Your Son is no good". I know Glenn was only trying to save me from the pain of telling me my son Ron was a thief. Ron had shown complete disrespect and disregard for my brother, and hurt his grandmother, my mother, beyond repair. He trashed Windy and I's home, sold our antique furniture, and spent money, not his, on an expensive all terrain vehicle. He lived in our home letting the mortgage and property taxes go unpaid until the property could not be salvaged. When I asked my brother about Windy's life insurance policy, he just sighed. I prayed for months Ron would not do the evil he has done, and do the right thing by us. My prayers went unanswered. I believed in my heart that he would protect me, not destroy me. A whole lifetime of work and struggle gone. I was told he had been influenced by his mother, step brother, and step sister. With such disregard for my life, what did he do to Windy?

In many ways things at Bastrop are the same as Lasalle. In many ways things are very different. There is more freedom albeit in a gilded cage. What is utmost on men's minds is 3 big men living in a 7'x10', 70 square foot room with 3 bunk beds, 3 lockers a toilet and a sink. It makes living a nightmare. Everyone hopes to go home. So many men work feverishly on all manner of legal work day and night. The system is set up to defeat your every attempt at freedom by making needed resources unavailable. Every thing costs, everything. Those who are destitute are trapped. It is a system set up for punishment not for rehabilitation and re-entry. The system wants to keep you locked up, helpless without a way of redemption.

Each month I eagerly await for my Prison Legal News knowing it will assault my senses, yet, once it arrives I feverishly seek a safe, quiet, place to hide and read it. It's content is so arresting it take me hours to process my emotions, and days to absorb the sheer violent absurdity of how one human being can do such evil to another for a pay check. The Prison Legal News writes of, and exposes, deaths, tortures, beatings, rapes, criminal neglect in medical care, over crowded living conditions, wars over televisions, the insanity of the prison industrial complex, and of those prison guards who would gladly work for nothing for a chance to intimidate, hurt, and punish someone.

Is their more in peoples hearts, minds, and souls, beyond that which I have enumerated? The answer is yes. If I were able to harness all the hate that lie just below the surface of the skin of people now incarcerated, then transmutate that hate into electrical energy, I could light the darkest areas of the city of Chicago indefinitely. Hate that is kept hidden, but betrayed by words not spoken, and conveyed by eyes cast at you as they offer a superficial smile or social gesture. Those who do not understand the power of hate ultimately lash out, if only to hate them self. There is fear all around me. Fear that manifests itself in so many forms. Bible study groups persecuting each other with the gnawing and gnashing of teeth. People hiding in the shadows making them self the smallest possible target. Then there is a spoken fear of most, for which I am not immune. The fear of losing your identity, becoming just another discard of society. Fear of being forgotten by family and friends. Fear of all those who say, "They deserve what they get!" As the "Elephant Man", Joseph Merrick cried out into the universe, "I am a man, I am not an animal". Society does not have a clue what they are wishing on them self.

A fellow captive asked me, "So, Ron how does it feel, to be like this?" At first I wanted to be angry, but he stuck his hand out and shook mine. He said, "Welcome to my world, it is all I have ever known. While you were living your comfortable life, I, we, were struggling to survive in a system that thwarts our every move, a system that wants to enslave us. His words were hard, and biting. I could tell deep down he was glad people of my ilk were suffering. Had I done enough, when I could, to ease his

pain? Was my safety always an illusion? What is the price of oppression and tyranny?

Windy's sister Robin and her brother in law, Carl came from Indiana to be with Windy in the months before my trial. Although I had never met them, they were instant family to me. Our home was their home. Carl and Robin were divinely attentive with Windy in every way possible. Carl died within weeks after Windy did. I could not, and still cannot, shake the feeling, that the profound stress put on Windy resulting from my conviction, and Carl's need to her help her, had not contributed to his death. It was too much for his heart. My pain multiplied even though I was told by Mr. Burbank, "You are a victim of circumstances, you should not have lost your freedom". I heard his words, but knew it was Windy that was a victim of circumstances.

Right before my trial, Mr. Burbank said the FBI and the government after 5 years of time will have to memorize their testimony. He said "They will lie". I sensed when I was being interrogated by the FBI, that FBI agent Tracy Masington hated men. What I could not know was even though while agent Masington stood next to trainee agent Jason Ramsey in my gazebo, she would forever keep secret, his threat to go after, and arrest, my 13 year old son Ron. She was agent Ramsey's supervisor. I sensed her presence at my sentencing hearing. I was sure she was the lone figure sitting, out of the light, in the back of the empty court room, watching and listening, as prosecutors Randall Fluke and Chris Tortorice defended their petition to keep me silent, as FBI agent Chris Day gloated over his contrived victory. It is impossible for a captive to adequately and successfully defend them self when they have been thrown into prison. Agent Masington alone may have stopped all this, if she just had come forward. But then, she had said to me in a superior, authoritarian, tone "Its the law". When law takes precedence over doing what is right, then no one is safe.

I looked to the United States Court of Appeals for justice. They too were cavalier and dismissive. As my court appointed appeals attorney Douglas Barlow wrote in my legal brief to get me heard before the Supreme Court; "The Court of Appeals erred in failing to reverse the judgments of conviction and failed to even properly analyze the evidence and issues". "The Court of Appeals glossed over the evidence without analysis or detailed discussion. The highly confusing and contested testimony of the government, taken with the overwhelming evidence of Mr. Seabridge's innocence established by the defense witnesses, undermined the integrity of the verdicts in this case. The convictions therefore constitute a manifest miscarriage of justice". When I put my trust in justice to the Supreme Court of the land, I was ignored. It is impossible to climb a judicial ladder of fairness and equity when with each attempt at ascension you find another step broken.

Once a persons appeal fails and you are brushed off by the Supreme Court as unimportant, along with being rendered destitute by the government, your court appointed lawyer abandons you. You are left to your own devices to fight your conviction through a Writ Of Habeas Corpus. Everyone knows the man who represents himself has a fool for a lawyer. Some day if I am not covertly murdered, accidentally fall down a set of stairs, become a "Reported Suicide", or have my skull cracked open by a lock in a sock, I will write the whole story. The book, the story will be called; Windy "All Lives Matter"