Apology Unsent | Apology Unheard

(pg. 1)

After commiting crimes that have earned me a defacto life sentence and the contempt of everyone I was once close to, I find respite from the drudgery of my daily existence in elaborate fantasies about how my life could have turned out differently -- a sort of counter life where I am good, kind, patient, and loving. This exercise has come to occupy more and more of my waking hours and now threatens my grip on reality. I've come to view the line between memory and imagination as a permeable border. I can exist simultaneously in one world and the other. I wrestle with the notion that two contradictory stories can co-exist; if asked today to testify in court about our case I would ask the jury to believe that it is possible to both know and not know something. As a defense, it is inadequate, but in some ways it is also true.

The harder I try to escape my history the more persistently I'm pulled back -- often by visions of you crying in court. Your spirit is not an emmissary come to haunt me, as we usually see ghosts; they are the physical manifestations of a guilty conscience. They are also an anchor to the past, however unwanted that may be, especially for me who has left behind a life I would be happier forgetting. I fear my only recourse is to confront the past with raw honesty and hope that through the pain we can both find freedom and some semblance of peace.

I'm a scumbag. It is simple and complicated as that. I'm a piece of shit who somehow managed to keep it under wraps for almost 35 years. I have no one else to blame. I do not come from an abusive upbringing nor do I have a mental defect -- I am simply not a good person at my core. There's an arguement to be made (and I've made it before) that my addictions and bro-culture had something to do with my crimes, but we both know that's a cop-out and weak excuse to shift the blame. And, more importantly, none of that in any way lessens my responsibility or makes up for the degenerate way I acted.

Feel free to hate me, I hate me. In fact, I doubt anyone could ever hate me more than I hate myself. I've often considered the coward's solution, open any vein, but I'm weak. So every day I wake up to my nightmare of an existence and the worst part is: I know I deserve it. It is like being stuck in a barrel at the bottom of the ocean with no options; there is nothing worse.

The truth: I plied my dates with liquor in the hopes of getting them drunk enough to make bad choices, all the while getting drunk myself to avoid judgement or responsibility. It seems eventually, I would get drunk enough to make a move, quickly becoming overly forward and pushy until I overwhelmed them with my size and strength. BUT, it is also true that in all my life I have never seen or used any type of date rape drug nor have I ever planned to rape anyone and had I heard or understood non-consent, I would have stopped.

I am a degenerate piece-of-shit, but I am not a monster. I have a daughter, mother, sister, niece, friends all of whom I adore and protect. BUT, again, let me be clear: none of this lessens my blame. If someone tried to get my daughter drunk in order for her to lower her inhibitions and then pushed themselves on her, knowing she was inebriated, well God save them if I ever got a hold of them. It doesn't matter if he didn't plan on raping her, didn't drug her, and was drunk himself; he is still held responsible, as am I. The bottom line is, I took advantage of you. Rape is an outrage even God could not understand, the most innocence stealing of crimes and I deserve every day I spend in this purgatory for weak men who didn't have to power to say no.

I live with pain and suffering, yes, but it pales in comparison to what I've put you through. I wish there was some way you could take out your vengeance and pain directly on me -- take your pound of flesh. Otherwise, I wish I could somehow convey the magnitude of suffering I've had to endure (and my family has had to endure) these past 8 years. Not because I want you to feel sorry for me, I don't, but because I want you to know that justice is being served. That you can rest at ease knowing that I regret what I have done and am sorry you had to meet me, sorry for so many mistakes in my life, but none more than the soul-crushing act I perpetrated against you. Just know, I am in hell now and know that hell awaits me in the next life.

I know simply saying sorry is not enough. There is no word big enough, the right word does not exist. I am broken-hearted by what I did and I regret it every single day in every single way. Not a moment passes that my whole life is oriented toward that remorse. Which is why I must ask you to PLEASE forgive yourself of anything you may feel you did wrong or any blame you place on yourself. You are fully, wholly, 100% blameless. I am the only one to blame; not the liquor, not the addictions, not society...just me. Blame me. Hate me. I will gladly carry it if it means freeing you from any doubts.

What more can I say? Is there anything I could say or do to help you heal? Please tell me, regardless of my discomfort, I'll gladly try my best. My newfound purpose in life is to try to make things right - as much as is humanly possible. Not for me - fuck me - but, for you and your family and your future. I hope you can believe these are not just hollow words of a desperate man. I pray that these words may somehow touch a secret chamber of your heart and you can hear me past your anger.

That's it. I wish I was a better writer, more eloquent, better at fully baring my soul. I'm not. I now leave it in God's capable hands. I pray that the good Lord bring you happiness and health, God bless you and your family.

By Leo Carder