

FALL ONCE; NEVER GET UP?

When a child first catches adults out--when it first walks into his grave little head that adults do not have divine intelligence, that their judgments are not always wise, their thinking true, their sentences just--his world falls into panic desolation. The gods are fallen and all safety gone. And there is one sure thing about the fall of gods: they do not fall a little; they crash and shatter or sink deeply into green muck. It is a tedious job to build them up again; they never quite shine. And the child's world is never quite whole again. It is an aching kind of growing.

--John Steinbeck

When a parent--or anyone--falls, is there not *someone* around to hear them? To care, other than those directly effected? The children. Does society fail, when so many fall? Does any of it matter? If the parent falls, and cannot get up--should someone help? Or, is it better to just throw them in a room, lock the door, and forget. Even if they've fallen only once ... do we leave them to never get up? It's why there's *two* parents, right? Many just simply get replaced.

What did we care .. where we sat or how we lived, when youth throbbed hot in our veins, and our souls were all aflame with the possibilities of life?

--Sir. Arthur Conan Doyle

We all start off the same, in many ways. That's why so many make the same mistakes! It's why our prisons are full, overflowing in places; prisoners lacking in education, labeled criminal when they themselves are unable to even comprehend the gravity of their situation. I see so many around me that have IQs at--or somewhere around--70, and those that seem to *have* sense are still below 100. There *are* however, a number of high secondary level IQs hidden among the population--and it's these that the state wishes to keep. Those that will *recommit* crimes, are the ones they let go. I see so many bad people go home, and good people stay, stuck indefinitely. The prisons need to get back to rehabilitation, teach these guys trades, ways they can make a living ... and have no need to commit a crime. (Yes. It's a choice. But some of these guys are without hope of ever finding help, or employment) And judges need to learn better ways of discerning *who* is lost, and who deserves hope--set up an unbiased point system for sentences.

I want to help.

But from inside, there's little I can do. I help those that I can, get a GED; I teach others the arts of creative writing; but it's not enough. There needs to be more possibilities for these fallen lives; tedious or not. Some have a lot to offer once whole again.

I prefer the saying, "Fall seven times, get up eight." As long as there's breath in a body, there is hope! Hope of change, of forgiveness, and a better way. I've forgiven those that perpetuated the broken system that put me here--now, I want to work to help fix it. The profit margin for incarceration must be removed! Prisons are a blemish on society, a shame; not something to be proud of. Things *can* change; prisons could begin to help prisoners *reacclimate* to society.