

Brought to Light

The night I went on the rampage for reasons I won't get into, but for reasons I felt totally justified for, as I vented my anger at the world - Was absolutely crazy as hell and doesn't speak highly of my character, but I needed to vent as my world was coming apart on me ! As I think about my actions now - I am still unable to put into words what was going through my head - except for getting away from things in the past and starting over ! Now, here I was back in Chicago Heights after spending two and a half years incarcerated - still trying to clear my head and trying to leave my past behind me .

What I didn't realize at that time, was that I wasn't running from my past, but the color of my skin - here I was a dark complexed man, raised as a privileged White child - unable to understand the discrimination being brought against me by others for what seemed to me as no apparent reason - I was only seeing the world through the eyes of a White person and not a man of color ... Confused that people always seemed to misjudge me ...

When I arrived in Florida and made it to my parents place - I still had my duffle bag and guitar, but only seven dollars in my pocket, yet was excited I would be reunited with my children soon - I wasn't prepared for what I would find and my heart still to this day sinks at the feeling of my own helplessness and despair when I found my children living in squalor - Shock does not come close to what was going through my head as I blamed myself for believing my children would be better off living in Florida with my parents while I served my time in prison - I was now trapped in a world my actions had created, that was worse then having to deal with Mary cheating on me and having another mans child - I had wanted to change my world - not cause my children to live in squalor ! I immediately asked Mary if I could stay there and she refused - which was something else I was unable to comprehend - since they lived over five miles from my parents place and I had no other place to stay but at my parents place ...

I didn't have a car - hell - I didn't even have a drivers license and here I was stranded in a totally White conservative rural area - with my only way of getting around being on foot or hitch hiking - I tried spending as much time as possible with my children and with no means of income and being in a rural area, my despair only grew worse at not being able change things - I knew I had to find help since I was only able to rely on my parents for the temporary roof over my head ...

Every night around 8:00 o'clock, as far back as I can remember my parents would frequent bars and return home after the bars closed - things didn't change when they moved to Florida -

as a child they took me with them and in a way I grew up in Chicago, bars and as an adult, I felt comfortable in bars myself - even though it was in bars, where people who didn't know me, that I experienced the worse discrimination - and trouble - never realizing how the color of my skin made me an easy target...

One night shortly after I arrived in Florida while in a country music bar with my White step - father - a flicker of light kept hitting my eyes and I noticed it was coming from a table across the room - and when I got up to visit the washroom I decided to investigate the source of the flickering light - to my surprise it was coming from a lady with diamond rings on her finger and right then I knew I had found the answer to my prayers ! Barbara and I, hit it off from that point forward as she eventually invited me to live with her on Clearwater Beach - the only bad thing was it was ten more miles of separation between my children and me, but I hoped things would soon begin to improve since that was my goal !

As I came to realize Barbara was trapped in her own world of despair - I decided to stick it out with her even though I was still without transportation as I walked - hitch hiked and rode buses to get around trying to find employment and visiting with my children - often bringing them with me on my journey's - the best time I spent with them is when I played my guitar and sang with them - in hindsight my children and I could have made a ton of money singing in public places - but I still lacked the transportation to get us around and was working with Barbara to try and improve all of our conditions ...

Getting Barbara to understand the reality of my world and see the reality of hers was taking time - Barbara finally decided she needed to get out of the environment we were trapped in together - she read my fictional writings and began believing in my plans of becoming a renowned writer once I got my hands on a word processor ! As I reflect on things Barbara didn't encourage my musical ability - I think she feared other woman would steal me away from her and the last thing she wanted was me to be surround by groupie's ! Even though she had plastic surgery and appeared to be in her early thirties - she was forty eight years old and knew I knew it too ... She was doing everything possible to hold on to me and I had no qualms with that as we worked to begin our own life together which included my children ...

As Barbara and I grew as couple - I met her three adult children and even her estranged husband an ex retired army servicemen and neo Nazi - with her oldest son Robert Jr., (Butch) being the worse of the lot - even so I done my best to get along with each of them - while Barbara and I explored our options in getting away to start over in a world of our creation !