

"PALACE OF JUSTICE"

Written by Luke McDannel, Broken Heart Ministries, after visiting the courthouse in Bucharest, Romania, November, 2002.

THE PALACE OF JUSTICE IN GOD'S CITY (Palatul De Justitie)

Even the marble steps have bowed to time.

Once straight, with sharp edges, strong,
But over the years, decades, shuffling of the feet of people coming
to the Palace of Justice, have worn valleys right down into the
stone.

No longer hard and straight, the smooth, bowed marble now welcomes
the foot.

How many feet have trod these steps?
How many feet have carried persons to justice here?
How many feet have witnessed injustice here?

Walking through halls of smoke,
Sunlight streaming through the windows, clean and bright ...
... until it comes through the panes, then dusty, old and dirty.

The halls are filled with people,
Huddled in twos and threes, smoking,
Talking firmly and passionately, waiving their hands and arms.
They are not aware of how their surroundings look to an outsider.
They are not aware the outsider has stood in modern, clean,
technologized palaces of justice.

But where is justice, if not through God?

Open a creaky large door.
It screams silently that it should forever be left closed, left to
rest.
Heads turn, who is that stranger coming in?
(But the curiosity lasts less than a moment, and the scene
continues.)
Four poor souls on trial, one-by-one they tell their story.
They are guilty ... of course. They have all stood in this large,
smoky room before.

The moment is a surreal photograph in the mind's eye.
The outsider does not speak the language.
How does he now what is happening before him?
Justice and injustice need no language.

An attorney stands and makes an argument.
She doesn't believe the argument and she does not talk passionately,
but justice demands an argument be made.

The older lady in the middle of the room types into an antique, to
make and keep records of all that goes on.
Somebody could ask later what went on here?
(Later, when leaving, the same typing is heard coming up through
basement windows. How many records? How many sins? Oh Lord, praise

be to You for forgiving our sins.)

But then ...

The judge, to this point speaking mechanically and coldly,
straightens her glasses.

She takes a long look at the most pathetic of the four.

He is young, 22, 23.

She is older, 45, 50.

Her voice, in any language, now becomes stern but warm.

She is talking like a mother talks to her child.

He looks up from the ground for the first time.

He feels the change in the air.

He says something, a tear falls.

The air clears, but then is dust once more.

He is not to go free today, but there is justice in this place.

Among the smoky, green walls, the high ceiling, once bright and
proud, the burnt out lights, the coughing, the warmth, the smells,
there is justice.

A mother has corrected a child. The child feels cared for and
wanted.

One can see the type of justice that come from this palace and must
feel sorrow for the people.

What sorrow God must feel for his children, stuck in our injustices.
Our cleanest thought, our brightest work but a whiff of smoke wafting
up through the dirty rays of light,
But Jesus comes and we are clean.

God has called a family to this city, reaching across the world and
breaking their hearts.

For them, this is God's City.

He uses the Palace of Justice to show one of the family about the
history of this God's City and the strength of the people.

Did the four know God?

Did the judge know God?

Who will be judged in the smoky room tomorrow?

Who will stand in judgment?

Out on the street, a businessman stops and walks back to an old lady,
huddled and crippled.

He bends down and hands her money and bread.

For the family, this is God's City.