



#109 *The Village Idiot*



*A community theater group wanted to put on a play. The play was adapted from an ancient tale of a village far, far away. In the story, a protagonist emerged victorious over a convincing conflict. The theater group gathered around their familiar round table and read the script. They loved it, except for one major problem - there was no villain, no antagonist. There was a VILLAGE IDIOT in the play, but as far as they could tell, the village **revered** him. Apparently, he was so different, that he caused the villagers to bend over backwards to accommodate him, and somehow, the townsfolk in the play saw this as a gift from heaven that brought the community together. “But we need an antagonist - someone to hate,” spoke up one of the actors. “I know this community. Any audience coming to see our play from this town will not be able to support the leading hero, without having some villain to be against.” So, the group decided to change the play a little bit and portray the village idiot as someone who purposely did not dress or speak or think like the rest of the villagers. He would be an OUTSIDER - an OUTLAW! The protagonist in the play would apprehend the idiot and send him away. Then, everyone in the village would be safe and sound and they would live happily ever after in their comfortable routine.*

The Table

*[A poem given at a U.S. state prison - 10.27.2013. It is dedicated to those who have taken the role in life that others call **outsider.**]*

*I saw a table. You were there!
And many others, too.
Some were very smart and some were even wise.*

*We were deciding to go down to the physical world.
We were deciding what roles to play.
Together we would agree on which part to take.
Then, the role of outsider was put on the table.
No one wanted to play it.*

You took it.

*But, it was explained, "You will be cast out, disrespected.
The people are not like before.
Long ago, you might have been revered
as someone who makes the community come together
to handle such a different one.
Now, they avoid diversity."*

But, you took the role.

Someone had to do it.

Thank you.

***UNTIL WE EMBRACE DIFFERENCE
SOMEONE HAS TO PLAY THE OUTSIDER***