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JUSTICE

*Philosophical Conclusions of a 21st Century
Assassin*

By Christiaan Keaton

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*For Mikaela & Michael – my heartbeat, my driving force,
my sanity and occasionally, my insanity! Aishiteru!*

PART 1: Ju's Choice

*"For every beauty there is an eye somewhere to see it. For every truth there is an ear somewhere to hear it. For every love there is a heart somewhere to receive it." – Ivan Panin
(Russian Mathematician 1855-1942)*

*"Beauty often seduces us on the road to truth." – Dr. Wilson
"And triteness kicks us in the nads." – Dr. House*

Thoughts on "Beauty"

*"One day Truth and Love got together and got married. They had two children, Justice and Beauty and they were perfect."
This is the story Yasu used to tell me...*

What is "beauty" really? Webster's defines it as, "the quality or aggregate of qualities in a person or thing that gives pleasure to the senses or pleasurably exalts the mind or spirit." Sounds about right. Now, in the old Classical school of thought, both beauty and truth were synonymous. Whatever was considered true was also thought of to be beautiful. "But no pleasure is comparable to the standing upon the vantage ground of Truth," penned Francis Bacon from *Essays – Of Truth*. Scottish poet, James Beattie said, "How sweet the words of truth, breath'd from the lips of Love." In addition, the poet John Keats, in his *Ode on a Grecian Urn*, put it this way:

*"Beauty is truth, truth beauty, that is all
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."*

However, in today's Post-Modern worldview we say that truth is ugly. According to David Hume, "Truth springs from argument amongst friends." Edward R. Murrow is quoted as

saying, "Most truths are so naked that people feel sorry for them and cover them up, at least a little bit." Likewise, Jean Paul Sartre said, "Like all dreamers I confuse disenchantment with truth."

If I have to choose between truth and beauty, I choose beauty. Why, you may ask. A fair question, and for that I have a more than fair answer. Quite simply put, I prefer the view from beautiful.

But, do I have to choose between Truth & Beauty? Are the great minds of today correct in their theorizing that truth is ugly? Even still, are there any absolute truths or is all truth relative? If all truth is relative, that could get pretty ugly! There are truths that I face every day, every moment, in my line of work that are grotesquely ugly. I hate ugly...hate it with a passion. My eyes desire to drink in only what has extreme aesthetic value. That sounds cold and heartless you may say. Sure, I understand why you would think that, but let us think about some cold, ugly truths for a minute shall we? Give me a chance to validate my preference.

There are great global injustices plaguing our world today, none of which are beautiful but all of which are so true and real that, if you have a heart that cares for others and the world around you, they injure your soul. The plight of world hunger is one example. Others would include, but are not limited to child soldiering, HIV/AIDS epidemics, all forms of racism, prejudice and genocide, sexual violence against women and / or children, child slavery, and third world sweatshops and prostitution.

These injurious crimes against humanity tend to infuriate anyone who loves justice and beauty. Every day I try to do something about it. I have made it my mission in life to bring about justice and find truth. But I do not have all the answers as yet...I am still searching. There are so many more questions out there than real answers. And I am sick of asking and getting apathetic, indifferent responses and others' opinions. So I take action. I look for clues to the truths that I am after and every now and again, I stumble upon beauty along the

way. I have this sneaking suspicion and a hope that one-day truth and beauty can become as one.

- *Ju's Journal*, November 6, 2011

Chapter 1: Random Masterpieces?

“Creativity is the ability to introduce order into the randomness of nature.” – Eric Hoffer

“A gun gives you the body, not the bird.” – Henry David Thoreau

“I have big gun; I took it from my Lord. Sick with Justice, I just want to feel you. I’m your angel, only a ring away. You make me violate you no matter who you are!” – Mell, lyrics from Red Fraction

She laid sprawled out on the AstroTurf, staring up at a billion stars and wondering whether or not to use the knife under her tight jeans strapped to her leg or the gun in her right hand 6" DEP Scoped Holster. She decided to leave that to fate, if there is such a thing, or maybe it is just timing and a bit of quick judgment, that determines an outcome. No matter, she did not have to come to any conclusions right now; she had time. Time to enjoy the cool of the fake grass underneath her body. Time to relax and concentrate on nothing but her breathing. Time to gaze in awe at the vastness of the heavenly expanse above her. Time to do nothing. Time, for now, was her friend, her best friend...her only friend.

Her name is Ju, as the French pronounce “au jus”. Ju, Japanese for ten. No last name, just Ju. This is curious since she is not Japanese, just an all-American girl, of European decent but no Asian heritage...at least not genetically. However, she is a “ten” as far as biology goes. She has the above-average looks of a supermodel and the above-average intellect of a rocket scientist. However, Ju has chosen neither of those two professions to earn a living in this bizarre, twenty first century world. This New York-born beauty is an assassin. And a damn good one at that!

Seattle's Qwest Field was a perfect place for Ju to just chill out, since this late Sunday night all the spectators and personnel from the Seahawk's game were long gone and the madman chasing her still thinks she's inside a company-issue, Ferrari Gran Turismo that she left on autopilot going about 110 mph on the ever winding Interstate 5 in Tejon Pass, between the Los Angeles Basin and the San Joaquin Valley. The programming on this supped up vehicle is so high-tech that it will self-destruct as soon as the red Saleen S7 gets within one car length of it; taking both cars out. *BOOM!* And that will be all that Mr. Smith (or whatever his *real* name is)...all that sick-ass bastard wrote. *Good riddens!*

Ju sifted the artificial lawn through her fingers. Tactile responses are what bring her the most satisfying pleasure and comfort; touch means everything to this thirty-year-old killer. She moved her right hand up her shirt, under her Victoria's Secret, perfect 38 C, Ipex bra and turned on her iPod. She slid in the earbuds, closed her ashen-gray eyes and tried to tune out everything else. The ghostly sounds of Yoko Kanno & Ilaria Graziano's "Velveteen" gently ministered to her unsettled soul. Too many unanswered questions plagued her conscience. Too many lives she was directly responsible for ending. Too many fragments of memory that she will try to unsuccessfully pull together. All she manages to extract are pieces. Pieces of her childhood, pieces of her family, pieces of a young life long gone...a life that she choose to walk away from at age seventeen...a life that was not what you might think.

Ju was born Helena-Marie Juliet Barbieri on February 11, 1981 to loving parents, Antonio and Lia in New York's Upper East Side. The couple had come to the U.S. shortly after they were married in the late 70's in their hometown of Milan, Italy. He was an architect and she studied music. Antonio worked and provided for the family, real *old school*, while Lia did volunteer charity work teaching piano to inner city kids. A little less than a year after Ju's birth, they moved to a big home in Westchester, NY for a more family-oriented

environment. They hired a full-time, live-in housekeeper/cook/nanny, Yasuhiro Inoue, from Osaka, Japan. He became Ju's caretaker, teacher and best friend. Yasu and Ju's relationship would formulate one-half of her worldview; the other half came from the many philosophers' writings that she had collected over the years.

Philosophy was her passion; gathering quotes like some people collected trading cards or other memorabilia. Among her favorites: Descartes, Kierkegaard, Hume, Blaise Pascal, Kant, and Machiavelli, just to name a few. These great thinkers were what occupied most of her waking moments lately. Ju was on an internal and external search for truth, reality, wisdom and beauty. *But, NOT love!* In Ju's experience, love could not be found in any of those things...not in truth, not in reality and certainly not in wisdom. Not even in beauty. Love was an unrealistic lie, an illusion that was, without a doubt, unwise to try to get a hold of. As slippery as water and as unreliable as a whim. Love was such a waste of...*WAIT JUST A MINUTE! How did that word creep up into my thoughts again so unpredictably! I'm a trained professional for crying out loud! No one and I mean NO ONE, sneaks up on me and lives! Even in my thoughts!* So, Ju just killed it again in her head. *Bang! Bang! Love is dead!*

With that, she rolled over and stood up. A glance at her Rolex...two more hours before dawn. Perfect. She will head east again and pick up her next assignment from the company headquarters in D.C., The Magistrate, as it's called, but not before she makes up her mind whether to use the knife or the gun. On the one hand, her 5mm 'UltraMatch' auto pistol would be quick and less messy. But her new damascus hunting knife, handcrafted for her personally by Ichiro Hittori himself, would be swift and much more her style; fulfilling her need for "*tactile action satisfaction*" as Ju liked to call it. *What to do? What to do?* She pondered so hard that a vein over her right temple began to pulse and bring on a much overdue migraine. "Just pick one, lady!" She heard herself exclaim aloud. Her voice echoed in the grand, vacant stadium. She always called

herself “lady”, as if to remind herself that two very civilized human beings who taught her the best of manners raised her and also because Yasuhiro, the one who *really* raised her, would tell her that no matter what else she may choose to be in life, a lady is what she was. “Okay,” in a whisper this time, “the knife it is.” And with that she sauntered out to the Qwest Field parking area where she left her mark, tied up and gagged in the trunk of his Mercedes sedan, and slit his throat. She then placed an explosive in the backseat and at exactly 200 paces out she flicked the switch. *BOOM! All in a day’s work!*

On the plane back to our nation’s capital, Ju took out some papers she kept in her small, leather, over-the-shoulder, *carry-all* bag, where she keeps all the things like extra ammo that you can’t bring with you on a plane; sorry, trade secret, won’t be revealing how she does that one. She carefully reads over the quotes, one by one, and then writes one of her own. Here is what she read:

“Nature is an infinite sphere of which the center is everywhere and the circumference nowhere.” — Blaise Pascal

“How dare we speak of the laws of chance? Is not chance the antithesis of all law?” — Joseph Bertrand

“That which is static and repetitive is boring. That which is dynamic and random is confusing. In between lies art.” — John A. Locke

Then Ju took out her pen and journal. She added this entry:

“Are not my actions merely just carried out pieces of fallen gray matter? The outpouring of electrical signals wired in such a way in my brain that when carried from thought to motion they are performing random masterpieces?” — Ju

She was desperately searching for purpose in a world that through her own reasoning and personal experiences made no sense and through her own choices left her feeling empty and alone and without direction. The only direction Ju had now was to the company for her next assignment. At some point back in 1998, she decided that taking a job, as a pricy mercenary was somehow much nobler than an attorney for a Wall Street financial firm. And ultimately she would be correct if she measured the cost in lives lost. Greed is a much more devastating killer than guns when you add up the multitudes of casualties it takes with it. Besides, she was only killing the “bad-guys” right? Then a voice inside her head spoke up, “Stop trying to justify your sins,” it said, “either make peace with yourself or choose a different path.” Funny how that inner voice always sounded just like Yasuhiro. She missed him so much that it hurt to think of him even for a moment and yet the thought of not remembering him often was unthinkable. The killer swallowed some pain pills, put her head down and slept for four hours.

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