

The Prisoner

by Owen Robertson

(A prisoner is standing at the window of a conference cell. He holds the bars on the window to indicate it's presence. His face is bruised from a fight. A pastor has come to visit him. There is one chair on stage, facing the audience. The pastor should be implied as sitting in a chair opposite, so the prisoner addresses the audience as the pastor.)

I like to look out the window. Oh, yeah...this. *(Indicating his bruised face.)* You noticed, huh?! Well, preacher. This guy kept trying to hit me and I kept stopping his fist with my face. Heh heh. Yeah, otherwise doin' pretty good. Heard a new joke this week. *(He crosses and stands behind the chair.)*

A man and a woman died and went to Heaven. They met each other up there and decided they wanted to get married. So they went up to Jesus Christ and told him, "We want to get married." And Jesus said, "Really?! Oh, my. Well here's what I want you to do. Wait 100 years. That's not much time in eternity. Wait 100 years and if you still want to get married, we'll get you married." So they waited 100 years, then came back to Jesus and said, "Jesus, we've been here 100 years. We still want to get married." Jesus said, "Wow. Listen, why don't you wait another 50 years. That's only half the time you've already waited. Wait 50 years and if you still want to get married, we'll get you married." So they waited another 50 years. Then they came back to Jesus and said, "Look, we've been here for 150 years. We really want to get married. So Jesus said he'd have to go talk to God, the Father, about this. So Jesus went up and conversed with the Father, then he came back and said, "This is what we need you to do: wait another 10 years...if we still don't have a preacher up here,...we'll marry you by common consent."

Hahaha...*(Pause, solemn.)* Yeah. I guess I want to talk about it. *(He sits in the chair.)* This kid he came out of nowhere. The police report showed .17% alcohol. D.U.I. It was a terrible mistake. Yes. My father was an alcoholic. He was drunk all the time. I guess I picked it up from him, even though I never wanted to be like him. I hated him. But, look at me now.

Two days into my sentence, these three guys...they...you know. My cell mate told me he had a way to get back at them. He and some guys could arrange a little accident, for a price. Now I'm serving two life sentences. Parole in 60 years. Aids? I don't know. Guess we'll find out in ten years. I don't know, preacher, if I told you that I had Aids would you still be here?? *(Pause)* Don't you think that God has had enough of my trash?! I know I have. I don't think he'd want to get caught associating with me. I'm a pretty despicable person.

My mother used to sing to me all the time. She had a voice like an angel. She sang...what do you call them?? Hymns. Until Dad put her in her grave. Sometimes when I wake up, I can hear her singing still. *(He sings "There Is A Fountain.")*

Do you believe that, Preacher?!? Then you go back. You go back to your congregation and you tell them. You tell them to live what they believe. You make them accountable, Preacher. You make them accountable for what they say and do and how they tell folks about Jesus. You tell them, Preacher. You tell them. 'Cause if you don't they're going to end up like me. Oh, they may not be in the state penitentiary, but they'll be in prison. You tell them, Preacher. You go. You tell them. You go. You go.

Huh?? What do I want most in life? *(Pause, he crosses to the window.)* I want my family back. *(He looks out the window, holding the bars.)* I like it when you come, Preacher. That's when they let me look out the window.

(End with transition about the COOPERATIVE PROGRAM assists in ministering to prisoners.)

END