

HOMELESS IN PARADISE

November 23-29, 2018
CEDAR STREET SUMMIT - Part 17



“I STILL REMEMBER WHEN YOU LOVED ME AND I MATTERED”

By Wanda Sue Parrott

DYING of a broken heart is the stuff that makes for great legendary country western love songs. If, however, a real life victim like homeless writer CeliaSue Hecht or former Seaside city councilmember/mayoral candidate Kayla Jones suffers, do people really care?

Last week, following online publication of 25-year-old Kayla’s letter of resignation, I counted at least 75 messages on the Next Door thread announcing “Kayla is gone!”

Only three of them suggested Kayla be considered innocent until or unless proven guilty. She was apparently tried and found guilty in the local hometown court of public opinion in contravention of our Constitution and Article 11 of the United Nations’ “Universal Declaration of Human Rights.”

Article 11, Universal Declaration Of Human Rights

(1) Everyone charged with a penal offense (crime) has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he/she has had all the guarantees necessary for his/her defense.

(2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offense on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offense, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offense was committed.

Kayla’s initial offense was shooting off her mouth, exposing male councilmembers and other city staff to claims of insensitivity, which she called sexual harassment, thus embarrassing them in public.

Kayla’s alleged backfire crimes were namely overspending of public money for babysitting, travel and other expenses connected with her role as city councilmember from 2016 through 2018, errors for which she claims she was a scapegoat and for which public outcry forced her to feel she must resign.

Kayla’s Facebook Farewell

Kayla posted her Facebook Farewell on November 13, excerpt of which follows:

. . . I was torn apart by my neighbors and people that watched me grow up.

I don’t feel comfortable nor welcome in my own hometown anymore, and that deeply saddens me.

I've all but been excommunicated from leaders in the black community and as a young black woman that breaks my heart.

So it is with great sadness that I submit my resignation to be effective December 1, 2018. Wishing you all the best, Seaside. Kayla Jones.

Holiday Heartbreak Among The Homeless

One of Kayla's unsung acts of public service was establishment of Seaside's Homeless Committee to help find solutions to homelessness—akin to broken-heartedness.

For instance, two unidentified women, both loners, are daily habitués of Fremont Avenue, where they hang out near fast food establishments. One woman dozes upright beside her mound of trash bags on a bus bench and the other sleeps on the sidewalk beside her grizzled white German shepherd.

A third homeless woman, former Seaside resident CeliaSue Hecht, shares her van with her best friend, her dog Cici. Lately, she reports, she has nearly frozen at night.

CeliaSue, turning 69 on Thanksgiving, shares this poem she wrote about heartbreak:

Ode to the Four

by CS Hecht

(for Dietrich)

*I still remember when you loved me
when I could be and do anything I wanted
like sing and dance with the stars
perform cartwheels for Grandpa at the park
twirl Swan Lake as a ballerina in the living room with Grandma's scarves
I still remember when you loved me and
life welcomed me as a newborn babe into the world
dolphins and whales swam up to my face and kissed my nose
roses gasped wide open in wonder
I still remember when you loved me into dreaming sacred dreams
heart flipping happiness
joy induced seizures
unlimited unilateral bliss
I still remember when you loved me into believing
in cascading freedom and liberty and justice for all
buoyant hopes fulfilled
triumphant success and miracles
delicious kisses carved into a heart on a tree
I still remember when you loved me and I mattered
like an important art exhibit, a painting in watercolors of Monet
or the Sistine Chapel
My value and worth decreed a treasure trove
My words no longer optional but mandatory
I still remember when you loved me
and I approached each day with butterflies and leaping does
as special as the dew upon the grass in early morn*

*meaningful as the wisdom of Beethoven
I still remember when you loved me
as newly fallen snowflakes wet paint upon a wall
media heralding the next Pulitzer Prize winner
I still remember when you loved me
and I was bathed in rapturous waves of indelible illumination
carried my glow into the dark night of the soul of the world with nary a doubt
marshaled resources like only a one-woman Calvary can do
I still remember when you loved me
and you called me brave when I felt weak and bitter
you were determined to break through
and captured and wrangled my stubborn New York skeptic into submission
Your heart was vibrant and full while mine was shriveled and dying
so why do I now lie upon rows of fallen ghost heroes in a cemetery of lies
as a gambler who approached winning in Las Vegas
I feel as though Someone has tricked me
not realizing that the odds were always against me
the game was rigged with the House predictably the winner
my ace in the hole crashed
and my heart lies crushed into broken bits of fractured glass
my Royal Flush doomed into oblivion
witness to a Coney Island freak show hall of mirrors
I wonder did I do something wrong? Did I offend you?
Was it all a mirage in the desert?
Did I hallucinate something Wonderful into being
only to have it be aborted for some insane reason?
A foolish cartoon of epic proportions.
I cautiously, gingerly approach the Good with trepidation
not wanting my heart to be broken wide open one more time
wondering why my heart hasn't been vaccinated to loss and sorrow by now.
Have I been a fool for love or just a plain old ordinary everyday fool?*

CeliaSue's 69th birthday is Thanksgiving. She needs repeat breast cancer surgery—and a place to live with her canine partner Cici, whose love gives her a good reason to live despite heartbreak.

She says: Can you support a cranky, cold old lady with a hot cuppa tea for \$3 or more:

<http://ko-fi.com/k9mama>

<https://silverliningsandgraymatters.wordpress.com>

<https://cshechttwriter.journoportfolio.com>

If you're interested in helping heal the heartbreak of all who often feel unloved, as if they no longer matter, applications are now being taken for volunteers to serve on the Homeless Committee started by former councilmember Kayla Jones. May she heal in peace. Next meeting is Nov. 29. For details, visit the Seaside website at <http://www.ci.seaside.ca.us/156/Boards-Commissions>.

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Photo: CeliaSue Hecht receives unconditional love from her best friend Cici after breast cancer surgery
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