

# Freedom, Justice, and Equality

by Lonnie Hicks

Freedom, Justice and Equality  
sat down to discuss their differences  
as to who in the final differentiation  
was best for the Citizens.

Equality spoke stating 'Every human being  
is to be seen as equal.  
Classes, Kings, and Robber Barons  
have mounted historically over-weening excesses.

From them sprung oppression, slavery,  
disease and poverty  
other multiple negatives  
in the sad human panoply.

Society rebelled against them  
all hoisting my banner  
which reads:  
'What We Need is Equality'

All agreed this was so  
for a time  
with Justice finally noting  
'Well Equality all you say is true  
but also mark  
how easy it is to confuse Economic Opportunity  
with Political Equality.  
Some systems have one  
but surely not the other.

These two, of course, are not the same;  
in fact you Equality are perfectly  
compatible with Perfect Slavery.  
All you have to is treat  
all the slaves the same!

'Besides' Justice said 'Economic Opportunity  
merely addresses the beginning of the race.  
What of the middle and the end;  
is Perfect Inequality tolerated there  
as millions sink into poverty? '

'No' Justice sighed, 'Equality you are a good plank  
but you do not over-arc and don't really solve  
important problems.  
I, Justice, am needed to balance all the ills  
you're not able to address.'

Justice shifted slightly in her dark robes  
and spoke of that need to protect Citizens  
utilizing legal and governing rules.

'Rule by law  
not women or men is better  
grafted to all systems:  
Balancing and adjusting many of the  
the ills Undemocracy brings.'

'Justice is centerpiece  
where all the values of the citizens  
are sifted and set aright-  
enforcements of the Covenants.  
It is I,  
through which  
all society is possible.'

Freedom spoke slowly  
gathering verbal momentum:  
'Justice you are mystical  
but in the end precisely note that  
laws are made by men and women  
and is therefore rule by Judges.  
This does not seem to me  
to be much better than rule by Kings.'

'No mere Justice  
does not work for me.  
Clearly the object we all seek,  
is Freedom- Me.  
Justice merely refers to  
misdeeds but not the essence  
of what we seek.  
That would be me Freedom.  
For here is where all potential is protected,  
the Cauldron of the Probabilities.

Freedom is what we fight for,  
you, Justice, we merely sue for-  
if we have the money  
to pay your attorneys! '

Equality smiled wryly at Freedom's joke saying  
'but you Freedom have many aliases  
many definitions labeled;  
which Freedom are you today:  
Freedom From  
or Freedom to  
Free speech  
or the Freedom of the Road  
or merely Freedom From All Rules?  
And I would note you proclaim  
Liberty For All  
while tolerating  
Tyranny while at Work.

You Americans define Freedom  
as Freedom for Yourself  
what of Freedom for Others,

in fact, the Freedom of the World.  
You fall silent there.'

Outside a crowd gathered,  
Justice leaned to part the curtains,  
describing the outside scene.  
There was Ethics and Morality,  
Nature  
God and Divinity  
the usual crowd all clamoring  
to be heard  
or to gain entry.

Freedom said  
'they have right to their say.'  
Equality mused 'they all make equal claims.'  
Justice said 'if given the chance  
like vigilante villagers  
they'll be pounding closed-fisted  
at every citizens door.'

They all agreed  
and sipped their tea  
until at the appointed hour  
when key in lock  
admitted the rightful owner of the house.

Citizens Us  
was framed in the doorway Portal  
with her constant companion Social Covenant;  
They entered  
with Citizen saying  
'You get all three of you  
if you chose Citizen Community  
because there you get all of you  
plus me.

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. What point is the poet making here?
2. Which poetic devices run throughout this poem?
3. What is the author's purpose?
4. Why is "Perfect Slavery" capitalized?
5. Why does freedom's name change?
6. What type of error exists in the third stanza from the end?
7. What is the function of the word "aright" on the second page and in the second stanza?
8. Who is Freedom referring to when it says, "they have right to their say"?
9. How many stanzas does this poem have?
10. Does this poem rhyme?
11. Does it have repetition?
12. Are any sound devices utilized? If not, what type of verse is this--blank or free verse?
13. Is "panoply" a real word or an example of dialect?
14. What do you think of literature like this? Does it have any real purpose, or is it pure whimsy?