

GIVE ME A KEY TO UNLOCK MY CAGE

I've been to court in Colorado countless times.

Not because I broke a law.

Not because I was arrested or presented with a warrant.

I, an instructor of English as a Second Language.

They, my classes of Mexican male and female students.

Yes, crossed the border illegally at night while entire villages
lived marginally to support one of their own to start a new life.

It was a new life, a scary life.

At first they couldn't read the rules they were expected to observe.

They acquired English by day, but not fast enough to understand that
in this country, for example, one doesn't offer a bribe to a policeperson
when pulled over, hand cuffed or incarcerated.

Four-person jail cell was home for a month until court date.

Therefore:

Lost wages, hungry families.

Lost English lessons, no jobs.

Lost car, no transportation.

Lost apartment... homeless.

What *is* the definition of *JUSTICE*?

Imagine an unbroken world designed for compassion with:

Harmony rather than conflict.

Unity instead of threats.

Defense in place of blame.

Acceptance without prejudice.

Laughter replacing tension.

Let us wage peace and rediscover *JOY*.

~ Martha J. Perlman, for Charleston, South Carolina Vigil 2015