

## **Tyranny of the Cubicle Forward Document for Katie McCall's "The Tyranny of the Cubicle"**

As a young boy growing up in the suburbs of Minneapolis I have fond memories of sitting on the sofa with my family and with great anticipation tuning in our 4-channel black and white TV set to watch Perry Mason bring truth and justice into our living room. Each week we were so excited to see him defend the falsely accused who had nowhere else to turn. We just felt safe knowing Perry was there looking out for us simple folk. Likewise, there was Marcus Welby, MD. One of my mother's favorites as he skillfully performed brain surgery and then rushed cross town to deliver a baby in someone's bedroom just in the nick of time. Grateful families, often too poor to afford him, would send him off with an apple pie and hugs all around. Our trust in these icons was unflappable in an era of innocence and faith.

Flash forward to 2012 and let's be honest, Marcus would never find malpractice insurance or be able to afford the time and expense to maintain board certification in so many areas of medicine. No hospital would grant him privileges even if he could and the Medical Board would have revoked his license anyway for boundary violations. And let's face it, Perry could never badger someone into a criminal confession, he would have been lucky to avoid contempt of court citations and disbarment for his tactics and most surely he would have used his great skill to amass a fortune as a trial lawyer suing Marcus.

To some, this scenario may sound like cynical humor. But much truth is said in jest and sadly the last 40 years have seen the slow death of innocence and the rise of the age of the non-person. The icons of our age are no longer the noble healer or the defender of the little guy. Agreements are not based on a handshake and the spoken word is dissected until we are left with "depending on what the definition of is, is". The world has become so complex, so regulated and so impersonal. We need licenses to cut hair, permits to remodel a bathroom and consent forms to ride a horse. Often these forms are several pages long with verbiage no one reads because it's impossible to understand. Our neighbors are often strangers who we may only encounter when there is a dispute. Our lives are dependent on the decisions of faceless people and committees working at banks, insurance companies, government agencies and, of course, the Internal Revenue Service who never get to know us and really don't care to. Like the proverbial frog in water slowly brought to boil we have been lulled into a believing it has to be this way. Somehow we have accepted that these changes are progressive and for our own good as a society.

Albert Camus, French philosopher, is quoted as saying, "The welfare of humanity is always the alibi of tyrants." Whenever we give over a bit of our self-reliance, whether to another person or a governmental agency, under the guise of safety we surrender liberty to tyranny. It is time for Americans to once again remember this. We are not safer or freer when we abdicate responsibility to a monolithic power. Katy McCall in her book, *"The Tyranny of the Cubicle"*, has chronicled for us a true Kafka-est story of what can happen when the system takes on a life of its own with no one in charge and, therefore, no one with the courage to say hold on a minute! The Medical Board of California is a non-elected panel of political appointees whose responsibility is to protect the consumers of health care from harm. To believe that they do this in a judicious and honorable fashion is to naively believe that a large bureaucracy can be efficient and just. Every complaint by a consumer in California, by law, must be investigated by the

medical board. The motivation of the complainer is rarely questioned and their anonymity protected. The effect on the health practitioner, on the other hand, can be devastating and drawn out over years. When you have finished reading this book, please ask yourself if you feel safer knowing the Medical Board and the district attorney are on the job.

Katherine Louise McCall is a mother and a licensed midwife who tells us a story that would seem too tragic to be real if we did not know it was true. Even in her darkest hour, Katy is a teacher and an inspiration. She is everywoman, flawed and yet perfect, weak and yet powerful in both the realm of man and God. While her faith in man justifiably wavered, her faith in God never did. ...and the Lord replied, the times when you have seen only one set of footprints is when I carried you". It takes a very powerful woman to bare her wounds for all to see but her purpose is clear to me. No matter how dark the days may seem, from the ashes will arise a newborn phoenix. Strength of self derives from family, friends and faith and one does not come by those simply by luck. There are often two choices when faced with overwhelming tragedy. There is the reality of woe and the reality of hope. Katy chose hope!

Attending the birth of a child is an honor that few of us ever really experience. It is to see the choreography of a new life beginning and the realization of the unlimited potential of the human spirit. To become a midwife is a calling. One that I can only hope Katy returns to as soon as possible. I am honored to consider her and her sisters my colleagues. Her "once bitten" experiences with the heartless systems in this book might deter the common person but I have faith that will not be the case. I hope this book will enlighten the public to the dedication and the plight of this ancient profession. Possibly, in its way, inspire future strong women to choose a midwife for their birth experience or to become one themselves. While we may never return to those early days of innocence from my memory it is not too late to learn that birth is a normal part of being a woman and not an illness needing treatment. I dream of the day when this is accepted and caring for a healthy woman in labor at home need not be considered the practice of medicine any more than a mom treating a child's fever. Katy reminds us that if we are not forever vigilant even this simple act could someday become criminal. Our children deserve a better legacy of freedom than we have given them. We need to be shepherds and not sheep for our babies. That some of these beautiful newborns will grow up to be bureaucrats and administrators who relish the "Tyranny of the Cubicle" is the real tragedy here.

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