

Why you are making me hate you Maryland?



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McDaniel College Black and White image taken with a Nikon by Laura Ann Tull

I want to start this by saying I am grateful to my teachers in Maryland, those of you who took the time to really see me and to understand my gifts and abilities. You helped me escape abuse. You helped me find a temporary escape from a childhood of no one listening to me or taking me seriously. I was abused and no one knew. My parents will say I got everything I needed, but that is not true. I never felt listened to. My opinions or perspectives were not mine. I had no ability to have an identity because my parents would not let me. I was not allowed to chose my friends, or my identity. But I had an identity. I formed

opinions. I created my own view of the world, yet at home it was met with aggression and anger and denial. However as to Maryland, those of you who do not know me but have decided to either judge me or help destroy my life in California and my reputation, you betrayed me. You may assume you are right and I am faking who I am, but the truth is you did not know me. If you did you would know I have gifts and I am sensitive and smart, and I try to do what is right. You did not save people out here from me. You helped kill my dreams and hopes with your high school immaturity.

The birth of my maturity. I still remember when I registered as a Democrat and my father called his father and told him. I could tell he expected my grandfather to denounce me. My grandfather did not. His response was to leave me alone. It was the only time in my life anyone in my family stood up to my father and told him that I was OK being me. Though now I know it was in part because my grandmother, who was not happy about my Jewish friends, was actually a registered Democrat too. I think in my parents delusion they thought I would grow up and end up settling for a Republican. I never did. And now I have reached the apex of my life. And so I hate my past and the people who set me on this course, or perhaps my best explanation is deviate from the path I was supposed to be on.

I live in Los Angeles now and I have lived here for sixteen years. It is home. Years ago at an event on the West side a palm reader ran after me on the street and insisted on giving me a reading, for five dollars of course. Her urgency convinced me, or perhaps a moment of hopelessness. She read my palm and told me that my fate had been messed up. I was supposed to be married. I was supposed to have two kids. I was supposed to have my own company in the arts. But she surprised me. She told me I was where I was supposed to be. This was my home. I knew that. I knew I never belonged back east. Regardless of whether I believe in palm reading, this little palm reader (I think she looked sixteen), certainly knew how to read me.

Back east people live lives in a trap. We are told as children we can do whatever we want, but truth is we are required to go to school, go to college, and after college get a job and one with benefits and a health plan. There are no deviations. No following a different path. No creativity or ingenuity. As a child I wanted to escape. I read books. I read lots and lots of books. I escaped in my mind. I made up stories in

my head. I knew what reality was. But it did not make me happy. I wanted to be able to express my emotions and not be made fun of for them. I think that is one of America's greatest tragedies. We do not respect emotions. We do not teach children to be expressive, especially boys. We have a mental health problem but its center is one where women are not allowed to feel and men are allowed to be mean. We victimize the abused with the stigma of their pain.

As a kid I thought it “ends with me,” but it was not until years later that I figured out why I thought that. It was a subconscious cry for escape. I knew my relationship with my parents was not normal, and that their treatment of me was not normal. I watched television. As odd as that sounds, it was watching television and reading books that taught me about maturity and how people were supposed to interact. Though looking back I think I created an ideal in my mind of how people should be. My teachers and the few friends I had also showed me how parents trust their kids and talk to them and let them grow up. My parents on the one hand wanted me to be successful and make money, but they did not want me to achieve anything unless they planned it and they had control. I was female. My parents still lived under the shadow that kids stay at home and work the farm. That was the subconscious drive I think behind my parents actions. I was supposed to be in the kitchen as the help yet also capable of making a six figure income. My father wanted me to go to law school. It was all I heard as a kid. He had to have a family and had to give up dreams of going to law school or traveling the world as a spy. I know my parents really wanted my brother to be the one, but I was the one with the grades. Law school was my father's dream and my nightmare. I said I wanted to be an actor, and he pointed to this politician actor lawyer and said I could be like him. It was not until a decade later that I realized this politician had one advantage I did not have. He was male. I wanted to be able to feel and have emotions and be creative, but I was a girl trapped in a family that wished I was a boy.

The truth is my mother never cared if I did well in school. My academic success seemed to make her bitter. I myself never understood why I was good in school. Not until I started studying acting and had to rely on my memory did I discover I had a secret weapon. As Mulder on “X Files” once expressed, “I am cursed with a photographic memory.” But it is not perfect and I have had to learn to trust it.

My memory is one of the many reasons though I am furious with back east. I remember how hard I worked in school. I remember how I was abused for it. I was never clueless. Life was like a movie in my head and when things happened to me I watched and observed, but I hated conflict. Sometimes I would play back what happened to me later. I would think about the expressions and actions of others. I knew when people were really nice and when they were not. I also knew often when people lied. Pictures tell allot. For me watching life was like watching living images. Details mattered. Now that i am older my talent has faded a little and I miss things. But it is too bad my time has been wasted with people trying to make me do crazy things like become a practicing lawyer, or spend my days behind a desk.

I remember to how I was rewarded for my talent and hard work in high school. I am grateful for that. I went to college on a full ride. But then somehow My life has been destroyed by people who may have hated that fact. I mean my IQ is as high as a 150 and I have people trying to insinuate I cannot do what I want with my life. Not only do I not know who I am as a person apparently, but the father who would not listen and who did not care has been put partially in charge of my life. To my knowledge legally he has no right to tell me what to do. My father has said he never told me I had to give up acting or that I can do what I want, his constant get a job is infuriating when I tell him I want jobs, but on sets and in acting and in the industry around people foreign to him but normal to me. I say I am applying for work in film and acting and he starts screaming. But he does not get it. I have nothing to love about life in his world.

What is even more infuriating though are the people back east who suddenly are upset with me because I will not be their friend back in Maryland. I wonder now if my former college apartment mate who is a social worker helped destroy my reputation when it is her job to help the mentally ill. Actually I should not wonder. I know she did. It kind of tells you who your friends are when you are being terrified on sets by a guy who molested you and later get attacked online and your college house mate wants to call the police when you call to get her to stand up for you. I wanted her to say I lived at the theater in college. I loved acting. My teachers saw me as an actor. I have proof of that. I was considered a dedicated actor and artist in college, even though I also studied economics.

I am not a clone of everyone else back in Maryland. I am sick of people thinking that I should hang out with people from Maryland. I left Maryland in 2002. I went back for a wedding in 2003 of an apartment mate I had in Law School who was a PHD student at American in Physics. She was black and not happy I left and was striving to be in the industry in California. I do not think she understood my Masters was in the performing arts, and not science. There were only so many performing arts jobs in Washington DC. I also wonder now if she would like I was vegan or I could tolerate her life experimenting on rats. We parted ways for multiple reasons, though I wish her well and hope she is happy.

Even so people back in DC should be defending me. The one friend I know is all right with my decisions though left just like I did. He is no longer there. I don't have a foundation of love and hope in Maryland. I do not want to date a man back in Maryland even who is a working actor. I am not interested in taking care of a man and being his wife. I want a career. I want to not disappear and be the byline of some guy with a house he needs organized and kids he needs help to raise.

What really makes me angry Maryland is I finally had what I wanted. A home. Maybe not the best place to live in my HOME, but I still felt like I was understood and that people wanted me to make it as an actor. They did. I was happy. I felt sane and alive and loved life. And you could not accept that because I was not working as a lawyer, or making a six figure income, or doing what people in Maryland are expected to do. But that is the point. If I had wanted a life like people back east, I would have stayed back east. I do not need the cultural trauma of being yanked from a place I felt understood or at least felt like I could be accepted as I am, only to return to a place that not only does not want me to accept my career goals, but does not want me to be myself.

I am an actor, poet, film maker, digital artist, editor, and journalist. Yes I have a law degree. My bar number is #207690 in California and I quit for health reasons in 2012. I did not want to keep paying as an inactive attorney when I would rather pay for my Sag Aftra membership and move into a more creative and hopefully lucrative and enjoyable career path. I now also have a certificate in Digital Media. Did you know that Maryland? Did you know one of your own had that much to offer? And I am a woman too. And can I reach for a star back in Maryland and achieve what I want with everything I can do? Or do you intend to

make me serve a man his dinner by 6 and put his kids to bed, and spend my days teaching the next generation, because as a woman my life of freedom is over? I have grown up and have no right to be free to find a place I belong and where I can love life and achieve more than you could ever dream for me.

Even if I make my dreams come true. I will not be back Maryland. You lost me the minute anyone back there tried to gas light me into quitting my dreams and give up on me. You may have made it impossible to ever be fulfilled in my life. I cling to passion. I cling to dreams that may be dead. If I let go though, I will stop fighting to come up for air. Go on your way Maryland. If you want me to fail and disappear back there, I would rather die alone here. I was always alone back in Maryland. and you are just like my family if you can not accept I really did like it here, because I was finally allowed to like me.

