

POT AND SPOON

A TRUE TALE OF
OCCUPY WALL STREET

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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO OCCUPIERS EVERYWHERE

**A Free download of
Pot and Spoon is available at
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HUMAN NEED
NOT
CORPORATE
GREED

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AND WAR

OCCUPY WALL STREET

ALL OUR GRIEVANCES ARE CONNECTED

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eople all around the world heard about the activists at Occupy Wall Street. They heard how the activists had set up a camp in the financial district in New York City and that every day they would go to protest against the banks on Wall Street. People all around the world had been hurt by the way the bankers do their business.

The banks felt very powerful and they felt that they had the right to oppress people in order to make money.

The activists at Occupy Wall Street made people question the power the economic system had over people's lives and how that power is used unfairly.

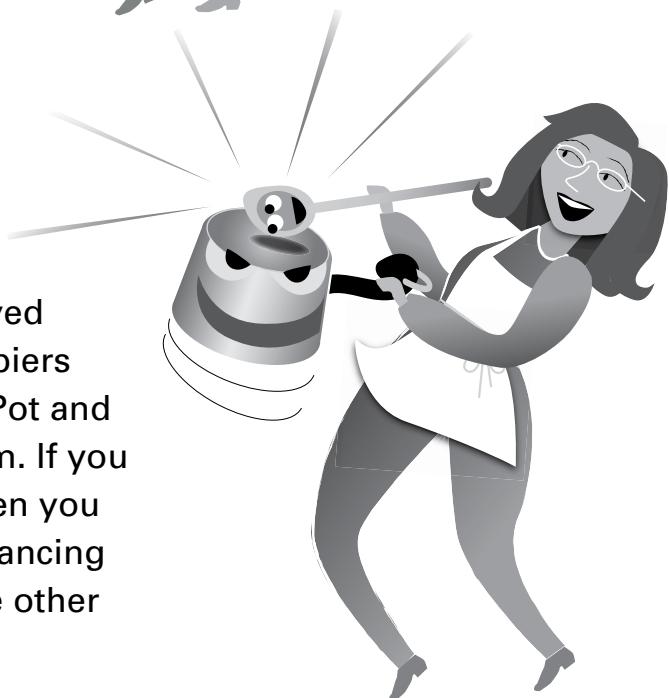


Madeline always helped. She was the kind of person that if people were fighting somewhere for social justice, you would find her there. Madeline always looked at a situation and would think, "What needs to be done?" At Occupy Wall Street, Madeline was always in the kitchen making food for the many activists. She would serve them food with her pot and spoon. Madeline and Pot and Spoon enjoyed making food to feed the many people who gave their time and energy to the Occupy Movement.





But the one thing they enjoyed more than feeding the occupiers was rhythm. Madeline and Pot and Spoon loved to make rhythm. If you didn't find them in the kitchen you knew you could find them dancing and making rhythm with the other activists.





ne of the most frightening things to the people who hold power is if the people they oppress start to gather together and talk about what is happening to them. So late one night many police came and forced the activists to leave the park where they made their camp.





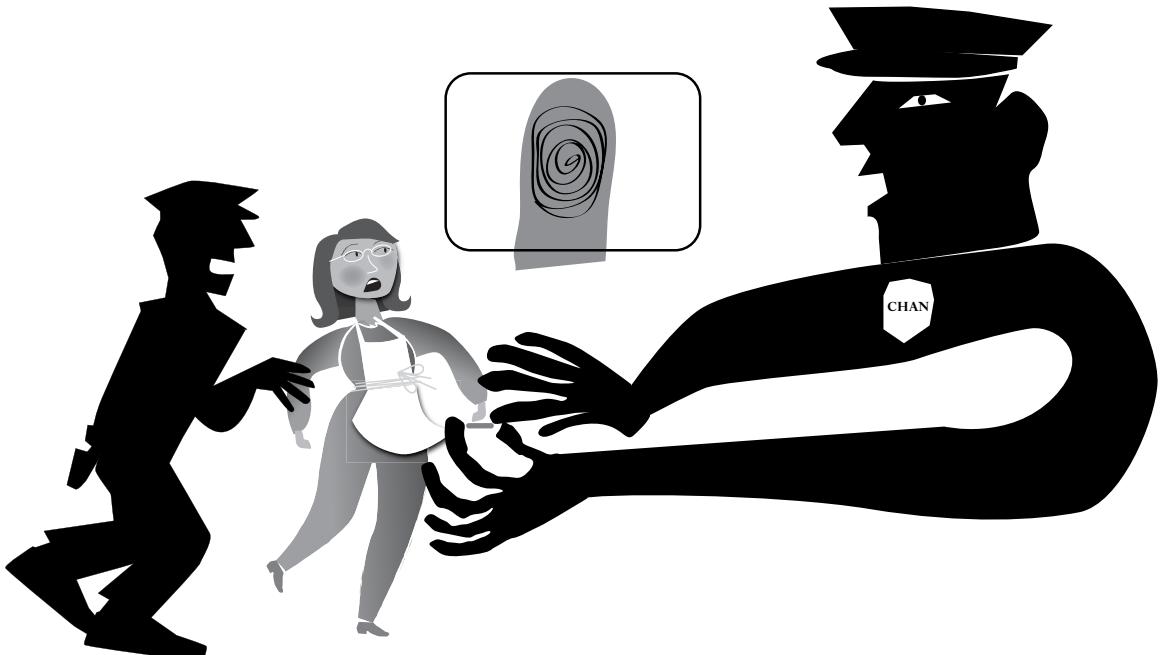
The occupation of the park was ended but the activists did not stop working. The activists decided to go to the mayor's house and have a drum circle to show the mayor and the people that they were still together, still talking and still working. Madeline went with Pot and Spoon and joined the drum circle in front of the mayor's house.





At the drum circle, a policeman took Pot and Spoon out of Madeline's hands and said, "You won't need these where you are going."

He called over a young police officer named Officer Chan. Officer Chan took Madeline's bike bag and Pot and Spoon, put Madeline in the back of a police van, and took her to the 33rd precinct house.



Officer Chan said, "I've never taken someone's fingerprints before." And Madeline said, "It's good that you are getting practice for when you have to do it with a real criminal."

Then Madeline said, "The police have no reason to be brutal with non-violent protesters."

Officer Chan shrugged his shoulders and said, "Where you see brutality, I only see a day's work," as he continued to fumble with Madeline's fingers trying to get her fingerprints.

Meanwhile Pot and Spoon sat on a table waiting. Then Madeline was put on a bus and taken to a large prison where she spent that night and the next day in a jail cell with a lot of other women and then she was let go because the district attorney couldn't find anyone who saw Madeline do something illegal. Madeline was arrested and put in jail but was never charged with a crime. This happens sometimes.

Madeline was free and set off to get Pot and Spoon back. First she had to get her bicycle, which she had locked to a fence at the site of the drum circle. Then she rode to the 33rd precinct station where she was taken when she was arrested and where she could get her bike bag and Pot and Spoon.



When you get arrested the police take your stuff and they write all the items on a voucher so you can reclaim them. They had her bike bag but where were Pot and Spoon? They were not listed among her belongings on the voucher.

Madeline said, "I had a pot and spoon when I was arrested. Why are they not with my things?"

The police officer said, "I didn't do it."

Madeline said, "Were they not in a cupboard somewhere?" Then she thought, "Could the police make a mistake?"

Every time Madeline tried to talk, the police officer said, "Can't help you. I didn't do it. If it's not on the voucher, it didn't come in. Wasn't me. It's not my fault. If it's not on the voucher, we don't have it."

Then the officer suggested that Madeline go to One Police Plaza where all personal items are kept.

"But they were right there on that table," said Madeline.

"One Police Plaza," said the police officer.



Meanwhile Pot and Spoon sat on a shelf.

"What do we do?" asked Pot.

Spoon thought. Spoon had been washed so many times by activists who talked of all kinds of things. And Spoon remembered one of the things they talked about was jail solidarity. In fact, Spoon had heard many people talk about how important it was to have good spirits in jail and to do things that would keep everyone's spirits up.



"We have to keep our spirits up," said Spoon.

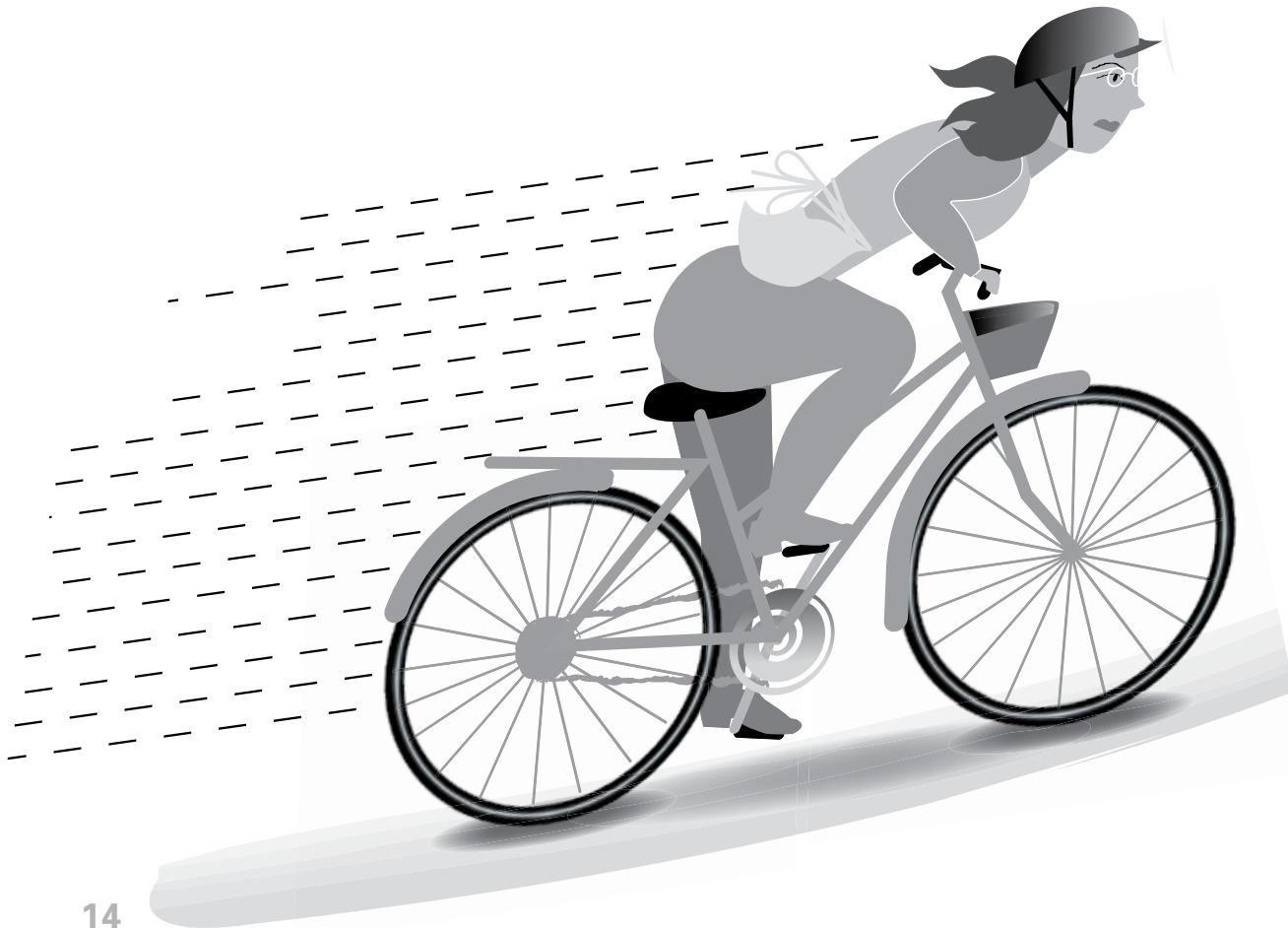
"What if Madeline doesn't come to get us?" asked Pot.

Spoon thought for a moment. Spoon always thought for a moment before it spoke. Spoon had been like that for as long as Pot could remember, back to when they first became friends. Spoon always thought for a moment about what it would say before it spoke.

Spoon said, "You know Madeline as well as I do, maybe better. She will come and get us." Then Spoon told a funny story that made Pot laugh and that made Pot wonder if it knew a funny story to tell.

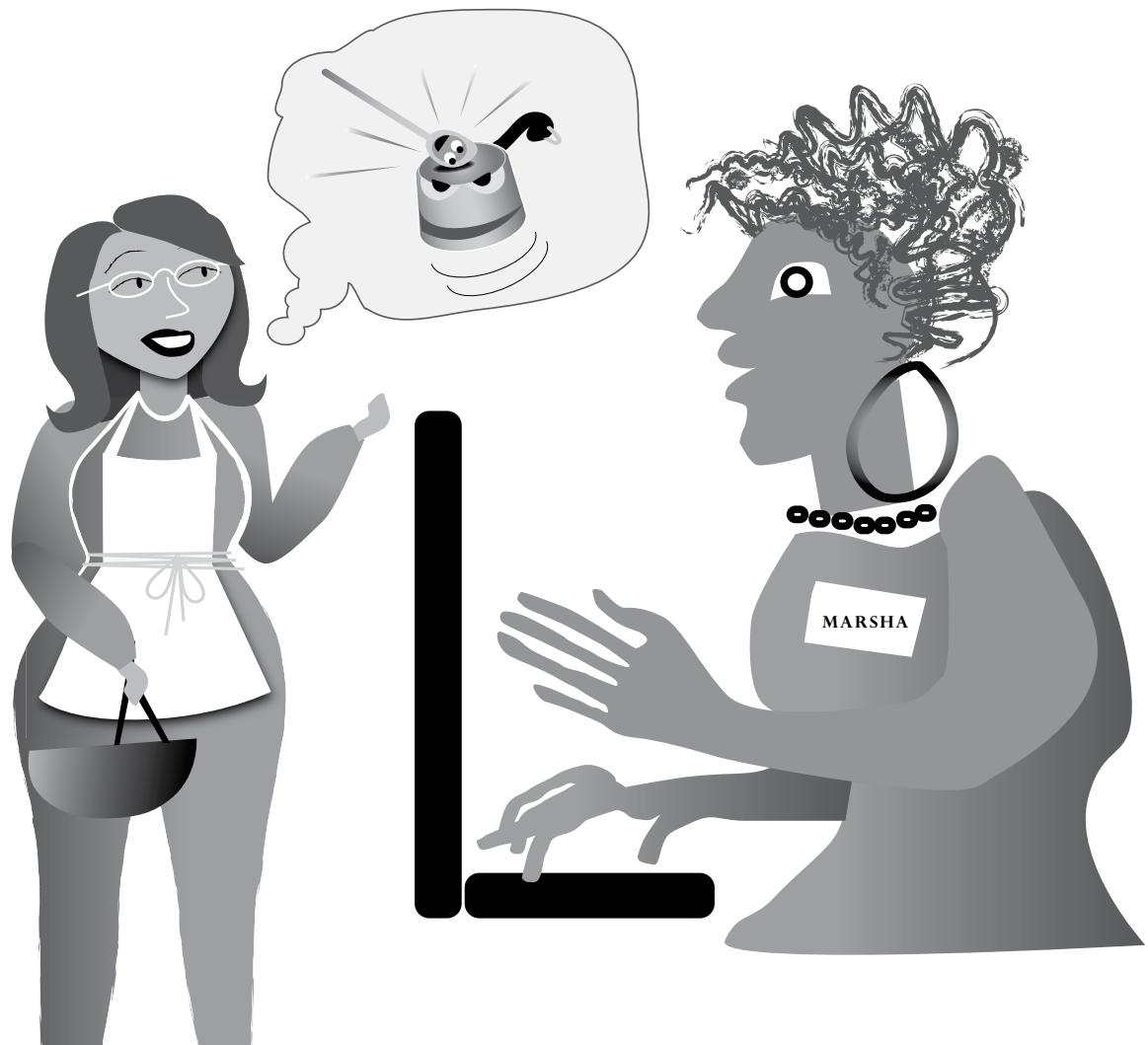
Madeline was upset and frustrated but she knew she could not show that to the people who worked for the police department. If Madeline got angry or said something rude, the police would use that as a reason not to help her. Madeline knew her battle was not with any individual person but with a system. Madeline was going to get back Pot and Spoon. There was no reason for Pot and Spoon to be in jail.

Madeline rode her bicycle hard
and she rode it fast.



She rode her bicycle to One Police Plaza.

The person at the desk was named Marsha. She was not a police officer but a civilian who worked for the police. Madeline told Marsha the story of her arrest and of Pot and Spoon. Marsha was very efficient and business-like checking her computer. Madeline tried to be friendly and even funny about trying to get Pot and Spoon back but Marsha kept a tight face and only said, "You have to go to Officer Chan's station house at Precinct 28 and ask him about Pot and Spoon."



Pot was still trying to think of a funny story to tell Spoon when it said, "I know, let's make rhythm, that's the most fun thing I know." And Pot and Spoon started to bang together.

"Let's try that samba rhythm that we've been practicing," said Pot.

And so they did. And as they worked on it they started to sound better and better.

Little did they know that not far away sat Sink.



When the police ended the occupation of the park they took everything away including the kitchen sink. More than anything Sink liked to dance. In fact, Sink would tell everyone that the only time it felt really free was when it was dancing. Sometimes if there were dishes in Sink when the drum circle played, the agitation of Sink dancing cleaned them so well that they didn't need to be washed.

Sink heard the rhythm from Pot and Spoon and started to dance. As Sink danced, it moved closer and closer to where Pot and Spoon were until the three friends saw each other. Pot and Spoon knew Sink very well. They had been washed in Sink many times.



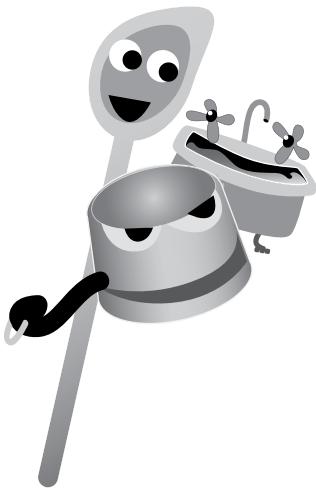
Madeline got on her bicycle and set off to see Officer Chan at his station house; but Officer Chan wasn't working. The sergeant at the desk said no belongings were ever held at the station house. The sergeant looked like he had been sitting at his desk for a very long time. He was a big man and when he spoke to Madeline he tried to make her feel very small. Madeline never let that bother her and she convinced the sergeant to see what he could come up with.

"It's your own fault for being involved with Occupy Wall Street," he said. "We risk our lives to keep the peace.
Otherwise there would be anarchy."

Madeline said,
"You mean chaos,
not anarchy.
Those words are
often confused."

The sergeant finally found an invoice number for Pot and Spoon. The sergeant puffed himself up as big as he could get. He gave the number to Madeline. "Don't get arrested again," he said.





"Why do we even have to be in jail?" asked Pot.

"The government always wants the police to control any protest action," said Spoon.

"Why?" asked Pot.

"They say they do it to make sure everyone is safe," said Spoon.

"But we weren't making anyone unsafe and now we're in jail," said Pot.

"The police are told to make sure an area is under control and sometimes the police make up the law on the spot if they're not sure what to do," said Spoon.

"Why?" asked Pot.

"Because they are not well trained," said Spoon.

"But they carry guns," said Pot.



"Going to jail is one of the things that might happen when we do a direct action," said Sink.

"Even if we are afraid of the police and the courts and the jails, we have to keep on telling the truth," said Spoon. "Many people who believed in what's right have been sent to jail."

Pot had heard many occupiers talk about direct action. A direct action could be a march, rally, strike or a boycott to call attention to an injustice. Or creating a solution to a problem instead of asking the government to do it.

"There are a lot of different kinds of direct actions," said Spoon, "I heard one activist say she had a list of two hundred different direct actions."

Sink had never been to a march or demonstration because it was always busy in the kitchen working to feed the activists but it ended up in jail anyway. Sink was in jail because during the raid of the Occupy Wall Street encampment, the police said Sink was a deadly weapon. Both Pot and Spoon knew that Sink loved everything.

Sink always said, "We have to work really hard to understand each other because it is misunderstanding that leads us to hurt each other."



Madeline was back on her bicycle. She was going back to the 33rd precinct with the invoice number for Pot and Spoon. At the 33rd precinct there was a different officer at the desk this time. His name was Sergeant Gonzalez . He looked the number up in a database. Sergeant Gonzalez appologized to Madeline for her having to run around so much to get back her property.



"It was a minor mistake," he said. "We're making changes to the system. We will change our training. We will do everything we can to make sure it never happens again."

Sergeant Gonzalez is not sure, but Pot and Spoon may be at a warehouse in Queens. So Madeline got back on her bicycle and headed to Queens.

Pot, Spoon and Sink had been talking a long time.

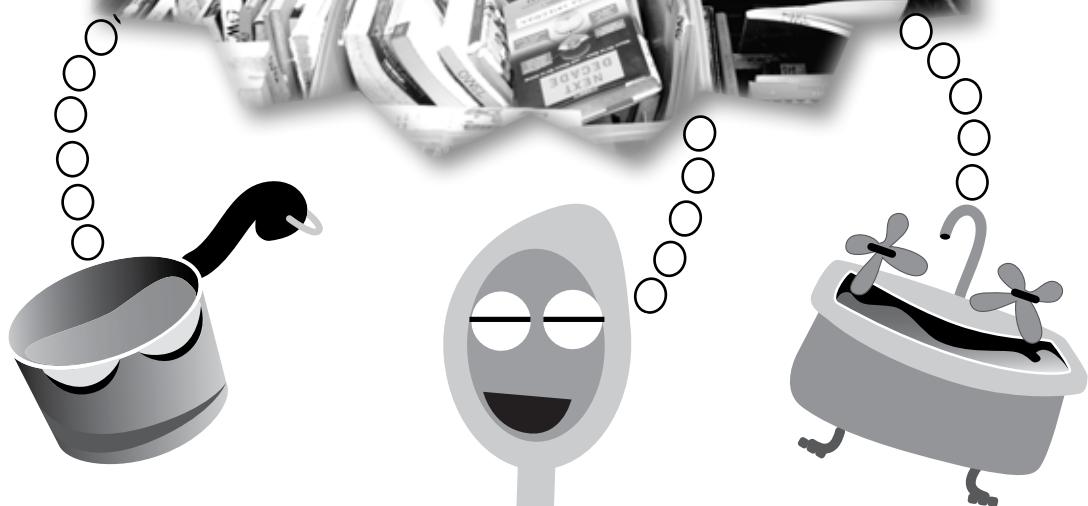
Occupy Wall Street was a big event. Many issues were being examined. Many smart people with a lot of experience working for social justice came together for Occupy Wall Street. Even though the encampment was raided and closed down, the activists knew that they had gotten the attention of the world. The activists were determined to continue their work to be clear about their message, to be creative to bring more people into the movement and to have good politics so that serious activists would want to give their time to those actions. This caused a great deal of discussion.

Pot was saying, "In the kitchen, I've heard activists talk about direct democracy, decolonization, mutual aid, the commons, non-violence, and so many other things. Sometimes it makes my lid spin. I don't know if I'm an anarchist, a socialist, a progressive liberal or what."

And Sink said, "I'm a pacifist. For me peace is something I try to live everyday. It's a great struggle. Every day I think about the way I interact with others, the way I treat myself, and the world. For me peace isn't a goal, and it isn't a useful tactic. It's an idea for a way to live my life."

Spoon said, "We are all damaged in some way by this social system and the cycle of violence that is part of our history. Sometimes we don't even know that we are being oppressive."

Pot, Spoon and Sink all wished they knew more. They remembered how people would always talk about the library - how they found a book at the library that talked about this and that.



"I wish we had a library," said Sink. The three friends closed their eyes and they all wished that they were at the library.

Madeline rode her bike to the warehouse in Queens.
Inside was a little office with a woman behind the counter.

"Hello, my name is Madeline and I'm here to get my pot and spoon," she said as she gave the woman a paper with the invoice number on it.

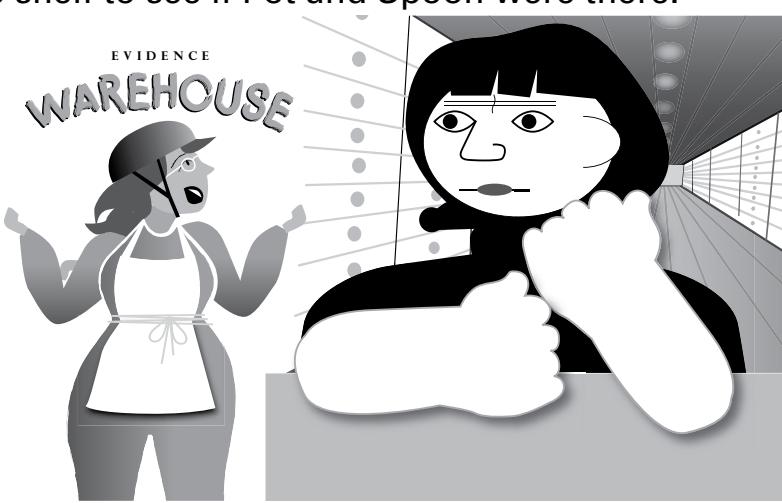
"I can't give you anything without a form from the district attorney releasing the item," said the woman.

"The police officer who gave me this number wasn't sure this was the right location," said Madeline. "Is it possible to just check if they're here so I will know I'm at the right place?"

"I can't release any items without the form from the district attorney," said the woman.

Madeline said, "I understand you can't release them but if you would please just see if they are here."

Madeline used her most polite voice and she convinced the woman to walk back and look on the shelf to see if Pot and Spoon were there. The answer is yes, they are there, but to get them, the woman tells Madeline she needs a statement from the district attorney's office that Pot and Spoon are no longer needed as evidence.



Pot said, "I heard an activist say we have to organize society in a different way. A horizontal way where things are more equal. And another activist said the people who have power are very afraid of this idea because it will take some of their power away. And because it makes sense and when people understand it they will think it makes sense, too, and they will want to make change"



Spoon said, "I've heard them call that horizontal way anarchism and they said in order for anarchism to work everyone has to take more responsibility for themselves. And have a good understanding of all the issues. And not always look to someone else to solve society's problems."

"Those are good things to do," said Sink.



At the district attorney's office, Madeline is told that her case is sealed, so they have nothing in the computer and they can't give her a piece of paper to get anything.



Pot looked very unhappy. Pot said, "I heard some people stay in jail all their lives."

"Madeline will get us out," said Spoon. Spoon looked at Sink.

Sink said, "There was an activist who was in jail for twenty-seven years. And when he got out he became the president of his country."

"How could he be in jail for twenty-seven years and not lose hope? Not give up?" asked Pot.

"He had good friends with him, friends like you," said Sink.

"And friends outside who will never stop working for justice, like Madeline," said Spoon. Sink and Spoon looked at Pot and gave Pot a warm smile.

Pot took a deep breath. "Madeline will get us out," said Pot. Then Pot smiled and said, "let's make rhythm. I like watching Sink dance."



DOROTHY DAY



CHELSEA MANNING



NELSON MANDELA



EMMA GOLDMAN



JULIAN BECK



MUMIA-ABU-JAMAL



WILLIAM GODWIN



LEONARD PELTIER



MICHAEL BAKUNIN

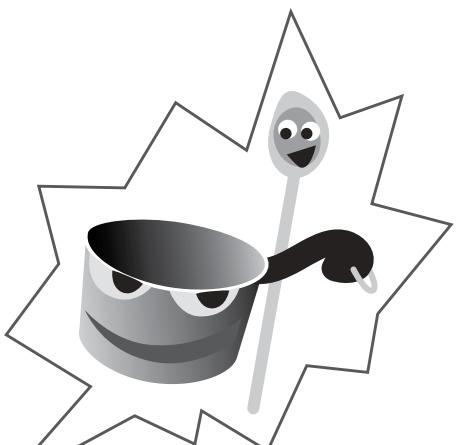


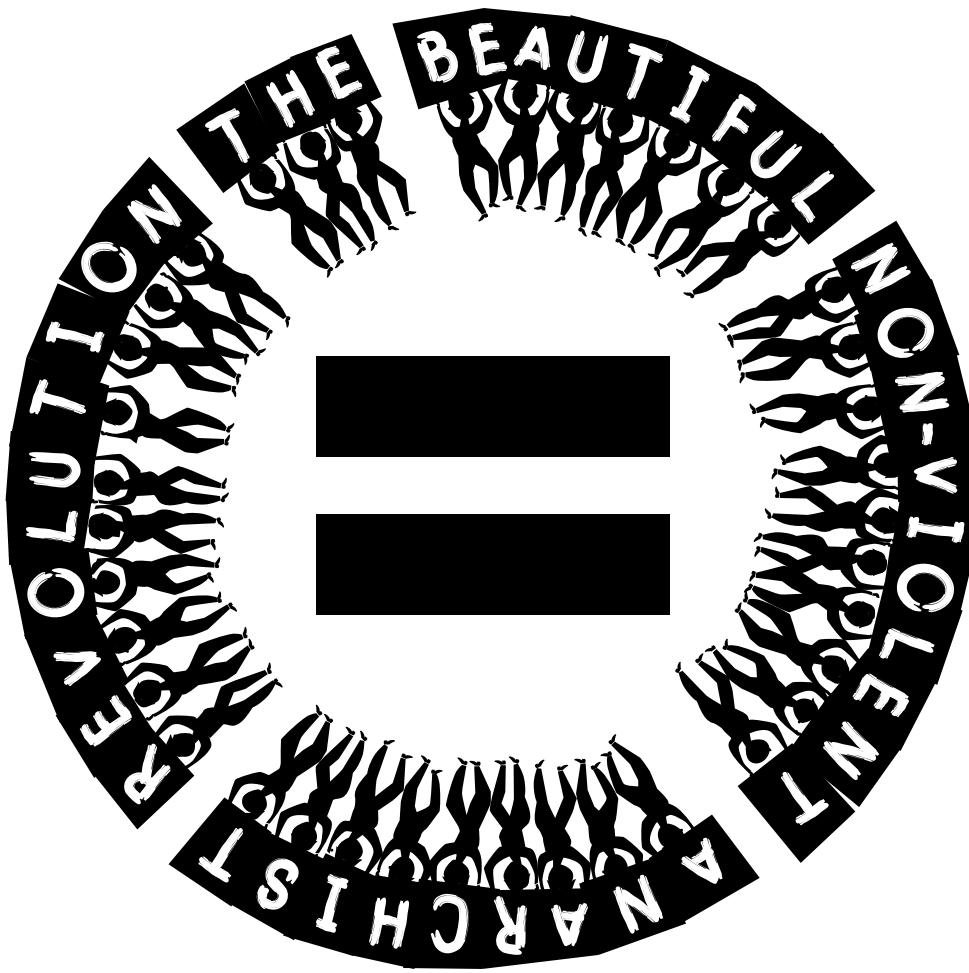
JUDITH MALINA

Madeline calls Marsha at One Police Plaza and puts herself at her mercy.

"Don't people in the police station talk to people in the district attorney's office? Couldn't they figure this out between them?"

A little while later, Marsha calls back with a contact at the district attorney's office.



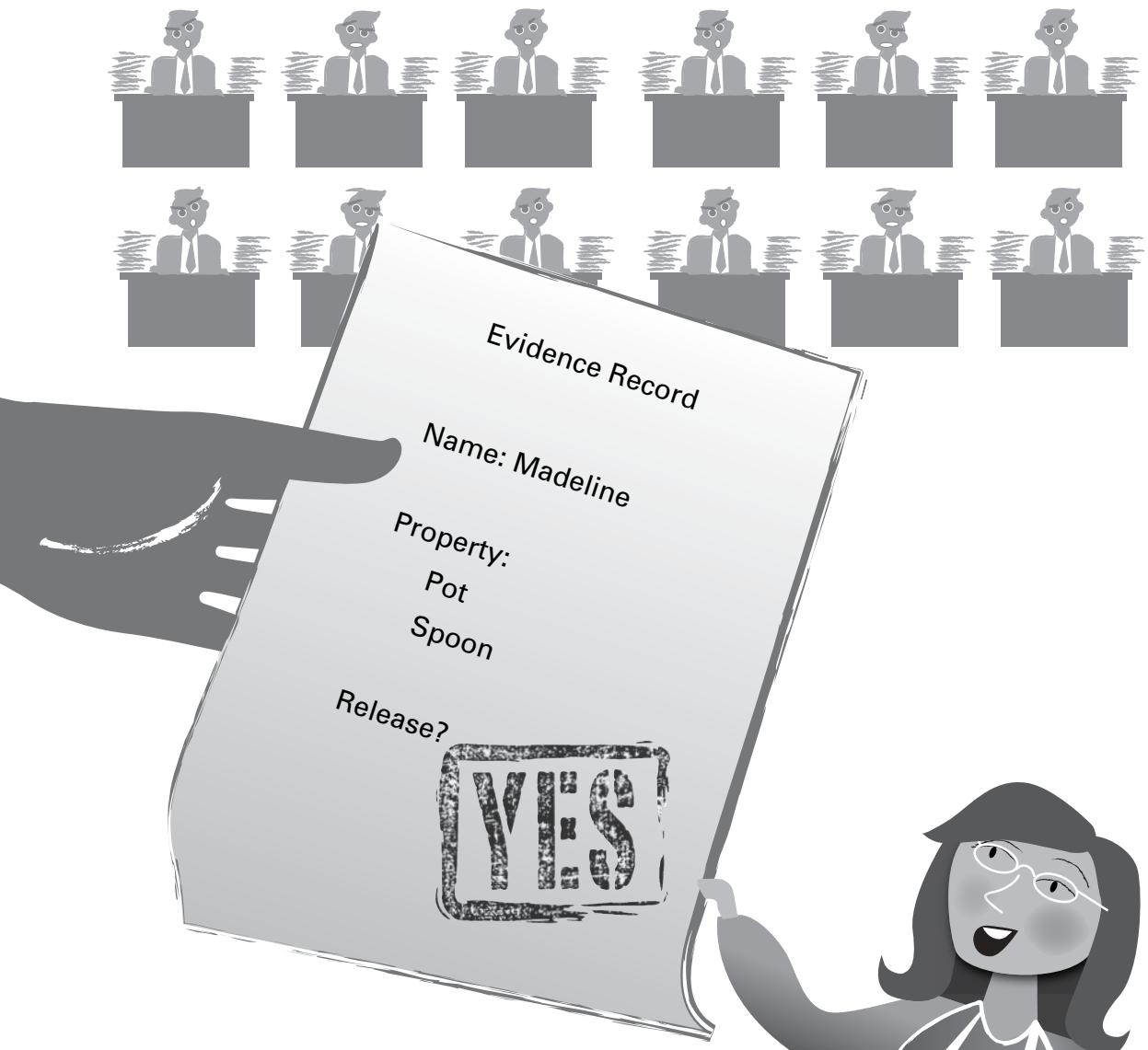


"When I think of a better world," said Spoon, "I think of a world where everyone feels safe to share what they have with others."

"I think of a world where everyone is dancing," said Sink with a laugh.

"I think of a world where there are no more jails," said Pot.

Pot, Spoon and Sink thought about the activists at Occupy Wall Street.



Madeline goes to the district attorney's office.

Somehow now they are able to find the original charges against Madeline and give her the paper she needs to go to the warehouse and get Pot and Spoon.

Pot liked Spoon very much and they always liked being together. Pot had great respect for Spoon. Spoon was kind and Spoon was fun and Spoon seemed to have a way of saying things in a clear and thoughtful way. Pot thought that Spoon was that way because Spoon was carved from something that had once been alive. Pot was made of metal, something that had never been alive, and Pot felt that it was different because it was made of something that had never known life. But Pot wasn't sure because one night sitting in Sink, Pot heard a conversation about molecules and atoms and strange ideas like how once everything was nothing and that the one thing that everything shares is that everything vibrates.

Pot said to Spoon, "Let's make some rhythm."



Madeline went with the papers from the district attorney's office to the warehouse. She gave the papers to the woman at the desk. Madeline waited and then the woman came back with Pot and Spoon.

When Pot saw Madeline it started to cry and Spoon said, "I told you Madeline would come to get us."

Madeline put Pot and Spoon in her bicycle bag. The woman said, "You really kept at it. Most people would just give up."

"Thank you for your help," said Madeline. Then Madeline looked all around. She looked at the walls and at the desk and at the woman at the desk. And then, like she always did, Madeline thought, "What needs to be done?" Then she got on her bicycle and rode home with Pot and Spoon.



Madeline thought about all the things that had been taken from the activists for no reason and were locked up. She thought about all the people who were in jail that weren't supposed to be. Pot and Spoon thought about Sink.



On New Years Eve, activists all around the world were going to stand outside jails and make noise to show the prisoners that they were not forgotten. Madeline had been arrested and put in jail for two days for no reason. Pot and Spoon were in jail for many days because someone had made a mistake. Sink was wrongly designated a deadly weapon, so it would never be let out of jail. Madeline and Pot and Spoon went to the warehouse. They stood outside and started to beat out a rhythm.

Sink heard a familiar sound. From outside the warehouse, Sink heard the sound of Pot and Spoon making rhythm. As Sink listened, its feet started to move and Sink started to dance. And Sink danced and danced.



And Sink felt free.

