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Immigration Behind the Desk

“On my first day, when I met with her, she had an immigration file that had to be done. She was like, ‘Here, do this.’ And that was it,” (Julien, 2022)

This is associate lawyer Christian Julien’s reply to the question, “What led you to become an immigration lawyer?” wherein he alluded to his internship mentor, Adela Crossley, for whom he worked for three years. Hardly a response befitting the expectation of a legal officer. However, the law is fickle and those who uphold it, more so. There are gaps in the law filled by mundanely orthodox solutions, most of which require more common knowledge than systemic.

Christian Julien sits at his desk, following the orders of the woman standing over him. When absorbed in paperwork, he resembles a bookish office worker, his features traceable with a pencil. When talking, it is as if this drawing has leapt off its page, possessed by cartoony vigor. He can tell you the best or worst news with feverish gestures and expressions that belong in a painting. And while he speaks, you may forget for a moment that you are sitting in a government style office, listening to a spiel of courtroom lingo.

It requires but a few minutes of conversation with Julien to learn of his odd nature. Stereotypes of lawyers seem to crumble and fall in tandem with his chipper manner of speaking. Even his environmental appearance changes when realizing the woman ‘ordering’ him is actually his assistant ensuring he is on time for his appointments. This not only aids in displaying a friendly face but allows his clients a special sense of comfort.

As one of the faces of Mamann, Sandaluk & Kingwell LLP, the practice of law is not without its difficulties. As of his start in 2021, Julien has recounted numerous cases which blend together, simply because of the nature of problem, as well as clients whose education fall short of communication. However, the leading mishaps occur through the language barrier venture where clients, through no fault of their own, cannot phrase their concerns coherently. This is where Julien’s work shines. Through guesswork and judgement calls, he assembles clients’ stories piece by piece. If they withhold information, he investigates and if they are vague, he interprets.

Julien’s area of expertise extends from family immigration to the justification of restrictions on state law power. While it may sound like a boring topic, you would never realize this as Julien can talk for hours on the flexibility of restrictions that seems almost criminal. However, his true passion is defending those at risk of deportation, a job he discusses at length with the utmost enthusiasm. “I’m not one of those people who evangelizes for people to go join

the legal profession,” says Julien, “but I genuinely believe its possible to be a lawyer and enjoy it,” (2022).

As of recent, Julien resides in a constant state of work. Due to the state of the world and its complications, deportation cases are at an all time high. Usually, such proceedings are portrayed as exciting, suspenseful events in mainstream media but in reality, they are often slow paced and rarely does anyone exclaim for an objection. A trial pulled from Julien’s repertoire involved the deportation of Dainia Smith and her daughter Shemeka Jeffers. Contrary to the drama of the case, concerning an abusive husband from which they had escaped, the trial was handled with decency and little outbursts. The fact of most proceedings is that all that must be done is to stockpile enough information and evidence that it outweighs the opposition.

Julien talks of his work as if it were a puzzle he enjoys solving. More often than not, he seems to find loopholes or certain breaks in the foundation of the law which help his clients remain in Canada. For example, a mother and daughter from Hong Kong who moved to Canada, were now at risk of deportation. As the daughter was already a citizen and pursuing a career in Life Sciences, Julien had found that mandatory lab classes prevented the daughter from deportation. As the mother was the primary caregiver, this permitted her residence by effect. “The lovely thing about humanitarian applications is that you can be endlessly creative,” (2022), Julien says with a smile.

What truly speaks to Julien’s character is not the amount of people he helps but the attitude with which he approaches his job. “You know I’ve never had a boring day of work,” Julien admits, “and I work a lot,” (2022). There are numerous people who have been aided by his efforts and countless more waiting for his insight. As for now, he will continue starting each new case and each new day with the same sprightly attitude and bright personality that has advanced his career thus far.

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