

Prisoner
Express
Poetry
Anthology
Volume 14

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Alternatives Library



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Selections on Love and Relationships

Would you?

If I was to see you on the outside
Would you tell me hi
If I was to shake your hand
Would you shake it with pride
If I was to smile at you
Would you politely smile back
If I asked you to be my friend
Would you be there at the end
If I was to tell you a secret
Would you promise to keep it safe
If I was to shed a tear
Would you promise me that you'll be near
If I asked you to call
Would you call or not at all
If I told you, you make my day
Would you be mean and take it away
If I told you I'll be here for you
Would you be there for me too
If one day I ask you to be my wife
Would you say I do...

-Reynaldo Zamora

Thinking of You Card

Hoping everything I say
Hoping everything I do
Convinces you, I'm wanting you
Anxious, just of having you
Wishing it was a thousand of you
Greedy, when it comes to you
All I want is you
Don't want to share
Selfish, when it comes to you
Happy and Joyful
Ambitious to make you
Hoping you smile
receiving my card
I made it thinking of you

-John Tyrone Slade

I Believe in You

I believe in you
in the things that are important to you
And the way you have chosen
To live your life

I believe that you can accomplish anything
You set out to do
That you have many talents
And the wisdom to use them well

I believe that you have what it takes to overcome obstacles
And to grow from every experience
Life brings your way

I believe that you will always be faithful

To friends and family
And to the values
That have shaped your philosophy

I believe in your courage
Compassion
And strength of character
I believe in your goodness
I believe in you
And I will love you always
and Forever

-Anthony Washington

Untitled

I can see
the beauty
in
a warm sunset,
high above an ocean breeze.

I can hear
the voice
of nature,
whistling
through the leafy trees.

I can smell
the weather
change,
as raindrops fill the air;

And I can taste
the salty tears,
that come when you're not here.

-J. W. Johnson

Truth is Our Undoing

You are not mine
i am not yours
not SAVIOR
not messiah
(sometimes not even friend)
You cannot belong
to me
i cannot belong
to you

we meet on sidewalks
in subways, at dinner tables,
over coffee in bistros, in bars
and Bedrooms
plummeting down on sagging mattresses
wringing love and sex from
each other drop by drop
sometimes confusing the two
or complicating on or
the other with talk

you try to make me
yours
i try to claim you are
mine

But it doesn't take
it can't/won't last
only until the cum dries
until the door closes and
the footsteps fade down the hall
the promises we made soak
into the pillow drying
like sweat, in time
to be washed out and forgotten

i am not yours
your are not mine
we each return to ourselves
lying and alone
sharing only moments
And calling it forever

-Geneva J. Phillips

The Fisherman's Cliché

I remember in grade two or three.
It was always you and me.
Grade school crushes,
we were hand in hand.
Valentine lovers playing in the sand.
Castles' of dreams molded with care.
Innocence covered with a lock of hair.
Our laughter lingers,
well on this day,
we were forever in love and play.

As time passed and older we grew,
and I began wearing a young man's shoe.
"Best friends forever."
To each other we'd shout,
than you left me and my heart without.
Tender love in pieces was torn,
and I loving to hate love with scorn.
Knowing the meaning,
of the fisherman's cliché,
you were "the one that got away."

Love became hard for me to accept.
Making the motions only to be inept.
Look at what's missing, for something to yield.
Searched on what my life to build.
Emptiness grew to increasing depths.
My days taken in unconscious steps.
Boulders of sorrow,
on my shoulder rest,
my memories are all to me that's best.
Today I wonder where we would be,

With children in grade two or three.
Our loving crushes,
still making the stand,
and our children playing in the sand.
Shaping the mold of their castle of dreams.
Joyous the their laughing screams.
Ours still linger,
well on this day,
You're the one that got away.

- D.B. Hughes

Lifetime Achievement

If you're an author and write the best book
So that everyone will want to take a look,
Or if you make a wondrous work of art
That no critic would dare to pick apart.

These things are not the best you can attain.
If you think you are, your life ends in pain.
You'll be forgotten; popularity dies.
I hope you find where accomplishment lies.

Find a companion who's faithful for life,
Be it a true friend, a mate, or a wife.
Raise up a child, like an arrow shot true,
Or by some stroke of luck, you might have two.

If painting and poems are all you can show,
You'll not end up happier than Van Gogh.
Your magnum opus is a life you can touch,
And maybe one who gives back half as much.

-Mark Hamme

Anything For You

Love is like magic
It's odd and confusing
Then the next thing you now
It seems so amusing
Like candy and cakes
Its as sweet as can be
Then the next thing you know
It's as rough as the sea
Like fire it's hot
Like ice it is cold
It's never the same
It's both young and old
It will make you do things
You don't want to do
Cause anything, you ask Babe
I'll do it for you.

-Arthur Saucedo

Sonnet: Not Once

Not once did she see
The good in me
Though I tried my best

It was all in jest
Not once did I know
How it all would go
Not once did I see
Beyond all that was me
Not once did I hear
With all that is Dear
Her pain filled voice
As she was given no choice
But to do her best
And now I need to let it rest.

-Debbie Jones

Diamonds and Pearls

If I could give you diamonds and pearls
I'd take you on a cruise around the world
I'd fly you to the stars
And make love to you on the moon
If we never came back
Forever would be too soon
But if I could give you anything
Than here's where I'd start
I'd open up my soul
And hand you my heart

-J.A. Lopez

I Need You To Know

I need you to know.. That I'm sorry. I've been the impetus.
The source of no small amount of distress, dejection, damage and
depression in you're life.

This very day, I take full and honest responsibility for all the
anguish, ache, injury and heartache my instigation has beset upon
you.

I need you to know... I'm truly sorry.

I need you to know... that I'm changed.

This time apart, time to reflect, realize and understand has led me
to a transformation.

An alternation what is most important and of greatest value in my
life.

I've remade my inner self, refashioned my values. This time has
brought a conversion, an altering, a modification in me that lets
me know I can and will be better, I've been revolutionized. I need
you to know... I'm truly changed.

I need you to know... That I need you.

In my past, our past, I've allowed many things to take precedence
over you, over us.

Through it all you've stick by my side, not only in deed but also in
heart.

No longer will you be unaware, that you are my true strength, my
rock, you're what I require to facilitate my growth.

With you I'm so much more, what a man should and could be,
with a strong, vibrant woman at his side.

You are essential to me my beloved.

You complete me in both love and life.

I need you to know.. I truly need you.

I need you to know... That I love you. No doubt you've
questioned these words and their meaning for us both.

So it is without reservation, of heart and soul, that I
unconditionally love you, unlike any ever before you.

I give to you now all that you so richly deserve.

My devotion to you, to us is my deepest desire.

My adoration, admiration, appreciation and passion are
unequivocally yours.

You are my rare and precious jewel, of immeasurable value, a
priceless treasure, to be forever coveted and cherished, beyond
and above all else.

A new esteem and respect, just for you, resides deep with my
impassioned heart.

I need you to know... I truly love you.

Through up or down, Friend or foe, feast or famine, we belong
together. I come before you, not as knave, but as knight, on
bended knee and graciously, humbly ask, that you stay with me,
stick with me, once again, beside me as I build a shrine to our
eternal love.

These are the things... I need you to know.

- Robert Allan Cooke

We are two in one

Both traveling in different directions

Yet on the same pathway

Her glasses are my reflected memories

She looks into my direction

A world of cold concrete

Where deception thrives on misery

Hope belongs with fairy tales

Death becomes a cherished nourishment

Her path comes to a skidded stop

In the middle of my unwritten words

Awaiting for my linguistic perspective

In her world of entelechy

She is a poser, portraying traveler

Or a traveler posing for a ride

Either way our paths cross

In the world of creativity

Where my soul painfully yearns

A chance to feed upon freedom

To walk those unproductive lands

With scrubby growth for a view

Heated sun scorching my Red flesh

Either way we are consolidated

For this moment of creative writing

Where her reality brilliantly bursts

Through my world of written perception

A gift that's essential

In my land of figurative language

An awaken mind

Bleeding thoughts through pen

To feed a pit-less appetite

Renegade Warrior

- Raylon Shane Attebury

Untitled

Love isn't easy, especially for me.
Now I'm in here and bars are all I see.
Love isn't easy when you're all alone.
knowing I'm in here and you're the only one at home.
Love isn't easy especially for you.
At home by yourself and sleeping in a bed made for two.
Love isn't easy when we're not together.
I know it's only time and soon we'll be together.
Love isn't easy when you're not around.
But our love is strong, so don't let anything get you down.
Love isn't easy as I'm sure you're aware.
Bad things happen and life is just not fair.
Love isn't easy and I know it's hard for you.
But our love is special and I love, loving you.

- *Robert Castle Jr.*

Where Are We

Am I kept away, secretly upon a shelf?
Thought of, just now and then...?
Is my name uttered only to yourself?
While thinking with paper and pen.

Do I cross your mind, here and there?
While doing your daily tasks.
Or do our hearts beat as a pair.
Is it folly, I should ask?

Should I ponder who you are?
While the hand of time hold us apart?
Though we both share the same distant star...
Does it shine on both our heart?

Can I trust to you, my soul bare,
And define my love from lust?
Or is it just a tangled snare
That will leave my heart... in sorrows dust?

These few words, I send to you,
with hope to make it clear,
no matter where you are, or what you do...
In my thought I hold you dear.

- *William Andrews*

"In A Woman's Heart"

In a woman's heart,
is the most pure essence.
Can always feel her warm embrace,
even when you're not in her presence.

In a woman's heart,
is the demand to be respected.
Still know how to love,
even when her heart is being neglected.

In a woman's heart,
hold so much pain and so many tears.

Instilling the motivation to never be denied,
and to overcome her greatest fears.

In a woman's heart,
is the most exquisite place of serenity.
Where her beauty lies in confidence,
and exposed in her true identity.

In a woman's heart,
is everything she believes in.
Protecting what her heart means to her,
because that is where her trust begins.

In a woman's heart,
is all she does according to plan.
Because in a woman's heart,
she knows she can.

- *Jerome Fitzpatrick*

Good Pain

Some argue that love should not hurt
Pain is love's mentor
Without pain love is lust
Pain signals an abuse of emotions
Yet it also incorporates a real measure of love.

Love can't be contained or controlled
It is an emotion that hurts and heals with equal affect
Exposing the bare essence of human life
Not getting what we want in love promotes pain
Encouraging us to examine our reason for wanting love

Real love can endure sincere pain
Without pain love can never be tested
Pain makes us stand up for our right to love
Love lasts forever and so does pain
It's up to us to fight for one or the other

Everybody at some point believes they know what love is
Thus it hurts to find out when we have been wrong
Intentional pain is not love, but incidental pain is
It strengthens individual resolve to find real love
Doesn't mean find a new lover; just means change perspective

Love complicates truth and misguides emotions
We always hurt the one we love
Therefore we are hurt by the one who loves us
It is in love thru pain that we acknowledge our wrong
Knowing the pain of real love prevents us from hurting our lover

- *Byron Wattree*

WISHFUL THINKING...

TODAY I WILL PROVE MY LOVE TO YOU BY LOVING
MYSELF FOR REAL.
I'LL FIGHT AGAINST THE SMOKING AND I'LL FIGHT
AGAINST THE PILLS.

I'LL GET A GOOD NIGHTS SLEEP TONIGHT AND EARLY I
 WILL RISE.
 WITH TIME TO CONTEMPLATE THE WONDROUS
 MYSTERIES OF THIS LIFE.
 I'LL DO MY BEST IN EVER MOMENT, EVEN IN EVERY
 THOUGHT.
 I WON'T ALLOW TO GO TO WASTE WHATEVER THAT
 I'VE WROUGHT.
 MY ANGER IS MY CHOICE, SO NOW I CHOOSE TO
 ANGER NOT.
 I WON'T RETURN TO HURTING ME AS IF I HAD FORGOT,
 THAT TODAY I'D PROVE MY LOVE FOR YOU BY
 SHARING WHAT'S WITHIN.
 AND IF I HOLD THAT ANGER INSIDE YOU'D KNOW BY
 WHAT I'D GIVE.
 I LOVE YOU ENOUGH TO SAVE YOU FROM THE MISERY I
 SEE.
 AND SO TODAY I'LL LOE MYSELF FOR REAL, CAUSE YOU
 LOVE ME....

-AARON V. HILL

Empty? No! Broken Promises

My heart has been stomped and trampled.
 My hand and feet have been cuffed and shackled.
 My body has been beaten and bruised.
 My love has been used and abused.
 Yet my spirit keep caring loving.
 In spite of all the kicking and shoving.
 I forgive and accept my losses.
 For each and everyone's broken promises!

- Derrick A. Hinds

Much More Are You

Much more beautiful are you,
 In God's imagine you were created:
 In his imagine he created you!

Not the stars or sky, but you!
 Not the mountains—seas he created:
 Much more beautiful are you.

If all creation show the beauty of who, created it
 this includes you as stated:
 In his image he created you!

Beautiful poetry is created too!
 Is not poetry what the heart constructed?
 Much more beautiful are you.

If one uses poetry to reflect through
 then more is the heart unrestricted:
 In his image he created you!

All above—restricted beauty comes through,
 In you is his image fully reflected:
 Much more beautiful are you,
 In his image he created you.

Look into natures mirror and see
 the reflection in the wild flowers:
 More beautiful are you in your entirety.

With the sun's rays burst in glory,
 Purples and blues burst from flowers:
 Look into nature's mirror and see!

With such vibrant beauty we can see
 it's but restricted beauty beheld with eyes:
 More beautiful are you in your entirety.

Wrapped inside you exist such beauty
 waiting to burst as the sun's rays:
 look into nature's mirror and see!

Purples! blues! as vast as the sea!
 Not as wild flower—infinite it is:
 more beautiful are you in your entirety.

When you can't see all you're beauty,
 and can only see tarnished reflections,
 look into nature's mirror and see,
 More beautiful are you in you're entirety.

-Steven Newell

Dear Heaven

Dear heaven, can you hear my plea?
 I'm looking for my lost angel, April D.
 The light of a thousand stars are reflected in her eyes
 Ringed with the clearest of blue summer skies
 Hair spun of the finest gold
 Soft ringlets setting her sunset smile aglow
 Skin soft and white as a gentle winters snow
 yet strong and graceful, as a wide eyed doe
 If my angel you should see
 tell her I carry her love in deepest parts of me
 Of God, how I miss my April D.
 I still love her,
 Forgive me...

- William Carlson

Selections on Hope and Optimism through Religion

Nothing to Fear

On my knees in my prison cell
 hoping things with my family are well.
 No letter or phone calls answered in weeks.
 I'm sorry to say but my spirit feels weak.
 So I start praying harder as I start to cry,
 asking "God, would you please tell me why?"
 Praying and fasting like God says to
 when there's something you want Him to do.
 The Bible says to trust in the Lord with all your heart,
 and not to give it one little thought.
 So at His feet I lay my burdens down to stay
 as my Father washes all my worries away.
 Ask and it shall be given, seek and you shall find.

So with a gentle hand that's soft and kind,
my load is lighter and my mind clear,
and I know now that I have nothing to fear.
My head grows heavy and my sight grows dim
as I go to sleep dreaming and thinking of Him.

-Alessandro Milan

C.J.'s Dragon

As the sun sets low in the sky, the backdrop is set
the giant dark shadow, soars high as a jet
the air is crisp, cool, it will be a star filled night
he spreads his great wings, gliding along the sinking light.

At first glance he seems to be evil, powerful and all knowing.
Ancient, primal and ever glowing,
his scales are like armor, he spits red flame
but look deep into his eyes, could he really be gentle and tame?

Yes, this dragon is pure, with a heart of white gold.
He reminds me of you, keep him with you until you grow old.
For this beast is not evil, he is born of the light,
God hath created all, and given him flight.

You see this dragon protects me, white alone in my cell.
For in him I see you, freeing me from my hell.
On this journey through life, we all need a friend,
so to my son whom I love, this dragon I send!

This dragon we now share, for he is with me too
he will bring us a new beginning, one that's shiny and new.
He will guide you and love you, my sweet son Christm
God's love is eternal, let him fill you with bliss.

-Chris Blanton

Nowhere Man

"Nowhere, man!"
That the motto of all the lost.
"Nowhere, man!"
No matter what the final cost.

Nowhere Man,
Why do you have to be so down?
Nowhere Man,
You always act like a clown.

Nowhere, Man.
That's where I've always been.
Nowhere, man,
Thanks to the curse of original sin.

Somewhere new.
That's where I want to be.
Somewhere new
Is where my Lord met me.

-Daniel Easter

His Loving Words

His loving words are soothing to the ear and always rule our fear.
They penetrate the darkest place and dry the falling tear.
They break the chains that shackle every mind,
and provide strength to heal the hearts that sin would bind.

His loving words that are whispered, rooted in the heart
will bear fruit and give wisdom to those that are apart.
will shed light in the darkness, where hope may have died
and bring life to ambitions that can fill us with pride.

His loving words give strength to survive each task,
To help the sinner to take off his mask.
They inspire our dreams and show the way
the release us from pain until that perfect day.

His loving words sooth the soul and enlighten the spirit;
They bring comfort and warmth like a beautiful lyric.
They bring peace to our lives in most difficult times;
So always remember, his loving words are divine.

- Juan Frias

Selections on Loss and Mourning

Last Kiss

Vigorous youth finds crazy erratic love
A juvenile's first taste, a blessing from above
Her kiss so warm and sweet, like golden honey
Memories, a reminder of days so bright, so sunny
Arrogance and ignorance mesh to rule his world
Until unrestrained chaos and madness unfurled
There is no comfort, no gratification left in her caress
Haunted, feeling like a mortal body possessed
Swept away suddenly into never ending starkness
Do anything to escape the abysmal darkness
And feel the nick of that razor sharp kiss
Instead of a culture survived by a bloody fist
Searching perpetual depths for a hint of her presence
Lost and denied, not even a glimpse of her essence
Everyday the soul withers, something is dying inside
Running for his life but there is nowhere to hide
Exhausted, ragged and empty, there is no time to tire
Trek through the mud, tread through the mire
An opportunity to rest, failed attempt to reminisce
How it felt to experience that pleasurable kiss
Agonizingly, it remains elusive and obscure
Like twilight, memories are fading for sure
Perhaps it harmful, maybe it's for the best
Hopes and dreams are lost with the rest
Connections to another time, another life, are severed
The Last Kiss of freedom is now gone forever

- Michael E. Drebert

So true, It's Unbelievable

Condemned for beliefs, His reputation is smeared;
He carries His burden, guided by fears.
Beaten & mocked, slandered & slammed;
His tears fall like drops, mistaken for rain.

His voice barely heard, overcome by the crowd;
He yells for His Father, His Mother stands proud.
He looks towards His left & then towards His right;
Several are with Him, each one in fright.

He speaks with a passion, His words so sincere;
The few turn their fright, into perseverance & cheer!
A Man poorly treated, with a kingdom in sight;
They hang with a leader, who need not fight.

The battle is Won, the victory is yours;

He said, "It is finished", as He walks through the doors.
The Glory is His, given by One;
His Mother's child, His Father's Son.

He looks up to Heaven, then bows His head;
His spirit alive, yet His Body – Dead.
He's helped off His podium & cover with shroud;
They take Him to rest, under darkness of cloud.

The Light had just set, the moon saddened in the sky;
The stars disappear, soon the sun will rise high!
The sea will calm, the wind not blow;
The truth brought forth, a lie never told.

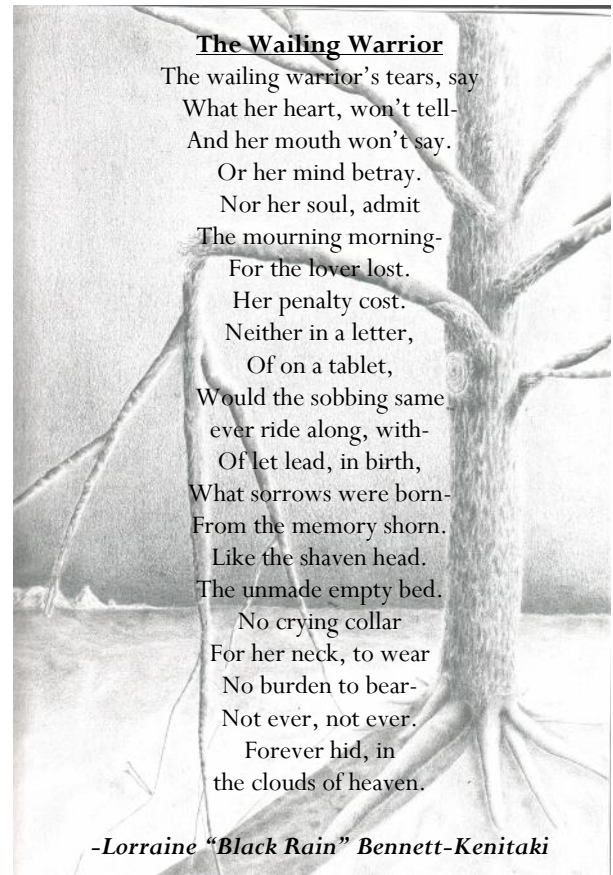
They'll see what was done, Humans are prone;
They'll realize their crime, as the story unfolds.
The people regret, judged on their own;
and an innocent man, now sits on His throne.

-Luis Ortiz

Imprisoned Soul

A soul imprisoned within itself, surrounded by evil and rage,
it seeks freedom from its cage.
He's unsure of the world around him, feeling misunderstood and
rejected.
He seeks the attention from those like him, only to become
distant and vague.
He finds his relief through the infliction of pain, escaping the
unspoken
agony that fills his veins.
He craves another hit to make all his sorrows fade away.
It's a silent cry for help that never seems to appear....
Leaving his soul wondering helplessly, in the darkness he
disappears.
Seeking refuge wherever his head lays not knowing where the
following days may
lead.
A brilliant mind gone to waste
Never seeing his full potential nor
understanding the consequences of his choices.
Just living the life he chooses, forgetting there is another life,
another way.

-Kent D. Simon



The Wailing Warrior

The wailing warrior's tears, say
What her heart, won't tell-
And her mouth won't say.
Or her mind betray.
Nor her soul, admit
The mourning morning-
For the lover lost.
Her penalty cost.
Neither in a letter,
Of on a tablet,
Would the sobbing same
ever ride along, with-
Of let lead, in birth,
What sorrows were born-
From the memory shorn.
Like the shaven head.
The unmade empty bed.
No crying collar
For her neck, to wear
No burden to bear-
Not ever, not ever.
Forever hid, in
the clouds of heaven.

-Lorraine "Black Rain" Bennett-Kenitaki

Prison Life Blues

Freedom taken, life forsaken;
Steel bars, painful scars;
Concrete walls, collect calls;
Mental strain, waist chains;
Jingling keys, trembling knees;
Count bells, stairwells;
Mind games, nicknames;
Faceless stranger, constant danger;
Lonely hours, faith sours;
Hope tasted, years wasted;
Nothing fair, hang to bear;
Questions why,
And then I cry...

- John King "Farmer John"

This is my poem for the anthology

I hate that I hate my life.
I hate it because I lost my wife.
Instead of being a man treating her like I should.
I abused her and spent all of my time, chasing skirts around the
hood.
I used to live and breathe for this chick.
Don't have her now, because I thought with my little man... my
dick.
Now when I try to write her about things like love and
commitment.
She doesn't write back because her heart is filled with resentment.
How could I, Walter Greaves, have ever been so stupid?
Imagining, I was invincible with no consequences to what I did?
No one told me that being a player doesn't pay off in the end.

You should see my face, when I come from the commissary, no
dividends.

You think I'm playing and that this is a joke.
Or that I'm whining and crying because I'm broke.

This is a poem about my personal loss.
And the real price you pay when you think you're the boss.
I need this woman and I'm willing to pay the cost.
'Cause the truth is that without her I feel so lost.
I hate that I hate my life.
All because I was a dumbass and lost my wife.

- *Walter Greaves*

A LIAR'S TRUTH

Time delivered from the Judge's gavel is truth to a liar;
Truth told, through a fixed span of time,
The length of which, determined by the size:
Small truths—born from a fib;
Immutable truth—the end-all—
When the lie is habitual.
I never feared getting caught in a lie;
My lies—hubris from ignorance.

Reward, greater than risk,
When that is all you've ever known;
Easiest for a liar (that is true).

The truth won't set this liar free;
I am a liar—hammered by the truth.

-*Justin Begandy*

Learning To Live Without Love

Learning to live without love, that's what I
have to do.
No one to touch, no one to make love to.
Never again to kiss soft lips, or feel warm skin, with fingertips.
No one to hold and share my dreams,
beneath the beauty of moon beams.
Or bask in the glow of warm sunshine,
with that someone who would be mine.

Learning to live without love, that's what I
have to do.

Because if I don't, I'll never make it through.
These long lonely days, my misery, words can not say.
Time keeps marching on. another long lonely day.
Time beats down on me and I'm not resisting,
because without love, I'm just existing.
And without love, life ain't worth living.
And I'm so damn tired of just existing.

Learning to live without love, it's so unfair!
Of a life without love, I'm so very scared.
All this frustration make me scream, makes me shout.
This trying to learn to live without.
But to live at all, is more than I deserve.
So I'll keep on trying to learn...
To live without love.

To all those who I love, I beg, please believe me.
I'm not trying to deceive thee.

It wasn't my will, when mama was killed!
Now it's only right my dreams remain unfulfilled.
And here in prison; crazy with fear and self-hatred.
I get lost in a world that my mind has created.
Then it gets better, then it gets worse.
Am I a victim of Satan's curse?
On a roller coaster of strong emotion,
my soul screams out a loud commotion!
It's because you want to see what's in my heart.
I never even got a start!

I only wanted you to love me and bring you joy.
Can't you ALL SEE? I'm still that little boy!
I have to please you! This is my need!
So I'm stuck in a prison that has no keys.
Learning to live without love,
I need to learn now.
They're unlocking my cell,
it's ten minutes, until chow.

- *Paul K. Valdez*

The Same

Sometimes it's hard to say.
Why I stay the same
I shoot dope to stay up
to use as an excuse when I mess up.
But it's time for me to buck up
to put up or shut up.
It's easy to say but harder to play
because the price we pay
to stay the same
is so high it don't seem real
This game we call life turns out
Not to be a game or
even fun to play...

-*Jason Treadaway*

Selections on Self Reflection

Ain't Getting' No Younger

I found a hair in my lap today,
Clinging to my jeans.
I knew it had to be mine,
For no one else had been that close.
My hair, as anyone can see, is dark brown,
But this hair was nearly translucent,
White, sort of clear, and white some more,
Nowhere near resembling the color of mine,
I see this hair of mine
In the mirror every day,
And it is definitely medium to dark brown;
Nowhere else do I see these pale imposters.
So it strikes me that they are hiding
On the back of my scalp,
Just waiting for the opportunity
To jump out from there and catch my attention,

Throwing out a disclaimer to the idea
 That I might be eternally young.
 These pale imposters have already invaded
 The hairs on my chinny, chin, chin,
 An obvious intrusion of reality, I suppose,
 On my dreams of youth and invulnerability.
 I have thought of coloring them,
 Disguising them out of existence,
 But I'm afraid that they will only return
 In greater profusion than ever before.
 So, I guess, acceptance of my aging
 May be the answer to my distress,
 Acceptance of the consequences
 Of living to a ripe old age,
 As well as gratitude that this aging
 Has so far only affected my hair,
 While the rest of me
 Continues its rejection of that decline,
 Being physically and mentally fit,
 As my golden years move me along.

-James A. Merrill, 68 years of age

Just Be Cause

Cause and Effect, always one, then the other
 What, then, precedes Cause?
 What is the origin?
 What causes the Cause?

It runs deeper than mere belief or conviction
 Encompassing environment, judgment, experience
 Yet even these serve only as precursors
 Tendrils straying from the Root, searching for a Cause to embrace

Everyone has a Cause
 Mine is the most righteous by far
 Intrinsically unique
 Just like everyone else's are
 For this I will live
 for this I will die
 I will kill any obstacle
 I will anguish, I will elate, I will cry
 Without this Cause,
 I am not alive
 Nor is there purpose
 Vitality or drive

Cause: Brings life,
 Or delivers holocaust
 Given time, it may one day end us
 And yet another may serve to extend us

Cause is caused not only by experience or deed
 But by each one's interpretation
 Of that part of the world which we know
 forged in the dying coals of unfulfilled goals

-Tom Williams

What?

US Marine Corps boot camp
 Relearn every last detail of how to live
 Terrified, What have I done?
 Just 18; twelve weeks last forever in Living Hell

What are side-straddle-hops? Oh, jumping jacks
 Field day – Not fun, nor in a field. Just cleaning barracks
 And cleaning, and cleaning, and missing life
 Faceless Recruit, you will never make it

Graduation, a proud Marine still learning
 Silver is better than Gold here
 The effect of these memories will never die
 A recent nightmare – Boot camp again. And again, and...

--- --- ---

Ten years in Prison is a Dime
 I put myself here
 Rehabilitate? No. Learn new crimes
 Strip away, to the animal

Much like Boot camp, without the self-respect
 You put yourself here
 Emptied, filled back up with guilt
 Hope evaporates with thoughts of tomorrow

Offender. All you are, all you will be
 You put yourself here, but Love comes on Visit Days
 Despised by People - You were once of the same
 Until you put yourself here

-Tom Williams

Untitled

A Machine that runs off the blood, sweat, and tears
 every poor criminals dreaded fear
 we must, we must, live life in a rush
 No time to think of the past and all the horrible
 stuff
 that's done to us pass on to others
 no fathers no mothers but so called brothers
 That help us recover by releasing the anger
 on so called strangers on a boy a man that's just
 like you
 poor, homeless, beat, outcast forgotten by the world
 resorting to drugs, alcohol, women, in worse case violence
 takes the pain replaced by an empty silence
 The Machine that never sleeps nor cease

-Michael Madrid

STRAIGHT TALK

Its hard to feel righteous in a prison cell
 Where everything around you is going to hell.
 You're haunted by a past that you cant forget.
 You wish they would, but they don't forgive
 And everyones a critic, trying to crucify
 their brother with a plank hidden in their eye.

Every word they say is just tongue in cheek.
 I swear, its getting harder telling wolves from sheep.
 No need to sugar coat it, make it pop and fizz.
 I give it to you straight and tell it like it is.
 I'll never sell my soul in a soap box race.
 I'll leave that to the rats running in last place
 And excuse me for my French, but I dont give a damn
 about popular opinion, or the price of ham
 You can't sell me a hog because I don't eat pork.
 I dont believe in Santa Clause or the Stork.
 I aint trying to be funny. Wipe that grin off your face.
 You think you're something special. You're just a damn disgrace.
 so take your spot light and five minutes of fame.
 When its all over all you'll have is your shame.
 No. I dont think I'm better. I just keep it real.
 And you can think whatever this makes you feel.
 I've been hated by better. And loved by worse.
 But it aint gonna matter in the back of a herse.
 Because when its all over, and youre in the grave,
 you'll be taking nothing with you anyway.

-Robert Beard

A Few Things

(to be read both horizontally and vertically)

My parents were missionaries
 I got lost in Guatemala
 our piano lived in a homeless shelter
 where I loved to play hymns
 then we had a yard sale
 now I have no possessions
 my Snickers candy bar was stolen
 but I have diabetes
 daddy died from cancer
 mom fought cancer she lost
 and I broke my collarbone
 later I broke marriages
 went to France to heal my heart
 now I am an alcoholic
 hands and fingers were broken
 broken or not broke
 money doesn't break but
 I can't play the piano anymore
 my car breaks down a lot and
 then I had a break down so
 I started to scream in my head
 sometimes my brain is sad

my brother became an addict
 I learned to appear happy
 I was still afraid because
 my feet were broken and
 my heart breaks easily
 now I can't fall in love
 favorite color: purple
 but I still wear red lipstick
 so I learned to write prose
 because of my felony record
 now my sister's turn for cancer.
 I am cancer.

-Catherine La Fleur

My Journey's End

I'm rushing slowly to my Journey's End.
 getting closer and closer by each days end.
 yet each day seem like a year in the pen.
 My life is a flash of memories, thoughts, and ideas
 My past actions playing out in slow motion quickly bringing
 me here.
 Here I stand not knowing my journey's fate, Just
 rushing along steady praying for another day.
 I know there is a day written just for me, how slowly
 is it coming along rushing dead at me.
 My journey is your journey traveled through different paths
 we are all headed for the end. Yours may be over the
 hills, Mine could be just around the bend.
 So far I am thirty eight years in the wind.
 I've done good, I've done bad, I have repented, I have sinned.
 I won't stop any of these things until my journey ends.
 Slowly I am getting there quickly as it comes.
 I lived yesterday and today but tomorrow my Journey
 is done.

-Tony Lee

Moments Before Honorable Acts

In my cell with closed eyes, on my knees I pray with my forehead
 to my stapled hands. over my shoulder the deck awaits my
 presence,
 the multitude thirst for blood like a woman arena's crowd. Old
 friends become enemies in the wake of my spiritual change, no
 more
 worldly games I've outgrown my gang...but I put on my full
 armor to
 protect myself from the snares of evil, my mental state is solid as I
 prepare my body for the physical battle. As I stand to my feet I
 grab
 my sword and place a kiss upon its powerful surface...then I turn
 to
 face the serpents. Outside my cell the 'brothas' wait for me with

pumpkin-head intentions as I stand tall like an almighty arch-angel
from
another dimension. I must have unwavering faith when I walk out
and work or
I'll fail. so...I clear my throat, grit my teeth, ready my holy
Excalibur and
open the door...to myself I whisper, most unclean...unleash your
hoards.

-Tori "T'Andrews" Starks

Remember Me

Will anyone remember me?
Recall the contributions
I've made to my community?
I've communed with thieves
Confused my dreams with greed
My need to be liked invited those
Who'd re-write my mind
Enticed wit' crime I'd find
I hunger for 'hood approval
Will I be remembered with love?
What have I given
That those still livin' should think of?
I am more than a dealer of drugs
But who will remember me
As anything mo' than a bad seed?
A "G"?
A local thug?
We only truly die
The day we're last thought of
And I fear to be forgotten

- Ray Sanchez Jr.

Entrapment

Trapped in this mace of life, Don't know which way to turn,
I'm tired of being the one that gets burned, Do I except
My fate or do I fight, two wrongs never make it right,
But I'm a survivor with battle scars to prove it, one
Thing for sure I'm not new to this, Life isn't fair
Even if you play by the rules, somebody has to win
Someone will lose; I have a voice that needs to be heard,
Every story begins with a single word, it's your choice
To listen or disregard, No one says life is easy, but
People tend to make theirs hard, use your tools to
Free yourself, Don't be another brain in a jar stored
On a shelf, figure out your next move and shake
This maze, life is like a story you must turn the page,
Setbacks are only obstacles that challenge our strengths,
To break this cycle of failure I'll go through any length,
Side by side hand in hand we a living proof shall
Understand, Every journey in life begins with that
First step, so have no regrets, In life we have
Choices so it may be time to repent, but most of
All for once liberate ourselves from entrapment

- Sonny Juarez

Pills

In the beginning, I thought you'd be fun,
Telling myself I'll just try one
Well I bet you can guess
What happened next
One led to two then three, and four
Before I knew it I needed much more
This went on for a good while
Until everything about me was fake, even my smile
My fiancé asked where did my Eric go
I couldn't answer her cause I just didn't know
You crept into my life like a thief in the night
I'm winning the battle but, I'm losing the fight
I wanted to stay numb so I couldn't feel
Not wanting to face the things that were real
I was trapped inside myself, looking out. And I wanted to scream
Somebody save me I'm stuck in a bad dream
I've been sleeping, that's how I feels
I guess this is what happens when you take too many pills
The heck with this stuff I'm finally awake
I finally woke up but it's a little too late
Now the Justice System decides my Fate.

- Eric KP

A Stray

I know the feelings of the stray dog
His mind and my mind have become one
His eyes and my eyes tell the same story
Once loved beyond measures, now loved none

His bark isn't as loud as it once was
Just as my voice trebles when I speak
Because communication us useless to us now
Solitude is all that we seek

Together we stand, far apart
Able to spot another loner
I pat his head, he looks up
And we both become a little stronger

We could never be Friends, him and I
It just wasn't designed that way
But he now knows that he's not alone
When it comes to being, a stray...

- Daniel R. Jackson

Untitled

I'm currently incarcerated, living life in segregation.
Isolated from the general human population.
But no matter what I'm facing... dedication, motivation,
determination.
I exercise my body as well as my mind.
I exercise my ingenuity from time to time.
Remaining still, I dialogue with my soul.
I practice a lil' discipline and self-control.
A deep breath in, a deep breath out.
Waking up this morning, I smiled.

Twenty-Four hours are before me.
 Another day to add my story.
 The story of life, my life!
 My spirit soars higher than the trees.
 My energy rushes like roaring rapids.
 My thoughts remain active, my wits growing sharp.
 My vision no longer blurry, from searching within my heart.
 A spark, a flame, now it's a full fire.
 Possessing my mind is what I'm out to acquire.
 Patience over passion.
 My spiritual power is not in a hurry.
 I must free myself from fear, guilt, judgment and worry.
 Meanwhile, I'm going solid and stable like an oak tree.
 I'll continue on this path until I'm set free.

- Cesar A. Cabrera

While We're Forgiving-Forgetting Our Past

What do you want from your life?
 That is the question that drives us.
 Do you understand the meaning of Strife?
 While were putting all our past behind fuss.

I wish you to earn an understanding.
 To gain knowledge, all on your very own.
 Please remain humble, and not demanding.
 And try hard to stay off of my phone.

- R.J. Clayton

Untitled

I was named Jamie Do'von Chaffin
 I was born August 1st 1987
 Born to sin, love, cry and die young.
 Cause, I was raised in the slums.
 With violence over women, drugs and guns.
 Wondering how my purpose was so unknown.
 Being trapped in the cycles "oh" so young.
 My pain of wearing and being a color.
 Was the choice of choosing a family or doing a number of drugs.
 But I was trapped, fighting da demons to let me go
 I wouldn't die, so while walls and correction, let me know.
 But, than it was to late, now I sit back and think slow.

- Jamie D. Chaffin

Tha Pro'z & Con'z

Born and raised in tha pro-jects, I adored tha ways of pro-spect, to
 pro-tect and pro-vide, pro-perly, pro-phetically, pro-fessed a pro-
 digy, pro-pogate, pro-ducts like pro-caine pro's hate so much –
 he's pro-fane/pro-fame/pro-mayne, a pro-blem for them – he's
 so pro-fessional, exceptionally pro-ficient in pro-cessionals, pro-
 crustean/pro-muslim/pro-christian, pro-gressive, check my pro-
 spectus, it's pro-jective, pro-ceeding to pro-minence, pro-
 municamento, pro-cedural, pro-mise you I'm pro-vidential, pro-
 venance, tha pro-totype, your pro-tractor, pro-gnostic, tha pro-
 gnosis: A pro-factor, pro-choice, pro-life, five times a day I pro-
 strate, pro-miscuous, pro-verbs, pro-bate say pro-create... tha
 pro'z.

Con-cise, con-cepts, con-catenate, con-trive, con-scious, go on
 and con-graduate, everything con-curs, nothing con-tradicts,
 nothin' con-flicts othen than me bein' a con-vict, I should be con-
 tributin' to tha con-tinent – A con-vent, never con-tent forever
 con-tempt, comments un-con-ventional silence, silent con-tract,
 con-signment and con-sent assigned to con-tacts, con-scripts with
 con-spirators that are con-crete, con-fides in con-figurations, it's
 con-ceived as con-ceit, con-sorting and con-gregate should con-
 genial/con-sensus/con-sistant, con-venticle, con-tiguous, con-
 tinence, never been in a con-fessional, con-duct bizz like a Gee,
 he con-descends, con-fidantes a con-fluence of con-fidence ...
 Tha Con'z—Tha Pro'z and the Con'z

- T. Carroll

Untitled

How lonely must I wait in captivity
 before acceptance shines upon the key
 How luscious must your gorgeous parted lips be
 before they're filled, fulfilling my fantasy
 How lingereing must the past pointed fingers be
 before they lose skeletal, tangibility
 How long must this piercingly cold sorrow be
 before perseverance makes a man of me
 How lost must my wandering soul be
 before I go within to finally see
 all these Howling wolves inside of me

- Brian J. Barrett

Fear Is My Oppressor

I've wasted my life, running from the pain.
 Nothing ventured! Nothing gained!
 I couldn't understand. I was so confused.
 Why wasn't I loved? Only used and abused.
 They taught me I was bad and deserved what they did.
 But of course that's not true, I was just, a little kid.
 Now that I'm grown and I know they were wrong,
 why is the shame and the pain, still so strong?
 How can I go back and undo what they did?
 I'm Thirty-Eight years old and still scared, like a little kid.
 It seems so unfair, most of my life they have stolen,
 than moved on with their lives like their special or golden.
 Everyone will hurt me and that's what I believe.
 So I avoid them all, hoping the'll just leave me be.
 But I hope that;s not true, because I'm so very lonely,
 But I want them to leave me, not just use and control me.
 Must I wait on god to undo what they did?
 Then finally, will I be permitted to live?
 I don't want to wait. I want to live now!
 If someone could please just show me how.

- Paul K. Valdez

Revelation

Past the point of stupidity, understanding
 that simply knowledge is the key to stability.
 Through the fires, past the bullets, from the gutters,
 broken home and ignorant souls.

I see the picture perfect,
 brighter than the sun's surface.
 Change, I see it relevant,
 new frame heaven sent.
 Remember the days,
 remember the pain, but no! Not a care,
 never walkin in shame. I never place the blame
 took up my chain, carried my yoke.
 From days when I was broke, nights when I was cold.
 Roof top sleepin, family thought I was a demon,
 I never knew the reason,
 black sheep fightin demands, 1 a.m.
 Same draws stinkin, suicide thinkin, 2-11, drinkin.
 Pity me not! God's lessons taught.
 Made a man from the box,
 born a man from the drop.
 Face tattoos, two, times forgive me for the lots.
 Relentlessly pushing. Resilience learned on old burns.
 While trusting to never trust, hoping and fearing love.
 Scared cuz they always go.
 Even when I show no "emo," I'm always thinking,
 no please don't go.
 Really tired of the lonely wars, though I'm no use to the shut
 doors.
 Sleepin on pissy floors.
 Stair case drifting,
 a little mary, just to get merry,
 cuz the pain, was too much to carry.
 Found blessing and it took a while.
 Got the message, but it took some downs.
 Been hit with a thousand punches, still sayin "ow!"
 Now I see glory and all I could say is "wow!"
 Pushed away like an empty plate,
 thought the ruckus was my fate,
 thought I was a worthless shit,
 did so many jail stints,
 seen so many vicious hits.
 Lost my only love, never trusting love.
 Still survived, he's saved me from my life,
 from bullet shots and rusted knives.
 Kept me right, when I had no sight,
 so blind but he still held me tight.
 In the cold nights thought I was alone,
 when the streets was my home,
 he kept me strong,
 with the spirits to push on.
 This revelation is my forever song.

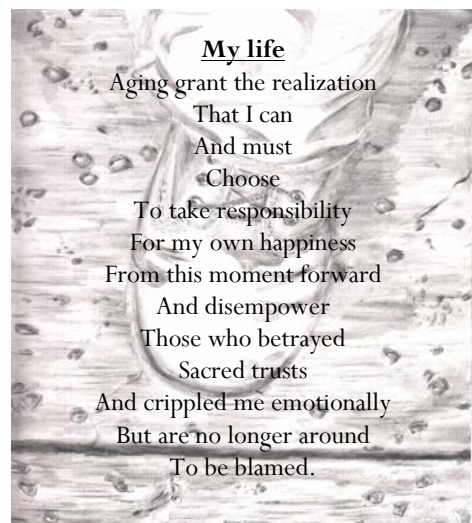
- *Brian J. Barrett*

Reflections Regarding my Adolescence

- Reflections on the essence of my adolescence...
- Turning back the hand of time in my mind's eye
 - What I see is lessons towards progression
 - Before finding answer, I ask proper questions
 - Like: "where did I go wrong?"
- "what did I gain or attain from running the streets all day
 and night long?"

- A fresh pair of eyes through which I scrutinize
- Examination of path I've taken to help me realize
- Maybe my life of sin was vital to help my next of kin
- To help them avoid wrongdoing and all the bad it brings.
 - It's crucial to iron out the wrinkles in my self first
 - In learning from mistake I must be well versed
 - I feel far from cursed; in fact, my life is blessed
- Even in difficult time I find ways to navigate around the
 present mess
 - The steps I now take lead me a different way
- What I will find when I get there, I can't really say...
 - But I've come a long way so I can't give up
- I generate positive thoughts and keep my chin up
 - My trip to the past takes me through trouble
- It was my own but to others it brought struggle
 - The difficult task of keeping me tamed
 - When I vowed not to be caged like a lion
 - They struggled with trying to make me see
 - That in fact, the truth is, most lions are free
 - But not to me; or so I perceived
 - Upon reflection I see that I myself deceived
 - Especially regarding camaraderie
 - It was never a two-way street
 - The difference between night and day
 - When I was coming, they were going...
 - But not leading the way! Just leaving away!
 - Into non-existence; a true friend was always non-
 existent...
- Epitomizing the phony... If I know then what I know now
 I would've ran by myself only.
 - Answers to both questions are extensive
 - But I am at least now stating to comprehend them
 - I'll have answers to both questions in due time.
- For now, I'll meditate and reflect on this life of mine
 - Reflections on essence of my adolescence
 - Before the answers I fest ask proper questions.

- *Cesar A. Cabrera*



Along with that choice
Comes the right
To say no
As often as necessary.
A learned prerogative
Not allowed
In earlier years.

Used deliberately
And decisively
No and yes
Can be the two
Most powerful words
In the English vocabulary;
One draws boundaries;
The other opens doors.

Happiness can be constructed
With them.

-Lou Tompkins

Retrospect

Look at life through my eyes
roams the impoverished communities that I've seen.
Allow yourself to be raised in a fatherless home:
Where there are more sibling than there is food to eat;
where clothing is passed on to whoever can almost fit it;
where roach infested two-bedroom apartments,
are considered home to a family of eight.
Look at life through my eyes.
attend the local public schools and watch as your peers,
pay more attention to what you're wearing than to what
has yet to be written on the chalkboard;
where Gestapo-like police officers patrol the hallways,
armed and eager to impose their authority on future
profiles, who just happen to "fit the description">
Where tyranny, is the only alternative,
to the fear of the fighting five rivals simultaneously;
where raging hormones satisfied within seconds
with someone's sister in an empty locker room.
Look at life through my eyes.
Take a stroll through the neighborhood park on a hot summer
night.
Watch as basketball games to lead to fist fights and fist fights,
lead to chalk lined memorials;
of the seven year old, who really should have been upstairs,
once the street light came on;
but wanted just one more try to prove to his friends that he could
pop a wheelie.
Walk up the block and watch as an illegal dice game,
brings forth a similar fate, to another single mother's only male
child.
Watch as your best friends younger sister falls in love with lust,
then watch as she becomes a grandmother fifteen years later.
Take a look through my eyes,
maybe then you can understand my rage.

- Malcom Jackson

Reality IV

We walk
Into the shadowy indifference
That resides in the hushed folds of our hearts
Never seeking to illuminate the grey pall
In which our excuses and forgettings lie.

We brush aside
the cobwebs which hide
The crooked altars and broken idols
That once held the mores and goodness of our souls,
Souls that have been sacrificed
By the indifference in our hearts.

A spark alights, a remembrance
(perhaps)
But then that too is subsumed and consumed
By the darkness more at hand

We forget
As unseen servants weave
And veil our degradations once more
And once again we drift
upon the dark, lightless sea
That we have come to call
Home.

-Brian Joseph Wake

Light

There is light
from the sky
yellow, orange star
sol makes growth.

There is light
flipped by switch
white, blue bulb
lights the page

There is light
inside of me
colors all shades
dark black shadowed
illuminates the world.

-Catherine LaFleur

Talented

Many days I have woken up and wondered
What am I doing in here?
I have so many talents to choose from
I have taken them for granted for years

Even though I am aware of my talents
I hate the fact that I take them for granted
I wish that I had exploited the all
to the world and used them to my advantage

The thing is, that I can still use them all
To share them with people who have a need
For my special and God given talents
To those who are less talented than me

When I do this, I feel so much better
About not wasting my talents
And by sharing it with others
it brings my life some balance

-Benjamin Rivera

IM JUST ME

Im not trying to be nobody that I can't be... So why are these
Shadows is trying to pull me down by my feet. Can't stand to see
Me live my own live in Peace. While misery is constantly
throwing
rocks at me... What did I do wrong? What can it be? Every day I
I do my best to make sure I do good deeds.... And the world isn't
still satisfied with me being me.... won't everybody go away and
leave me be.... I don't live my life for you. I live my life for me.
You can get mad all you want. I wont turn back around from the
words you say or the things you do. All of you just hate the face,
Im just me....

-Lavonté D. Maxwell

Powerful Enemy

He is the all-knowing, which makes him of the worst kind,
for this enemy knows, knows everything and can easily take
control of your mind.
It is easy for him, because he owns you, see.
For his is the power, of which you never be free.
He holds all the chips and possesses your will,
this enemy is the strongest, for to eliminate him will cause your
own blood to spill.
This leaves only one choice, that is after exposure,
which is befriending him through knowledge, experience, but
most importantly composure.
For he is harsh and wild to the core.
Because once he gets a piece of you, he'll always want more.
It take perseverance to tame him and make friends,
as he has the upper hand and wants no amends.
He sees, hears and knows everything you do,
nothing escapes him and he catches, everything that slips by you.
The struggle begins with making him out,
what follows then, is eliminating doubt.
Recognize that is not lost,
you just have to work and away melts his frost.
Some journey their whole-life, not knowing this enemy,
they just take all the damage and charge it as destiny.
While some realize this a little to late.
Other open their eyes early and strive to control their own fate.
Though some will fail to even know he exists,
it's the most mindful that identify him and fight with the mind not
their fists.
Who is this person, of which I speak so highly?
I'm sure you'd want him on your side, if in fact he is so mighty.
I'll tell you this, which I know to be true,

if you control him, he will forever serve you.
Enough of a riddle just a few parting words,
this enemy is different for everyone, yet so identical it is absurd.
This enemy is named "self" and to all he is oppressive
until you master this friendship and take the offensive.

-Rene Farias

Untitled

When you are all done... and feel that sense of depression...
Invisible tears felt through your soul... because of suppression.
Running through your mind... searching for the key...
To unlock the secrets... of a peaceful eternity.
A place inside away from... the earthly tests...
A place inside away from... the pains of the flesh.
A journey inside only your soul can make...
Away from the torture only... god can take.
Emptiness... your hoping to fill with divine love...
Something to fight for... so I can rise above.
I'm tired of this turmoil... I'm just trying to be stable...
I pray to god... hoping he makes me able.
All I want to know... Is there a reason for this madness...
Or... am I destined to be alone...
Lost...
In eternal sadness

- Daniel Ahmed

I Converse

I converse with history to find where I fit in
Because
There is no pogrom in my past, no Stalin,
to subvert, no Pol Pot, no famine,
no ethnic eradication, nor devastating destruction by mother
nature,
no sectarianism, no cultural identity,
codified in a book passed down from one generation to another.
no Toby a.k.a. Kunta Kinte, no Selma,
or political orientation, no language, no norms,
no martyrs, no battles fought.
History's, history, recorded by victors and I'm no victor;
So I lament
Yet
History, in lame, launched a stone at Stonewall,
cried over milk, marched won the Castro,
cruised Christopher Street, paraded at Pride,
danced on Fired Island, delighted at Camp.
History's band played on as caner'd corpses
passed the pen over DOMA and learned not to ask
and not to tell and not to ask why? when Matthew died;
Then history sent Angels to America who declared,
Hawaii is for lovers, so is Vermont.
Then history rhymed a bit,
when Civil Unions begot Windsor Knot;

History chided me, reminded me, although we
are not a legion, nor a nation unto ourselves,
I am not a without a people or past, with a present
chronicled still,
I, too, have a history.

-Jacob Silva

Selections on Social Commentary

Wires

I used to believe
In that thing we call science
But magnetic thought did violence
Made me raving insane
Infected my brain
Now I know the whole truth
And I've told it to you
And to countless smart people
But they don't listen to me
Saying how could he be
The first person to see it
While the whole world is wrong
While we've known all along
That science is strong
But I tell you just THINK!
I'm not asking for trust
I don't say to believe
A single word that's from me
Just look at the facts
Use your brain and that's that
Start with one thing we know
Than when two currents go
In the same direction
They develop an affection
Start attracting each other
But wait! Don't go further!
Don't draw wrong conclusions
Avoid the confusion
Take away the wires
Attraction disappears
It's no secret
We've know it for years
But we learn wrong things first
And our brains are cursed
Do our best or our worst
We can't solve the big problems
Asking questions
Just the wrong ones
It's all wrong from the start

Think about this part:
What do the wires do?

-Robert J Richter

GRAZERS

Slanted moments of Clarity
lucidity
the towers falling
with perfectly placed detonations
implosion to ground zero
the world gasps
collectively
And in perplexity
Returns to the confused delusion
Everyone's losing the war
can't fight what you don't
Believe in
Unilluminated masses
Chattel
Cattle can't battle
the slaughterhouse
graze on: ipod ipad xanax xbox
netflix nextfix sony
Ticketmaster methadone martinis
tripleshot Latte' casinos with a
valium chaser porn gazer
Constant grazers
moral erasure

-Geneva J. Phillips

AS AMERICA SLEEPS

As America sleeps,
The armies of America's night
Form in endless parade + cant.

Unless America's citizens
Firmly seize their constitutional values,
Civil war will once again
Paralyze the land.

Self destruction is already evident
= A legal system that is corrupt
= A medicine system that cannot
Even imitate television well
= Abortion + crime, wasted cities
= Lack of generosity, pollution
= Destruction of farm land
= Racial + political warfare
= Poor educational systems
= Drugs that devour the soul of a nation
= Unbacked currency, skyscrapers of debt
= + a populace that values
Only laziness + materialism.

-LESLIE AMISON

Unity

What's Unity? Unity is more than just a five letter word with a
powerful meaning
Unity is when enemy's repair friendships
And foe's set aside beef
So we all can eat!

Unity is when people of color come together

Unity is sacrifice!

Unity is when you stand up and fight,

But in today's world

Unity doesn't mean nothing

It's just a word that has no meaning

So when I hear my so called brothers say

Unity

Their words don't add up because

The things they say don't have any meaning

But don't get me wrong

I know real unity when I see it

Real unity is gettin' bit by police dogs

Or gettin' sprayed by fire hoses

Or even a million men marching to Washington

To conform the same pace race

That enslaves us from the start.

When are we goin' to open our eyes

As a race and understand

We are the true kings and Queens of this world!

We are the ones who have the power

To change the World

But until we understand the real meaning

Of unity

We will forever be lost in this world

The same world that

Was built by us

But not for us

The same world my great grandmother and father

Lost blood sweat and tears

The same world that has my brothers and sisters

Behind bars for years on top of years

The same world that keeps black mothers cryin'

And little black babies dyin'

But until we understand unity

Our people will continue to be blind!

- Davon Wells

Spiro Agnew's Speeches

I began to think.

=He wanted us there in the streets

=The cops, the National Guard, + the radicals

=Terrorizing + shooting one another

=All to his crooked, great flag waving glory!

Not that I am morally so much better than he.

=I just don't relish civil wars + heaps of corpses.

Hitler was enough

= The films of German DEATH CAMPS

+ THE BODIES BULLDOZED INTO DITCHES!!

-Mr. Leslie Samuel Charles Amison Jr.

Way Of Texas

They work in the name of the law.

Granted with powers of authority.

Doing good for what sometimes must be done.

But often misdirected, to the destruction of the innocent ones.

Blinded by the powers that be.

Not being able to see the difference between,

What's not real and reality.

They think they do right by the power they've been given.

But only in the end they bring more pain and affliction.

Fear is what it must be.

What they live within their reality.

Caused by the task they have taken.

Looking over their shoulder day by day, wondering if they will be taken.

Justice is what they think they bring.

But it' only brings the end to people, like you and me.

- Micheal Pogue

Chicago Style

There once was a fourth of July

With baseball and moms apple pie

As evening was growing

The fireworks glowing

Red, white and blue in the sky

The "ohhs" and "ahhs" of delight

Joined in the sounds of the night

Grown up and child

Entranced and beguiled

As rockets made whistle in flight

Soon though the evening was shattered

Kicked in, molested and battered

X marks the spot

Where Eighty-two shot

It wasn't the flag torn and tattered

Faith though in brotherhood shredded

And too in direction that's headed

Instead of evolving

The door seems revolving

Perhaps where we're stuck and embedded

It seems that Chicago has seen

A weekend for sure rather mean

Caskets now filled

With those that were killed

This time was numbered fourteen!

- Michael S. Griffis

Maybe

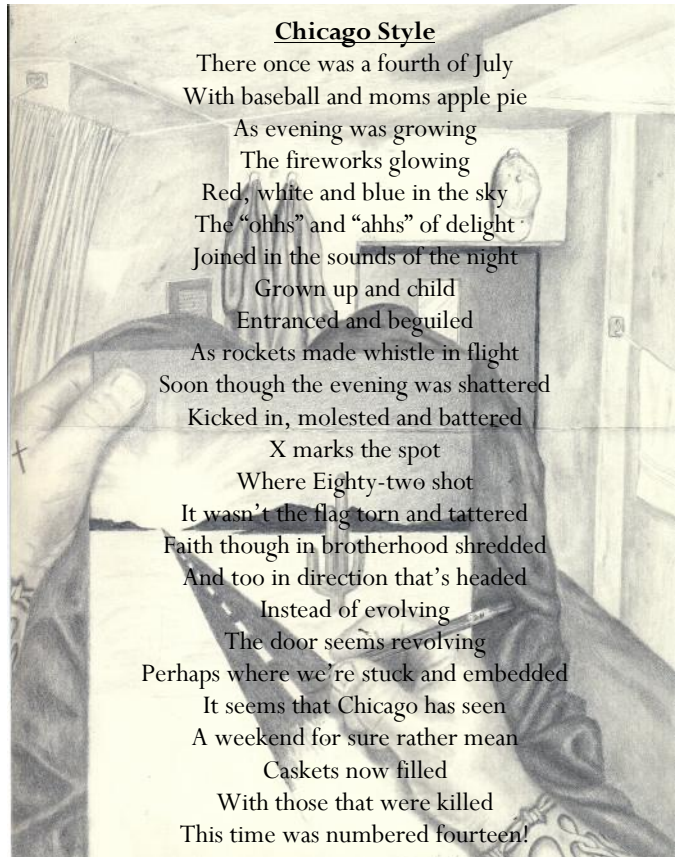
Maybe if black would treat each other better, than they will be able to completely come together.

Maybe it's because of the devils' self-destructive drugs they been abusing, recklessly living in a world of confusion.

Maybe they are caught up in a deceptive atrocious trend, while it's their own hearts they need to mend.

Maybe they are victims of broken families and their own self-destructive communities.

Maybe they are unconsciously infatuated, with money when it's evil work people are going to the cemeteries and others are caught



up in the diabolical corruption of the penitentiaries.
 Maybe they will realize they are promoting promiscuous sex, by
 giving them condoms made of latex.
 Maybe they should teach them their bodies is precious and it is
 something they should cherish.
 Maybe if they knew to walk with integrity they would reflect their
 own dignity and love and respect themselves enough to protect
 their virginity.
 Maybe it's the blind misleading the blind and for the genocidal
 destruction they are deceptively manipulating their unconscious
 minds.
 Maybe it's at an all time high blacks are constantly going to jail
 and as responsible fathers and mother many have failed.
 Maybe if they realize abusing alcohol has been many black down
 fall, they would learn to stand tall.
 Maybe if they had the proper knowledge, they would be inspired
 to attend college.
 Maybe if they knew the magnitude of saying "I'm black and I'm
 proud." They would stop trying to be part of the opposite crowd.
 Maybe if they learn to love and respect the "beautiful reflections"
 of blackness within themselves, they would stop imitating
 everyone else.
 Maybe if you sincerely love yourself, respect yourself and honor
 yourself, than you would not have to pretend to be someone else.
 Maybe you will ultimately look at the individual in your own
 mirror and realize the message of my divine words, could not be
 clearer.

- *El Roderick Mckissic*

Training Daze

In American they train 'em
 The Middle East, they train 'em
 In the ghettos, the military of course, they train 'em
 Young killers of both sexes, veterans'll train 'em
 In Europe they train 'em
 Indeed, African trains 'em
 A vicious cycle to be broken lest they continue to train 'em
 Gangs, they train 'em, religions steady training
 Officers, mercenaries, the undetected serial killer
 The effects of a brain washed, the cycle of capitalism
 For sue the poverty, abuse and oppression is swift to train 'em
 To love is to be weak, neglect a true sensation
 A house can be no home if hate is the foundation
 They're training

- *Isaiah J. Johnson*

The Cemetery Is Full

Another person dead,
 but who killed who?
 Guns don't kill people,
 people kill people
 and police get away with killing people,
 so what is left to do?
 Washing the memories down the street,
 But still leaving stains of reality outlined in chalk
 Because truth can't be hidden under the white sheet.
 Death is not racist

and bullets don't know any names.
 It's unwanted pains for the families,
 causing conflict between the mourning and the blame.
 In loving memory,
 staring at the picture of the deceased.
 Another person on death row
 that is never being released.
 The court of law
 uses the eyes of the jury to judge through,
 but who has the right to judge who?
 More problems more funerals,
 so how many more have to die?
 If we STOP THE SILENCE
 to STOP THE VIOLENCE,
 we can change where destiny can lie.
 It's sad there's more guns than roses!

- *Jerome Fitzpatrick*

Schools Jewels

All across this gracious land
 from East Coast to West
 our teachers with the toughest task
 yet always ace the test
 From A,B,Cs and 1,2,3s
 'til days of graduation
 our mentors guide with loving care
 it's more than just vocation
 It's so much more than all three R's
 at times it's life and death
 a child saved from Reapers grasp
 with teachers final breath
 They show the best in worst of times
 and too the pay the price
 the gift of love is life itself
 and the of sacrifice
 These hero's songs are most unsung
 their feats not brought to light
 a thousand times a day take place
 with strength and grace and might
 Today though brings this song of praise
 to those that make the grade
 mentors, teachers, helping hands
 the written accolade
 Thank you for my faith renewed
 our teachers got an A
 our children too from coast to coast
 have yet another day.

- *Michael S. Griffis*

Untitled

Conform, confess cosign, concede
 controlling you from the moment you breath
 keep you conflicted constricted
 as long as you believe
 your worth radiates from the images
 you see on TV
 we profess the truth

and with subtlety deceive
 you're just a product, an empty pock
 a consuming slave
 a numbered barcode
 on your soul engraved
 we will imply if you don't buy
 or produce-you are failing
 still inside your soul
 is empty and wailing
 and if you don't come around
 or breakdown
 we will build places for you
 to reform, reconstruct
 make you into a better replica
 robot to instruct
 you can never be satisfied with things
 yet you still try
 until all the forests burn down
 and all the rivers run dry
 for every last resource
 we will scour
 we'll destroy the earth
 for your appetites to devour
 there is always something else
 for you to desire
 your this and hunger
 covet never complete
 shiny new madnesses
 and sufferable aches
 to weigh down your feet
 so trod on lemming go
 to the endless want
 that makes it so
 to the sludge, to the mud
 to the grind
 we'll keep the waves
 swirling fast enough
 to keep you blind

- *Gary Gregory*

Untitled

Punishment is the professed purpose but,
 Retribution and revenge are the real reasons.
 Incarceration incites individuals to
 Satisfy a sense of moral superiority by
 Obsessively obtaining oppressive ordinances
 Never know how near their own necks
 Swipes the sightless sword of justice.

- *Carl Branson*

End to Hostilities

While they define our reality,
 foolish stimulations blind out
 vision, turning optimism to opposition

oppression sways the masses,
 to not care about our solidarity

solid are you, me, Black, Brown, Red
 Yellow and poor Whites, people of purpose,

I ask the question, "how can we love ourselves
 and our own, but use hate our neighbor,
 yet proclaim to want to transcend and
 resuscitate the collective?"

We are no better than our neighbor, as we
 are no better than ourselves, we all have
 known bloodshed—though institutional
 bi-partisanship, intensifies the social struggle,
 paired with economic disparities.

As a gun needs bullets to discharge effectively
 we the people need a united common interest,
 as all guns are different in shape, size,
 power, even color, all are created
 to serve one purpose, to protect and to
 restore order, destroying and uprising,
 as fingers connected to a palm,
 if even one finger is dismembered
 the entire hand is venerable,
 your hands complexion has color, even

mixtures of complexions on one hand,
 united and devoted to one body.

Like it or not, if you are part of any
 'prison class', you are 'the' struggle,
 your history is my history.

Domestic loathsomeness is a mighty
 nation of people labled as "the minority"
 my Brothers and Sisters, mentacide is
 a nation of separatist "qualified"
 as, Latino, African-American, Indian

Native, Asian ect cetera
 of this world, it is time to form a fist
 and pound and punch through our racial barriers,
 together as an enourmously autonomous
 nation, a correlation of mind-sets.

- *Juan Roberts*

Skin of the Birch

Like dark eyes on the white skin of the birch
 The black man covets what society holds taboo
 Northern winters remain too cold for them – mostly
 Helping keep the southern stereotypes alive for another season.

The whitest states are covered by the deepest blankets of snow
 Resulting in even their food froups to differ
 A few small things get borrowed one race to the other
 Helping to feign some "Breakthrough" side show election =

The things that are in the hearts of these who prefer to be
 snowbound tell a deeper, drifting tale.

How are we to proceed with the looming promise of Global
Warming?
While southern borders rise with the alarmists ocean temperature
The "Stars and Bars", as well as the "Maple Leaf"
Will share this new disorder, Brace yourself Canada.

When they moved their sacred Alamo
To the fracking foothills of the snow packed Tetons
Those same dark eyes on white skinned birches
will burn those Northern forests, Just like Ferguson, Missouri

snow may melt but cannot burn
the safety of the cold will get to play its race card
so, rebuild your own damn desolation
Then we can all find a new taboo.

- *David LaCouture*

With All Due Respect

Dear verse writers
I send my luv with all due respect
Now, observe as my verbals bounce like a personal check
Personally,
I peruse release with every verse that I spit
Cuz, let's face it, as long as I'm faceless
Y'all allow me to vent
But, if I put a picture to words,
could you picture me on your curb?
Draped in ketchup, a gangsta encases the nerd
Case in point,
Can you view you in my tattoos, dude?
Visualize the hate we speak
Fo' those who wear the color....
True to the G-code, G's know we go
Hard to the paint
Would rather go home, but we can't
Would rather be square, but we ain't
And it's a possibility
My destiny relies on thugs and thieves
So I can testify to lives of what it's like to be a 'G'
Is you feeling me wit' sympathetic epiphanies?
Maybe my baby was denied her dumb-ass daddy
So I could share with daughters
The burdens put upon their fathers
To explain the pain they'd know
If stopping you was within' their power
As is, you relate to what I say
Cause I'm just words on pages
Able to morph back and forth between multiple races
I'm white or yellow, black and brown
back it down or hold your ground
This is for those in the pen wit' pens
And ain't playing around
like broken carousels, care for self,
And nothing else,
Limits the soul and denies it wealth
has it occurred to you yet
That this is what thug life gets?
Excuse me now, my mouth is burning

Cuz I just spit fire,
With all due respect

-*Ray Sanchez, Jr.*

Miscellaneous Selections

This bequeathed to the Dawn

Yes, my foul feathered friend,
It is near Dusk when Darkness just begins.
You there alone, blink in vain upon your perch,
While all other Wraiths wander out into their search.
An arboreal frame beckons you, to fly from Pitch,
As Daylight, long yearns her Time to niche.
We fail to comprehend rhythm's charm for lack,
For not, your gaze reflects back from black.
The glare of Rainbow's colors in neon flare,
An oversight of your Creator's own despair.
Yet, we but sojourn on in pace with Dawn,
As often we shirk where Day has gone.
Into the Abyss, into the Void, into Chasms unprepared,
There do dwell, Night's very Dreams and Mares.

-*Robert McHale*

The Miracle

Drones!
Create unprecedented tones
Conjure tracings of a murmur
(WHILE SITTING IN SOLITUDE)
Our breath turns into sounds
As again I start these movements
Straining for
An accurate use of words...

While air drifts along
With its light, solitary steps
Untouchable noise
Dissolving the silence
Into spelled words
Manipulated
These fixed, yet faded fingers
Pointing at nothing
But gestured dreams
Of an empty street
A diffused vacant voice
More fragile; Than
Threads of Glass
Eluding a Hurricane...

This song, even now
Flees from a distant tongue
Obsolete,
In a stalled unforgiveness
Unsung...

The only contact allowed here
Are shadows crossing paths
Stretching to know each other
They revel in the Sun's light

Off a wall, from left to right
Indifferent to any bickering
Speaking only their own language

A noiseless echo of everything following, watching from behind
It belongs to man, bird & stone
Unaffected by the wind even.

Strange, that no one thinks
To challenge that, that
Belongs to no one, yet everyone
Reaching for the horizon...

-Richard Conway Jackson

I am Cocaine

My name is cocaine. Call me coke for short.
I entered this country without a passport.
Ever since then I've made lots of scum rich.
Some have been murdered and found in a ditch.
I'm more valued than diamonds, more treasured than gold,
Use me just once and you too will be sold.
I'll make a school boy forget his books,
I'll make a beauty queen forget her looks.
I'll take a renowned speaker and make him a bore,
I'll take your mother and make her a whore.
I'll make a schoolteacher forget how to teach,
I'll make a preacher not want to preach.
I'll take all your rent money and you'll be evicted.
I'll murder your babies or they'll be born addicted.
I'll make you rob, and steal and kill,
When you're under my power you have no will.
Remember, my friend, my name is "Big C,"
If you try me one time you may never be free.
I've destroyed actors, politicians and many a hero.
I've decreased bank accounts from millions to zero.
I make shooting and stabbing a common affair.
Once I take charge, you won't have a prayer.
Now that you know me, what will you do?
You'll have to decided, it's all up to you.
The day you agree to sit in my saddle,
The decision is one that no one can straddle.
Listen to me, and please listen well,
When you ride with cocaine you are headed to hell.

-Alessandro Milan

What Remains

Ifs are gone...
Whens are past
Childs grown...
First is last
Ohh... what remains
Seas rise...
Clouds part,
Parents demise...
Broken heart
Ohh... what remains
Hope is not...

Dreams awry,
Happiness bought...
Memories die,
Ohh... what remains
Desperate hours...
Broken wings,
Blooming flowers,
Yes... these remain

-Travis Newell

AM Anthem

Every morning Correctional Officer Reams
Strides into our cell block - her head pulls
Back to mimic David's stone CPRE- launch
Position. Her jaw unhinges: Gooooooooooooo
Mooooooooooooorning, she broadcasts

Nobody gets the joke but me.

-C.F. Villa

Snowfall upon children

All around nothing but white.
But everywhere you look you can see signs of life.
A snowman dressed with grandpas old clothes.
The little children make Frosty with a smiling pose.
The joy of life can never be more present.
The presence of snow is always it's own link.
It shows us there is more to life than we idly think.

As a blizzard prevents all work and movement.
Children are free to play with nature freely.
To take it a minute at a time.
Building sleighs, angels and snowballs.
Parents laugh and reminisce as they recall.
Their life, their stories, their own meaning.
They see the little ones they used to be.

If there was ever a time to be happy.
Snow always knows when to come.
Christmas at home.
With the spirit of Jesus they are never alone.
The hearts of children remember love.
As momma-Santa brings forth a bundle of toys.
Children remember with snowfall comes joy.

- Jason Miers

Drug Addled Dreams

Whether curse or cure I'll never be sure.
The nurse's pull has overcome my will.
To resist closing m eyes which open
the door to the museum of my mind.
Snapshots of life reflected in a sheen of fog,
that shimmering mirage.
Medieval moat guarding, a garden of
gravestones marking, each cinderblock of pain.
Where once snow fell like spring Swallowtails,

migrating in a blizzard of gold leaves.
Covering masquerade balls at Versailles,
in colors vivid and sublime, watching
lovely as a Disney Cinderella.
As she danced a fluid waltz while I waded.
Witnessing in her dream, a sparrow, like
a lightning bolt, alight on a porch rail.
Only to fall midst the detritus of life
while like a janitor, I whisked the broom
across the floor of temporal prisons.
Clearing a wide path to mental freedom.
Yet puzzled as a panther prowling Paris,
in search of a willing and worthy mate.
Failing to make sense of these drug addled dreams.

-Carl Branson

Mass Casualties: this is a true story [poem]

An F-14 Tomcat came in hard onto the flight-deck of CV-67; the
U.S.S. John F. Kennedy and caught the slack #2 arresting gear
cable. The SKREEEEEEEE-e-e-e-e/high pitched whine of the four
inch thick steel cable stretching out like a rubber band... then

BOOM!!! Seconds later; the alarm...
..."Mass casualties on the flight-deck."
"Corpsmen, bring your plastic bags."
"Make sure to get all foreign objects."
"We've got 'Birds' to land."

And, although my country put me here in prison.
I love her more now, then when the sun has risen.
I served her proud until that fateful day.
But, at age nineteen, I turned and went astray.

Help was found through whiskey wine and song.
But never again, could I stay in one place for long.
Itching to crawl out, for under damaged skin,
Only to wake up each time, back in jail again.

Now I only dream, that I again could sail.
And come up from behind/that bloody flight-deck rail.
To step beyond the tragedy that surely blocks my path.
No matter how I figure it, I cannot do the math.

And through the horror of being right there.
Standing up, I couldn't help but to stare.
Their broken bodies and the hearts that ceased.
We had to go out there and pick up every little piece.

The jets were coming back around...
...running out of fuel and inward bound.

"Mass casualties on the flight-deck."
"Corpsmen, bring your plastic bags."

-David W. LaCoutre

Prison

Welcome to prison
let your sentence begin.
There's plenty to cover

once you get settled in.

You'll get three free outfits.
Some old used prison blues.
And the footwear come standard,
with holes in your shoes.

We'll give you a job,
you must work every day.
Yes, we'll out you to work,
but we'll give you no pay.

Now it's off to the chow hall,
where in line you will wait.
We'll feed you three meals,
but the food's not that great.

Back at the dorm,
you can sit in your cell,
you can think on what brought you
to this corner of hell.

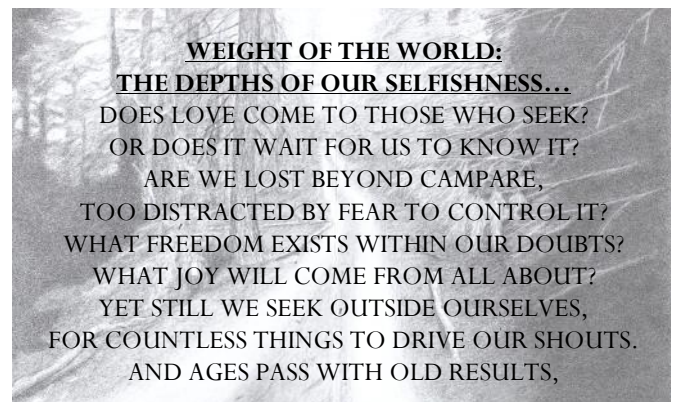
The worst thing you'll notice,
are the tricks of the mind.
And how ever so slowly,
goes the passage of time.
Each minute is an hour,
each hour is a day.
So soon will you wonder,
how you'll live life this way.

Excitement is high
at mail call each night.
For some hope is shattered,
when loved ones do not write.

Now it's time for lights out,
what a strange day it's been.
It's like living a nightmare,
that won't ever end.

When you wake up tomorrow,
we'll start it over again.
So welcome to prison,
let your sentence begin.

- Nathan Zimmerman



AND MILLIONS DIE DEVOID OF THOUGHT,
THAT WHAT WAS SOUGHT HAD NOT BEEN FOUND,
WHETHER SAGE, PRIEST, RELIGION OR CULT.
IT SEEMS OUR HOPE IS DYING OUT,
WITHIN SUCH PATHS WE'VE CLAIMED TO FIND.
THE COST, TOO HIGH TO LIVE ABOUT.
THE CLIFF, TOO STEEP FOR US TO CLIMB.
SO IS THIS ALL?...THE EXTENT OF OUR QUESTS?
FROM THOSE WITH HOPE, ARE THERE NONE LEFT,
THAT BRAVE BEYOND AND RISK THEIR LIVES,
TO KNOW ALL LIFE, AND TRANSCEND DEATH?...
FOR ON THE TINY SPHERE CALLED EARTH,
WITHIN THIS ENDLESS UNIVERSE,
IT SEEMS OUR MINDS ARE NOT ENOUGH TO
CONTEMPLATE
THE SCHEME OF THINGS,
BEYOND OUR EARTHLY NEEDS AND WANTS,
AND KNOW THE TRUTH OF HUMAN BEINGS...

-AARON V. HILL

Good Living Room

You would think to play there
just go in and sit
Hello, is it Christmas or Easter
or maybe just company coming

Hey, get out of there, close those doors, you
know you aren't allowed in there-
my mom would yell, no not say,
YELL!

Curiosity is a fleeting mental condition
brought on by the unknowing
brought on by the want to know
brought on by the child
brought on by the cars out in the
street, seen beyond the clearness
of the glass substance filling
the perfect opening in the wall

Please, can I just look in for a
while
hear the quiet
smell the clean
see the pretty
look out on the porch to the chains
that hold the swing
Guess not.
Not allowed in the Good Living Room

-Sherry Davis

The Great Fall

Autumn is such an intriguing time of year, inevitably on schedule
Reds, browns, oranges & yellows floating to lower levels
To fall is to rise again, a season of nature for us all
Indeed, the leaves shall return, vividly green once more as Spring
Begins to call

Put your leaf blowers away; let us rake many great piles
Yet these leaves are not to burn though they seem to cramp our
style
Next time around this year whence a crisp crunch reaches your
ear,
Please watch your step, some cries for help are loud & clear
It's fall...

-Isaiah J. Johnson

Aquarii Serving Humanity

Let us free ourselves.
From our restrictions.
Conceive of the future.
As having arrived.
Fighting to be individual.
Living; feeling alive.
Creating a global justice.
Exercising innovative ideas.
Getting away from crowds.
Focused attention without.

-R.J. Clayton

Untitled

Don't go assuming you know
how I feel or why
Some need a necessary pruning
and a slice of humble pie
Still-think what you will
others know it's just for show
But give yourself a pat on the back
and pump up your ego
you're just a shadow
in the masquerade
you weren't there
when the foundations were laid
the mask isn't even really new
To all things misconstrued
I supposed it futility
To need a dose of humility
I wont even look you in the eye
so you can see it's just a lie
know that anger has and always will
leave you blind
When the volatile cocktails
are already mixed in your mind
long before they stirred
or slurred your speech
That hostility and bitterness buried
are easily within reach.

- Gary Gregory

Sleep

Maybe one day there'll be a better day,
but certainly not today
Because currently we subconsciously
stand, but consciously run away.

From the battles that's better fought,
and the dreams that's better sought
after.

Who's your master, or the source
you choose to kneel to
The being that the spiritual life's
revealed through
think before you answer, because this
question is not a trick

Question

Jesus, Mohammed, Buddha, are just
a few selections

Be aware that we will die, without
ever reaching their perfections

We argue amongst each other, and
mentally break our brothers

Instead

Eating foolish knowledge, to keep
our brains stable and fed

And wonder why we want to jump,
every time we get to close to the edge
Sad reality it will be, once we do decide
to leap, and realize the world is,
Sleep...

- *Daniel R. Jackson*

Thank you PE

I got something I want to write for you.
Somewhere deep in my brain.

Where I hide all my pain.

But I don't know what to write for you.

So I hold my pencil loosely.

Than tightly.

Back to loosely.

Like my whole life behind me.

My pencil want to find me.

But it gets lost.

Like I pay the cost.

For when I got lost.

Couldn't find my way.

Not even today.

Will my pencil Pray.

To everyone who say.

Look ahead.

Look beyond.

With nothing to do.

I'm no good to you.

My pencil lay loosely.

Then it shine brightly.

Back to lay loosely.

With this head crammed full

My mouth stays empty tho'.

Hoping my pencil will tell.

Of all this living hell.

Still I grip it loosely.

Holding it nightly.

Then again I grip it loosely.

It can't tell no story.

Without me to guide it.
It's just made of wood.
I can't force it to do what I can't.
That just ain't no good.
It has no mood.
It don't eat no food.
But with the power of my mind.
And the strength of my hand.
It sure filled up this paper.
Gave me something different to do.
For a minute or two-
Thank you, PE.

-*Lorraine "Black Rain" Bennet-Kenitzki*

Selections on Hope and Optimism

Carry On

Each day I meet my stressors

My depressors

My oppressors

Thinking All is hopeless

Lacking strength

To carry on...

It is then I must take stock

For it is me-myself and

My perception of these stressors

That is the strength

To carry on...

-*C. Michael Lau*

Poem (Untitled)

Though the odds are stacked against us, I see a sliver of hope.
My optimism has broaden my vision from the naysayers narrow
scope.

And ambition, propels me forward via aesthetic minds and sand
impressions.

Altering the course and process of natural-selection,
breaking down biology in sections
then reforming a strong frame with principles and mental
intervention.

I'm on a crash course with life's oddities but I'm focused,
dividing man's true nature from the dangerous doses of hocus-
pocus.

Don't allow the magicians to fool you, the sky isn't broken.
Only obscured by foggy mirrors and shady politicians who still
smoke 'em.

Life is strange, I know it. Futures are even stranger when they're
cloaked,

by ignorance, diluted education, systematic religions and caged
votes.

But remain diligent, enlighten the weary and wake the buried.
'Cause everything is possible in solidarity, only the weak find it
scary,

to stand up, to speak up, to find courage in life's fights.
'Cause it's impossible to bring change if you won't stand up for
your *Rights*.

Don't wean from your constitution, the institution of a better
day,
a brighter tomorrow starts with the first steps is what my mother
says.
So water your seed and nourish the beauty of an educated mind,
and be inspired, be motivated to set your goals high.
'Cause I'm only one voice, one heart, but 'together' we can all
rise,
as an unwavering body, that's standing up for what's right.

-Santiago Duran

Incarnation

Old games of chance are what remain
Of old designs shaped, all made in vain.
All dice were thrown and lots were cast,
That were the life my mind held last.

The trace of what was once and died,
What lived and failed at last, but tried.
Out from within that shadow, I am born,
Now come to be again on this new morn.

What may remain for me ahead,
Rattles of another's long lost dread.
Echoes of long cold roads and darkened nights,
Racing away, gone, at the sun's first lights.

Desire and needs all left to rust,
As I clutch onto this new dust.
Hungering no more for – I cannot recall,
Onto wonder of what, my new eyes fall.

Everfar from first dimple home,
To everdistant, all alone.
Come to see a path emerge and am flung,
Now go! A new mind's-journey has begun.

-Alexander Valentine

Give Aquarius A Chance

Others do not seem
To take mas as serious.
Yes, I must admit:
Many rules I've broken
Known to be very outspoken.
Let's stop on this token.
Having hope for others, is Golden.

- R.J. Clayton #1078585

Andy's Fight

Your presence lives on in every struggle against brutality,
A precious life not spared the coarse nature of our reality.
A reflection of life under Amerikkka in the streets,
We yearn for the day youth need not worry about them folks
wearing them damn sheets.
You were not allowed to reach your 14th birthday,
This tragedy was felt all the way up in Pelican Bay.

I was in my windowless cell when I got the news,
Mijito in our struggle for justice we will not lose!
Today we are born into a repressive state,
Yet the beauty of the people is shown resisting on your birth date.
Your precious life meant more than you would probably ever
know,
Your small Brown fist has already dealt them a mighty big blow.
Transformation has started due to this pig's actions,
Look at the mobilization of people from so many factions!
Your fight began the day you were born,
Occupation will continue until struggle becomes the norm.
Today we rebuild with liberation in sight,
There is no way in hell we will abandon Andy's Fight!

- Jose H. Villarreal

Chase the Darkness.

Sometimes you feel like no one else cares
And you are all alone in this life.
When darkness stares; and Ugly glares
Itself into stress and to strife

People tend to find themselves
In downward, spinning spirals.
Losing touch with things that use
To bring them happy smiles.

To stay there, in that place of gloom
For any length of time,
Would wear the poet to the bone
and rob him of his rhyme.

So, let the Darkness come and pass,
Take from it what you can.
And stay there less, the next time;
If it comes back 'round again.

Put some words to paper
When there is no one else nearby.
And chase the darkness down the road
Where you can sing your words on high.

-David LaCouture

Take A Chance Aquarian

You're opportunities to rise.
From abject poverty toward riches.
It's like a distance of sentence.
Away from great writers apprentice.
Let go of negativity.
Accept equal measure of light.
Spirituality, is the truth.
So hardly grasped, after youth

- R.J. Clayton

Written to Fit

A tiny space, no need to waste
The last little corner, but I'll warn ya'
Don't expect much, I'm too rushed
And the space was too small anyway!

-Robert J Richter

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Thank you to everyone who submitted work. It is unfortunate that we cannot include everyone's work, but we encourage all of you to keep writing and submitting your work. Best wishes from me and all the Prisoner express employees and volunteers. – Ben

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