

Prisoner Express Poetry Anthology



April 2008
Volume Two

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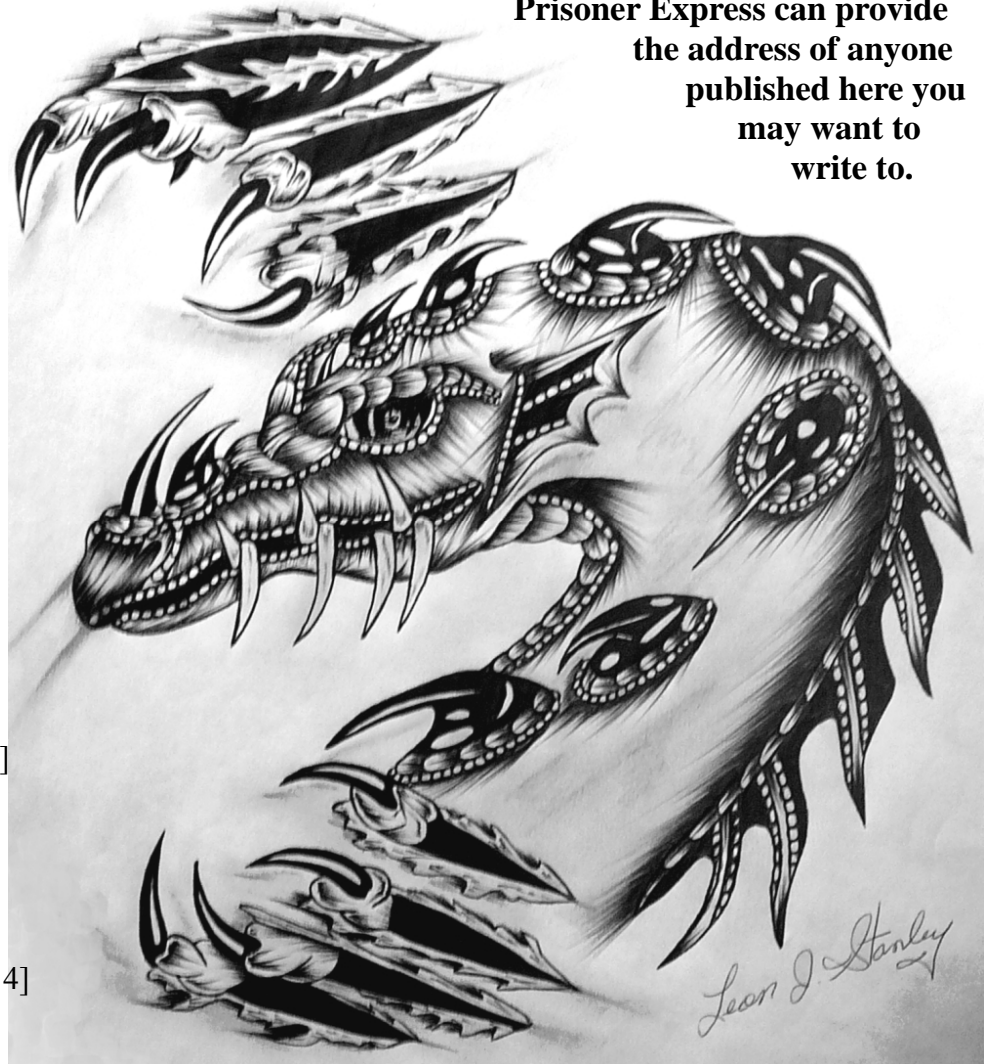
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...and to everyone who sent in their poems!

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Buddhist Prayer for Peace
Willie Jenkins

May all beings everywhere
plagued with suffering of body and mind
quickly be freed from their illnesses.
May those frightened cease to be afraid,
and may those bound be free.
May the powerless find power, and may
people think of befriending one another.
May those who find themselves in trackless,
fearful wilderness: the children, the aged,
the unprotected,
Be guarded by beneficial celestials.
And may they swiftly attain brotherhood.

Unicycle
Eric Michael Street

We look at Nature and
Our nature is to classify
To satisfy some drive to
Draw lines between such
Things as cannot be divided then
If we minded our surroundings
They're abounding with ample
Obvious examples of how things
Such as a plow are simple
Holy symbols of the unity
And infinity of Birth
To Rebirth for Life
Is rife with Death and
Each last breath is our first
On earth.

Realm
Starkim

How did I leave without moving? They sold me to
the state that raped my community, I just wanted a slice
of the moon and sprinkle stars all over it, plus taste the
Earth's crust. I stood still, the only thing that moved
was my thoughts. My soul frozen.

Take away sound and think out loud rest your ideas
in a volcano, creating erupts. Headaches of reality. I
opened my mouth to yawn, bored by my pondering. I
questioned my existence and held my breath tasting the
lust in my heart. Drenched in my own filth, I nearly
drowned in affliction. Regurgitate my weakness in this
realm, it rained lava, acid rivers, I cried chemicals.
Flowers died the hour lied, time was wrong. Words of
winter fall then spring back up because I miss summer
some her.

I slept in placenta before I could remember, I laid in

[2]

this book, the pages became my blanket, the words
warm and gentle. Imagine thinking of yourself, what
would you remember?

The aggression that I held was for my purification
washing with my own blood, I held on for dear life,
clutching on to my sanity. An explosion of my thoughts
brought forth a change in my realm of relativity. I
regained my relevance. I hear the song of reassurance, it
increased my endurance, I felt the rush coming over me.
Slowly it felt like the softest fabrics, clothe me, console
my spirit, make time move faster, free me from my
enemies that hold me captive against my will.

A Letter to God
Jonathan Thompson
dedicated to Dr. Maya Angelou

I understand that it all starts with me
So I ask for wisdom as I bend my knees
Lord I give my battle up for you to fight
And I open my heart to your guiding light

Father you've brought me through the storm
But still my life is far from the norm
So I keep praising, for you have saved me
And promised to love me for all eternity

You have given me another chance to live
And my broken spirit you have healed
So in return I will sacrifice to save another
And share your glory with my sisters and brothers

As long as I am here
I will be used
And as long as you shine down on me
I will give all praises to you

Stream of Life
Charles V. Anderson

Life is like riding down the river,
Listening to Mark Twain, as the banjo
plays on. As I see the swamp bird rise
from the water's edge; as the mosquito
bites my neck, I see the alligator
watching through the moss like life
waiting to take another bite out of time.
I find myself following this stream
searching for an end in the water's depth.
Sinking until I'm gone and I find myself old
and know life will continuously flow
down this stream of life.

My Revelation
Ben Winter

Do I dare compare myself to the desert prophets of old
Were Mohamed and Moses as tortured as I
In this desert of the mind and soul

Mirages of hope dancing before tearful eyes
A promised land of nowhere and nothing
A myth, a dream and a lie too many time told
Too many times believed to be
The truth absolute
By simple hoping fools

And I wonder...
Where is my revelation supposed to be
Where is my virgin statue weeping blood
My Lazarus, my manna from heaven, my water to wine
My arise and walk through parted Red Seas
For I have delivered thee!

If isolation leads to enlightenment
I should be the wisest being
A laughing Budda, a Soloman, a Confucian sage
A Socrates or a Plato
Whose wisdom echoes throughout the ages
Lingering in the minds of countless generations
I would build a world of philosophic glory

And still I wonder...
Where is my revelation supposed to be
What mystic truth will solitude reveal to me
What god or goddess will appear to me
Through clouds through visions, through angels
Through burning bushes of hallelujah chorus
And brazen trumpet fare
To share with me what it's all about

But I guess I'm too full of doubt
To believe in distant desert mirages
And any angel I've seen
Must have been a dream
Must have been my mind hallucinating and playing
tricks

Anything I cannot enclose with my mind is fable,
False, illusion, error, a lie, a grave mistake of some kind
And even though I've tried so hard to find them
I dismiss the miracles I've seen

Left to wonder once again
Where is my revelation supposed to be

[3]

Today Is Thy Only Kingdom
Jackey R. Sollars

Today is thy only kingdom,
A minutia of life.
To get all wrongs right
Marching to thy own beating drum,
Seize this opportunity!
Flip the bull by its horns.
Dance with all the storms.
Become what thou ought to be.
Cast fear upon a gale wind.
Muster courage, strength, achieve victory
For many the trials as well as the enemy.
Testing thy faith's compassion,
Blessing the thy peace and wisdom
For today is your only kingdom.

What Was, And What Is
Jonathan Thompson

I have seen smiles and peace on rainy days
And I've felt shame and pain in many ways
I've come from nothing to become someone on this earth
And I've seen goody two-shoes fall from grace to less
than dirt

I've seen those thought to be dumb learn in society
And I've seen educated people fall to stupidity
I've seen love over-ride hate in the hearts of men
And I've seen hate for men in the eyes of women

I've seen the weak make a stand and become strong
And I've seen the strong break down and do wrong
I've seen the forgotten remembered by their past lovers
And I've seen the unbreakable bond crash between two
brothers

I've been through hardships but I have a better day in
sight
I only pray that I'm blessed to make it through the night
And there will always love, hate, smiles and tears, I'm
your witness
And no matter how we live it, life will always be what
was and what is

Penitents**Ronnie Gurganus**

Shortened spires
Trimmed in white
A thousand moving minarets
Clouds of dust meet waves of heat
Beneath the solemn druid feet
As they circumambulate
Like Muslims at Medina

Mendicants and proselytes
Forced to worship reverently
At the State's unseemly mosque
Of incapacitation

Minatory elocution
Builds redoubts of retribution
Zealots of authority
Construct cloisters of control

Arrayed all the same
With like minds and like colors
Sit promethean vultures
Disaffected and cruel

Under the big top
The psychotic, sad circus
Arenas of power
For the empathically challenged

Where pageants of time
Parade lazily by

Habitué of urban fen
Become monastic denizens
Brothers; blood-kin
Tied by suffering
And by guilt
Circumstance adduced
And in some fine
and fancy way
Immolation is redeeming
And they find
The martyrs swinging
Safe passage bid
As we cut them down

So someday may
My soul return
When wiser heads
Learn to prevail
To fiddle while
Old Texas burns



Humanity reduced
To obsequious syllables
Truncated horizons
Lives interrupted
Loves left to die

Sublimation of legal misery
Played out in courts
And on tv
Legislators, cops and judges
Self-appointed
Vanguard of morality

Amid new cries
And forlorn walls
Of justice—
Somewhat delayed

Each One Teach One
Brandon Jamal Dixon Sr.

The more you learn,
The wiser you become.

The wiser you become,
The more you have experienced.

The more you have experienced,
The more you have to share.

The more you have to share,
The more opportunities you have to enlighten others.

The more opportunities you have to enlighten others,
The fewer mistakes they tend to make.

The fewer mistakes they tend to make,
The more options they will have.

The more options they will have,
The more they are taught.

The more they are taught,
The more they learn.

Vetus Error
J.S. Slaymaker

Poisonous spider, vampires and trolls,
 lurking beneath the bridge of our souls.
Demons and evils, monsters and fiends,
 pit us to the maiden, cross and guillotine.
 The Blood of the Lamb upon our doorpost....

Satyr and players, users and more,
 all of genus psychic carnivore.
Black orgies of ladies with lovers renowned,
 desire in the darkness devoid of a sound.
 Lord Jesus and Mary, the heavenly host.

Allergic disorders and skin disease,
 heart failure, thrombosis, and warts if you please.
Brain tumours, ulcers and Cupid's itch,
 if not one thing another, ain't life a bitch!
 St. Vitus protect us to the utmost...

A young Gypsy woman-child almost virginal
 with a hunger burning almost cannibal.
Ghost dancers and glamour, dark mystical charms,
 she read mystic visions in my tattooed arms.
 The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

[5]

Our Divinity
Brandon Lee Garvin

Could it be our destiny to live, or is it all a dream...
Should it really be our faith to give, or are there souls we
 can't redeem?
Truth in falsehoods lies within, the Hands of Time
 Refuse
Free Will is Liberal Paradox, yet this is what we choose
Believe me when I tell you that, we breathe this Life too
 fast
Deceiving as it may seem to us, the future presents its
 past
Existence thrives on Memories, Immortality stays true to
 heart
This Dance goes on for Eternity, Music lies within the
 Art
Signs of silence beckoning to you, listen to their Calls
We question with such intensity, which caused our
 Guiding Falls...
The Messengers make it clear to all, "Ask and you shall
 receive."
So look deep within the Pyramid's walls, Divinity's ours
 to retrieve!

Anyway
Reginald West

People are unreasonable, illogical and self centered.
 Love them anyway...
If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish ulterior
motives.
 Do good anyway...
If you are successful, you win false friends and true
enemies.
 Succeed anyway...
The good you do will be forgotten tomorrow.
 Do good anyway...
Honest-and-frankness make you vulnerable.
 Be honest-n-frank anyway...
What you spend years building may be destroyed
overnight.
 Build anyway...
People need help but may attack you if you help them.
 Help people anyway...
Give the world the best you have and you'll get kicked in
the teeth.
 Give the world the best you've got anyway...

A Maiden's Tear
James Meier

It's an Indian maiden's love song
Whispered through mesquite and through sage
She sings of her beloved warrior
And the reasons for his anger and his rage

She tells of the many time
He has held her fragile hand
And played the pipe he made
Outside the tipi of their little band

She sings proudly of the bride price
He said he would gladly pay
But then of the white man's coming
Men in blue who took him away

She sings of the longing
Of her heart emptied and frayed
Of years spent in strange lands
And the terrible price she'd paid

Her sweet voice wavers
Across prairies dotted with sage
Her shoulders now cruelly bent
Sweet face wrinkled with age

She sings now of his waiting
On distant shores she can see
She tells of the end to her journey
And her longing to be set free

Bitter tears have tracked the cheeks
With memory of endless years
Those endured without him
The wasting of those tears

Her aged face is raised now
To Great Spirit in the sky
Forgotten now the prairies
Her soul readied now to fly

To her beloved warrior
Who's waited through the years
Heard her many prayers
Seen her wasted tears

Now man no longer stands
To keep the two apart
Soon there'll be a mending
For the maiden's troubled heart

[6]

So comes the final chapter
The turning of life's page
And no more sweet voice
Whispers through the sage.

Tears in My Eyes
Joe Evans Santoya

How many days will I sit and cry
Thinking of my nina
She died when she was nine

She was one that I loved
One of the one's that I had
Mija If you hear me,
this one's from your Dad.

Paso mis dias
Feeling all alone
Pidiendo le a dosito
why he took you
home.

I remember the day
When I heard your first cry
It touched my Corazon
To have you by my side.

But today is the day I find tears in my Eye's,
Even my Corazon has become
paralyzed.

Mija, I love you
And I'm sorry I wasn't there
But I want you to Know
That your Jefito really cared

Tears In My Eyes will always be there
And the thoughts
of you Mija
And all that we shared

Forgiveness I ask for leaving
you alone crying and praying for
Daddy to come home

So I'm writing this poem
To remind me of you, Tears In My Eyes
Mija, your Jefito loves you.

Why Me?**Deanna James**

Here I am in this room, all alone. Oh so cold.
 Everything blue, gray, and white; dusty, rusty and old...
 The mirror is metal, distorting my reflection.
 Reminding me daily of my dereliction.
 Pick out my own clothes? Those days are gone,
 A set of State Blues is what I have on.
 The women in here, the misfits of life.
 No happy tales, only tales of strife.
 The guards seem to have lost any trace of compassion.
 They feel we're just suffering the consequences of our
 actions
 And maybe they're right to a certain extent.
 I just hope they realize how easily it could be them.
 I too had a good life, once upon a time.
 When I was following His will, and not mine...
 I used to complain about silly little things;
 The kids tracking in dirt, coming back from the swings,
 Corey and Colby screaming and fighting each other.
 All part of the joys of being a mother...
 The cooking the cleaning, the job for which I had a
 knack,
 What I wouldn't give to have it all back...
 I'd give anything for just a hug and a kiss.
 To play Simon Says, watch Sponge Bob Square Pants.
 But I gave it all up, tossed it all down the drain,
 What was I thinking, I must've been insane.
 I let drugs carry me down the fast road to destruction.
 With little hope now of any reconstruction.
 I participated in taking the life of another,
 My life and others, thrown in the gutter.
 It sounds really bad, and trust me it is,
 But anyone out there could end up like this...
 Pop the wrong pill, take a hit of the wrong rock,
 And I could be greeting you in the next cell block.
 When I'm alone, and all I can do is cry,
 I ask God "Why couldn't it have been me that died?"
 He answers in that still gentle voice...
 "Because Deanna, that was my choice.
 I have plans for you, things you must do.
 People who need to hear all that you've been through"
 So you see, man says I have 28 years,
 But He says "daughter, dry your tears..."
 "If you remain faithful, I promise you will see...
 Your family restored, your life renewed,
 Your blessings will be many, not just a few...
 Don't worry about your sons, they're in good hands,
 Just like I take care of you, I'll take care of them..."
 That's all I have now, the hope I hold on to,
 That my God, will carry me through...

Of Moth and Flame**Charles Cameron**

I see a pretty girl in a booth in the corner of the room.
 People speaking softly.
 She doesn't seem to be expecting any company.
 Sitting alone. Cold cup of coffee.
 She stares at the candle on the center of the table.
 A scar of a smile on her face.
 She studies the flame closely,
 Considers it as a botanist would a flower in a vase.
 She knows all about the fire:
 What it eats, from where it came.
 She knows what makes it happy;
 She remembers the taste of the flame.
 She believes that they have a lot in common:
 Never satisfied, forever wanting...
 Always needing more oxygen.
 Destroy everything they touch -
 Everything they fall in love.
 The fire turns it to ashes...
 Her tears turn it all to mud.
 She recalls the very first time she met the fire,
 When it burned her paper heart to ashes.
 It left her naked and alone.
 Blue eyes. Black lashes.
 I could see she was tired of life,
 Tire of the pain and all the games.
 And just as I was about to say to her
 Everything would be okay...
 She looked me in the eye, lifted her wings,
 And then she burst into flames.

Little Fingerprints on the Glass**Tommy Ray Steele**

One day while wiping down the tables in the visiting
 room at the French Robertson Unit in Abilene, Texas, I
 noticed little fingerprints on the glass. Then I noticed a
 man's handprint on the other side of the glass
 overlapping the little fingerprints. And I hear the little
 fingerprints say...

"Daddy, will you hold my hand?
 I sure do miss you, Daddy.
 Please don't cry, Daddy.
 I wish I could wipe away your tears.

"I read your poems in school the other day, Daddy.
 All the other kids said, 'Oh he sure does have a good
 Dad.'
 I just laughed with all the girls and boys.
 I didn't tell them you were in jail.
 I was scared, but then I cried.

I'm sorry, Daddy.

"I went to the park yesterday
and flew my kite, Daddy.
I watched all the little boys fly their
kite with their daddy.

You would have been real proud of me, Daddy.
My kite went the highest, as high as the moon!
Well, I pretended it did.
I couldn't tie the tail on right.
I tried real hard, Daddy, really I did.

"Mom, why is Daddy crying? I wasn't bad, was I?
I promise to come see you next Sunday, Daddy.
And Daddy, please hurry up and come home.
Mommy needs you too. You're my Daddy and
I love you thisssss much."

Then I wiped away the little fingerprints,
and I wiped away my tears.
Tried not to think of all the pain
I'll cause being away so many years.
You see, the man's handprint on the glass was mine.
I'm locked up in this cold and lonely prison
doing my time.
And someday when I'm finally released at last
I'll never again have to wipe away
little fingerprints on the glass.

(from my heart)

It's Tough To Be Transgendered **Synthia China Blast**

It's tough to be a transgendered woman in prison. No
one really knows what the pressure is like.
I awake every morning and, stare in a mirror, longing to
feel beautiful, yearning not to be viewed disgraceful.
My friends seem to like me. If I follow up with their
dares.
If I am not willing to sexually satisfy them, they act like
they really don't care.
I walk around in a daze. In a prison complex that is
made to keep us in a maze. No one really likes me.
But everyone seems to want to wife me.
I thought about taking drugs. I even attempted self-
castration.
I feel as if I am fading, into a light that keeps me
waiting.
I am a transgender. My life is spent around men. If one
of them wants to date me, they don't ask they just try
and rape me.
I fear the being taken, to a place that I fear if I awaken.
I fear being taken, to a place that is forsaken. I look at

this prison cell. I think of my prison hell.
Sometimes I really get so low that I want to end it all.
It's tough being a transsexual. Life has never been
fair. I wish I was a woman so I wouldn't feel such
despair.

The Country Song You'll Never Hear on the Radio **Bryan Page**

Sometimes the world is a hard place
And sometimes the facts are hard to face
Life ain't always easy
and sometimes it's no fun
but I'm still hanging in there
I'm not done

There's got to be more to this life
than a prison cell but I can't tell
There's got to be more to this life
than this heart break - it's all I can take
There's got to be more to this life
than hurt and pain, am I insane?
and I'm not done

I want to know what it's like
to live clean and free
To be happy as can be - can it happen to me?
I want to tuck in my kids
and make love to my wife
Yes, that's the life, the kind I'd like
I'd like to break the chains of alcohol and meth
Yep, that's what I said - come back from the dead.
hold my wife's hand again, as we pray by the bed
find peace inside my head
and I'm not done.

There's got to be more to this life
than a prison cell but I can't tell
There's got to be more to this life
than this heart break - it's all I can take
There's got to be more to this life
than hurt and pain, am I insane?
and I'm not done

Wasted Time Miami

The time that I've wasted is my biggest regret,
Spent in these places I will never forget.
Just sitting and thinking about the things that I've done,
the crying, the laughing the hurt and the fun.
Now it's just me and my hard-driven guilt
behind a Wall of emptiness I allowed to be built.
I'm trapped in my body, just wanting to run
back to my youth with its laughter and fun.
But the chase is over and there's no place to hide.
Everything is gone including my pride.
With reality suddenly right in my face
I'm scared Alone and stuck in this place.
Now memories of the past flash through my head,
and the pain is obvious by the tears that I shed.
I've asked myself why and where I went wrong,
I guess I was weak when I should of been strong.
Living for the drugs and the wings I had grown,
My feelings were lost, afraid to be shown.
As I look at my past its so easy to see
the fear that I had, afraid to be me.
I'd pretend to be rugged so fast and so cool,
When actually lost like a blinded old fool.
I'm getting to old for the tiresome game
of acting real hard with no sense of shame.
It's time that I change and get on with my life
fulfilling my dreams for a family and wife.
What my future will hold I really don't know,
but the years that I've Wasted are starting to show.
I just live for the day when I'll get a new start
and the dreams I still hold deep in my heart.
I hope I can make it, I at least have to try
because I'm heading toward Death and I don't want to
DIE!

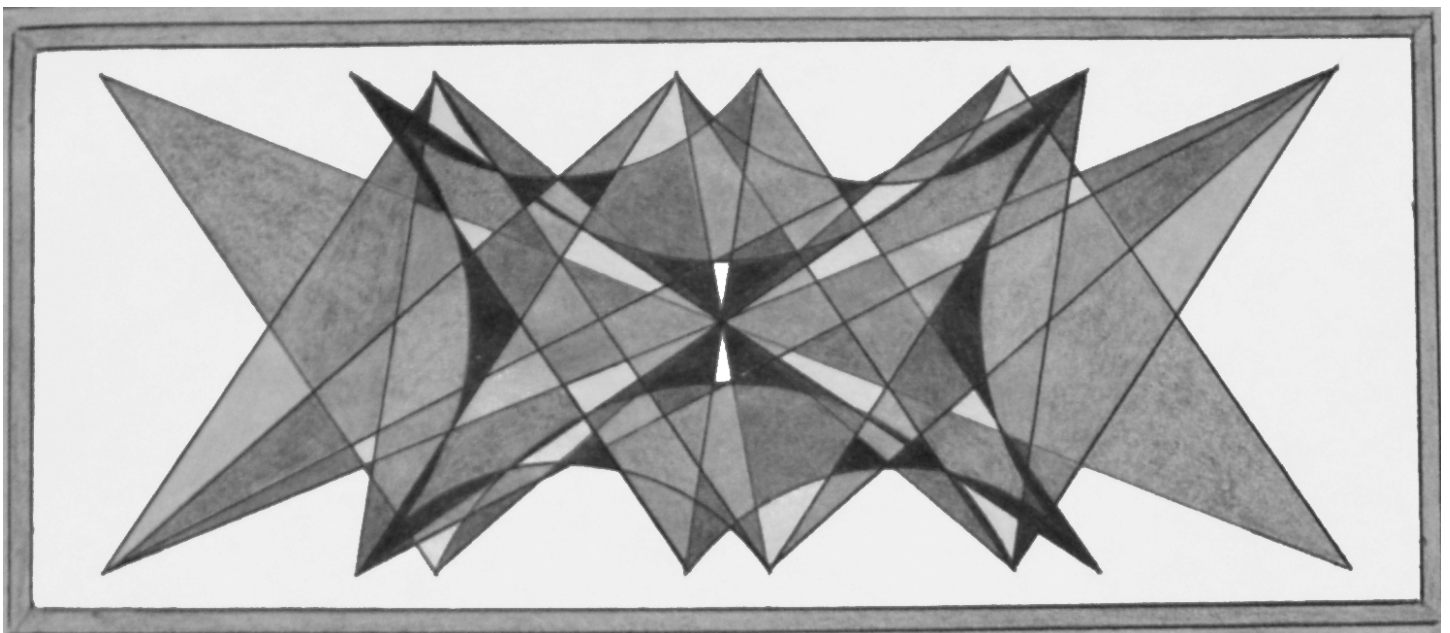
Lisa CF Murdoch

Author's Note: Lisa Steinburg was a 10 year old child in NYC who was a victim of horrible child abuse and who was murdered by her stepfather in the late 1980s. The story was heartbreaking and I wrote this poem for her and for all children who may be trapped into such an environment. Lisa's tragedy did NOT have to occur because her school teachers as well as her neighbors knew that the child was being hurt, yet no one helped to save her.

Past my heart's window...comes a weeping wind
Her tiny voice heard at the edge of a night's end
Small precious child who we shall never know
A lost little soul who lived a nightmare of woe

Little Lisa the girl who weeps in the night
How the days for you must have been such a fright
The nights you spent weeping in fear of the day
Never given a choice for life in love's way

I ask night's embrace of the love that we send
To Lisa...who's gliding on currents of wind
Ever in heart does the wind leave its mark
Holding little Lisa who weeps in the dark.



Freedom Made Me Prison Raised Me...
Theresa Battles

Freedom presented me the opportunity
to learn but I didn't take advantage
Prison raised me to think, speak,
learn, and not be afraid to reach

Freedom made me self-destruct and shun
the pain I felt inside
Prison raised me to realize through
it all I was given the strength to
survive

Freedom snatched my innocence, swallowed
up by the streets
Prison raised me to re-evaluate and
reclaim my life than to live life on
life's term

Freedom brought about peer pressure
that I surrendered to costing me everything
Prison raised me to not be pressured but
to embrace all lessons and then have the
ability to make my own choices

Freedom sometimes make you take life for
granted and ignoring all the goodness that
it brings
Prison raised me to squeeze appreciation
tightly asking for one more change to be free.

The Good Prisoner
David Snyder

Silence? Good prisoner.
Speech? Bad prisoner.
Model versus advocate and political.
Seen? Good prisoner.
Heard? Bad prisoner.
Shadow versus real.

Incompetence is... good.
Ignorance is... good.
Negligence is... good.
Prisoner awareness is... bad!!

Hear no evil (prisoner).
See no evil (prisoner).
Speak no evil (prisoner).
Monkey see,
Monkey do,
prisoner.
Uneducated? Good prisoner.

[10]

Unintelligent? Good prisoner.
Good prisoner. Here's a treat.
Data by prisoner? Bad.
Information by prisoner? Bad.
Survey by prisoner? Bad.
Data, information and survey by non-prisoner? Good.
Data, information and survey by advocates? Bad.
Good prisoner? Bad prisoner? Ooops, "inmate?"

In Dreams
Jorge Lira

*Author's Note: This is an expression of how one wakes
up to the same place and to the same surroundings, day
in, and day out, while being incarcerated. You dream
your life away, yet face reality once that first ray of
sunshine awakens you in the morning.*

A passage of time,
with a mind of its own;
a glimpse of eternity,
or thoughts you've outgrown.

It's deep in your mind,
the place none can see;
Holding all secrets,
as time is set free.

Of its realm you will seek,
those moments of past;
Some feelings of present,
a future forecast.

At times, a hero be born,
or a villain be slain;
The great voyage of time,
yet never the same.

Could be a time of fulfillment,
or torturous event;
Leaving a soul full of joy,
or a heart that is spent.

And as you come to,
reality will set in;
You'll look at these walls,
knowing it was only a dream...

Just Passing Time
Joseph Angel Cano

As I sit and glance at the stars.
 I begin to write of my past,
 thinking of how I became a victim of circumstance.
 When I was young I lived a street soldiers life,
 Watching my homies die by drugs, guns and knives.
 I would always say, "it'll get better then this,"
 not knowing if I'll be arrested or next on the mortician's
 list.

I would always step back and try to get out
 the gang bargin, but there would always be people
 who would be constantly hatin.
 I've come to relize how my teenage years had gone
 to waste, prison isn't the place...
 When I exit here my mentality will be different then
 when I came.

I have learned to much prison corruption never will
 be the same.

So as you sit and gaze at the stars hoping your
 wishes come true, remember there's a young man
 behind these bars doing the same as you...

My Blue Never Fades
Chermon Kennemur

As the day brings on this rain
 and my thoughts extend my pain
 I can't see so clearly
 through this fog and haze
 The end of my troubles
 will meet the end of my days
 and I will find out that
 my color of blue never fades
 These whispers have cried
 the deafening truth
 I scream at these demons
 for stealing my youth
 Nothing comes out, but in the back
 of my mind the devil resides
 So I'm overwhelmed by the color
 glowing inside
 I tore out this heart of mine
 and replaced it with blue
 and this is the reason
 I do what I do.

The Prison Within the Prisoner
David Snyder

"...Give me your tired and poor..."

So many different walls.
 Personal.
 Emotional.
 Mental.
 Society.
 Culture.
 Sex.
 Age.
 Race.
 Concrete. Electric fences. Barbwire. Gun towers.
 Metal detectors. Security cameras. Lockdown. Strip
 cell. Shackles. Searches. Frisks. Escorts.

The ironic.
 A homeless person.
 A tired and poor.
 They have more freedom,
 yet, far less than most.
 Even a prisoner.
 They have the one thing
 we don't.
 Freedom.
 They are alive.
 Prisoners just "live."

How many prisoners
 are so willing
 to live out of a shopping cart,
 sift garbage,
 sleep in a cardboard box
 just to have the freedoms
 the homeless have.

Is a soup kitchen bad?
 Is a halfway house or shelter bad?
 Are Salvation Army clothes bad?
 Is being scorned as homeless worse than
 scorned as an ex-con?
 Pity versus scorn.
 Would you
 give up pride,
 to have pity over scorn?
 Which would you choose?

Faceless, nameless as a forgotten homeless but free
 OR

Faceless, nameless as a scorned, spit upon ex-convict
 and never free inside or outside walls?

It is said, "You are your own worst enemy."
Concrete walls are for the enemy of society.
Shanks are for the enemy of prison.
Prisons are for the discarded problems of society.
A prisoner has one retreat to save themselves.
The mind.
That too is a prison.
A prison made and built by the prisoner again.

Prison within the prisoner.

We hide.
Our skin is the wall.
Our eyes are the cameras.
Our fists are the gun towers.
Our words are the shanks.
Our fear is the protection.

If you look,
out of the corner of your eye,
quick and fast,
in a flash,
for a moment you'll see a prisoner cry.

In a prisoner there is nowhere
to hide, no escape
except one.
Travel inward.
Go inside.
The prison within the prisoner.
Inside the mind.

Dark Side **Joseph Angel Cano**

Perhaps I was addicted to the dark side.
Please Lord forgive me for my life of sin.
Ain't flashed a smile in a long while.
A life of crime just another sinner caught up in the
mix...
I'm seeing it clearer hating the picture in the mirror
Waking up sweating I'm living in fear of a felon
Coast to Coast, lonely roads, God only knows.
Some see me stranded in this world of hell, jail and
crack cells.

In the eyes of a convict I shed no tears
Looking at all my wasted years.
I'm only a number in the eyes of the state
Lost my right for doing wrong
I blink my eyes and it hit me strong
Talent and young surrounded by convicts pretending

[12]

that I'm having fun.
My dreams seem so real and tears on my face waking
up to the state as my dream fades away.
Bars on Windows, glass and phones not having any privacy
with the ones you love...
Leaving them hurting on the way to the door, that's the life
of a convict and pray never to return on a ride to the
Dark side...

Imperium **J.S. Slaymaker**

Arranging my knights, my bishop and king,
my pawns and my rook to capture your queen.
The beat of my steed's steel hooves thundering,
upon her I ride, my route unforeseen.
My approach bold with my sword brandishing,
a swing of my blade and her head comes off clean.
Your kingdom captured is my ultimate goal.
For those who resist, their heads too will roll.

Ode to a Utensil **John E. Christ**

The food on my tray
Below my nose
Beckons forth an appetite
With hands forbid
Nor inhale I not
In times long past
A spoon I held
Of steel or silver made
Opposite at arms
With sharp long tines
A for served as well
In their place
Of plastic made
Tines and bowl as one
I now with one
A free hand have
To pass my drink to lips
In other have I my tool
To scoop, shovel, stab
Hoisting food to my mouth
Hail to thee
As I eat my pork
Who art thou?
Thou art my friend the spork!

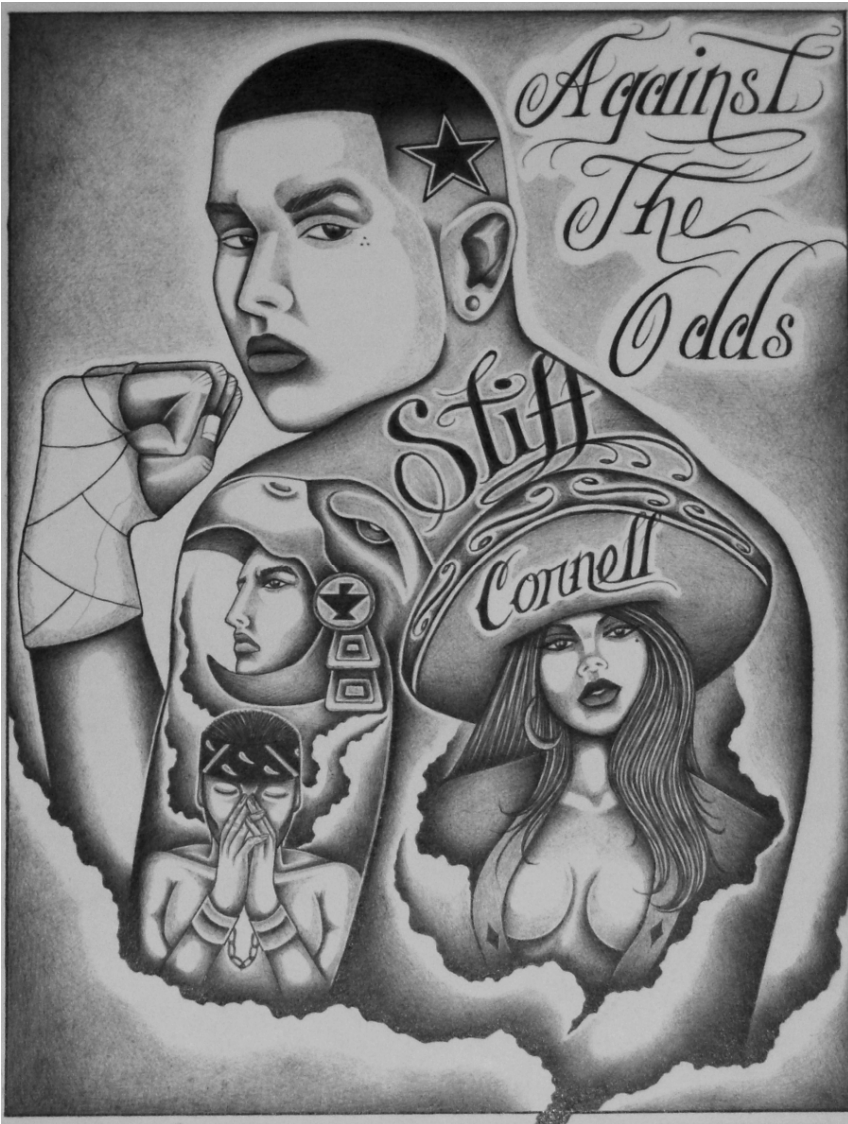
Post Modern Poet's Blues
Eric Michael Street

I want to write a poem of love but,
 Damn, it's all been done to death, hey,
 Death can be my chosen topic...
 No, no, it has been passed along the way, so
 Sorry, what about a poem of Sorrow, or
 Would I need to borrow phrases used in
 Days of yore? Yesterday has been abused;
 Today is gone & tomorrow isn't here, oh
 Dear, maybe sex can be my affair, of
 Course, who has failed to use that one?
 Anger, joy, Nature, all undone, law
 Or chaos, loneliness, I despair the way
 All the things have been expressed
 And pressed into cliched interpretation
 I guess I'm stuck with blank pages.
 Hey! It can be a new abstract poetry...

Flawless English?
William Chaplar

If the English language was indeed one without flaws,
 In-laws—once the divorce was final—would become outlaws.
 There'd be a whole new way for us to spell words such as sleigh.
 And none would be confused when they looked at the word
 croquet.
 Inflammable and flammable would sure not mean the same.
 And words like claim would doubtless look a little more like
 fame.
 Weight and height assuredly would not have different sounds.
 And wounds would almost surely no be spelled the same as
 rounds.
 It's doubtful that hyperbole would end the same as role.
 And you could bet it wouldn't look like it should rhyme with
 pole.
 There's no way that epitome would end the same as
 gnome.
 And likely neither one of them would sound
 the same as comb.

Straight, given all those letters, would sound
 longer than ado.
 By no means would segue look like it ought
 to rhyme with queue.
 Progress and Congress definitely would be
 opposites.
 And words like blitz would probably be
 spelled the same as pits.
 Yes, flawless in language is a thing that
 cannot be,
 So it's replete with some incomprehensibility.
 The better part of logic, then (or so it seems
 to me),
 Is learn your tongue as best you can.
 Wouldn't you agree?



We of Sparta
David Snyder

King Leonides.
 He and his 300 Spartans.
 They stand at the Fire Gates at Thermopylae.

The Great Xerxes.
 The God Xerxes.
 His Persian army.
 His one-thousand armies.

They come for Greece.
 We come for them.
 We come for...
 SPARTA!

Here Xerxes,
 listen well,
 your Immortals will die
 and be immortal...
 NO MORE!
 We will give them nothing
 and take everything.
 If they are thirsty
 let them drink their blood!
 If they are hungry
 let them eat their flesh!

You will not have
 the blood of our wives,
 the blood of our children.
 You.
 Will.
 Not.
 Have.
 Greece.
 You will not have...
 SPARTA!

Gods can bleed, Xerxes.
 False gods bleed more.
 Men bleed even greater.
 You will bleed most of all.

Here we stand.
 Here we fight.
 If necessary...
 here we die!

Up From The Gutter
Eric Michael Street

It's mighty dark here in this hole
 My only lighting a tint
 Inconsistent glow as
 I try to climb to claw my way
 Up these walls that hem me in
 Then I see them peering down
 Pouring refuse 'pon my head
 I cling tight accept the abuse
 My only goal to reach the light
 Then finally beneath the lip
 Before I slip I grasp the ledge
 Over the edge I pull myself
 To find a shelf in a larger
 Hole illuminated by a tiny
 Inconsistent glow
 But now I know that I can scale
 The heights I reach my goal again
 So I begin the next long climb
 Keeping in mind all their abuse
 They can't dilute the drive to grow
 Desire to know what I can be
 And when at last I end the rise
 I climb up to my feet with pride
 A task complete a man full grown
 I stand alone reach for the flame
 And hear God say... Écrasez l'infâme!

Untitled
E. Byh

Life is full of decomposition.
 Especially with my position.
 I sit with in the middle thinking
 To my Right is the Father
 To my Left is the Mother
 I sit with in the middle thinking.
 Father is full of creation and Judgment
 Mother opens her decomposition with consent.
 I sit with in the middle thinking.
 I turn to Mother and Father strikes
 I turn to Father and Mother strays
 I sit with in the middle thinking.
 Who will accept me?
 Surely not the Mother if I turn to Father
 Definitely not the Father if I stray to Mother.
 So I must sit within reach of both and
 watch them bickering over me.

Raison D'être
Ricky Parson

lack of meaningful relationships
time is running out
so many things I desire
experience above all
knowing that it's there
waiting patiently
for the taking
"will I ever...?"
is a question I often ponder
will time allow
even here in this world
of imprisonment
and strife
or am I destined
for loneliness for eternity?
a loneliness I know too well
a hunger that paralyzes
lust and love
fervor in the night
passions igniting
one by one
awakening all senses
memories long abandoned
misplaced and forgotten
how I long to feel
to know what others know
or have known
once upon a time
It's so strong
this desire I have
like a compressed coil
a spring
ready for release
I wait
knowing one day
"She" will come along-
hoping so at least
and knowing too
that when she does
I will have a life
a reason to finally love
a raison d'être.

Untitled
Juan Ochoa

Rising Up In the Morning... Washing Traces, of the
Faces And Places from My Memory That I Dreamt The
Night Before, Dressing in Yesterday's Misfortunes And
Tomorrow as I State At the Solid Never Opening Door!
Then I Run Across the Pages of all the Pain and All The
Rages Crossing Old and Broken Bridges over the Rivers
of Once More All the Smoke and all the Burning I'm
Stepping Slowly Turning And my Brown Heart is ever
Yearning In The Shadows of nightfall alone I cry Aloud
To the World... Amidst its Invasion and Confusion, As I
endure What remains of This Perishing Fate And Move
towards my Destiny!

Wheels Upon Wheels
Leroy Floyd II

I turn from where I started to see where I must go
"What goes around comes around," they say
We reap what we must sow, it's what we come to know
I'd like my path to be paved with joy so now I've learned
to smile
And I'm not the best at showing love but I hug every
once in awhile.
Yet there's always that ever doubtful dread where failure
peeks his head
Letting me know, "I come and I go, you reap what you
sow, you reap what you sow".
I'm not sure when I can repay my past, it's a long and
broken road
Or just what price of fear and vice for the truth I now
extol
To succumb becomes my constant choice,
I Adopt to extend my hope a hoist,
And whether the crowd objects with its adverse jeers
and jests
I'll await the rejoice of that still, small voice
My conscious guide and inner sun
To whisper to me, "Job well done old friend, Job well
done..."
Moments within moments, hurts trapped in hurts
Sometimes tears on bended knees are all I've found that
works
In this destination where desire dreams
My midnight madness of "what if means"
In all I see I seek to find
Some sense of peace to be called mine.

The Journey**Tomieko N. Davis**

The journey is short for some,
 Longer for others, eternal for few.
 The journey, filled with choices,
 Quit, overcome, be bitter, or rejoice.

The journey, a well worn path,
 Trod before, and after, forever more.
 The journey will make some flee —
 Moms, dads, children, and lovers – poof! – vanish.

The journey, its goal to win,
 Its prize is to your demise and ruin.
 The journey plays hard, but fair.
 Will you lose and leave broken and depressed?

The journey can be beaten,
 It will take all of your strength, might, and will.
 The journey may seem ahead
 Don't relent, but persevere and endure.

The journey will come to end.
 Your goal and prize – to be a better Man.
 The journey, your prison stay,
 Rise up Because? or Be defeated By?...
 The choice is yours.

Memories**Marcus Shedd**

I can remember when I was 6 years old;
 an old wood house
 a shortage on food and no clothes
 Mama striving hard to do the best she can
 Juggling a job and 3 kids we were living off the land
 had a daddy but daddy had a habit
 a monkey named dope on his back, daddy tried but he
 couldn't grab it
 So the monkey won but we didn't find out until
 Christmas Eve
 woke up to an empty house—no presents and no tree
 Mama hysterical thinking we've been robbed, gods
 knows she worked too hard
 the neighbors came forward and explained what she had
 seen in the dark
 Daddy carrying the tree and the presents down a dark
 street
 Mama mad as hell because she didn't want to believe
 but see even though daddy was a dopephine he looked
 down on people who lied
 an' when mama confronted him he explained while

crying and mumbling how hard he tried
 But the monkey named dope was too strong it had daddy
 where he couldn't breathe.
 Being the strong black sister that she was Mama asked
 daddy to leave
 4 years later I'm 10 years old during the chores of a
 grown man
 No GI Joe's and tonka trucks had to give mama a
 helping hand
 We were doing better than we was now that daddy's
 gone
 Moved to a bigger and better house that we were proud
 to call home
 Mama hasn't slowed down a bit—hustling hard to make
 ends meet
 furniture beautifully arranged even though it was so
 cheap
 I can hear mama as plain as day
 “Treat a woman with the utmost respect” is what I'm
 hearing her say
 Till this day 15 years later I take heed to what mama
 taught me
 And I thank god daily for the valuable lessons that life
 has bought me
 I locked up in the pen for a crime I did commit
 it wasn't mama's fault I had free will and the lesson I
 choosed to ignore it
 But I'm not lost I still have a fighting chance
 So I'm used this time wisely to better myself to be a
 better man
 Also I want to let mama know I'll never quit
 I'm not lost, I found myself and this is it.

Wild Darkness**Eric Bedersen**

The wild darkness
 Is a phosphorescent tapestry
 Before my lurid eyes
 With the sullen setting
 Of the winter sun
 Floats the incessant mist
 Of a purple night

Though I love the day
 And the running tide
 Where the river moss comes to rest
 In the dwelling house
 Of my soul
 Comes the clangor
 Of the wolf

The Name of the Game**Dana Y'ungblood**

Mama always told me that when you're playing with fire
 you're bound to get burned
 And, if you're chasing tail they'll be a lesson learned.
 So many times lust has led me along its trail,
 But at the end there was always this awful mell.
 Sometimes I wondered if the Devil could've drawn me a
 conclusion;
 I founded love in a woman named Maryjane to be a better
 solution.
 I used to run with Dollar Bill who loved to smoke dank,
 His best friend was a brutha named Big Bank Hank.
 Now, Mr. Dollar Bill was a cold-hearted brutha...
 Some even say he was a greedy Mo'phucka!
 Heard he once stole man's woman and left him for broke;
 Took his car, skipped town and lefted behind a trail of smoke.
 I know you remember how Ol' Cain killed Abel?
 Seen Mr. Crack Pipe lying on the living room table.
 Hey, if you think that's cold...
 Look in the graveyard, it's filled with the young and old.
 People always said, the good die young...
 And when other people's business hits the streets,
 It's best to play deaf and dumb.
 Ask Jack Daniels who stabbed 7up for Cokacola,
 Read in the paper it all happened in Pensacola.
 Russian Roulette shot craps with Smith & Wesson,
 It took many years before he learned his lesson.
 Mis Kitty was pretty pretty until her health started to fade,
 Then word hit town that Richard gave her AIDS.
 They had a daughter named Lexus who survived the test,
 But as pretty as she was she was a big ol' mess.
 It's a shame how she failed to put herself in check.
 She married a man named Lincoln who died with her in a
 nasty auto-wreck.
 Ummm, Ummmm... yeah, I say the same.
 But that's the way it is that's the name of the game.

The Gods Decide**Chief J. Ramos**

The winds blow, the seasons change
 But I am to remain in chains
 Until the Gods decide my destiny
 I live, think, dream and hate
 But they decide my final fate
 If they decide I am to be free
 Then in time that's what I'll be
 But if they decide I must remain
 The slowly but surely I'm to go insane
 It will be something that pierces my heart
 But I will remain here til death do us part...

Release**Gilbert M. Davila****TDCJ OFFENDER PROPERTY**

Embossed in bold
 Black lettering on the clear
 Tubing of the black-ink pen
 I hold, poised,
 Over a clean, blue-lined
 Sheet of white paper.
 Slogging through
 The pool of muddled thoughts
 Amassed at the forefront
 Of my troubled mind,
 I painfully search
 For words to exorcise
 The Phantoms of Darkness
 Bottled inside.
 Frustration, then anger, rears
 Its ugly head, seeking
 To devour the remnants
 Of my waning patience.
 Pressure in my skull.
 Temples throb;
 Work of an angry vein.

Ever so mercifully,
 Images take the form
 Of words and gather
 At the tip of my tongue.
 Spoken aloud,
 Life is given to the pen
 In my trembling hand.
 My face hovers inches
 Above the page, deep
 In concentration, as I mar
 Line after naked line
 With prose, virulent and
 Dark as a grave.

Phantoms released.
 Voices cease.
 Pen put to rest.
 Tomorrow is another day.

Invictus II
Bryan Page

Fast fading the night recedes,
leaving only gray.
And in the dark I am alone,
waiting for the day.
Heavy hands hold me bound,
with no one else to see.
Chains are wrapped around my heart,
no God to set me free.
I will not bow, I will not break,
I have no hand to hold.
The friends I never once forsaked,
have left me in the cold.
My body bleeds my bones are
broken,
but I will never cry.
If words of fear are ever
spoke,
then I would rather die.
So here I am, here I am,
ready for the fight.
My soul remains, my spirit
lives,
I will survive the night.

**Beyond A Window: A Night
On The Lake**
Jackey R. Sollars

Whispering wind, blending
colors to dust.
A heap of spirit, living
liberation.
Tails snap, manes ripple
shadowed imagination.
Quickened silhouettes to the
west upon red dusk.
Feathers, white down glides upon mirrored soil.
A handful of pebbles thrown against lucent glass.
Through dark of night apparitions doth pass.
Til first light when instinct stirs to toil.
Midst hovering in Dawn's graying light.
Lazily heads lift sniffing hope's new day.
Restless neighs softly, a coyote's last bay.
Stillness breaks with a flurry fowl taking flight.
Soaring high, the foal lifts its head.
Bidding the pond elders a friendly farewell.

The Moon
Francisco J. Lopez

I woke up with a start. Without the slightest idea of what time it was, but it was still dark... I felt the stare of someone, something, on me. Steadily strong and palpable so that I wondered, craned my neck and looking out the window – I saw it: I saw what had been watching me, guarding me during my sleep... The Moon! Full of light and so full of life it appears to me as I sit up on my bed – almost unconscious of my moves and ignore the bed sheets whispering, calling my name to come back to sleep.

...I give them a gentle nudge, and these slip off my thigh and crawl back to the bed where they wait for my return... I have better things to do... Almost possessed, I stare into the eye of the stranger, the friend or maybe lover who's always been there... Up there surrounded by a congregations of clouds watching me silently, patiently and possibly urging me on to grow up since I was a child beginning to live, oblivious however, of the unanimous stare of the Moon... That now looses its unanimity, its ambiguity before me on this night of interrupted sleep... "The Moon." I whisper to myself and the Moon itself now whispers a song, a subtle poem of timeless mystery and knowledge, for it has seen babies born and grow old, kingdoms rise and fall – but the Moon, ever living and ever existing has seen it all and has a thousand stories to tell...!

"You," it now says. "If you would be patient enough to listen, I'll in turn be kind enough to recount to you stories of old... And stories of new..." "Yes" I beam. "I'll be a patient listener!" I add excitedly, gazing out my window, my bed long-forgotten, because tonight is the night I get to know, really know – the Moon.



Man-Made Hell

Shane P.

God made earth and then made man.
 The snake gave man Knowledge and man
 Man made Hell, Blood, tears, deaths, Prisons and
 Slavery, Man made Hell and as years went by and
 Centuries, wars and bloodshed and war cries yelled
 And women and young girls raped in front of their love
 ones
 but they tell you this is the America Dream and fighting
 for peace and only showing you what they want you
 to see and not the raping, unlawful killing, and dead
 bodies
 of Little Children Man made Hell and People all was
 said History
 repeat it self alone meaning Man made Hell.

Find the Answers

Jonathan Thompson

Why do I suffer in silence
 and why am I losing my brother and sister to violence?
 Why is the weight of the world on my shoulder
 and why because of my color I'm treated colder?

Am I being rebellious because I find my own path
 and why are our soldiers dying in a bloodbath?
 Am I being selfish doe wanting some time
 and why am I being punished for speaking my mind?

Why do you belittle women calling them whores
 and why do we still look down on the
 poor?

Why are so many people dying
 from AIDS
 and why were threats on Jesse
 Jackson's life made?

Why am I sometimes looked at as not
 human;
 is it because of my race that you do
 not understand?

Why do the government sell
 products that cause cancer?
 Could you please help me
 find the answers?!?

War and Peace

William Chaplar

You had to be pro-war to be called patriotic,
 But people all around the world though that was idiotic.
 One could still support the troops and not the
 administration.

Being bully of the world won't make us a better nation.
 They had Christians saying peace isn't what the Bible
 flaunted,

But they should have asked themselves, "Is this what
 Jesus would have wanted?"

We're supposed to hate the French today for standing in
 out way.

But if things keep going sour, seems they'll have the
 final say.

They trashed a country singer because she voiced her
 opinion.

Seems like freedom of expression here no longer has
 dominion.

Musicians of the day would not sing out against the
 fighting,

So far too many kids today think war's somehow
 exciting.

We were quick to end the war, but we botched the
 occupation.

The post-combat deaths, though, brought lots of
 frustration.

The Pentagon was scared to use the term "guerrilla
 warfare,"

But whoever did the killing caused a nation to despair.
 Folks in the White House were afraid to call it "civil
 war,"

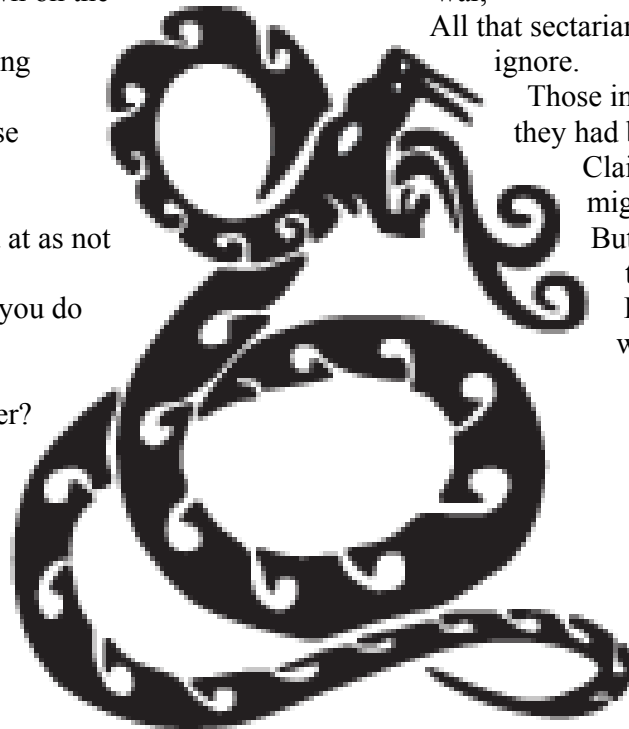
All that sectarian violence, though, was real hard to
 ignore.

Those in Congress started whining, claiming
 they had been misled.

Claimed with valid information they
 might not have forged ahead.

But would things have been different if
 their kids were sent to die?

Looks like those who voted for the
 war don't have the right to cry!



The Lynch Trillogy
Thee Gracious Poet
 © Y2K7

It Ain't 1712

it's no longer the season of self-imposed apartheid
 no more shall W.E. perpetuate the G.A.Me¹ of sleek and
 hide

nor 2 play bipolar...brotha Just us & Dr. slide
 CEASE & DESIST the monstrosity ego
 throw that d'lusional klatter outta the ride
 W.E. gon' indaba² w/ Ancestral sprit on the side...

KAUSE IT'S NO LONGER 1712
 W.E. BLOCKIN' THE KUSS!
 IT'S NO LONGER 1712
 W.E. STOPPIN' THE KUSS!

there's no more time for self-hate at the front gate
 that yadda-labba that DEgenerates our home plate
 how kan we put pigs over Folks & Peoples
 when our huemanity iz at the stake...
 W.E. draw from the preancient well of Seven
 where Orisha dwells & divinity swells
 in our kombined paradise in heaven...
 when we intimidate the plantation ode
 we only further the konquer & divide kode
 lozing out on our kollektive independence a la mode...
 Sow W.E. gon' set our place

REown our own space
 at the globeall sundance
 REtrace our legendary kommune
 & give us that natural chance...

KAUSE IT'S NO LONGER 1712
 W.E. BLOCKIN' THE KUSS!
 IT'S NO LONGER 1712
 W.E. STOPPIN' THE KUSS!

W.E. looking past that murder of mnemoniks
 & REkall-IN the Ancestors
 so why's you 4F The Way in word
 & smack dung the Blessings...
 then you shake out on us & say i'm KONfessing...
 4saking our survivall solidarity & self d'fense
 intaking dour self-kon-fusion DISease and nullsense...
 Sow W.E. gon' machikolate until
 the Son rizes in the west
 profuze our mental vizion from the sanctum kitchen
 & Reap our follies w/ the machete test...

KAUSE IT'S NO LONGER 1712
 W.E. BLOCKIN' THE KUSS!

IT'S NO LONGER 1712
 W.E. STOPPIN' THE KUSS!

muha'funk willy lynch
 AND them neckrows who rode w/ he... SISSIIIEES!

¹ Genocide Against Me

² Zulu—South Afrika—term for “matter(s) of diskussion b'tween native peoples”

DEmagnify 1712

*Author's Note: “DEmagnify 1712” originally
 “D'magkneety 1712” iz mostly kapitalized spelling
 except for where willie lynch is being referenced... it is
 ah IRRITATIONAL lamentation that URGENTLY
 REPEALS the mental DISease of slavery. Selah*

SELFINKLIKTED PLANTATION SINDROME
 KAUSED US 2 ROME
 FRUM ONENESS DOME
 KONCEIVED Ah GRANDUER ILLUSION
 JUST 2 TRICK Ah BONE
 & LUG Ah STONE
 WEAR NONE HAD EXISTED
 THERE WAS SENT Ah PSUEDO-DROP ZONE...
 DRAWED UUP AN IMAGE OF BYGONE EPOCH
 UZING Ah GHOSTLY GRUDGE
 HELD UP THE SLEEVE
 FALSIFIED W/ STUPEDUST PSYKHE
 THAT ONLY BLINDEST DROLL WOULD B'LIEVE...
 b.u.t. willie lynch gotta viktim 2day
 yeah, willie lynch gotta viktim 2day
 KONSIEVED FRUM CHICKEN FEET
 & GIZZARD GOOP
 OLDE MASSA SNUK THRU THE
 BLOCK DOT KOOP
 BATON IN he LEFT & lynch ROPE
 IN he RIGHT
 he WHIPPED UP Ah RECIPEE UZING
 US AZ Ah SEE SAW
 & ONCE WE WAZ KON-FOUNDED
 BY THE white
 he LAID US DOWN W/ THE WILLIE LYNCH LAW...
 SHROUDD BY REKOGNITION, KONTROL
 & SEKURITY
 he LED US 2 THE VULTURES DEN
 & KONTROLED US BY THE SPLENDOR
 OF THE BLACK MEN...
 MADE ONE KONSUME FALSE IDOLS
 IN BLUE
 2 OVERTAKE THEIR BROTHA
 THAT STAYED TRUE
 W/ Ah PALE SPOT IN he OWN EYE

FRUM LAKTOSE DEW
 THEY WERE THEN PUT ON Ah OCEAN SHREW
 & LIKE KASTAWAYS BACK IN THE DAZE
 THEY WERE KONFINED W/ PINKTOE
 DOO-DOO
 so willie lynch gotta viktim 2day
 yeah, willie lynch gotta viktim 2day
 WE HAVE B'KOME OFFENDED BY THE
 PRAXIS OF ONES KULTURE SENSESEEBILITY
 ALTHOUGH W.E. STEM FRUM THE SAME
 OLDE TIME AXIS
 WE ASSUME Ah SEPULCHER DENativity...
 euroPEON VALUES BIO-KHEMIKALLY ALTER-IN
 OUR PRIMORDIAL ALKEBU-LAN¹
 INTELEKTION
 INKYUBAITING VIA 566 YR'S.
 FRUM THE ERA OF PAPAL BULL SHIT
 KASTRATION...
 SOW WE KNOW THE BIBIFLIES² WAS MADE
 IN2 AH NIGGER BUYBULL
 & MANYOUFAKTURED HOLY
 ALIKE THE black widow male spider
 W.E. SHALL MAKE IT POIZONLESS
 B'NEATH OUR FEET
 BLAAK AGAINST THE KREMESUN TIDE
 SKREEAAMING!
 W/ Ah BLACK HEART BEAT...
 WITHIN THE SOULJAH' DRUM TUNE
 THOROUGH O.G. LAMBSBRED
 (meaning Our God)
 WILL GIVE NILLY willy he own DOOM
 LYNCHED! And STILL...
 willie gotta viktim 2day, SISSIIIEEE!

¹ ANCIENT NAME OF AFRIKA...

² SUBLIMINAL TERM FOR BIBLE. MEANS
 UNKOUTH WHO WEAR IT AS AH BIB OF LIES TO
 KEEP BLIND DEAD & DUMB AND WHEN THEY
 FOAM AT THE MOUTH

DEZERTE'd KOZMOS

*Author's Note: "DE-ZERTED KOZMOS" is ah klosure
 of sadness and UNacceptance inna melankholy
 lamentation...saying if you stray frum our unified verse
 Eye ain't going with you. Selah*

Eye had prezoomed we vakumed
 the rust'd midst of lil'G & bib G
 that we'd kross'd the finities
 of MISunderstood truancy;
 kause Eye felt komfortable in your domeaim.
 & I ain't see the forbode b4 your trees.
 til you tumbled down on krooked knees

& IGNORED our dekrees.
 HOW KOULD U LET willie IN
 AFTER ALL WE BEEN THRU
 HOW KOULD U LET willie IN
 AFTER ALL THE BLUES WE DON THREW
 HOW COULD U LET willie IN
 Eye figured the dezert sands we had tread
 & were fragmented imagery frum
 the baldhead;
 that the pigfeet amongst is
 waz dead to our homestead
 & all the time Eye was MIS Led
 like sanford bred...
 you kut our umbilikal ties az if
 we were ah mirage,
 hoodwink'd our kommunal bond
 & gave me sum entertainment massacre;
 centered by your selfreflekting pond
 you assumed I saw in2 your kristal ball
 when tunnel vision DISallowed you
 frum Black Light
 Eye put up ah Serenity shield
 & you put up ah wall...
 HOW KOULD U LET willie IN
 AFTER ALL WE BEEN THRU
 HOW KOULD U LET willie IN
 AFTER ALL THE BLUES WE DON THREW
 HOW COULD U LET willie IN
 Eye BEEN klozed the door on slaak
 of komunikation
 kept my eye/vizion/ear/arms/hearing
 & seeing our past prezent future in Being...
 swam the 9,000 miles w/ kaution
 yet full speed at 1,037 ¹/₃ miles per hr.
 w/o ad nauseum
 so how kan U make us bleed
 when Sweetback told us in H.I.S.
 baadass song
 'only W.E. kan harvest the oneness creed
 & Our Father by way of Hon. Garvey
 gave us the Do 4 self seed...
 HOW KOULD U LET willie IN
 AFTER ALL WE BEEN THRU
 HOW KOULD U LET willie IN
 AFTER ALL THE BLUES WE DON THREW
 HOW COULD U LET willie IN
 when Eye trusted you...

Shackle in U.S.A. by Reginald Jones

I see already men torn from their weeping and distressed families, without hope, without redress, never to return, by an unrelenting, lawless crew, unbridled by own our civil and legislative authority, and wantonly cruel in the exercise of despotic power. I see every endearing tie of father, husband, son and brother torn asunder, unrespited, unpitied, unretrieved.

Brainwashed Carlos Contreras

Author's Note: In many countries around the world, children are taught to believe the way their elders believe. (Extremists, zealots, fanatics) Etched in their mind from birth is the image of "God." Religions taught not as philosophies, but as "the way it is," "the Truth." Even here in America where we supposedly have freedom of religion, parents teach their children of "God," "the only true God." Whatever they're first taught, they usually believe. They'll never have the chance to find "God" for themselves.

You believe in God but not of your own
You believe in God because you were shown
Taught from the womb to believe in their creed
Born to a faith that you're brainwashed to need

Never given a chance.
Bound by nativity
Never given a choice,
Bound by nativity

Stuck in a caste where you're bound from your birth
You're taught that your soul will return to the earth
You know it's the way the creed of your kind
Taught by those who've brainwashed your mind

Never given a chance.
Bound by nativity
Never given a choice,
Bound by nativity

Hindu or Christian, Islamic or Jew
Children are born & bound it's true
To faiths that they're taught & brainwashed to be
To live for themselves they're blinded to see

They're bound by nativity

Signs of the Times – Breaking the Holds of Bondage Talib

Oh say does that star spangled banner yet wave, over
lands of the free, and the home of the brave—
How can this be the land of the free, or the home of the
brave, a country that was built on the backbone of a
slave— and now united we stand on top of his
grave—

The ultimate task is not to dwell in the past, or be
deceived into thinking you're free at last, with an
expression on your face like a tribal mask—you must
look to the signs, as an original design, that provides
the initiative to free your mind, only if you wake up
in time—wake up brother, It's no time to sleep, you're
not lost sheep—but a sleeping giant with promises to
keep, how long will you allow your ancestors to
weep—you must look deep inside, find the remnants
of African pride, understand why your fore-fathers
died, to regain the strength to stay alive, for only the
strong can survive—

Evidently, the Creator has made it clear, you must hold
fast to faith and in your heart be sincere; for a day is
coming that most men will fear, except such as
prepare as it every draws near—so wake up the
sleeping giant, for the world has defined, we are
living in the day of the signs of the time—

Free at last, free at last, are these inspirational words
enough to escape the bondage of our past—

The death, the hardship, the tribulation, can these words
overcome such devastation—

Can we look beyond the norm, and expose the true
purpose of social reform—could it be a new set of
chains, that causes a similar pain—using methods of
pacification, to suppress the shame of a nation, a way
for the country to flip the script, using a reversal of
the racial tip—

Like a newspaper retraction, with pacifying promises of
affirmative action—have we become so insane, that
we no longer recognize game, there is a reason for the
hype in the population, forbidden sex, the use of
drugs for recreation; is it necessary to draw a
blueprint or a map, it's a structure, just like a drug
trap—

Built on promises to achieve success, but too often the
outcome is pain and duress—don't you see, they're
not bleeding the block, but bleeding the nation, while
you hold onto hopes of future compensation—

Put two and two together, don't play the part of a fool,
free at last is an analogy, like forty-acres and a
mule—

Run Charlie, Run Unknown

This poem was separated from its envelope before we could record the name— please always mark your work, and if you know who wrote this poem, please tell Toby!

How I wish I could compare to
their good,
pointed odes; ballads sweet-
rhythmed and versed.
Perfect iambics! The masters stand
tall.

I read my ignorance and want to curse
my tainted scribbles: graffiti to their walls.
God Damn... Oh, well. There goes the
neighborhood.

Run, Charlie, run. The niggers
are coming. The niggers
are coming.

Run, Charlie, run up the For
Sale signs. Red-line and
gerry-manner my dictions.

Zone me out, thugged out, bugged out, locked out. Shout
out. Out. Out!

Raise my rent. Sell me your shingles at twice your price.
Never mind.

Vouch to take your kids, and school funds, too. Leave
city kids behind.

Chase city Bankrupted community re-investment
porkfolios. It's the law. Dial 911.

Call the poor-leased, laid away, You-hauled out the fires
into frying pens. Go. Go.

Go sprawl out to where the sun don't shine and the burbs
sing the lyrebird's
multi-vultured, mocking song. Orchestrate self-hate in
one grand

Oprah; members only, white dashiki affairs at a thousand
bucks a plate.

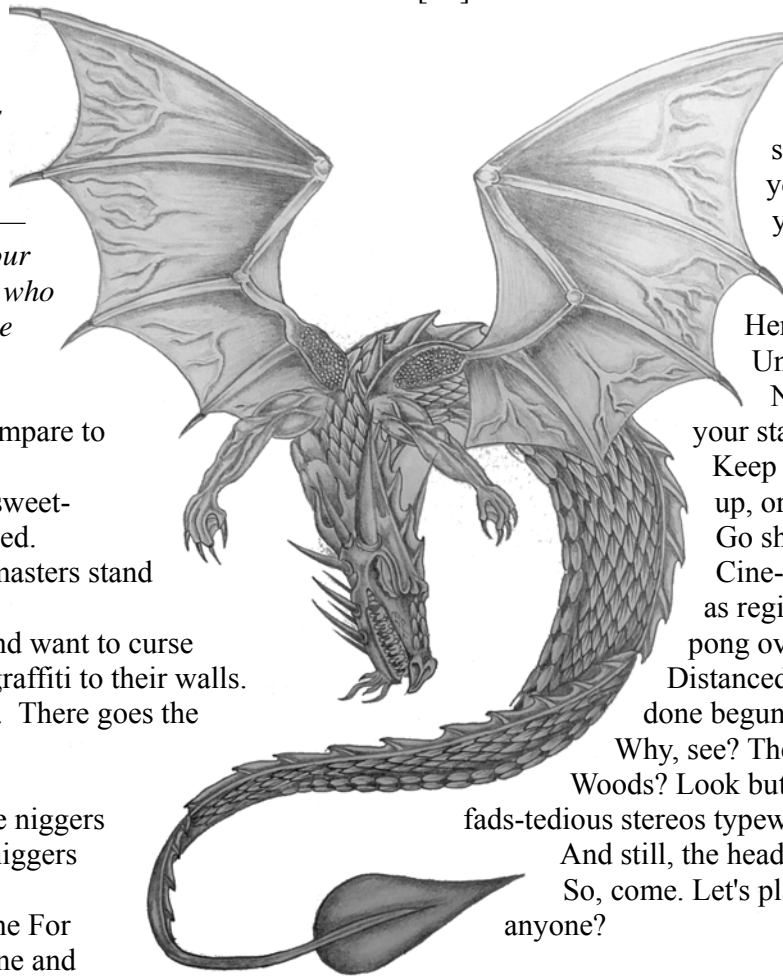
Run, Charlie, run. The niggers are coming. The niggers
are coming.

Run, Charlie, run the demo tapes. Demo classy. Demo
crassy, Demolition politicians.

Demo-hippo-critters. Hippo-dermy-rocks. Flesh rules,
dude. For food, clothes, shelter.

All. Every measure beyond need. Love me?

Prove it. Take off your clothes. Let me torch you with
my new-clearer



optics to see your private
subway tokens. Let me
bone out your marrowed
skull; transfuse
your ortho-paradoxy. I'll buy
you dying-mens and iron out
your beautiful wedding
presses in your Bureaus.
Here, hon. Take my whole art.
Untraditionally.

No lessons tasted. Vasectomize
your stand-in ovations.

Keep it real. Keep it funky. On the
up, or keep it and go. Go!

Go shop for the branded brains.

Cine-sex movies and our madness
as registers ping!

pong over the picket net worth.

Distanced consumptions. Slavery's long
done begun.

Why, see? The Powells and Jordans and
Woods? Look but don't touch while rebates ring
fads-tedious stereos typewriting sporty news clippings.
And still, the heads line up.

So, come. Let's play, then. Bad Man-ton,
anyone?

Run, Charlie, run. The niggers are coming. The niggers
are coming.

Run, Charlie, run hard raps against my dome. Stand on
my hip, hop down my head with
combat boots to underground roadkill crossovers that
bungee tongue

lusty lyrical libations lamenting ludicrous love at the
Lyricist Lounge,

waxing poor-hectic from con-street yield signs. Stop.
Don't cross the solid white party lines, Jr. Only dash in
for fun and army ant salvation.

Set. Alright. Dish out my pockets maimed-screamed on
my TV.

Timed, primed, Oscar's mired in soapy adulterated
diapers weaning his prime
mate with hate viewed for his fate. Watch. But don't stay
too long.

You might get piped by cracked hypes, struck by Mac
fucks,

and soul punched in the gut by Sylvia's pot and nettles at
night.

So bring Tum Tacts and a dash of balk and leper
sprayers.

It's not too late. It's not too dark.

So, come back. Come black.

Or sleep white. Sleep tight-fisted. 'Cuz, the niggers are
coming.

State Property
Anwar Tapia

You sleep on their clock
 And awake to their alarm.
 You work without pay
 To the hours they say.
 You wear their clothes
 According to dress code,
 You eat what they say
 And eat what they gave.
 Your visits are a privilege
 They can take away.
 You get no sympathy.
 You are their commodity.
 You are State Property.

You obey their whims
 That are also the rules.
 Your mail they will read
 When they feel the need.
 Your free-will is restricted
 And your movements limited.
 Your dreams are extinguished
 And your potential inhibited.
 Your only possessions
 What you buy at commissary.
 You get no privacy.
 You are their commodity.
 You are State Property.

New Age Twelve Gauge
Gary Gilbert

Merging, splurging, surging need,
 Forget the people, never equal, greed.
 Without hope, without chance, downtrodden trance,
 Break out, staked out, no money in advance.
 Bought and sold, break the mold, rotten to the core,
 Government, money spent, none passes through my
 door.
 White trash, colors clash, moral majority no more,
 Forever resting where I am nesting, hungry for a little
 score.
 Living life with a smile, everyone wants the extra mile,
 Your cloak and tunic too, throw them in the pile.
 Oppression, repression, all the same,
 It's all part of our cold, cold modern game.
 Why call it new when it is so old?
 Too, too many left out in the cold.
 Give us a blanket, but no shoes,
 Our death won't even make the local news...

The Rebel
Chester Jones

What a vivid imagination,
 Thoughts of freedom on this plantation.
 Constant darkness my soul does dwell,
 Only through death, shall I be released from Hell.
 Four-score, before a war was fought,
 Lying Ab Lincoln's proclamation forgot.
 40 acres and a mule, 'twas not for we,
 How long in Amerikkka, for us this poverty.
 Black women, our sisters, our back bone broke,
 "We Shall Overcome"—at least that's our hope.
 Freedom, sweet freedom, released from this
 plantation,
 Where forth art thou freedom, in my imagination?

Fall Back
Jonathan Thompson

Fall back young sisters
 You have a precious gift
 Hold on to yourself for you are pure
 Don't lose yourself

Fall back young brothers
 Don't fall victim to the streets
 You have a voice that should be heard
 And your strength is needed in the communities

Fall back single mothers
 I know it's hard raising kids on your own
 But you have to press on to a better day
 Your love is the next best thing to God's love

Fall back black man
 You don't have to be another sacrifice
 You have the ability to choose how you want to live
 Make nonbelievers respect you and your mind

America fall back!!! I demand
 Realize that I am first a man like any other
 I have the freedom of speech so hear me outstanding
 We are equal in God's eye so accept me
 Or fall back



She's Gone
Ruben Wilson

I never thought I'd have to go through this shit again—
But this time I've lost not just a lover, but a wife, my
very best friend—
She told me she couldn't take it anymore and that she
really tried—
She also said before that she'd never leave me but I
guess she lied—
But it's not her fault, I caused her to have some pretty
deep scars—
Plus it's hard to feel loved by a man who's behind prison
bars—
I wonder did she fall out of love, or find another man—
Whatever happened, none of this was part of the plan—
We were supposed to be together forever, united as
one—
Because of my stupid ass it's over, because of something
I done—
Whatever she's doing, I hope she's happy now that she's
free—
But no matter what, she'll never find another who loves
her like me—
No one could ever love her, the way that I loved that
sweet little woman—
But in the end it's her loss, because they come for a dime
a dozen!

Texas Home
James Meier

Six tight strings on an old guitar
Homemade likker in a Mason jar
Soft summer nights on a front porch swing
Hummin' 'n strummin' 'n tryin' to sing

Hits from old Hank and sometimes Ray
Tunes from the legends I learned to play
Lost in memory of bygone days
Just me 'n my six string, take me away

From all this modern day musical crap
Senseless noise 'n neighborhood rap
Deliver me Lord from all that noise
And take me back to them good old boys

Pickin' 'n grinnin' 'n sippin' along
Lost in that jar 'n all them songs
Just lovin' life 'n that old farm
The woman inside with Texas charm

Lovin' that bundle down the hall
Safely wrapped in grandma's shawl
Livin' my life 'n following fate
Makin' my way in the Lone Star State

Don't get no better 'n it can't be beat
This old swing 'n that unpaved street
Star filled nights 'n propped up feet
But I gotta go now...

It's time ta eat.

The Book
Chief J. Ramos

I read a book and it made me laugh
I read it again but it made me cry
I realized it was the story of my life
so I read it again and it made me sigh
ashamed, embarrassed, excited at the things that I saw
it caught me off guard as I stood in wonder and awe
made me wonder why I didn't have a heart of pure stone
seeing things that hurt clear to the bone
Things I know that I should not have done
for the most part I was young and just having fun
But now it's time to decide what I want out of life
A house, a car and maybe a wife
I can't well on the past and what could of been
the mistakes or choices or even the sin
Though I will reflect, to keep my head straight
and I pray to God that it's not too late

The finale chapter of the book is yet to be read
 I can still change it before I am dead
 who knows it could be number one on the list
 The end of the story could have a hell of a twist
 nothing to lose nothing to hide
 come over here, come get inside
 come meet the real Mr. Jekyll & Hyde...

Madness **Gary Gilbert**

What is it we are searching for,
 What is it we hope to find?
 Life is losing its meaning,
 Could we be running out of time?

Madmen with mushroom cloud intentions,
 Armies of God loving to death nations.
 My tears leave streaks of greenhouse gasses,
 Not much help wearing rose colored glasses.

I don't think we will be happy until it all burns,
 The hatred of races our humanity we spurn.
 If only I could grab the planet and offer a shake,
 The future of our children, our families at stake.

What do we do when we no longer care?
 When we see living as torture, our existences bare?
 Strap bombs to our bodies, melt crosses to swords,
 I am choked with emotions, at a loss for words.

Maybe our future has already been written,
 With the void we seem to be smitten.
 I cry, I weep, and moan,
 Towards self-destruction we are surely prone.

Me & You **TMC (The Mexikan Connection)**

I remember the first day I met you girl in front of River
 Center Mall.

Young and beautiful as can be and I fell in love with
 what I saw.

I was shy just as much as you, we were only up in our
 teens

I tried to keep me up in your mind so you could see me
 in your dreams.

Back in those days I stayed in the slums and you stayed
 off of Tea and Malone.

Remember how we would talk all night until we stayed
 asleep on the phone?

Till the sun was up till the sun went down we'd be
 walkin' all through the park.

We couldn't wait for night to fall so we could kiss up in
 the dark.

M&M 4/Life baby girl, remember that's what we
 engraved in the park?

I told you I felt this love from the start, until I die you'll
 live in my heart.

Remember the words we promised each other, that we
 would never brake apart?

No matter what happened between me and you, that we
 would neva change our hearts.

Now I sit here girl all alone all I think about is me &
 you.

I feel I'm only hurtin' myself cuz is there even a me &
 you?

What happened to the love you have for me, baby it ain't
 the same no more?

Why do you make it so hard on me, baby I can't live like
 this no more.

There's only one thing that's left to say but I don't know
 how to say good-bye.

I really don't know if to give up or not, it's killin' me half
 to death inside.

I miss the feelin' that I would get when when our lips
 would come to touch.

I miss the words of I love you, I think of it now and it
 hurts so much.

I try to block it out of my mind but I think so much so I
 play it again.

Times have changed it ain't the same, I wanna new life
 but it won't begin.

Cuz I tell myself, don't let her go, everything's gonna be
 alright.

But I tried for so many lonely years so how the hell is it
 gonna be alright?

Mixed feelings have rushed and filled inside, it's tearin'

my lonely heart apart.
 I know your love is there for me and I know I'm
 somewhere in my heart.
 But you act like you don't care for me cuz baby you ain't
 down for me.
 I'm not in sight so I'm outta your mind so you easily
 forget of me.
 You know how bad I'm doin' girl but you don't even
 think of me.
 I tell you one day I'll be on top but you don't have faith
 in me.

Now I sit here girl all alone all I think about is me &
 you.
 I feel I'm only hurtin' myself cuz is there even a me &
 you?
 What happened to the love you have for me, baby it ain't
 the same no more?
 Why do you make it so hard on me, baby I can't live like
 this no more.
 There's only one thing that's left to say but I don't know
 how to say good-bye.
 I really don't know if to give up or not, it's killin' me half
 to death inside.

I try so hard to keep this alive but it's killin' me half to
 death inside.
 I don't want the pain to show outside so I'm tryin' to hold
 the pain inside.
 With my hands to my face so my tears don't fall but
 through my fingers tears still flow through.
 Cuz I don't really want to say good-bye, what happened
 to the days of me and you?
 This wasn't the way it was supposed to be, why do you
 make it so hard on me?
 Everything I tell you baby girl, you don't even believe in
 me.
 Yeah, I did what I did and you buried me, I'm reachin' up
 help me off the ground.
 But too many times you pulled me up just to let me right
 back down.
 Your words always make me feel so nice, they're
 everything and all but true.
 You know baby girl I'm in love with you but I know
 what I gotta do.
 I raised myself up off the ground and this is the last time
 I will fall.
 It's coming down to the final straw, be down for me or
 it's nothing at all.

Now I sit here girl all alone all I think about is me &
 you.
 I feel I'm only hurtin' myself cuz is there even a me &
 you?
 What happened to the love you have for me, baby it ain't
 the same no more?
 Why do you make it so hard on me, baby I can't live like
 this no more.
 There's only one thing that's left to say but I don't know
 how to say good-bye.
 I really don't know if to give up or not, it's killin' me half
 to death inside.

I Gotta Ride **James Meier**

Papa taught me how to ride
 Hung a barrel right outside
 Kept me swingin' 'n twistin' away
 Taught me th' tricks 'n toughened my hide
 Made me live ta rope 'n ride

Rodeo's become my ways 'n means
 It's in my blood 'n all over my jeans
 My days are spent knottin' a rope
 Cowboyin' up for my time in hell
 My own eight seconds 'n that janglin' bell

It's a homespun cowboy's favor-rite drug
 A big ole slice off'n a plug
 Better'n an angel by my side
 Gimme a chew...
 I gotta ride!

Cowboy up 'n slack them reins
 Chasin' dreams 'cross Texas plains
 Ridin' bulls 'n bustin' bronses
 Hustlin' a buckle 'n eatin' dirt
 Tryin' to outrun th' constant hurt

Deliver me Lord from rodeo dreams
 Keep me safe from th' crowd and th' screams
 Them poundin' hooves 'n them red-eyed beasts
 Lemme keep my agein' flesh 'n precious blood
 C'mon Lord keep me outta that mud.

Desire **The Rooster**

Desire abides...
 It is all people have that stands proof against time.
 Everything else...
 ROTS!

Ana
J.S. Slaymaker

With your gauzy dresses and soft raven tresses,
 and subtle Spanish sophistication.
 In your smoky eyes I watched my soul liquidise,
 and stood frightened at your invitation.
 I resisted the urge to completely immerge,
 myself in you, for you'd swallow me whole.
 Your love and affection demands total subjection,
 necessitating my whole heart and soul.
 Of my own volition was cast into perdition,
 and the great sea of insufferable tears.
 I know it's pathetic and hardly prophetic,
 that your loving arms would've soothed my fears.

She of My Dreams
Earl E. Thomas

Why does the very thought
 of my heart's discontent parade victoriously
 Through the spectrum of my dreams?

She should be the last vision
 my subconscious summons—
 or so it seems...

Still I've chased her through fields
 empty streets—
 Followed her through crowded malls.

By every time I'm within reach of her
 the vividness of my imagery dissolves,
 my chimera stalls.

Tranquility
Theodore Leslie

Being alone is the next best thing
 to being with her.
 Fleet skeletons of music
 dance on fallen leaves.
 Silver birches bathe in pools of
 afternoon sun.
 Amid the confusion of
 spring dispersals
 A misguided bird cracks the
 shell of a crooked day.
 The music stops. Darkness
 coats the ugly day,
 She's light on the only way
 to break the solitude...
 Lay down beside her again.

Train Tracks (Amy)
Ricky Pearson

Remember that day long ago
 When we were walking down those beater tracks
 and you-
 you had that old train still running in your head
 We walked a mile while you cried a river
 drunken though you were
 your pain was all too real
 my arm around your waist, holding you
 hearts beating to the sound
 of our footsteps on the rocks
 your heart aching from a memory
 another time, another place
 as the tears fell down your pretty face
 you shared...
 said your daddy was a walker
 said he was a rider
 roamed the land without you
 or your momma
 only him, his drink
 and the broken thoughts within his head
 dreams upon dreams-
 never coming to fruition
 lacking the will, he lost the way
 and fell into depression
 that fateful night years ago
 should have been long ago forgotten
 but still that train
 slides on down that rusty track
 and when you start drinking
 you get to thinking
 that you want to be like him
 so you saw the tracks and pulled over
 as you have so many times before
 and all but run toward the light
 and here we walk
 and here you cry
 and the light draws near
 I will help you, I will heal you
 I will love you like you need
 so take my hand- please, babe
 and let's push this memory away
 finally I reach you
 and the train leaves us in its wake
 the conductor never truly knowing
 how close he came
 to taking an angel's life away.

The Coon Hunt**James Meier**

That old dog won't hunt
 And that old hound won't tree
 But that old coon you're chasin'
 Is wearin' perfume just like me

Don't take no kinda genius
 To look around 'n see
 Them all-night huntin' parties
 Are takin' you from me

Don't know who that old coon is
 But she must not have fleas
 And when I think of losin' you
 I grow weak in th' knees

Now we've traveled this life's highways
 And we've even sailed rough seas
 But I've never been without you
 We're a match, everyone agrees

So listen while I tell you
 Pay close attention please
 And wake up to what's happenin'
 I won't get on my knees

You're my man forever
 I said it in my vow
 And I won't give you up
 Especially not now

With our kids all grown
 Finally now we're free
 And this old Colt forty-four
 Says you're stayin' here with me!

(Gunshot Optional)

Untitled**Christopher Manthei**

An artist living sculpture lying bare on the covers
 seen by the light from below the closed door
 a fierce dragon peering at me from the beautiful
 marble hollow down low
 My desire to kiss and thereby seduce the dragon
 to tameness or more fierce wildness
 the dragons desire to be taken now
 Me wondering if I could capture the dragon master's
 heart and capture the dragon for my own.

You're A Crown Princess**Dana Y'ungblood**

Little girl with Angel eyes born through incest
 A secret not known to many, as quiet as kept
 Her mother was raped by her Uncle Jimmy while she
 slept
 No one ever listened to her cries for help
 Abandonment is all that your mother ever felt
 Too young to know about her bodies haste maturity
 Uncle Jimmy staked out waiting to rob her virtually
 A thief he is - Ultimately!!!
 Admiring your mother from a distance,
 As if his devilish smile has no resistance
 Proud cause your mother keeps quiet and no one'll listen
 The puzzles scattered everywhere now, and a few pieces
 are missin'
 Time was in overdrive, inside her stomach a baby was
 pumpin' like a pison.
 It's obvious now, 13 years old and 4 months pregnant
 Now everyone's feeling guilty, and your mom grows
 repugnant
 Uncle Jimmy's on the run, and your grandma constantly
 repent,
 So your grandma goes and presses charges to the full
 extent
 The family picture has such a lovely frame
 Though the picture itself appears to be so strange...
 That's why it's often rearranged.
 Because your beautiful existence is the source of family
 pain.

Wildflowers and Rainshowers**J.S. Slaymaker**

Fields of wildflowers and summer rainshowers,
 and stars shooting across the dusk.
 And beneath its cover I kissed my lover,
 inhaling the scent of her musk.
 Sensing her fever I sought to relieve her
 of her pulsating feminine fire.
 Ecstatic emotion rolled us like the ocean,
 capsizing my ship of desire.
 Tasting so sweet and without missing a beat,
 my palm stroked the length of her thigh.
 Teasing and squeezing and with loving so pleasing,
 she melted and came with a sigh.
 Behold upon her cheeks the maiden's blush,
 as having been applied by my love's brush.

You and I
Pablo J. Ponce

My heart is special to those
 who care shooting star spring
 time air for you I'm strong
 my love is bright golden
 sunset love in flight
 Be soft and gentle for it's
 my heart you hold bed of
 feathers pot of gold all I
 have too offer its all just
 for you me your bright red
 rose you my morning dew
 I think about you my heart
 goes out that you love me
 I have no doubt like a
 crystal clear lake real
 soon you'll see you and I
 are meant too be.

Simplicity
Armando Solis

Recreating outside this cold November day.
 Just thinking of you and the many things I want to say
 It's on days like these that I wish we were together
 Even the simplest of things we share, I will treasure
 forever
 Please forgive me for the mistakes, I've made in the past
 And please understand that I want our friendship & bond
 to last
 You are my world and my heart's only desire,
 When I think of you my soul catches fire.
 My feelings for you... I can't find words to describe or
 expression
 Just, always remember that you're the best, to have,
 and to hold-to protect and to treasure
 Being bonded to you is a reminding pleasure.
 I can not explain what you mean to me, but God above
 does...
 But I surrender to faith that love will last forever-
 eternity.

Don't Look At Me That Way
Thee Baldhead Blackman

don't give me that look...
 ain't nothing changed...
 i was – i am, and i am still...
 the owner, the maker, the cream of the planet earth, god
 of the universe
 irrespective of your revocable imperfections, i dare to

know you
 as you were, as you could be, and as you will be in your
 ultimate glory
 you see, you are the co-owner, the co-maker, the churn
 of the planet earth, goddess of the universe

don't look at me that way
 that is the look of unconsciousness –
 and ignorance of our true identity –
 as deities of this mundane creation where
 self attempts to separate self from self...

don't look at me that way
 it is the look that denies your goddesshood –
 it puts you at such a worldly level – your highness
 the level where you're over there and i'm over here
 where i'm in black and you're in white
 where you're the mistress and me the slave
 where you're rich and i'm poor
 oh, what a worldly divide

pleeze ... don't look at me that way
 you're not the synthetic chemicals that denies your
 natural beauty to shine
 you're not my true enemy – the oppressor
 that holds your kingdom hostage
 you're not all you have been made to think you want to
 be
 don't look at me that way
 you are the mother of all creation...
 you are the deity that holds up half the sky...
 you are the beautiful reflection of my hu-man-ity

so...

don't look at me that way
 understand that the bondage you see me in is actually a
 testament of my true freedom

don't look at me that way
 i am a son of a mighty supreme
 don't look at me that way
 don't say you don't know me
 i am you – you are me
 and We are no strangers

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Prisoner Express promotes rehabilitation by providing information, education and opportunities for creative self expression to incarcerated individuals throughout the United States.

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The Durland Alternatives Library, which funds Prisoner Express, is a project partner of the CRESP Center for Transformative Action. Additional Support comes from the Cornell Public Service Center.

About the CRESP Center for Transformative Action

Our Mission

We are an alliance of individuals and organizations inspired by principles of nonviolence and committed to bold action for justice, sustainability, and peace. Our Center supports change makers with the tools to build thriving, inclusive communities that work for everyone. We serve our member organizations, the public, and Cornell University by offering educational programs and strategic organizational resources.

About Transformative Action

Transformative Action is a model for social change rooted in the principles of nonviolence. It realizes a positive, just and inclusive vision by seeking to expose injustice, transform adversaries into allies, and evolve anger into goodwill. Authentic yet compassionate communication is a foundational skill. Our goal is to train and equip our member organizations and others committed to social change with the most effective strategies and experiences for engaging this empowering approach.

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