

POWER IN POETRY
A Poetry Anthology

October 2018

Written in 2018 by students in poetry workshops
at the Rountree Correctional Facility
and the Rountree Rehabilitation and Re-Entry Facility,
Watsonville, California.

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Cover art by Shadley Stephens

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The Devil
by Shadley Stephens

The devil laughs hysterically,
cackling deep from within his gut.
His red face further reddens
as I fall into this rut.

The devil reaches out,
expecting the surrender of my soul.
Like so many weak-willed fools,
they help accomplish all his goals.

The devil knocks me down
and laughs directly in my face,
so I dust myself right off
and extend to him a warm embrace.

The devil looks confused,
and he feels quite disgraced
because it is now my turn to cackle
as I put the devil in his place.

I put the devil on his ass
and I really don't think twice
'cuz if you ask me my opinion,
I think the devil's just too nice.

Green
by Shadley Stephens

A jungle.
Deep and thick with shades.
Through the eyes of a summer dragonfly,
Gazing upon a lunar tide rainforest.
Canopied by palm fronds
And interlaced with trellis vines.
Strategically planted olive trees
Randomly sprinkled with basil leaves
And splashed with dill weed.
A glimmer of crown jewels
Guarded by exquisite emeralds
And blessed with a four leaf clover,
Washed with a sea of shiny shamrocks.
Puffs of menthol floating upward,
Dissipating into the aquamarine atmosphere
Of nature's own happy ending.

Don't Jump
by Shadley Stephens

I spend my 120th birthday at my usual post
High above the metropolis.
The world scattered about far below
And far too busy to notice little old me.

I only hope that one of my pigeon people
Remembers to stop in on my special day
And keeps the over-excited fecal splatter
To a bare minimum... or at least on the
Ledge this time... away from me...
Just for today.

A special day for me
Although I don't think my invite
Reached the rest of everyday life
Judging by the usual hustle and bustle routine
Going on everywhere except for where I sit.

I watch a single red balloon
Float upward in the distance
Through my blank unmoving eyes.
I find myself pretending it's for me
Even though I know it's not.
But still, just the thought brings an amused,
Sinister smile across my pale face.
But then again, my sinister smile is a
Permanent fixture as well as the
Beautifully symmetrical horns
Protruding from both sides of my wrinkled
forehead.

My claws are sharp, and my wings are spread,
But I won't be flying anywhere
Anytime soon.

Even on my 120th birthday I will loyally
Man my post high above
The rat race of herded cattle
Stampeding the world's biggest ant farm.
I'll just take it all in
Like us gargoyles do.

And I'll smile...

The Demon Who Owns All Your Souls
by Shadley Stephens

The Demon with the glowing red eyes.
The Demon with the razor sharp teeth.
The Demon with the pool of blood at his feet.
The Demon who crashed my party.
The Demon who rained on my parade.
The Demon who fucked my wife.
The Demon who shit in my Wheaties.
The Demon who refuses to leave.
The Demon who never says "please."
The Demon who takes without give.
The Demon who wakes just for sin.
The Demon with the glowing red eyes.
The Demon you never see cry.
The Demon with the wicked-evil laugh.
The Demon that sleeps all through class.
The Demon whose roar shatters glass.

The Demon who taps every ass.
The Demon who blows a fat load.
The Demon who scratches his chode.
The Demon who dwells down a hole.
The Demon who owns all your souls.

Crash & Burn
by Shadley Stephens

As my new, glimmering bracelets slowly tighten
around my wrists,

Metallic click by metallic click,

Panic spreads like an epidemic from my head to my
toes.

Once again, life as I happen to know and love it is
now careening down the slippery interstate,

As if someone pulled the emergency brake from the
back seat unbeknownst to me, the driver.

Controllessly skidding in circles down the endless
Highway to Hell in an infinite thunderstorm.

My eyes drift close, in a sort of surrender.

Knowing it's over once again, until "they" decide
otherwise.

It's time to rest.

Time to regroup.

Time to regrow.

Time to eat.

Time to sleep.

Time to exercise.

Time to heal.

Time to feel.

Time to get real.

As the revolving door makes another lap around the
Nascar track,

In a never-ending race at a never-ending pace,
I prepare to embrace...

...Right before I hit the wall.

The History of the Poet by Shadley Stephens

It starts out with an inmate.

Nothing but time.

Time for sitting and thinking.

Time to plot the next crime.

Time to mingle with others.

Time to compare your notes.

Time to reflect on your feelings.
Time to come up with some quotes.

Time to fill a blank page.
Time to fill a blank book.
Time to fill a blank rage.
Time to fill a blank look.

Time to serve a full sentence.
Time to write one as well.
Time to be released and return.
Time to spend more time in Hell.

Nothing but time to transform.
Change from inmate to poet.
Change from criminal to writer.
And not even know it.

The Woman in the Red Dress
by Nathan Cooper

There she was as beautiful
as all of the stars visible in the sky.
Hair flowing like a flame dancing across the
ground.
Skin fair as fresh snow on Christmas Day.
She was walking towards me through the thick
crowd,
moving like a river down a busy street

when she caught my eye.
It was her red dress amongst
all the black business suits which
caught my attention like a final ember
in a pile of ash.
As she passed by me and our gazes caught,
time seemed to stand still as if everything was
frozen,
crystal clear but not moving.
Then the moment was passed and she was gone,
only to be a memory as if she was only ever a
picture in my mind.

The Cliff

by Nathan Cooper

Ocean breeze, salted mist,
crashing waves barrel as they sweep across the sea.
Otters play like children on a playground.
Dolphins and surfers catch waves as if
they were one and the same,
connected eternally through the love of the surf.
The day is crisp, not a cloud in the sky.
Locals and tourists alike walk, bike, and skate
the cliff enjoying this perfect Santa Cruz day.
We sit at the house on the left,
Little's Beach down in the cove.
We sit just baked basking in the sun.
Everything is absolutely serene, perfect

in every way. Nothing can ruin this moment,
but then the bright lights turn back
on it's 6:00am I hear, "Breakfast, gentlemen,"
and I think, "Fuck, another day at R&R."

Home
by Nathan Cooper

On our way home, we drive
after one year of preparing.
We are driving through the desert
to sit in line for twelve hours.
The 5 mile line of cars
inching their way closer
to Black Rock City.
Some are there for months,
Some only a few days.
Some build, create, and destroy.
Some just get fucked up and
enjoy the sights.
Some are there for the art
and the fire.
Some are just there for
the free booze and naked women.
But everyone there is family,
connected by their love of the
Playa and the burning of
the Man.
7 days of constant music,

amazing art, fire everywhere,
and everyone as high as they
can get.

At night it's the most amazing
sight you can see. A 70,000 person
city of lights, colors and huge
creations many stories tall.

It's like being on another planet
in its immensity.

On the second to last day, everyone
gathers around the Great Circle
to see the incredible fire show then
fireworks then BOOM huge
explosion and the Man catches fire.

We all sit and watch as it burns
and feel the heat like a forest fire.

And when he finally collapses, everyone
rushes in.

The last day, the temple burns. It's
much more ceremonial, for with it
goes all of our wishes, prayers, hopes,
and dreams.

Then we all pack up
and go back to prepare for next
year, to return home to Black Rock City.

The Never-ending Game
by Nathan Cooper

Well, here it goes again.
Time to go play the game we all hate.
The never-ending game of hurry up and wait.
First it's the phone, we find out where to go.
Then we are on our way after the
Words that they say, "I'll be there in 30
minutes so you better hurry," but it's always
a lie so we sit and just wait, wait to
get high.

Here it goes again, it feels like
it will never end.
Each minute as an eternity as we
wait to feel the serenity.
With each click of the clock's ticker,
we continue to get sicker,
wishing it wasn't like this.
Stuck on this dependence.
Wishing to be clean cause
life then was serene.
Now they've finally come
And this wait is finally done.

Squish Dog

by Nathan Cooper

The dog that was born a ball of squish
The dog that we named Squish Dog
The dog that grew to be straight brilliant
The dog that ate 5 sheets of acid

The dog that loves to sleep under our legs
The dog that loves fetch more than anything
The dog that must run hard everyday
The dog that still seems young to this day
The dog that if you're tripping know it's time to
play
The dog that once said the word "no"
The dog that can always go go go
The dog that is a force to be reckoned with
The dog that forever was Nosedog's only friend
The dog that I will love til the end
The dog that goes crazy every time I come home
The dog that needs a disc golf disc cause Frisbees
are too weak
The dog I raised from 7 days old
The dog that is the greatest dog of all
That is my dog "Squish"

Googes Favorite Ice Cream
by Adam Hymen

If know-it-all was a flavor
That would surely be the one,
But it's not...
Do you suppose there's a bullshit
flavored ice cream?
Check with Ben and Jerry
Did you know rear naked choke
is the most common finishing move in MMA?
If mint chip was in the UFC it would

surely lose to butter pecan,
By knock-out...
The Empire State Building is 1,264 ice creams
taller than the list of useless facts
I have memorized.
I guess if I had to choose one
I'd settle for chunky monkey with a
sprinkle of arrogance
Oh so sweet is the taste of knowledge.

One Vice at a Time
By V.M. Stafford

To the seedy underbelly of
excess and indulgence...
Proclivities arrive at the
Obscene when unmasked and
Evaluated or held to the light.
To sit on your ass and watch
The days drift away into an
Unknown expanse.
Expensive and riddled with
Bullets, the fate of such habits
Rise and fall with each forgotten
Arrest. When I attempt to
Count this area of life, my
Mind is boggled and my brain,
Befuddled...

The Gig

by V.M. Stafford

There's the gig I have been
Searching for,
There's the gig that needs to be,
There's the gig that is seen in
The stars.
There's the gig that starts in
The bars.
To the gig that starts
 Right here,
A monster of a gig
That is near.
This gig I used to fear,
The gig that rules
The day.
It absolutely rules in
 every way.

Angels

by V.M. Stafford

To be visited by an
 angel
What a "divine privilege."
I believe I have made
A wish such as this.
Be careful what you
 Wish for...

“Ambiguity”

by V.M. Stafford

“Ambiguity” seems to be where
this description lies...

just at the edge of my mind
and tongue...

slippery, yet tangible,
in the most available of ways...

Sans wit, my will persists,
In the pursuit of “What is it!??”

I cannot shake this thing,
It has no form yet a vague

Description...

Will “It” remain this way?

Or will “It” materialize from
Sheer effort and labor I have

Expended to uncover “Its”
Identity...

Guitar

by V.M. Stafford

Your very shape, as I’ve
said before, was created
in celebration of woman!

Long, slender neck, of 21 frets,
Shapely through the body, the
way her hips were created...

The Italian Virtuosos of love

sent instruction to the French
for her creation. To seduce
women in bedchambers...
Is your actual reason
for the life breathed
into your being.

Romans 1:27

Seething
by V.M. Stafford

Knotted-up, unkind,
Depth of ritual, can't unwind.
Straining for release and
Nuthin' there, freedom
Disappeared into thin air.
Void of color and into the
Void, nothing at all as you
Fall, fall, fall...

Author's Note: Inspired by "By Demons Be
Driven" by Philip H. Anselmo

Haiku/Fallen
by Jordan William Roe

The taste of failure,
Versus the taste of success.

Each carries poison.

Spring is now over,
And the apples have fallen.
Sweet yet forbidden.

Fall, fall, fall again.
Get up, stand up to the plate
And swing for the fence.

Swing batter batter.
Not one, not two, but three strikes.
You're out of the ballgame.

Question what to do,
When we fall head first again.
Just dust your shirt off.

Gift
by Jordan William Roe

What is this word?
What does it mean to me?
An eight year old me,
waking up in the hope of finding a present under the
Christmas tree.
Maybe my first car at the age of sixteen.
But wait it's much more than what's materialistic
The loving touch on my forehead when my mother

kissed it
Or maybe this life I've been blessed with
like the word "sunset."
The imagery of gift is simply so bliss.

Wishin'
by Jordan William Roe

Chasing my dreams, it's been a long road.
Now I'm just wishin' I was home.
Trying to get my money up, but these bills keep
piling up,
Now I just want to be alone.
I wish I could sleep, but instead I drink,
I still can't blink as I stare at these walls.
The drugs are long gone and it seems my only
thought is
No one is there to pick me up when I fall.
Always running from the law, will I ever live free?
Most of the time brighter days are hard to see.
Dark clouds seem to cover up my days.
Now I'm just wishin' I could wish away the rain.
Maybe wish away the pain, maybe wish I was sane.
I wish I didn't play no part in this game,
But it's calling my name, said I'm destined to reign.
So here's my two cents and a pocket full of change.

"Pen" Pal
by Jordan William Roe

Oh how I enjoy our time together.
Even though we made mistakes,
We still passed the tests thrown at us.
You never judge me,
Whether I'm black, white, or feeling blue.
It seems our colorful personalities match each-
Other in perfect harmony on a day to day basis.
When you were young, I struggled with each breath
As your grip tightened around me.
Your only concern was to stay in the lines.
Now that you're older, i have grown fond of your
touch...
The way that your hand holds me ever so firm and
carefully
As a mother would caress her child.
The way we dance across our canvas of creativity,
In complete sync with each other.
To express and paint a picture for those who don't
understand us.
There will come a time when you don't need me
anymore.
You will move on because in the end you were just
using me,
But still I just want you to know.
I appreciate our time together.
Sincerely,
Your pen pal

Pity Party
by Jordan William Roe

Come one, come all.
I see you are down and out.
Well, you are cordially invited
To my pity party.
So put all that stress to rest.
Who will be the M.V.P. of S-A-D?
Would you like an upgrade to V.I.P.?
I hope you attend my pity party.
No one showed up to my pity party,
Except for me.
That makes me M.V.P.
Most Vulnerable Person.
But hey, it's still a party.

Sands of Time
by Jordan William Roe

Sitting back as I watch the sands of time pass
Thinking every moment, "How long will this life
last?"
I'm just a victim of my own demise.
It took til now to realize the truth within my eyes.
It's no surprise I spent so many years with a heart of
frost,
Buying drugs on the daily, time and money lost.

“Hey Mr. Dealer, I’m needing another,”
Days on end turn to fall, winter, spring, and
summer,
I’m a natural born sinner, please forgive me,
Mother.
But it’s shady in these times and it makes me
wonder
Why this world is so cold and why these souls have
been sold
To a future untold of fortune and gold.
These fools act bold, ignorant minds mold,
Destruction mode has put your life on hold.
Wow, when the word’s out your own mouth
ricochets.
Everything you say is used against you in every
way.
Trust in nobody, but trust me when I say
You only live once, no rewind or replay,
That he say, she say, give nobody no lee-way.
I’m telling you they lied when they said life is easy,
Best believe me, that’s rubbish Mr. Weasley.
I’m praying some day someone will come and free
me
From this world of sin, forsaken how I’ve been.
Don’t dare to drop the pin and call yourself a friend,
Your neither two nor ten when your life is at its end.
So take this time you’ve got, repent and make
amends.

White Noise
by Jordan William Roe

Homesick was the black sheep
As he traveled down this lonely road.
Where courage and compassion
Is the only medication towards redemption.
He still carries a heart full of regret.
Locked with fear in a shadow of depression,
Disappointment just another roll of the dice away.
Thoughts run wild of the beautiful, barbed woman
Who stole all love and happiness from his soul.
Those three words once said
Still lingers in his head.
Each memory like a bullet wound to the chest.
I hate you, I hate you, I hate you.
Pain and grief is in his nature,
So he continues to walk alone.
The drops of rain is where he finds music
To drown out the noise between his ears.

Moonlight
by Jordan William Roe

A shape-shifter of sorts
Trickster by trait,
The lone wolf prowls

Sits and awaits.
Nocturnal by nature
While most are asleep,
Labeled an outcast
The pain cuts him deep.
Yet out of the blue
The moon shall arise,
He'll look up and howl
To the only friend by his side.
Moonlight.

Date Night Disaster
by Jordan William Roe

Two hours and counting
Till we date and we dine,
So much to be done
In this race against time.
Veggies to boil
The mashing of taters,
The oven won't work
I curse and pray to my savior.
Oh please, oh seez
What a first impression.
Nothing's ever perfect
That's just out of the question.
What to do, what to say
Time is ticking away,
I stained my white shirt

With chardonnay.
I call and I say
“I’m so glad that I met you,
but tonight just won’t work
can we please reschedule?”
What she said next
Made my heart hit the floor,
She replied these six words,
“But I’m at the front door.”

Penned of the Pen... A Penitentiary
~ **Lamentation** ~
by Michael Gregory Montgomery AKA Shag

These scratches and scribbles etched upon and
hastily arranged...
 in hopes I’ll convey the foundation
 of sentence laid bare in dismay...
 that I can construct,
in some cool sounding way
 all the confounding wisdom
earned if I may... by staying up late,
 alone in my head, while serving my
 penance for years and a day...
 I’ve earned these lonesome sonnets,
 doing it my way,
So, I’ll bend ya this hear-say
 sent forth the hard way.
 Sailed un-even keeled to blow

in the wind...

No rhythmic beat a drummer,
marks time to the oar...

as a freight train of rambles
burns hot in my core.

Over sea, over land I travel
my thoughts
to meet with old lovers I reminisce
but for naught.

No letters I get from her that
I've touched
or picture mementos of whom
I've held hands...

When once I walked freely
and relished the land

A man, a man
only once I just was...

Now a mere shadow dressed
same as my fellows...

who shuffle alongside counterclockwise
it seems, to turn back the time
sentenced to bend mean by our schemes.

I've squandered my youth
on gambles unseen, when all I did covet
bagged up crystalline
turns to bicycles and backpacks
paint pens and shiny things
the treasures of paupers
do justify the means.

When suddenly a stranger
peers back this reflection...

I hadn't recognized that
wrinkles connected the grey.

As all that surpassed me
Blinked by in a day

Which lasted a decade
Ten years gone they all say...

Author's note: Written by Michael Gregory
Montgomery AKA Shag after a 9 year prison
sentence. Please listen to Ten Years Gone by Led
Zeppelin.

Jail

by Michael Gregory Montgomery

To find one's designs... work them in fruition...
Using the signs of the times, coupled with our
search

For better understanding (of self). The grass roots
Once dried... now uncommon they're felt, yet
Still a call to investigate harks love upon our
Shelf... a collection of Who am I's and how can
We search... where are the elders, tale-swappers,
Lore keepers and is it even cool...? Politically
correct

My life matters to... and proud might my service
Reflect this display, a coupling of mementos

I've drawn hopes to say... I too belong
And we have our treasures, and I as a
Seeker grow stronger in the
Pleasure of adornments inked
Back... a forever worn attire
Powered by Three (3)... be it religion
Or spirit, self mantra, trinity.
Father, Son, Holy Ghost.
A Sanskrit etched drawing,
Deftly sketched on the sand, the shape
Of a fish the knowing understand...
Fraternity of crusaders, a Temple of Men...
The Templar, an Ark, a Chalice, a Shroud,
Knots woven and tied the Isle of Man...
Or a ribbon for her hair to join nature's coupling
As Church is to state... tattoo'd reminder my
Legacy be great... solidarity the first line
 My Lord's prayer not be late –
Oh Danny Boy, Danny Boy – William Wallace
 Freedom Great –

Transitions – An Achilles' Tendon
by Michael Montgomery

Change... be it sudden or surely
 the more formidable, a knowing or
awaited Change, looming and worried
to catastrophe size forecast... by me,
myself and I...

(my most trusted and familiar critics).

Addicted to playing just one anxiety
riddled tape... over and over upon my
treasure box of nostalgia, (my mind).

Sabotage and intrigue, the resistance
underground I covet to undermine my
success... however carefully crafted
by this kid.

Doubting Thomas, woe is me,
“It’ll never work” and “Danger
Will Robinson... Danger”... all titles
on my best sellers list...

Swipe to the left, always on
the touchscreen photograph of self.

When safe to share this clever
construct of smart demise...?

“It must be exhausting!” The common
reply...

“I’d have it no other way!”

The silent scream of I...

Guilty as charged by the high court
inside my heart.

Forgiveness of self

unfortunately has died
so critical... the hypocrite, my pride.

Inner child, the wounded,

you’ll never see him cry.

Tis my excuse to cling to as I
plead the 5th... silence tells no lies.

So maybe you'll believe me...
That everything's ok...

And I can continue failing
(see, I'm good like that!)
Then I'll never have to change.

The Disease

by Michael Gregory Montgomery

The power of want... May I please
have some more?

What must I do... lie, cheat
or whore?

On the outs I'll have plenty...
my own little sack

To hide or divide...
I'll decide which attack.

In here I'll keep quiet...
No need to expound
On all that I've been, or done,
just the sound
of self-serving preaching...
bongs, gongs and symbols
confound.

A confusion of mores on deaf ears galore...

The sounds of my needing
or
just wanting more.

by Michael Gregory Montgomery

A tree branch broke
A bicycle spoke
Caught the first drops of rain

2

– When I was young –

Two best friends and a
wonderful girl

Butch Cassidy and The Sundance
kid, life as a movie

Autumn leaves, bicycle sleeves
an oak tree sheds in layers

Memories in Kodachrome
I'm reminded of peaceful times
When I was young.

A Life in Song

by Michael Gregory Montgomery

Left foot in Left foot out
years of Hokey Pokey
always just left out

Jingle Bells, batman smells
Robin laid an egg

Childhood years been gone
And along come The Shag

Louie Louie, Sweet Melissa
Dancing in the rain

All gathered in youthful times...
way before the pain

Bye Bye Miss American Pie
My mom...
She sang before she died
Just a thought before she goes
Band on the run

Assigned to me
A mother always knows
And then begin to find myself
So stuck upon the shelf

Hearts and thoughts
They fade

Fade away

Did I show you love?
On the heart that was my
Neighbor

That breach I'll never know
That loss
I'm known to show.

Inspired by If – (If we meet again)
by Michael Gregory Montgomery

I first heard (knew) you... then in a cell,
memorized by a soldier...
he'd committed so well
His treasure box of nostalgia
did never forget

A stance to adhere to
though lofty I'll admit...

The pleasure in Truth
I'd never heard yet...

Upward and onward
We both exercised to fret

In worry or wonder those words rang true

If I could just remember
If only for you

My comrade in shield
upon the front line

him with his twelve...
me with my nine... (years)
If forever a brother
Whom gifted me these lines
Strength and Honor
I love you
If yours crosses mine (paths).

Ode to a Sister
by **Michael Gregory Montgomery**

Oh homer...
I first met you... the day you paroled
His cell phone was filming and
I wore her clothes

A Jeremy... A Dickie... high as
Who knows

Along came a spider you introduced me
To Chara

I commandeered both, the biggest tent

The biggest girl

Who was to become...

My own twist and twirl

Friends most on Facebook

We both dealt in things

You with your lovers

Yet none exchanged rings

Bike rides on a levee

We'd eat Denny's

Then back to a suite

More Junkies to meet

I gave you a Jason

But you ripped him off

And just as you do... cried

wolf and be gone.

You collected so much and

Coveted even more

When ripped me off to?

I evened the score.

Still now get to know you

The person I'll love

Through the words of your poems
Connected once was

And I can't wait to meet you
as this time we'll share
The real gifts of our artwork
shall again dye our hair.
~ Love, Shag ~

What Am I
by Joseph Bollom

Sometimes we try and catch up with it,
And then we look back to find it as if it's
a loss.
It's as delightful as having love – that sweet, sweet
smell
from long ago like some old 80s show.
That feel of big bell blue jeans we all used to
know.
I can have it again and again if I just meditate
enough.
I have you now with everything I need,
and it's as perfect in every way.
It's like life's blood – it is my need.
It's like from the past, but I need you now,
I think of you in the future but you just don't

live there!
It's alive in us now,
But you truly won't be alive until it
happened to me now.
So you're alive, but don't exist.
You're like my breath but not just yet.
You are my thoughts I just haven't had
yet.
But I will see you in a MOMENT OH-YEA.
You just came and went. Where are you now in this
moment!

The Lady I Love
by Joseph Bollom

When I walk beside her I am a better man
Once I looked to leave her, but I just staggered back
again.
Once I built this tall tower so I could worship from
above.
When I came down to be set free she took me back
again.
When she comes to greet me she is
mercy at my feet.
She sees the bitter charms and she throws
them back at me.
Once I dug an early grave to find a better land.
She just smiled and laughed at me and took the
blues
back again.

When I go to cross that river, she is comfort by
my side.
When I try to understand, she just opens up her
hands.
Once I stood to lose her and really saw what
I had done,
So I bowed down and almost threw away the
hours of a garden and her son.
I turned to see her weep and for over 40 days
And for over 40 nights, it still comes down on me.
To think of this prison that separates
you from me,
my dear, sweet Wendy, you're so great for waiting
on me.
Our love shines through these days, but I
still miss you so.
Your choice in me will be
real very soon...
as you shared this
with me.
I love to
Love you thanks from your mom.

Dedicated to Wendy M. Bohnert

Actions
by Joseph Bollom

The more I see greed in others, but not with you,
And I will give you all of me and everything
We can imagine because I love you and trust you.

The master doesn't take sides, it gives birth to good
and evil.

Connection brings purpose and meaning into my
life
Even with my awareness it's not enough I have
To work on it (intentional practice).

Nothing is unless my own very thinking makes it
so,
So make it so...

To be with my dear one, I am here for you just
As much as you – truly love.

My healing happens through connection with other
People – this means you.

Doing something different will always be
Uncomfortable, to me life is not lived in
What I know, the most exciting time
I've ever had is in the unknown.
Most things I know have hurt me the most.

Nurture with great thoughts, knowledge is
not wisdom,
I will never be higher than my thoughts,

So what's the benefit of unnecessary suffering
if I can't measure it, it doesn't exist.
True growth is from my discomfort.

Connection brings purpose and meaning into
My life.

My disconnection causes fear and shame.
I'm not good enough, but I know that's just
not true, but it lives like an unwanted
guest.

Vulnerability is the fear that keeps me from
True connection.

Worthiness = the belief that I am whole-hearted
With courage and compassion and connection.
Tell the story with my whole heart!

We numb vulnerability,
but we live in a vulnerable world.
We can't numb emotion.
When we numb those, we numb love, joy,
happiness.

We chose to move away from our hearts.

My outer life is a manifestation of my inner
thoughts and feelings.

Can we get to our human capacity of love,
Happiness, Deserving, and Connection?

It's just emotion and most people don't want
to expose that. Our need is to belong!

Practice love and joy. Believe we're
Enough. I'm enough, you're enough.
We're kinder and gentler
 To ourselves
 And the people
 Around us.

Sincerely, Seriously

Sing:

Vented

Joseph C. Bollom

My Dear One

I love to love you

It's You I See
by Joseph Bollom

You do this without thinking or
Maybe even knowing, it is just yours.

You give me dignity and respect, harmony
In breath. I'm determined to practice
Loving speech to you.

Each and every day,
Wendy.

To Attract That Which is New – “In Belief”
by Joseph Bollom

To Attract what I deserve

To Attract that sweet, beautiful girl

To Attract that which I love

To Attract that place with a bar
A drink on the warm sand

To Attract those trees that sway with their

Long, green leaves. Can you see?

To Attract that life from here

To Attract is also to empty the old

To Attract is to have new in the mind
Of my own Creation

To Attract is to believe that it's already
Happened

To Attract is to be grateful as if it's
Already been gotten

To Attract what I know I desire will
Happen

To Attract my dear, sweet Wendy

To Attract that Costa Rica that
Is there, and that we're there

To Attract that awesome job that is
There waiting for me

To Attract that which is great in us
All
Is any wish too small

“Well I can have it all”

Dedicated to Wendy M. Bohnert

Me
by Joseph Bollom

Going through an unsatisfied life
-- to go through the darkness

To come out to oneself

No death, no transformation
No death, no change of my self.

We all go along our own additions as if it's
Our own true self.

As if it's a new book that someone
Else didn't write.

I must die to the self that we all had made

So going, through this unsatisfied life is to
Go through what was once seen, but not
Lived!

And to see how I could be awoken

To my true conscious self!

I've awoken!
But still a little lazy from that victim
That tries to portray itself.

No, that's just some weak thinking, that's
Really not my true self.

To go through the darkness to come out to
One's true self.

To know your greatness

Now and I've always seen
The true King in me
The soldier in me
The greatness in me
The Hero in me
The understanding in me
The legacy in me
The seeker in me
The cosmos I belonged to in me
The Clint
The Silly in me
The Ghandi in me
And finally, the Lover in me
The Joseph in me

I am just me.

The Pine Fur
by Angel Valdez

Ever since I was a kid, I remember the smell through our two story house for over two months: the Christmas tree of pine fur. The so-called happiness and joy that was a façade for over twenty years in my family. Since then, I've been chasing the smell of the holiday pine fur and going to extreme measures to provide or try and capture my childhood happiness. That smell brought so much memory to my mind that I would try and provide that to many families in my neighborhood, thinking I could change all the broken families. I was surrounded by hate, violence, and broken families and hundreds of boys and girls running wild, causing chaos and addiction. I would act like Robin Hood during these days by pulling up to many Christmas tree lots and load up as many trees as possible and take off without thinking twice or stopping. And I would pass them out to many families in the projects, telling them to take down their plastic, store-bought trees and fill their houses with the fresh pine fur smell I loved as a kid – hoping this would change the chaos during the holidays.

My Pain
by Angel Valdez

The amount of pain I've been through in my life. The physical pain is unbearable to any other human being. I've explained my life to hundreds of people in treatment and in society and the looks and expressions left on many faces were indescribable. I've been shot and stabbed many times – left for dead. I've been beaten, tased simultaneously, pepper sprayed to where tears and snot run down my face while gasping for air, choking on my own saliva. Been shot by block guns in prison during a yard riot just for survival. Zip-tied and sprawled out like chuckwalla lizards with third degree sunburns. I was beaten as a child by my own dad and fears. So much pain has been manifesting in my soul. I have tattoos from head to toe that are so painful. The pain tolerance is above the charts, yet the pain that I've been feeling from the way you have treated me is far more than all of these life experiences. My heart is forever weeping and broken by your words and the way you have treated me. You're the only woman ever in my life that has been able to completely open my entire being and all my deep, dark secrets. What a fool I am for allowing your beauty and twisted compassion to devour my

vulnerabilities and who I was as a man by my trust in you. Your actions will effect my boy and I forever. We will never be able to trust a woman.

The Woman Not for Me
by Angel Valdez

This woman will never leave you or forsake you, but she will take you to a place like never before. All it takes is one taste of her acquired taste. She's not for everyone, but she does enter every race, no color, no racism. Just the courage one time to let her enter your veins, she will fill your every need slowly from head to toe – the warmest, fuzziest feeling that makes certain parts of your body rise to her face with great stamina and everlasting pace. All other women will eventually want your taste. Because of that one girl who talks about your all night strengths and great lengths. This she-devil will make you crave her everyday, not telling you to handle her in a safe pace. Before you know it, your weekends are taken by the everyday taste now she's wrapped and intertwined in your veins, searching for more places to take before you know it it's no longer a pace – it's now a race for more and more. Slowly it tears your face long with the grace you used to have. Now it's sucking every moral, every cent. Your belongings,

your pride, she's winning more and more of you.
This girl is laughing at what is happening –
devouring my soul, my everlasting ways.

IF

by Angel Valdez

The power of the word if and of two letters
combined,

I look at my life and say to myself:

IF it would have started early in my life.

IF the words 'I love you' ever came out of my
father's voice,

the scars would not have been in my soul
and fear

would not be embedded in my mind.

IF I would not have seen my father beat my mom
when he would

come home drunk.

IF I would have not been old enough to understand
the things I

saw my dad do behind my mom's back.

IF I would have never left my home at 16, what my
life

would be.

IF I would have never got shot at the age of 16
would my

career in basketball not be just a dream?

IF I never made the worst choice in my life to
retaliate for

being shot, would my life in prison never
be?

IF I would have listened to my mother's fears and
words in

saying, "Please don't follow your family
footsteps – it will either

kill you or take your life away."

IF my dad would have showed me how to be a real
man

where would I be today?

IF I would have never taken that first taste of heroin

I would never be able to hide my pain for so
many

Years. Instead, I would have learned to deal
with life

and its pain.

IF my heart was never broken by my first love I
would

never made me insane.

IF I would have listened to my parents at a young
age my life

would not be in vain.

IF I would have not relapsed would my life be the
same?

IF I just gave myself some time to heal from my
painful relationship

things would remain, instead here I sit again
hearing my name

in vain. Telling me I did things that are not
plain.

IF I just would have not acted insane I would not be

sentenced once again for what they say.

Damn how powerful

the words are to me “IF” my life was never insane.

Sheer Romance
by Angel Valdez

It’s the color of her eyes that first captured me forever. The attraction, the daze – it would always take me there, staring at her through the mirror. The depth of our commitment and our understanding of each other. Her eyes are the reason my heart was captured at first sight and realized there are finer things in life. Throughout our journey, they change according to our current emotions or what is at the present of our trials we face together. The shades of blue that transcend through her emotions. When we are in sync, they turn to the colors of ocean waters of Maui from such happiness and without worry or stress. But when pain interferes, they turn towards the deeper blues of Cabo San Lucas. But when we face our pain and struggles together like two people forever in love, I see the blues of natural waterfalls where the blue and teal mix in her eyes (knowing my soul mate’s eyes are hypnotizing still to my forever acquired taste that is fulfilled by her forever). Her eyes run deep through my mind and soul – that’s what gives me the hope and strength to maintain my sanity through this painful life

experience I'm going through alone right now, away
from my misty blue, my world, my other, my wife.
My best friend. The person I chose to go through
this journey in life as we get old together we can
look back and hold hands on the shores of the ocean
blue water reflect off those blue eyes that carry me
through my broken heart.

Kicking
by Dennis Wells

Locked in this cage of anxiety
Restless legs keep kicking the wall
of the unknown
Thoughts of the future remain
perpetually clouded

But my mind's eye
on fire for clarity
To free myself from self-abasement
My body locked by chains
of self-perpetuated darkness

~~But~~ No more. Through dedication
I shall find freedom from my inebriation

Fathers
by James Hood

Fathers are good
Fathers are bad
Fathers can make you happy
Fathers can make you sad.
Some are there for the tough times.
Some are missing in action.
Some foolish fathers are out their damn minds.
Some will keep it on the low
and some will tell the police
everything they know
when you're out there on the streets
committing crime.
Whatever way a father may be,
I forgave mine.
Because I refuse to let anything
bother me here on Earth,
and wherever I go for eternity.

In the Moment
by James Hood

As I look around
I see dirty boards,
carpet that is slowly tearing & wearing
from human feet,

one female amongst a pack
of male lions.
One sound that catches my ears
is a fan that seems to be from the early 2000's.
From the look, a roof in the room
that seems to be in need
of repair, likely due to the cheap
material they used back in '98 or '99
when building this godforsaken place.
A smell that's become common to my nose
over the past 19 years
I've been getting incarcerated.
A smell of cheap commercial laundry
detergent, mixed with cheap lotions
and shampoos
unheard of by the normal society
of the United States.
A bunch of lost souls hovering
over their old bodies, waiting
for the lions' spirit to retreat
so they can once again sit
in their temples upon release.

Steel Doors
by James Hood

Steel doors play a part
in all our lives

Steel doors can get you locked
in a house with an evil woman
who fooled you into believing
she was your future wife

Cops, guns and knives
turned your short, miserable relationship
into days of our lives,
spirit cries, and God's light
which you were self deprived

Are you going to fall victim
or will you be ready to go
to heaven when God arrives?

The Ghetto in the Beginning
by James Hood

The ghetto has been around
since the beginning of mankind,
Half monkeys, half humans evolving
into what we are now
with beautiful damn minds
nothing to eat as the sun goes down
Ugly monkey face
motha fuckas paying attention
to every sound the insect makes

On the ground, pound, pound
A vicious sound
as the trap the monkey man made
hits the ground
Feast time now, that's the beginning
of intelligence in the human mind

by James Hood

Silence is good silence can be sad
Silence can mean you're dead awaiting
Judgment day to answer to the higher
power for every wrong or right
decision you ever had, choices that
has arrived will you be a fake
Soldier, a wannabe, are run
And hide, a definition of a
real soldier is a person who
Lived his or her while life with real
Pride, and when the hard times
Arouse, kept their head high, and
put massive surges of positive
energy in every step and damn
stride.

I Should've Never
by James Hood

I should've never took that road

I should've never hit that bowl
I should've been a good kid
And played the good guy role
I should've never did what I did
But if I could do it all over
again I probably will still have split
that ninja's wig, coastin while I
sip the devil's potion low ridin
through my town. Ass end draggin
to the Ground. Fuck all them old
vindictive haters they can look at
me now, Geed up with my beat
up, with my new shirt on that
says Rest In Peace to my mother
Renita.

The Nature of Jail
by Travis Shivers

They say I did wrong
that I deserved [to be] punished
I was only doing what I learned as a kid
Taking responsibility – I've been asked to do
Having a life of gray skies
instead of blue
Born into situations,
do we deserved the lives we get?
Plenty of time to wonder
...cause in jail I now sit...

USA

by Dougie Murdock

USA

We don't play

Other countries like Somalia

listen to what the fuck we say

Day in and day out

other countries know

what we're about

We bleed bravery and free slavery

We take what we want

and leave the rest

God, I'm blessed

Pretty Pictures

by Devin Thomas

Pretty pictures all in a row,

Why I do this I do not know.

This time I will finish them all,

The color I'm using is a dark crimson red,

on my pallet I won't run out 'til I'm dead.

She runs in and sees a smile on my face,

looks at my arms and legs and sees all

the pretty pictures I have traced.

No need to call the doc,
I have ran out of my color
and my pretty pictures are complete
better call the coroner.

Burning Nightmare

by Delvon Wash

As he boarded the train and took a seat
something didn't seem right
But he didn't mind,
he was one step closer to his destination
A woman sat across from him
She seemed very happy
In a split second the train sped up
Moving faster than usual
He knew right then the train was off track
That's when everything went dark
When he awoke there was this man
standing over him
He seemed to be worried
He may be a fireman
He tried to rise
That's when he noticed he couldn't
His legs were too weak
It smelled of flesh and his skin
Was peeling horribly
That's when I woke up,
Touched my body and was relieved
of my fears

What a burning nightmare

What My Dad Wasn't to Me
by Delvon Wash

My kids are my everything
My dad was nothing to me
I will give my kids what he didn't
Give me love and guidance
No time to lie to them
like he did me
Show my kids right from wrong
Give them a house and a home
When they cry
make sure it's tears of joy
Never turn my back
on my handsome boys

Time Lost
by Ben Davis

Relationships evaporate
Cold aloneness
The cost...
Only real ones
Prepared for the
Empty promises flowing
From home... empty as
Bone.

The dry taste of iron
In your throat... stale clammy
Palms, remnants of the
Bitter offense. The cruel
Smirk the glitter of
Vengeance teeth.
Broken...

Homes
Hearts
Furniture
Broken...
Minds
Moments
Fathers
Broken...
Time
Tolerance
Silence
Broken...
Family
Fucks
Futures
Broken...
Broken

Broken
Broken

by Ben Davis

Getting tired of the same
old shit
Bitter beans
dry bread
and some stale ass chips
change will come
going home
local term
or going up for a bit
but soon I'll be
getting tired of the same old shit.

Bentley

by Lee Travis Drone

Recently we met again,
I got so excited to see my childhood friend,
Still dressed in the same clothes that granny put on.
Still had a look, that made me want to yawn
At the age of 34, we still wrestle on the floor
Imaginary fights were the time of my life
Then I let you meet D and he tried to steal you from
me
Then we all had a fight, that was the time of my

life!

We getting old my friend,
I love how we still play pretend! Shout out to my
granny who left you to me,
I hope she watches us play
And how you made me be me!
The me that she loved, and adored all her day
Before convolution by the world changed my ways!

Court, Jail, Prison or What?

by Lee Travis Drone

[Pat down, belt off, empty pockets

Metal Detector, x-ray machine

Dept #

8:30, 9:00, 10:00, 1:30

Arraignment, Calendar, Pretrial, Trial, Sentencing

Jail, Prison, Probation, Parole

Day, Months, Years, Decades, Life

Stamps, Stamped envelopes, Pictures, Letters, NO

LOVE

{Charges, Allegations, Lies, Truth, Fear, [Alone]}

Packages, TV, Tablet, MP3 player

Bob Barker, Kefee, Walkenhorst, Access Secure

Pack

Basketball court, baseball field, Pull-up bars,

running track

Phone time, Phone line, cell phone, Facebook, DM

Programs, Classes, Instructors, betterment,

possibilities

Black Eyes, Fat Lip, Bloody Noses, Hands sent
from God
Punch, kick, stab, die
[Recycle]
[Bad Thingz]
by Lee Travis Drone

I once got out of jail and came back the same day!
I was 16
I was caught doing the same stuff
at the same place
by the same guy
in the same way!
The officer looked at me and asked,
the same questions
in the same order
for the same reason
as my previous days.
See at times I do bad things
I end up in places that need key rings
The doors are locked
The walls are bare
I can't seem to find women anywhere!

[Two]

[Offering My Heart
2U]
1 + 1 = 2
equals

by Lee Travis Drone

If 1 is me and the other is you
Dinner and a movie
Or make a movie after dinner
2 people at the same place
at the same time
at the same table,
Mentally and physically
Walking the same line
All I have is Me,
Plus my pulsing, bleeding heart that you see!
my ventricle veins ,
Arteries open to pain
[Falling in Love
Forgetting my fears
pain, hurt, happiness all lead to tears]

Mob

by Lee Travis Drone

Everyone I know is from the mob
In some way or another
It's a full time job
I used to not want any other
What's a mob to a KING
A KING to a God
Aspirations set low NOW!
But my chin held high

Only one way I could go
Eyes wide shut
Coke, Crack, and Meth, all made by a chemist
Life, Death and Failure made me a realist

Always & Never
by Lee Travis Drone

Always been an outcast
Always been needy,
Never had a handout
Never given a freebee,
Still got my head held high tho,
My dad always said
Never let em see you cry bro
Chest up, Chin out
Bloody Tears no friends out
California Revolutionary Independent Proud Soulja
No FATHER, just a dad
Ask me why my pants sag
Just a gun
Not a holder
The 30 don't fit rt, NOT in no holster
Hurt people, Hurt people
Cycle of stinking thinking don't stop
Just children seeking vengeance
I'm gonna start from the top
Always been an outcast
Always been needy,

Never had a handout
Never given a freebee

More Than Love
by Steve Kater

Scratched and
Scrawled with this
Shitty-ass pen.
Thoughts become
Words now
Become ink-blots now
Of memories
And of thoughts
And of emotions that are
Broken now
Or gone now
Or swollen into
Infinite space now.
Too heavy to hold on
Too deep to pull up again
It's crazy now.

Isn't it?

Dreams Against the Wall
by Steve Kater

Strangeness guides the knife

in making alterations
to thoughts that gave me spirit
now filling me with a kind of
vertigo
The peacocks on the crimson wallpaper
 nestling against this cheek
hot with the blush of blood
 while Babylonian dragons fly
about my head
 casting blame in shadows on
 floors of painted wood
Across my shoulders a caravan of
 blind camels guided by
 many months meditating on the
 unremarkable eyes of God
 Such soft silver!
 Such furious gold!
Spilling like hair all around me
 while terrible clocks give
 seconds of advice,
 fundamental mysteries,
 absolute clarity
A savage lost in the ecstasy
of dignity I kiss hard on
the mouth
 this
 impersonal
 fiction.

by Steve Kater

Frankenstein gets butterflies
Whenever he sees his bride
His Stolen cheeks like thieves
 Blush hot
Borrowed hands flutter at his sides
His monster's heart beats savagely
Ripped from some lover's chest
One eye blinks fast, the other bright
As stitched lips pucker for a kiss
 To his mistress in the night

by Steve Kater

Broken teeth
Smiling through
broken words
Stammered through
Broken promises of
Hopes, crushed
 and dreams,
 dismantled
Careless thoughts
breaking through
stone walls
selfish needs
breaking through
kindness,
a castle in the sky
now lies in

ruins
on the ground
like broken teeth.

Koan
by Steven Kater

We all think that fate
 Has dealt us a wretched
 sort
 of
 life,

that other lives must
 be better.

I suspect that this error
 is
 deliberate.

I close my eyes
 and see
 a
 flock
 of
 birds.

Purple
by F. Batteast

Purple people perfect steeple
Tall some short child with
Purple socks. Clogs sink
Purple mink way too
Expensive an cannot wash
It in the sink, water purple
An it stinks must be
Dry cleaned not washed
In the sink. Must not
be perfect

Treasure Chest
by F. Batteast

Treasure chest laded to rest
only open then they'll test
dust knobs rattling arms
never tightened just come
apart. Don't be mad jus
speak louder, I can't hear
you over the squeaking rods
my treasure chest I laded to
rest.

by F. Batteast

Chocolate lovers
pack,

pea-nuts snicker-
Kit Kat
M&M Monster
Chocolate Cina buns
wafers Coco
mash to roll
save your bread
to cut a roll
lay it flat so
you know, it's
one motha fuc –
around find out
this is how you
know

by F. Batteast

Playin' cards
like any other day
Sun is bright
but in his hands
are all black
upside down
hearts prison
hard, feels more
now like a
playground/ he
hails I can pull
7/an the guard

hails face down

The Caged Bird
by F. Batteast

Made an angry
Black sheep
eggs over my hammy
the blue moon
sweeps over the valley
as the sheep strays from the
flock
What came first the chick or
The egg
as I can see now the moon is
near
time will tell the sun to
rise
as the sun strays from the clouds
again
the angry bird will find
its home again

Lesson Learned
by F. Batteast

Lesson learned

so I don't turn,

the other side of
two strike

Received stolen property
Stolen bikes never saw
the sight of me

All rights reserved
the next time
that cop sees me
riding my two wheeler
in the night
that's my bike
kiss my ass, I
get two strikes

Sounds Still
by F. Batteast

Leaving the screaming
I can't bear the sound
Leaving but can't look around
Screeching like nails on a chalk-
board
leaving but not yet bound
by tape
leaving but the chains are

too tight
screaming cause the cuffs are
not right
one day I'll stop leaving
an sit still one night
Still I rise
like Statue of Liberty
Still I stand
tall like the
flag of the
Still I rise like
the sun in the
morning
Still I rise
like it's the last
day

Forget Fire
by F. Batteast

Fire an ice so cold you cuddle
With the L you will get a puddle

Hot enough not to touch
But not enough to buck a horse

Hold a torch pass it quick
@ Olympic Game, some say
that is beautiful I'd say

the same forget the fire
Some say a flame

by F. Batteast

Reason for living is the
reason I didn't pull the trigger
No love lost not a shot fired
I killed 2 birds with one stone
walk away and stay on a path
of greatness as you turn the
other cheek this is my area
this is my street

by F. Batteast

Enter my battle as I
fight time, the battle will
never be one
for some is a war between
line of freedom keeping our
spirits alive

I learn to live one day at
a time

by Jose Nick Ruiz

Early on in his teens. Drawn into sports. Pushing his limits to do better to be top to be Adored. Soon the love of the Sports Faded away. Drugs, Girls, Money take over Seems like in a Day. A Drop-out uneducated man. Became a Well Known Streets Graduate. Hall of Fame. The Addiction of Sex and Money of overpowered By the Greed of Drugs. Needles, Spoons, Black Tar, Crystals were his new friends always waiting to give him love. Nowadays still avoiding his troublesome addictive self. Sometimes he crosses paths with him in a mirror Apologizing to himself.

by Pablo Hartnett

MTA's are keystone cops
Bodies flop
From the stretcher Fuck the C.D.C. director
The DEFIB was uncharged
Another convict flat-lined
And left the yard

Relax

by Jason Fallon

Easy to say
from another set of shoes

Walk with my feet
you'll definitely see things
in another way...
Locked away in a cell
Nothing good to eat
Unless it's the fake ASS burger
made from strange meat

Jessica R.

by Jesse James Flores

Doing things with you good or bad has
always made me feel complete
You're my go to for whatever with family
Or on the sheets.
Me and you ride till we die like
Bonnie & Clyde
Swarming on people and things like
bees swarm on the hive
We do things when we want when we
Want to whenever we are together
It's like when the sky is blue after a
Rainy day it's always better
My love, my best friend after you
Have come into my life I've always wanted
To be my best
You & me, I can't imagine our love ever
Being anything like the rest

Green

by Victor Luna

Green is my favorite color. A lot of the things that are green make people happy. Money is green. That makes the world go around. My pen is green. That's helping me write these words down. I had a green Cadillac. That's how I used to get downtown. They say I got green thumbs. Helps me stay high as the clouds. Green is my favorite color, I'd rock it everyday if I could. Can't wait to leave this place so I can go collect my green and feel good.

I am offering this poem...

by Sam Mikols

I offer this poem
For those in search of solace,
Those in despair
And fighting off the over bearing loneliness

This is not all there is for you
In fact this too shall pass
This poem is here for you
To remind you your suffering won't last.

Situations as this
As permanent as they feel

Are only temporary
And will make the better times much, much more
real.

Take these hardships as a lesson
And while learning them tall and proud
Gratefully welcoming all that comes
Gratification being your shroud.

The Moment
By Brian Edmonds

Relax, just kick back
You never know,
When you might have a heart attack
So screw it, and keep brewin it
Live in the moment,
for those who can't do it
And when in doubt
Just sit on a couch
Pop a top
And drown those worries out

From the Penn
by Brian Edmonds

It would be neat
If with the new year
I could drink some beer

without worry or fear
of ending up back in here
but wherever I steer
It will always be clear
that the man just wants me
to stay the hell in here

Relax They Say
by Austin Saunders

Relax – The clock keeps ticking
The sun will rise, but also set.

Don't forget to laugh, but embrace
the stress as well.

It seems unfair at times, but then I
remember my past actions.

Relax they say, easier said than done.
One day at a time, I'll keep working
on that one.

Life is a marathon, not a sprint.
Slow it down and enjoy.

by Joshua Volera

Eyes my eyes wonder off this
world as the world have eyes of
its own as the world has its own
eyes my eyes connect with the
world as the world stares at us
I'm staring at the world through
my rearview mirror this life
a test so I keep my head on
shoulders trying to deal with
the stress my eyes see and
feel the stress as the world
has its own stress the
world sees the stress so if the
world and me didn't have eyes
me and the world would
be blind ones with no
eyes

by David Archuleta

The caged bird suffers from no wind and little hope
He can only run and jump and only dream of the
time he was able to fly.

The great times he was given, the fading memories,
he has left are no becoming fears of being set free.
The bird thinks, "Can I even fly or are these just

dreams and not memories.” Still I rise to every action at hand or court appearance for the one that’s only hoping for my full...

by Leo Anthony Sanchez

The sound of your name used to caress my ears like a warm summer breeze. A beautiful whisper sending chills down my back like the breath of a lover on one’s neck. Taking me to a time where you would kiss my lips like the warm, gentle kiss of the sun’s rays on my face. The sound of your name taking me to a place of a beautiful, luscious mountaintop being overcome by its beauty staring off to the far seeing the pain of heartbreak of the beautiful storm coming. Knowing it’s unavoidable if I stay. Knowing what damage it will cause. Knowing to heath caution but still without a care. The sound of your name a life lesson of love and pain, of bittersweet.

Artificial Flavor

By Antonio Mendonsa

As I walk the cosmetic avenue
As I see personalities of all.
In the windows the latest of all.

People's faces showing their gossip.
On the outside of street value.
There are no price tags only rags.
One with a uniform walks by.
Judging in all directions
With his mighty pen
And his mighty hand.
Deliver a price tag to the man.
With no artificial talent.

Composer
By Antonio Mendonsa

When the band lifts the wand
and the wind cracks from the violins
the cello, with the drum moves
together, how can it be changed?
 Wind chimes with trees dance
raindrops sing all around.
 How can it be changed?

As the rush hour traffic moves
the engine sound with the tires
on the ground
 How can it be changed?

The orchestra moves as one

as the audience moves with rhythm
with echoes of silence in between.
How can it be changed?