Incarcerated:
Spoken Words by The Artist Pa

By

The Artist Pa
(Asherdon Holloway)

Incarcerated is an anthology of poems (spoken word pieces) based on topics ranging from analytical thinking on Mens Rea, to being abandoned by loved ones while incarcerated, and so on, all connected and reflective of the thoughts, feelings, and experiences experienced by a condemned prisoner during incarceration.

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Introduction

On June 26, 2009 I, Asherden Holloway, was apprehended by law enforcers for murder, assault & battery w/intent to kill (ABVIK), attempted armed robbery, and possession of a weapon during a violent crime. I was held in the Sumter County jail (South Carolina) amongst other detainees whom had similar charges, but what made my particular case so high profile, was the fact that a one year old child was killed. The memory of it still haunts me to this day nine years later.

I was only eighteen years old when it happened. Being responsible for the death of an infant this way was a hazard pill to swallow at eighteen years old. Hidden with the burden of guilt for almost two months (the period between the crime and my apprehension) I was so depressed over the incident, that by the time law enforcers caught up with me I was ready to get it all off my chest. Needless to say, I wrote a detailed confession surrendering myself to authorities and putting myself up for punishment.

I asked for a thirty year sentence (the mandatory minimum for murder in the state of South Carolina) because I felt it would been the appropriate punishment for my crime. After all, I was young, a first offender accepting responsibility for his crime, and as quiet as it is kept, the father of the child pulled his baby in front of
him, in the midst of me shooting at him.

Sure we can say the child would not have gotten shot if I had not been shooting. But how can we disregard the fact the child would not have gotten shot if the father hadn't run all the way into another room, grabbing and pulling him in front of himself, as if he intended for his child to get hit? Until then the baby was NEVER in the line of fire.

First the story was that the father of the child was at home “rocking his baby” when I knocked on the door. He answered the door, already holding his baby, when I started shooting. But then the story changed to, “He ran to the room and grabbed his baby, presumably to get him out of danger,” which is a load of bull that shows they are trying to hide something.

Let’s be clear about one thing: I don’t want anyone to think I am not accepting responsibility for my actions. I know I should have never went to this man’s home. I should never fired a single shot. But at the end of the day, this man still pulled his child in front of him. And I can’t rest on that.

I was given a sixty-two year sentence instead of the mandatory minimum of thirty that I was asking for. Though thirty years would have been appropriate, the judge elected to impose a more deterrent punishment. Another very hard pill to swallow.

I never thought I would be writing and reciting

—The Artist Ra pg.5—
spoken words, but it has proven to be therapeutic for me while I’m dealing with what I’m dealing with. This is an anthology of spoken words based on some of my experiences during my incarceration, and some of the thoughts and feelings I transition through on a daily basis.

It is all really performance art rather than poetry, and I don’t expect these pieces to be as impactful without the energy and physical expressions of the performer, given during recitation of them. Nevertheless they must be put out for the world to view.

From analytical thinking in pieces like Mens Rea (a legal term which means, a guilty mind, or criminal intent) to expressing heartbreak while incarcerated, in pieces like Ridiculous, and speaking truth to power in pieces like Truth to Power, I want to show the world that I am human, just like you. I love; I hate; I stress; I make mistakes; I feel pain; I regret; I learn; I grow.

---The Artist The pg. 60---
Mens Rea

If you hit a man
Later you can apologize
And the swelling on his eye
Will go down after a while
If you steal from a man
You can acknowledge your wrong
And give him back sevenfold
When you return what you stole
But what if you, rape a woman,
Or, molest a child?
Kill someone in cold blood,
Execution style?
Should you expect to be forgiven,
If you sincerely repented?
What if you were the victim?
Would you really BE forgiving?
Does time truly heal all wounds?
Or are there some matters
That just can't be undone?
I ask because
There are traumatic affects of certain crimes
That people just don't come back from
The death of a loved one,
Witnessed by a young one
And when the perp runs

- The Artist Pa. pg. 7 -
After he's done
The child is too stunned
To call 911
What about the child who's been defiled?
The young boy sodomized
The young girl who cried
As a grown man tore up her insides
She may never be able
To bear a child
Would it be a time to jail-
Or a time to kill?
How much time would heal
The psychological ill
Inflicted upon that little girl?
And she was your daughter
She was only ten
Still a baby
God's gift, your little angel
Upon her crown you saw a halo
And when she smiled
Oh how she just glowed
Now you're looking at her
Face battered and bruised
Blood stains in her clothes
Due from forced entry into a womb
That was not yet ready to know no man
She's telling you, that she screamed for you
Over and over, yet you NEVER came
You, you, you begin to lose it
You, you don't know what to do
Forget keeping your cool
You keeping that cool
You know in twenty-four hours or less
You gone be on that news
And you don't just want to kill the perp either
Nah, nah, you want to torture
Gag his mouth, kidnap and toss him
Into a trunk
Drive him to an undisclosed location
Tie him up to a chair
Turn him around
Look in his eyes with the wickedest smile
Right before you shin him alive
Impale him, cut him in pieces
Bury him in his own excretions
Set him on fire
Cause you want him to burn
You want him to hurt
You pray to your lord sweet Jesus
Please don't let the LAW get to him first!
See, in the old testament it was eye for an eye
Tooth for a tooth
They took your life for the life you took
They took your life for the one you defiled

-The Artist Pa. pg.9-
There was no second chance
For rapists and pedophiles
Now they ask is there justice without mercy?
You would think the punishment
For committing a crime.
Would deter the mind entertaining the thought
Being far from divine.
Only to find, that time after time
The thoughts take over
Converting to acts, which are way out of line.
But you don't want to try
Understanding the why
When the big bottom line is...
People need help.
I'm talking psychiatric help
What we think, manifests itself in what we do.
Sometimes we don't understand why we do what we do.
This is our subconscious, manifesting itself.
Maybe if we penetrate these different realms of our conscience.
We can begin to understand what produces the sick mind
Of the man who forces himself upon a woman,
The relentless mind of the one who strips people
Of their possessions, and even their lives.
Maybe with psychiatric help these minds could be corrected.
And in other minds these sicknesses can be prevented.

-The Artist Ra. pg. 10-
May 6, 2009, a crime was committed
A discharging of a firearm
And a robbery attempted
Six to seven shots were fired
And two bodies fell as victims
To a frustrated youth
Who had no business with a pistol
He was drunk and unstable
And things got out of hand
Well somebody called the cops
And this little boy ran
Running, running, running
He was rushing across the highway
Passed a couple squad cars
Hit his homies’ driveway
As the sirens sounded off
He was drowning in his thoughts
The neighborhood was woken up
Erupting into chaos
Homies piling in the yard
Passing through back and forth
Everybody scared to death
Everybody paranoid
To see the nurse across the town
The boy had to take a trip
He shot himself in the hand,
was wounded from the incident
It was a night that ended crazy
Yes, the tragedy of a lifetime
That night the boy shot a baby
And it was weighing heavily on his mind
Now let’s pause for a moment
And bring it back
Because this here is more than a spoken word
Or a rap
This here is far more
Than just a simple song
I’m going back to the beginning
To try and figure where it went wrong
Now I know that some of you may say
That sixty years is not a bid
When you almost shot a man to death
And killed his little kid
There’s no excuse or explanation
That can justify what I did
And though there’s two sides to a story
And I have one, you don’t want to hear it
I was young and dumb and immature
Unhappy as a broke nigga
Mustered up the nerve
To go and rob myself a dope dealer
Went to his home, knocked on the door

- The Artist Ra pg. 12 -
He answered, we were face to face
He eyed me with suspicion
He was sensing that it wasn't safe
I planned to shoot him in the stomach once
So he would be afraid. I thought that if I shot him he would buckle down to his knees.
He turned and started racing
So I chased him, trying to break him down
He made it to his bedroom,
Grabbed his baby, then he turned around
You'd think a man who was in danger
Would divert the danger from his child
So that even though he was in danger
His child would be safe and sound
It happened in a flash
Way too fast for me to stop in time
But it was the last shot
The aftershock left flashes in my mind
I prayed I didn't hit the baby,
Prayed I didn't kill a baby
When I returned from the hospital
They told me I had hit the baby
I drank till I passed out
I passed out still praying
I prayed day after day
The baby died days later
The father was in a coma
What have I done?

-The Artist Pag. 13-
I awoke in cold sweats
For the next few months
The homies avoided me
Only few would support me
I couldn't talk to my mother
She would be so disappointed
Police retrieved me from school
Interrogated me once
I made it out, graduated,
And skipped to Georgia with unc.
My victim woke from a coma
And my picture he saw
In a six man line-up
My mother gave me a call...

---The Artist Ra pg.14---
Incarcerated

I missed the birthday
of my first nephew
I missed his first chew
After the growth of his first tooth
I missed his first words, first steps
And his first day of school
I couldn’t burp or babysit him
Couldn’t play peek-a-boo
But I caught Barack’s inauguration
Made it to my graduation
Then Mrs. Tracey died of cancer
Only three weeks later
She was the church’s first lady
Being married to the pastor
Such a virtuous woman
She was like my grandmother
I knew I messed up
And I knew the state was coming
Finally they caught up
And there went my summer
No Anderson College,
Military as an option
Only future I would have
Is to deal with the Karma
And the Karma came strong

--The Artist Pa. pg.15--
I had two incidents
The second one I got lynched
And almost beat to death
Couldn't stay in population
They put me on P.C.
To keep those who had a vengeance
From getting at me
I've been through a couple phases
Gave my life to the Lord
Accepted Christ as my Saviour
Till I read Niggas to Gods

*(I have to backtrack a little bit and put this thing into proper sequence. I left out some very important detail)*

The karma came strong
I had two incidents
The second one I got lynched
And almost beat to death
Couldn't stay in population
They put me on P.C.
To keep those who had a vengeance
From getting at me
Apologies are not enough
So how do I right my wrong?
The family is not touched
Their little one is still gone
To see the overflowing tears
My first appearance in a court
To know that I had brought the pain
It just hurts me to my heart
Cameras flashing in my face
It's the man who killed the baby
Judge is looking at me crazy
But they must have me mistaken
I'm no killer, cold-hearted
No regard for human life
I have a heart, I care about
What happened on that dreadful night
Heading back to my cell
My life flashed before my eyes
When I got back to my cell
I just broke down and cried
It was a very low point
But I was lifted by a light
I heard the voice of God
He said he had a plan for my life

*(The revelation hit hard because it was something Mrs. Tracey always told me. I was starting to believe she knew something I didn't.)*

Then came my transformation
And the death of Mrs. Tracey

*The Artist* pg. 17
Then my strive as a Christian
Singing songs in the sermon
Had my first altercation
Then a subsequent lynching
Then I read Niggas to Gods
Changed perspective on religion
My nephew had been born on February 20th
Then two years had gone by
And the judge gave me my sentence
Now I'm sitting here in prison
With a sentence so extensive
That I constantly be stressing
Heading into a depression
Missing funerals and weddings, graduations, school dances
I can barely get a picture
Of the moments most precious
My connections are disconnecting
No ones writing any letters
Barely answering the phone
Few are making any effort
I said I missed the most beautiful of weddings
Brother married his baby mother
Cousin married her baby father
Aunty married a truck driver
I missed some funeral receptions
Aunty died from heart attack
Homey died from heart attack

-The Artist Ra pg.18-
A couple others shot to death
My closest homies left me hanging
I will soon be forgotten
I'm just stating what's apparent
Being lost in this system
Nobody really cares it's not them doing the time
What I must go through in here
It's not an issue on their minds
Plus it goes without saying
What they really want to say is
I'm the one who made this bed
So I just need to lay in it
It's not their fault I walk around
With so much stress up on my chest
Constantly locked down behind the institution B.S.
My manhood's under attack
Because I can't be with a woman
And I'm not gay
So I can't turn to men to substitute them
How could you preclude the union?
It's our natural right as human
It's a form of genocide
It keeps us from reproducing
The holy books tell us persecution is worst than slaughter
And I'm feeling persecuted
This experience is torture
In life without parole

-The Artist No. pg.19-
Life as we know becomes a memory
It's just as bad, if not then worse
Than the death penalty
I'm sitting in the dark having suicidal thoughts
Only thing holding me back
Is that I'm holding on to hope
This can't be where it ends for me

- The Artist Pt. 2 pg. 20 -
Am I supposed to be complacent with being placed in this undercaste of institutional annihilation known as mass incarceration? Marginalized from society looked upon as being the scum of the earth for a lack of propriety okay him without sin you can cast the first stone I bet if we use that method not a rock would be thrown please pardon my mistakes yes I know I've done wrong but have a heart for an inmate I'm striving to move on I know the impact of my crime and the lives that it changed it had an impact on mine I have never been the same I'm overwhelmed with regret every time I reflect I fall deeper into stress because I can't take it back I know it's hard to forgive

---The Artist Ra pg. 21---
And sometimes harder to forget
when you're the victim of a crime
And have been trespassed against
Believe me I feel your pain
I've been a victim myself
of every crime from burglary,
Assault and battery, and theft
I know brothers who were messed with
And molested as a child
You never know what type of experiences
Have turned a brother out
You never know what kind of roll models
They had up in the house
Drunks, drug addicts, and pedophiles
Upon the couch
Predators who prey on
The innocence of a child
But this is not the type of issue
That you want to talk about
You just want to point the finger
Causing attention off yourself
Knowing good and well
Some of y'all have done a lot worse
But I know it's not about y'all
It's about those of us in prison
Whom got caught for our crimes
And subsequently got convicted.

-- The Artist Ra pg. 22 --
With a criminalized image
There will be no outcry from the public
When you decide to have your way with us
You're justified in handing down
A mandatory sentence
We're denied relief
Even with technicalities presented.
Technicalities omitted
Violations are permitted, and defended
By judges with their consenting opinions.
Now who becomes the victim?
I probably would've gotten acquitted
If I had enough money
To afford effective assistance.
When the judge dropped the gavel
I just knew that I was finished
Off the lies that were told.
And the facts that were twisted
What happened to exculpatory evidence?
You know, the type that tends to prove innocence
Or reduce a sentence
And what happened to Due Process?
If it's not applied how can I
Exercise my 14th amendment?
I agree with my conviction
And that's why I plead guilty
Only problem that I have

--The Artist Ra pg. 23--
I am not with the way that you sentenced me
For a system that boasts sincerity
For its citizens' security
Claiming to render justice
That is justice before victory
You offered me no sympathy
Taking away my liberty
I just have to ask the question
where is your integrity?

- The Artist Pa, pg. 24-
Ridiculous

How ridiculous to think
That I could woo you with my words
That we could really mix
When we exist in different worlds
How ridiculous was it
Thought I could charm you with my smile
See you walking up the aisle
Think that you would have my child
I thought that we were similar
And really speaking from the heart
No thought could be more sillier
Than I ever thought
Yes I was so ridiculous
I was such an idiot
I thought I read you well
I guess I was illiterate
To think you would be here for me
To write me and to visit me
To answer every time I call
Excited just to hear from me
To be more than a fantasy
To be my new reality
To be there for me mentally
consistent, not sporadically
I thought that you were into me

-The Artist Pa pg.25-
I was really into you
I could feel your energy
It felt so incredible
But I was so ridiculous
I was such an idiot
I thought I read you well
But I was so illiterate
I said I wasn't vulnerable
Said I wasn't desperate
That was just me talking tough
And that much was evident
But you are way too beautiful
And way too intelligent
to be dealing with criminals
You have your life ahead of you
But talking to you daily
Was the way that I made my escape
From the harsh realities
I have to deal with everyday
Superwoman you put on your cape
And then we'd fly away
I put my trust into you
Let you lead me to a safer place
I know I must get over you
But you left an impression on me
Conversation, wonderful
I thought we had so much in common

- The Artist PA pg. 265
Your voice was so musical
Yes I just loved to listen to you
That is just one attribute
Remarkable I miss about you
Told you if I had the vocals
I would love to sing to you
I was hoping
That there was a joy that I could bring to you
You stayed on my mind
I didn't have to sleep to dream of you
This is past infatuation
Really had a thing for you
I was gonna open up
More and more everytime
Never holding Nothing back
Never telling you a lie
I was gonna share my feelings
Thought I could really make you mind
Who was I kidding?
It would never work long as I have this time
Shouldn't have ever said I loved you
Really should've held it in
Caught in the delusion
Of the heaven that you put me in
You disappeared without a trace
And it started sinking in
I set myself up

— The Artist Ro pg. 27 —
Just to have my heart break again
I was so ridiculous
Believing that you really cared
I was such an idiot
Believing I was seeing clear
I was so illiterate

I thought that I had read you well
But I was reading braille
And tried to feel something that wasn't there
Now it wasn't like I was a lover just out to score
If I told you that I love you then I was sure
But what could it be in you?
What could it be in me?
What could it be in us that I tried to see?
Indeed it was your beauty, your body
That caught my attention
But I'm not one to be fooled by a big but and a smile
You impressed me the most when you started speaking
And you opened me up to your beautiful mind
A mind that was full of perspective
Sympathetic and understanding
I stood beside you enraptured by your compassion
I thought we had the same mission
And we shared the same visions
And even if we couldn't be together
We would still be companions

-The Artist Page 28-
I wasn't looking for a ghost
But I was looking for a boo
A woman who would be there
And to help me make it through
I was seeking happiness
So tired of feeling blue
I just shouldn't have thought
That I could have that happiness with you
Damn. I was so ridiculous
I was such an idiot
I thought I read you well
Turns out I was illiterate
Lost Love

Why do I torture myself
Looking at your pics?
A smile no longer meant for me
Lips I can't even kiss
Eyes locked in time,
But not locked on mine.
To see that I still exist
You are so far from my grip
All I can do is reminisce
Trapped in a time
I wish that I can forget
You have become a distant memory
who doesn't remember me
Yet I sit here remembering
What I thought was
What I thought was love,
But was never that.
All the times I said I loved you
And you never said it back
All the times I said I loved you
Wish that I can take them back
But I can't. Because I meant it
And now I feel like a damn fool
What I did I did for you
You were starting to outgrow me

--The Artist Ra pg. 30--
To frown upon me, leave me lonely
And it was all my fault
I was becoming an alcoholic
Kept no money in the wallet
Unproductive and undesirable
You started to abhor it
I was done with the talking
A dealer became the target
If the hit went successful
Could've made a major profit
And I figure my prize would've been you
Damn, I never took you on a date
I should've took you to the prom
We never spent the day
We never had our private time
I should've brought you to my mom
I never brought it like a Dan
I didn't have what it took
Soon you started catching on
And you started moving on
I couldn't take it
My heart was breaking
I started pacing
Back and forth, feeling frustrated
Crawling impatient
The lack of progress I was making
Getting wasted

- The Artist Ria pg. 31 -
I'm gulping down bottles
And getting drunk
And you know what?
Enough was enough
This wouldn't have happened
If it wasn't for love
But we weren't in love
I was just a sucker for love
I couldn't show you the way I told you
And that point had been proven
I guess I had the right idea
But a poor excuse
Now look at me
Sitting in prison looking stupid
You're states away in college
With a much brighter future
No old flings checking in
To see how I am doing
No old flings worrying about
The time that I am doing
But I don't stress for old flings
I never lost my cool
You're the only one that mattered
girl, my greatest loss was you
Now this is not a cry to get you back
In fact, I can never get back
What I never really had

--The Artist Po pg.32--
I just want to show you where my heart was at
How I felt for you and failed with you
All those years back
Staring at beautiful eyes
And a beautiful smile
Reading your status
It says you're in a relationship now
It makes me so proud
To see you at your best
I know you'll only do better
My Last Love. God bless
Take care

- The Artist Ra pg. 33-
Dear Mama

Dear Mama
Never have I ever
Met a woman so strong
As a child being raised
In a single parent home
The things you've endured
And the ways you have grown
And the way you'd transformed
And became supermom
You were dependent on the fam
Then dependent on a man
But grew independent, and
You gave yourself a chance
To try your own hand
To try your own luck
Yeah we've been to the shelter
But we made it through that struggle
No lights, no gas,
No water, no beds
No knife, no spoon,
Cereal in a glass
You didn't have a car
Barely money for a cab
So we walked everywhere
And we toted grocery bags

The Artist \(\text{Pa pg.34}\)
coming back from the store
One couch to relax
used to hate it that we didn't have what our friends had
But it was never that bad
Because we always had you
You were all we ever needed
We would always make it through
And you were used and abused
Abused and reused
But no one could break your spirit
You would heal from the bruise
That's bruise after bruise
During the abuse
You would fight for your life
So determined not to lose
The day threw that gas
Everyone could smell the fumes
No he didn't light the match
But it still wasn't cool
A few acts after that
And you really had to choose
Between life over death
You chose life and we moved
You were a mama and a daddy
Babysitter and a nanny
Used to break your back for us
Just to try and keep us happy

-The Artist Page 35-
I need to apologize
For every night I didn’t make curfew
For smoking inside even though you told me not to
You used to always tell me
That, “Your friends ain’t your friends.”
And that one day
I would wish I was listenin’
I need to apologize
That at the time I didn’t care
Skipping school having you believe I was there.
But you pushed hard
And I’m so glad you were patient
If I didn’t have you pushing
Probably wouldn’t have graduated
I need to apologize
For stashing dope in the room
Could’ve gotten evicted
If the cops raided our home.
And it didn’t help
I also had guns in the dresser
Not from a heist
That could’ve really brought some heat to us
I need to apologize
I told lie after lie about not being high
But you could smell it in my clothes
You could see it in my eyes
With liquor on my breath

--- The Artist --- pg. 36 ---
Swore I was getting by
The illusion that accompanies intoxicated minds
I tried to play you for a fool
I kept breaking all the rules
The nerve to eat up all the food
Yeah that's what that weed'll do
Didn't appreciate the fact
All you wanted was the best
In disagreement with your methods
My protests were in effect
I was young, I was dumb,
Thought I was witty,
I was foolish, I was silly,
Please forgive me, I just really...
Need to apologize. And I need to thank you
Because to have you as my mother I am blessed
For loving me
And at the same time dealing with my mess
It's with you I celebrate
And dedicate this spoken word
Saying Happy Mother's Day
To the best mother in the world

*To Mom*
They say I'm scum
You say I'm great
They say I've done wrong

---The Artist Ra. pg. 37---
You say we all make mistakes
They been gave up
But you're still praying for me
They been gave up
But you're still waiting on me
And last but not least
You hold on to the belief
That I am one of the brightest stars
This universe could ever conceive
You are my heart, my love, and my joy
I love you mom! 

---The Artist Pg pg. 38---
Black Knight

This young man is a knight
In every sense of the word
He's a friend to some
And a helper to others
And very intelligent with his words
He gives good conversation
and quality advice
He has exceeded the average
Young man of his time
With knowledge, wisdom
And the understanding he possesses
This young man can put the average
Older man through the tests
He is a rare black knight
Knowledge of self doesn't come easy
It comes with years of learning
This young man has a hunger
And it's definitely for a higher learning!
A knight is a symbol of power
And the brain of a black man
Is like the twin towers,
Constantly rising to higher levels
The black knight will definitely not drop
Below zero level
When you step to a black knight

-The Artist Pia pg.39-
And get on his level
Best believe, my brother
You have risen to a whole new level
Brother Holloway has surpassed it all
He possesses knowledge, wisdom
And understanding that some so called knights
Won't conquer at all
This is right
He is a black knight!
His destiny is coming,
For him to be the new and improved black knight
His destination is to enter supreme knowledge of self
For he possesses knowledge, wisdom, and understanding
He's getting all that's in sight
He is a young black knight

★ (This build was written and given to me by a brother I met in lock up at the Sumter County jail. We shared dialogue about white supremacy, law, and black history. It was from him I received a copy of the book From Niggers to Gods by Akil.)

- The Artist PA pg. 40 -
Legacy

The lights are on
But it's still pitch black
My life prolongs
But I can't relax
I'm in a bad place mentally
Locked in a cell sitting miserably
Haunted by a memory
I'm wishing that I'd done things differently
Feeling like I threw my life away
It's what's playing on my conscience
Could've been a great writer
Could've won a couple oscars
Could've been an icon
Could've been a roll model
Could've been a trend setter,
Sex symbol, and a mogul
I just want to leave a legacy
I just want to be one of the greatest
I just want you all to see the best of me
I just want to achieve greatness
Now, some are poets, some are rappers
Some are singers, some are dancers
Some are athletes, some are actors
And some could tell jokes that keep us laughing
Some are pastors, some are imams

--The Artist Pia pg. 41--
And some are politicians
who sell their souls for riches
And to be among the privileged
With no sincerity of love
For the ones they represent
All these standards that they preach
They have compromised against
They are not the ones to admire
Not the ones to follow
These are the Shepherds
Who lead the sheep to the slaughter
Not activists, but pacifists
Boot lickers, apologists
Bullieing and misleading
They commit the worst of robberies
The people really 'bout action
The ones who really standing
Could share the same fate
As the late Fred Hampton
Infiltrated, assassinated
Some even incarcerated
 Held back on false charges
Fighting to be liberated
With civil rights leaders
And Black Power redeemers
Slaves who raised revolts on the plantation
Fighting for their freedom

- The Artist Ra pg.42-
We get stuck on the Lebrons
And how they use their platforms
And forget the legacy
These visionaries left behind
I'm talking true legacy
Not the diluted version we've been given in grade school
See, Martin Luther King was bigger than "I have a dream"
Malcolm X was bigger than "By Any Means"
Marcus Garvey was bigger than "Back to Africa"
And killing "pigs" wasn't the Panthers' greatest agenda.
These people were legendary, visionary, revolutionary
Their legacies shall not be disrespected or discredited
It's amazing how we can be so negative
Be careful of what you say
Before you make a statement
And ask yourself what have you
Done for anybody lately?
Build a school or a steamship company?
Provide a free breakfast program for your community?
Would you really die for the people
That you claim you're representing?
Will a hundred cities riot over YOUR assassination?
Who are you?
Do you claim to be a child of God
In the fight against Satan?
Or a revolutionary in the fight against oppression?
What would it take to kill your spirit

--The Artist Ra pg. 43--
Just to stop your insurrection?
Could you be bought by the oppressor
Is the million dollar question
I will not be bought
For no price will I be hired
Nor shall I be silenced
By a single threat of violence
I am a legendary, visionary, revolutionary
I shall not be defined by the crime I committed
Nor shall my life be confined
To the time I've been sentenced
My mind goes beyond all your limits
That's the mind of a genius
Not the mind of a menace
My strive has been progressive
Since the guide has been present
I don't need your assistance
The Most High is sufficient
I will not die before his plan for me is finished
See they hate it when I talk like this
It makes them want to do a background check
They say, "This niggah thinks he has all the sense"
"He's no George Jackson"
"He's no Fred Hampton"
Well I agree
Compared to them I am weak
But in my mind I am free

-The Artist Ra pg. 44-
No longer blinded from the truth
with my mind I can see
No longer blinded from the truth
In my mind I'm at peace
I will die before I compromise against my strive
Don't spare me and tell me
I'm lucky to be alive
I'm like Patrick Henry
"Give me death or give me liberty"
Willing to take it to the extent of death
If you do not take me seriously
602 years is what they sentenced me
Most suspect that this sentence is the end of me
But it's for a greater cause
You all shall remember me
This is not the end
It's the beginning of a legacy

- The Artist Ra pg. 45-
Truth to Power

J. Edgar Hoover was a 33rd degree Mason and Shriner. One of his objectives through COINTEL was to stop the rise of a black messiah, one produced from a black nationalist group who could electrify us. The U.S. spent decades and dollars to positively identify him, identify him for what? Electrify us for what? What inspired the higher powers to conspire on us? The poor, rejected and despised, persecuted and demeaned, a generation that could rise through the elevation of our minds. See cause, we were once considered gods and goddesses, kings and queens, rulers in the mother land, until the other man intervened. Fast forward through slavery, fast forward to the eighties. The ages of the Nixon and Reagan administrations when factories in black cities

- The Artist Ra pg. 46 -
Closed and left America
Crack hit the scene and shattered dreams
Broke families, disaster struck
We became involved in a life of crime
As the only way to make a living
Ironically, making a killing
Arrested, thrown into prison
Crooked politicians
Calling us thugs when we’re not
I call like the pot calling the kettle hot
You kick the dog it’ll bark
Put in this condition
By the real thugs and criminals
To label us as such
It’s beyond hypocritical
AIDS wasn’t an accident
Ebola wasn’t an accident
Criminal justice is corrupt
It’s the way they wash their hands with us
What is to be produced
When we face these disadvantages
I’m walking with a sag
Because I give the world my ass to kiss
Black lives matter
Don’t tell me all lives matter
I know all lives matter
But the black life

---The Artist Ra pg.47---
Was the first life
And all other lives came after
So when you speak of the black life
It's the whole of the human family
And it's the black life
Out of all life
That's in danger here in America
Always have been and we still are
I'm just speaking history
I'm speaking statistically
This is not a simple speech
Mammas' hearts be skipping beats
When we fall victim to these streets
And as I speak it proceeds
To increase with intensity
Senseless violence, race profiling
Incarcerated and deprived of
Life and liberty
Where's the justice?
The scales are tipped
They judge us blindly
Shall the lawful captive be delivered?
That's why you need to read the scriptures
God promised he would save his people
From the wicked men who saw this evil
J. Edgar Hoover was a 33rd degree
Mason and Shriner

---The Artist's Poem pg. 48---
One of his objectives through COINTEL
Was to stop the rise of a black messiah
One produced from a black nationalist group
Who could electrify us
The U.S. spent decades and dollars
To positively identify him
Well I testify that the FBI
Has identified the messiah
I testify he’s the same man
Who annointed Elijah
Raised him from the dead
Reformed him with Islam
Blessed him with a whole nation
And a helper in Farrah Khan
One who won’t compromise
Against lies he testifies
Living proof of the truth
That removes the scales from our eyes
An extension of the messiah
Under whose guidance I strive
I stand here as a man
This Messiah electrified
Peace.

—The Artist— pg. 49—
For a long time I looked for someone to blame for my crime. I blamed the White Man for creating an environment that cultivates criminal minds and encourages criminal behaviour.

I blamed my parents for birthing me in poverty, as if being born a black male in a white supremacist world wasn't challenging enough.

I blamed my father for allowing my mother to take me away from family, travelling over 600 miles to nothing because of her personal issues with them. As a jack of all trades (carpentry, plumbing, etc.) a master of art (having paintings the size of your wall) and musician, my father had more to cultivate within me as I came of age than my mother did.

I feel like I would've been a jack of all trades being raised under my father. I feel like I would not have just been capable, but very well able, to create a masterpiece the size of your wall using oil paint. And I feel like I would've been an excellent guitarist and pianist.

If you were to ask me, I would tell you my father took the easy way out of parenting by ridding himself of the responsibility of raising a child under him.

I wanted to blame my brother for catching a charge in New York one Summer vacation, which resulted in him having to stay for court, and forcing us to be split up again, as
I was to head down south to South Carolina alone. I feel like he wasn’t concerned with what the split would do to our relationship, being able to strengthen our bond as brothers and creating more memories than we had. All he had to offer as comforting words during my departure was, “Make your name ring bells.”

I wanted to blame my Right Hand Man, who became a big brother to me, by default of my biological older brother, for not stopping me from throwing my life away over this crime. If there was anybody that I would’ve listened to, it was him.

I also wanted to blame the dope dealer I attempted to rob, for pulling his child in front of him while I was shooting at him, which resulted in the child getting hit, and me being convicted of murder. The murder gave me an additional fifty years to run consecutive to the twelve years I was sentenced for the assault & battery with the intent to kill.

But when it was all said and done, I really couldn’t blame anyone but myself.

Yes, the White Man did create and perpetuate the volatile atmosphere in our disenfranchised communities, with the intention of cultivating criminal behavior. But I had a loving mother who would break my neck if she knew that I was bringing drugs and guns into the house. She gave me curfew, would call, and would personally come and collect me from my friend’s house to make sure I

—The Artist Pia, pg. 51—
wasn't out in the streets all times of night doing god knows what.

I most definately would not have graduated from high school if it wasn't for my mother making sure I had it as priority. And even outside of her, I had teachers who recognized my potential and encouraged me to capitalize on it.

My father may have never sent the easel, canvases, and guitar he promised to send me down from New York, but every Summer I went up to spend with him he would have me drawing or painting. The instruments and the art supplies were always available to me. And I had the option of joining my father at work and getting hands on experience in his field of carpentry, if I really wanted to learn it.

Yes, my brother did want to stay in New York, but his situation was nothing personal against me. And I really could've stayed, too. But I chose to return to the South. Because at this point, I had found a surrogate family consisting of brothers whom I wanted to have raise me to be just like.

My Right Hand Man could've stopped me from making the biggest mistake of my life. The truth is he had already stopped me so many times before. Yes, he did take advantage of my stupidity on several occasions. But the fact of the matter is that we were both alcoholics, becoming junkies. And you know how desperate, selfish, and inconsiderate.

--- The Artist Ra, pg. 52 ---
junkies can get. You know it was bad when we started bragging about having “stacks in our lungs” and “stacks in our stomachs” to account for the money we couldn’t keep in our pockets because we were blowing it on weed and liquor.

And while I’ll never be able to understand why this man pulled his baby into the line of fire, I should have never brought that type of heat to his home in the first place.

People wonder why I would write a statement on myself, closing the investigators’ case for them. People wonder why I chose not to retaliate against the victims’ family and friends’ vengeful lynching of me. People just don’t understand how the death of an infant by my hand had affected me.

My admission of guilt gave me closure. And I felt like I deserved the lynching.

The stress induced by the excessive sentence was part of my punishment. As was the missed opportunity to attend college; and every wedding, funeral, and special moment shared by my family and friends that I missed due to my incarceration.

I lost the chance to be with the girl who I thought was the love of my life. And whether it was my crime, sentence, or whatever else that ran a recent fling off, I experienced another heartbreak when she did. It was heartbreaking because she had me believing what we had was real. Yes, I was so ridiculous. But this, as well, was part of my punishment.

---The Artist pag.53---
But my punishment could’ve been worse. I could’ve been killed! Instead, the Most High granted me a new beginning. Another chance to make my mother proud. It’ll be no problem for me this time. Because now I’m doing what I’m supposed to be doing.
The Best Mom in the World

08/11/2018 16:57

-The Artist An pg. 55-