COLORS LOCKED IN STONES
OF GRAY

Poems of
Beauty, Love and Longing,
And poems inspired by
Personal Thoughts and Memories

By Jack Losee
Jack Losee began serving a life sentence in prison in 1982, at age 23. Out of his loneliness, longings, and regrets, many of the poems in this book were written.

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Though transfer to any other institution could happen at any time.

7/28/16
ROSE BEE

With'r'd roses: stems and thorns--
The kill of colour bloom,
Kiss'd no more by loving bees
That swoon'd in their perfume.

Ev'ry autumn, wilt and die--
Death doth claim it all.
Come the spring they bloom anew,
Sending bees that fragrant call.

My wint'r has been long,
The wilting's been severe--
A gard'n bed in Erebus,
No flow'rs seeded there.

But if eer a new spring dawns:
Were I to bloom anew,
And could still draw bee to wing--
I hope that loving bee is you.

Jack Losee
A WISH AND A PRAYER

Did you ever wish upon a star?
Did that wish ever come true?
Did you ever throw a penny
Into a wishing-well
And softly whisper out a wish?

Did you ever ask of God a thing?
Did God, to you, ever give it?
Did you fold your hands before your face,
Kneeling at your bed,
And ask, with tears, for what your heart desires?

If I could see the stars,
Upon each and every one I'd wish.
If I had a pocket full of pennies—
Or every penny in the world—
As they floated through the wishing-waters
Every whispered wish would be the same.

And if God would grant me but one prayer,
The thing, with tears, I pray for oft—
My only wish... My only prayer...
That I be loved by you.
EASEMENT

If you'll grant me squatter's rights
To an acreage of your heart,
I promise to grow flowers
Of every color, shape and size,
'Til that heath of barren loneliness
Becomes a fragrant prairie mead,
Where you can always find me,
Amidst the butterflies and hummingbirds,
Reaching for your hand.
MY PRAYER FOR HER

Lord,
Ne'er let her heart be brok'n,
   Let not een a crack
Be inflict'd there upon it.

Ne'er let her dreams be crush'd;
   Let them be fulfill'd,
     Een the tiniest ones.

Ne'er let her know the sting
   Of sorrow or of pain.

Ne'er let a tear be shed
   In sadness or in loss;
Let those eyes of such great beauty
   Only know the tears of joy.

   Let not a scornful word
Eer be allow'd to bruise her pride.

And ne'er allow her to be struck
   In hatred or in ang'r;
Let naught but joyful smiles
   Eer be slapp'd across her face.

   Please protect her, Lord,
And keep her safe from harm.

Jack Losee
WHERE I SET YOU 'MONG THE COLORS

In sunsets blue and gold
On ocean beaches wide--
Swirling colors 'cross the sky,
I set you 'fore the tide.

In a rainbow's arc of beauty--
Misty colors bold,
I swing you in a hammock;
Put a halo 'bout your head.

In a flowered prairie meadow,
The prettiest flower there,
I set you 'mongst its petals,
And see your beauty make them weep.

Jack Losee
YOUR EYES

Darling, come walk with me
On sandy beaches yon.
There we'll watch the sun
Place its kiss upon the waves.
We'll watch as rainbow colors
Prism 'cross blue and green.
I'll hold your hand in mine
As we're barefoot in the sand,
And I'll tell you then, my love,
How the view is made more beautiful
When reflected in your eyes.

Jack Losee
THE AGING FACE

As this life passes me by,
Taking what seems an eternity
Within the blink of an eye,
Time has become my enemy.

When I look into the mirror
I see an older, aging face,
And I wonder what happened to yore,
When a younger man stood in this place.

The look in the eyes is different,
A longing sadness now there;
The youthful sparkle is absent,
Gone to who knows where.

How did the years go by
So slowly yet so fast?
But, to this query, I get no reply
From the aging face in the glass.

Jack Losee
NEVER MORE

Never more upon me
Will a lover love bestow,
For I have been entombed,
Buried deep from life's sweet glow.

Not for just awhile,
But removed forever from its flow--
The punishment for iniquities
Committed years ago.

And now I've been forgotten
By that world I used to know,
So never more upon me
Will a lover love bestow.
PRISON

Within gray walls entombed,
Deep within a living death. 
Heart's desire buried there,
Lifeless, yet with breath. 
Where dreams torment
And longing withers souls. 
Where mem'ries bleed the heart
And spirits die 
Silent screaming deaths--

Jack Losee
Into the ruins of Abaddon,
'Longside the wicked damned,
Tormented there forever,
The soul that let the heart
Grow cold to a lover's touch;
The man that held the heart
(With cruel, uncaring hands)
Belonging to a lover
He knew not how to love.
And in the breaking of that heart,
He rended 'part his own——
Shattered pieces in the dust,
Destroyed beyond repair.
And 'twas his everlasting soul
That he could not forgive,
And the everlasting memories
That he could not forget.
So from the dark abyss within——
A self-made hell, no doubt——
A broken heart and mournful soul
Weep silently in longing
For a discarded lover's love.
SCARLET RAIN

For ev'ry single tear
Shed from sadden'd eyes,
From a woman or a child
With a badly brok'n heart,
A drop of rain from Heav'n,
In a glist'ning teardrop shape,
Falls through mournful skies,
The bruising colors of their wounds.

And for ev'ry woman's passing,
Or the passing of a child,
The weeping tears from Heav'n
Scorch a flow'r fresh in bloom--
Searing as the scarlet tears
That rain from brok'n hearts.

And for each life thus extinguish'd,
A with'rd flow'r goes extinct--
The killing loss of beauty
In that scarlet rain of tears...

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Jack Lasee
TO MEND A BROKEN HEART

If I could travel back in time
To mend a broken heart--
To love as I had love received--
Could I mend my own as well..?

Could I patch her heart together
Using pieces of my own..?
By melding them together,
Mend them both as one..?

If I could travel back in time
To mend a broken heart,
I'd travel back to meet her then,
And when I got this far again
I'd have done so without ever
Having broken her fair heart.
CHANGING MEMORIES

My used-to-be's in memory
I chang to should-have-been's;
I travel back in fantasies
To a certain place or time;
To a special girl I knew,
And I change the way it was
To how it should have been,
If I'd only had a clue.
And in the changing of these memories
I lose the thoughts of knowing
Where my then and should-have-been's
All begin and end.

Jack Losee
LOST

Where from comes that silent cry?
From the sadness of a dream;
Lonely soul with ne'er a hope
Of being loved again.

Lost to him, all that was,
And all that e'er could be;
Tormented in his sleepings
For as long as he can dream.
LIFE...

I am nothing,
Caught in the cosmic gyre
Of nothingness,
Drifting nowhere
On wings that guide me not,
Without design or cause;
A spectral mote of light
That does not shine
In the nebula of life,
Where only dead things sigh...
ETERNAL

Eternal is the ruin
I've wrought upon my life.

Eternal is the night
That won't allow the light
To shine upon my dreams.

Eternal is the time
That I must spend alone
With longing thoughts of you.
WHAT I COULD NOT LOSE

No longer do I hear the sounds
Of birds in morning song;
No longer can I view
The beauty of the moon;
Never again will I be enchanted
By the sweet moanings of a lover;
Never again will I behold
The twinkling of a star,
The laughter of a child,
Or the setting of the sun.
So many things I'll never see.
But they could not take my memories,
Nor could they get my dreams...
Oh, why, of all that has been taken,
Has the most tormenting stayed with me...?
HOPES AND DREAMS

My hopes have faded gray
Like the stones surrounding me.
Entombed while yet alive,
They died a slow and brutal death.
(Oh, how they fought so hard to live)

And if I ever had a dream,
It has faded with my hopes—
An old man's tortured longings
Discarded in his youth.
(And done so foolishly)

Yet, even to this day,
(Oh, so rarely though)
I feel the stir of waning hope
As it fights to enter afterlife.
And when I do, it gives me hope—
Hope that I may one day hope again.

And maybe one day dream,
A dream that I can hold—
Pull it from the tortured ruin,
And know that one day maybe,
Just maybe, I can hope to dream...
As the sweet-scented aroma
Of the colorful flower
Draws the honeybee
With its fragrant allure,
And the delicate butterfly
And iridescent starfront
Are drawn to its nectar
For life-sustaining nourishment;

While the spotted ladybird
Is drawn to sip from its morning dew--
I, too, am finding myself
Irresistibly drawn to you.
CANDLELIGHT

When we made love by candlelight
Your elegant beauty enchanted me.
I'd look deep into your eyes,
The lovely, tranquil color of the sea,
And see my reflection within—
Candlelight flickers dancing with me...

When I close my eyes today
The vision comes crystal clear;
It has not diminished in clarity,
Though it's been many a year.
But this vision saddens me today,
For I wonder
Who's dancing with my candlelight now...
THE MELDING OF THE BROKEN

She's beautiful and delicate
As fragile as a rose,
But they knew not how to hold her
With their cruel and callous hands.

Innocent and longing,
She seeks but to be loved,
But they knew not how to love her
With their cruel and selfish hearts.

He's forgotten and alone,
Devoid of any hope;
Lost in hurtful memories
Of wrongs he cannot right.

Solitude and loneliness,
He's broken by the fall,
Reflecting on a life gone by,
With a bruised and broken heart.

Withered hearts and souls,
Sep'rate, yet as one,
Desp'rate to be loved,
And also for to love.

They touch across a void,
Then in the dark, caress.
Recognition gives them hope--
Then embracing makes them one.
ALL MY HEART

I've nothing that cost money
That I can give to you,
Though I wish with all my heart
That I could give you diamonds.

I've not a flower garden
Where I can pluck a rose,
Though I wish with all my heart
That I could give you flowers.

But what I have to give,
The thing that is forever,
Yet's fragile as a bloom,
Is a heart that's filled with love.
A DREAM

I walked with you awhile
Through the garden of a dream.
I held your hand in mine
And felt your warmth upon my soul.

We watched the butterflies in flight
'Midst the colors of the blooms,
And as the sunshine bathed you there,
My heart began to swell.

I kissed you in this garden
And whispered of my love,
And just before I woke
My heart plucked you a rose.
WITH YOUR SONG

Sing, with sweetness, your beautiful song.
Open the windows of your soul,
Loose the spirit from your heart,
And let it, from you, wondrously flow.

Drift it to me like the scent
Of sweet perfume on a breeze.
Tease my senses with your song,
And lovingly seduce me, if you please.

Jack Losee
REMEMBERINGS

Mem'ries fade like dying embers
Shot into the night--
Drifting earthward slowly,
To their final lonely doom--
From the fire's blazing core
That draws the watcher's eye
As he sits enthralled and staring,
Seeking his rememberings
Within the dancing flames.
INHERITANCE

Charred and black, the earth.
Where poisons have been sprayed.
Gasping breath of death,
The air we've choked with smoke.
No water fit to drink
For what we've poured in there.

Forever we'll be known
As those who passed it on:
The cancers of our flesh,
The deathrays of our sun.
We've passed it to our children,
We've borne them bred to die.

Can we heal an earth
We've tried so hard to kill?
Or is it now to late
To save our children's home?
To save our children's fate?
Oh, the children we must hate--
UPON A WHIM

In skies of blue and gold,
The bird a-wing and free--
Blazing beat of color
Fluttered 'pon a whim.

Lustful touch of wonder,
Blissful on a breeze--
Colored feathers on a whisper,
Lazing 'cross the view.

Mem'ry in full flight
'Cross dreams as yet undreamt--
Relic beat of wings
Blown upon a whim.
THE MOUNTAIN

Graceful and mighty, the bear,
Emerging from its winter lair;
Heavenward, majestically regal--
Breathtaking-- the soaring eagle;
The echoes 'cross still morn
Of thunderous ram's horn;
Wolves, through snow, file
Mile upon wondrous mile;
Sun sparkling off trout
On their last incredible route
Through streams so clear,
Nowhere more pure;
Lustrous and fragrant, the trees
That only God oversees;
Peaceful and serene,
The air amazingly clean.
Oh, the bewitching allures
Of the mountain's contours.
THE HUNT

Deep into the darkened thicket,
Running swiftly, whisper silent,
In and as the shadows,
Hot with lust upon the scent;
Deep into the darkened night,
Desire, a burning sweet torment—
Runs man's instinct for the hunt.
EDEN

Pretty petals, rosy pink,
Moist with glistened dew;
Slick and smooth corolla,
The taste of honey true--
Blossomed in full bloom,
The Eden of her youth.
A true and precious flower;
A florist's fantasies--
Overwhelming in the pleasures
Of the pleasures given these.
Oh, the lick of promise sweet,
Is Eden with her Eve.
LILIES OF THE VALLEY

I bring you lilies of the valley,
Once a week, every Sunday,
And I sit with you awhile,
Though I never know what to say.

Can you hear me when I speak?
And would you know if I missed a day?
These things I do not know—
Even so, I cannot stay away.

So I come here every Sunday,
Though to do it grieves me so.
I come in spring and summer;
I come in fall, and in the snow.
I come to tell you how I miss you,
And I wonder if you know.
I come to sit here up above
While you sleep there down below;
And I bring you lilies of the valley
Because I love and miss you so.
THAT SPARKLE

I saw it in your eyes:
To my heart you hold the key.
You couldn't hide it,
'Twas there for me to see:
That sparkle in your eyes,
Like stars across the sea;
That bewitching little twinkle—
The starry lure of destiny.

I love everything about you,
And perfection's all I see,
But 'twas that sparkle, my love,
That brought me to my knee;
That sparkle in your eyes
Every time you looked at me—
That gleaming ball-and-chain
That finally set me free.
IF YOU AND I TOGETHER

If you and I together thirst--
Water, but a single ladle,
I'd let you quench your thirst, my love,
Then kiss your sweet wet lips.

If you and I together hunger--
But a single apple on the tree,
I'd let you quell your hunger, love,
While I feast upon your beauty.

If you and I together chill--
One tiny blanket 'twixt us,
I'd cover you with it, my love,
Then warm myself with my love for you.

If you and I together live,
Yet one of us must die...
I hope that you could live without me, love,
For without you, I would not care to try.

Jack Losee
SWIRLING FUTURE

Swirly in the darkness--
Death whirling within there.
And should I turn in stride,
To find, from corner's eye,
That Death was twirling near.
Would a change in thought or deed
Grant gift of guarantee
That when again I looked ahead
My future'd still be there?
HOPE

Hope is a bewildering thing.
It can't be held in hand,
It can't be seen or heard,
You cannot smell or taste it...

But sometimes you can feel it
Swelling in your heart,
And when you do
It's hard to let it go.

But when you can't feel it
Swelling within your heart,
Hope is a thing that can leave you
Feeling empty and alone.
THERE WITH YOU

In my fondest fantasies
I can touch upon your dreams,
Where the whisper of my lips
Can brush your rosy cheeks.

So sleep, my love, and dream,
Warm and safe within my heart.
And if you dream me there
I'll hold you tightly here.

And as I softly breathe your name--
Tickled whispers 'gainst your ear--
You can know that I am with you,
That my thoughts are always there.
IF I ONLY COULD

If I only could, my love,
I'd kiss away all your tears.
I'd wrap you within my arms
And alleviate all your fears.
I'd love you like no other,
The remainder of my years.
If I only could, my love,
Oh, if I only could.
THE BUTTERFLY-CHIME ROSE SWING

In magical places
Where fairies frolic in beautiful flutterings,
Wishes are wished to the heavens,
Carried upon the breath of a butterfly's wings.

Gathering together, like soft whispers,
They build a Rose Swing,
Then tie themselves in.

Whirling and twirling,
They become a Butterfly Chime,
Calling their Beauty, come wish.

Riding the rose, she wishes her wish,
Then blows it to the winds
Through a butterfly's kiss.

There are untold secrets in the magical lands of the fairies. Mysterious wonders that bond fairies and butterflies in kinship and allowing wishes to be wished for children. And every time a butterfly is lost to a predator, or is pinned to a collector's display board, tears rain from the saddened eyes of a beautiful fairy with a broken heart. For if butterflies cannot fly, then breezes cannot be tickled by the teasing kisses of their wings, and wishes cannot be wished and carried aloft.
She weeps in her longings,
And her tears are beautiful.
They reflect her hopes,
And they taste like dewdrops
When licked from a rose.

What lesson is learned in the breaking
of a woman's or a young girl's heart?
And more importantly,
Why must they learn it?
And how dark and cold must a man's
heart be for him to teach such a lesson?
The torment of confinement
Is to dream of being free,
Then wake up in captivity;
Or to dream you lose the one you love
Ev'ry single night,
And in ev'ry sleep you dream.

Solitude gives time for memories,
Every single thought or deed
In every moment ever lived,
If once, a thousand times or more--
If they're stored in memory,
As all the sad things are.

Jack Losee
Whether diamonds or gold,
Flowers or kisses,
If I don't give you many,
Or I sometimes forget,
It's because I'm still trying--
With a heart that won't quit--
To give you the essence
Of a butterfly's flight,
And the moonlight's caress
When she kisses the night...

I just have to find me
The right kind of net.
I think that pain and sorrow
Make for good poetry,
Though I'd rather write of love.
But have I written well?

I have written of love through loneliness,
Aching for its tender touch,
And through the torment of my longings
I have suffered well.