The poems and essays in "Raw Feelings: Writings From Death Row" are from my personal experiences on death row, before and beyond, for 20 years. At different times I felt different emotions that became externalized in the written word. Some of it is dark and at other times hopeful. My longings and yearnings are not masked. I haven't tried to put a brave face on things. In the process of trying to find myself, my spiritual journey, it all got mixed up together within my writings. Many times the poem will start out gloomy and later my mood shifted and I added a lighter ending. Hopefully the reader will understand and feel some of what I have endured: my grief, frustration, despair and even joy. May all realize that a condemned man is not the unfeeling monster that the courts and politicians would have you believe him to be.
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The Right Way
by Kevin J Marinelli

I can vividly remember being young since I was only 22 when I got arrested for a Robbery-Homicide. Most of my life outside of prison was as a young man. At 36 years old some would say I'm still a young man. When you are a teenager, though, 36 is old; especially when you live in an environment that could get you killed at any time. Who can think about tomorrow when you don't know if you'll make it through today? I get it! It's something that one never forgets - even if they want to forget it. And, everyone has regrets, that is a product of being in a lose-lose situation. None of your choices are good so you do what you can. However these same choices are remembered and held against you for the rest of your life. Nobody will let you live it down, even though that is to make them feel better about themselves. Society doesn't think you are mature enough to drink, drive, vote, etc. but you are old enough to mess up your whole life with a few bad decisions, or even just one.

All that being said it becomes obvious how irrational and unreasonable others' expectations are. However, one thing you won't learn in school or on TV, is that life isn't fair and life is not easy. Sometimes it out right sucks. It appears the rules only apply to you and even then they are misapplied, and the rich and famous live by a whole different set of standards. No matter, we still gotta do what is best for us. We need to live as best we can within those rules. Whether or not we agree with them doesn't matter at all. The reality is that this is the world we live in. There is no choice between their way or our way. It's always their way - that's why I'm on death row, they had their way. So, it's either live a life within the rules or try to avoid getting caught living outside of those rules. But, sooner or later everyone gets caught. Nobody truly gets away with anything.

Those of us who get caught sometimes think that if we get smarter, snekier, and don't make mistakes that we can continue on in our ways without any consequence. The delusion is that the only consequences is within a legal sense. A wiseman once said, "you
are a slave to whatever masters you." Even our behavior or way of thinking can enslave us. Crime is the easy way out. It's for the weak. What takes a lifetime to build legally can be obtained within moments illegally. Doing things the hard way, the legal way, takes character, strength, patience, courage and intelligence. Anyone can stick-up a bank or sell drugs, be in a gang or use drugs, or rape somebody. It doesn't take any character for that! Nothing has really been accomplished. This is why criminals get no respect. Nothing is like respect, and that can only be earned.

Our culture has had a hand in warping our minds. I'm all for taking responsibility (which is a sign of maturity) but many things contribute to our behavior. Environment is a major one that should not be overlooked. We have been brainwashed into thinking some things are important that really aren't; like what you look like, wear, drive, where you live, how big your house is, or how much money you make. What really matters is freedom, truth, family, friendship, generosity, self-respect and love. These things are imperishable, indestructible and give a sense of true fulfillment and worth. Material things pass away and you're left with nothing. Those immaterial things can only be had by the hard way, the way that develops good character and earns the respect of good people.

When we think of great people, those who are remembered throughout time, who everyone has heard of, we don't think of criminals but of figures like Buddha, Jesus, Muhammed, Gandhi and Mother Teresa. Such as these owned nothing, sacrificed all for others, were never senselessly violent and whose only drug was love from a pure heart. So being famous doesn't come from a life of rebellious living; don't worry - being average won't kill you, but a life of crime will; being humble and seemingly "nobody" won't hamper your ambitions, either, but pride and arrogance will; being a good, law abiding person won't make you lame, but believing the lies of amaterialistic and superficial culture will.
Buddha gave up the easy life of a Hindu Prince for enlightenment. Jesus taught the truth even though it cost him his life; Muhammad reclaimed Mecca without spilling a drop of blood, and Gandhi defeated the mighty British Empire with non-violence; and Mother Teresa's wrinkled face showed forth a beauty of soul that touched the poor throughout the world. Yes, they were rebels, but their rebellion was against the material and tangible (not to gain more of it) and used a method directly contrary to the ways of the world. Criminal behavior is only the desperate act of somebody to fulfill a desire for something in the wrong way; whether it's for things (by stealing), for a feeling (by drugs), for acceptance (by imitation or sex), for power (by violence), &c. But knowing is half the battle.

After being sentenced to death in 1995 I was put in segregation, as all capital case prisoners are. This forced me to confront myself, my situation and how I got there. After a few days I realized that I had traded my life, freedom and family - everything - for the temporary pleasures and possessions of this world over the eternal blessings of the next world. I gave up the immaterial for the material. It really wasn't something I thought up on my own, but was a kind of revelation - like somebody turned the lights on and now I could see it. That feeling and realization hasn't left me in 14 years, nor has it faded. This is the same thing I hope to awaken in others. You really "can't take it with you" when you die, and to risk everything for something so fleeting isn't very smart at all.

None of what I've written will make me popular among my fellow prisoners, nor will it's application make you popular where you find yourself. But, I'm not particularly concerned about being liked by evil or misguided people. Are you? Such individuals only like those who are like them. If bad people dislike you it's because you aren't one of them. It's more of a compliment than anything else. Those people won't stand by you in hard times, they don't really love you, they have no heaven to give you or hell to put you in. When I got arrested everyone turned on me. I was a member of the Nazi-skinheads and the U.S.A. National Socialists Party. The leaders were the
first ones to tell the cops all kinds of stories about me. Their concept of "brotherhood" was short lived. Three skinheads help put me here. Those people didn't truly care about me - such people only care about themselves.

Even though I dised those who did care about me, they were the ones who stuck by me. One should live their life for themself and do what's best for them. Stand by those who will stand by you and love those things or people worthy of love. Again, life isn't easy and usually the most difficult choice is the right one that leads to less complications in the future. Change is especially hard after you're in a bad perdicament. We can't let our circumstances dictate who we are going to be. That's teh easy way out, jsut going with the flow.

When you spend time alone with yourself - without TV or radio and other distractions, you'll find out who you really are. Not many people take the time to really know themself, but once you do it's a whole new world. Then you can take yourself out into the world and share yourself with others. One of my favorite quotes is from Ralph Waldo Emerson. He said,"have the courage to be in public who you are in private". I hope you will make a solid decision and have a firm resolve to do this with me, keeping in mind that "Bad company corrupts good morals" (St.Paul). To do otherwise would be dishonest. So,"be true to yourself" (Shakespeare) and live a life worthy of life itself.
We Can Change Too

During an interview on CSAPN2 (BOOKTV) a college professor hit the nail on the head when she said, "Society has been convinced that prisoners are the only people on the face of the earth who can't change." A "Life" or "Death" sentence is, in essence, saying the same thing. (Denying "good time" credit is essentially saying "we don't care if you do change"). Time changes everyone, and everything. Even the pyramids have suffered from the constant wear of sandstorms, and the Niagara Falls from water's erosive powers. Prison will do much the same thing.

At times, people wonder who are those truly sorry for their crimes, which ones just had a hard life that sent them astray, or were caught in desperate circumstances; and who are the deliberately mean, cruel, vicious criminals. Erosion reveals what is inside, under the surface. Prison will reveal a person's true character over time. This is why some people become better or worse in prison. Time gives us the opportunity to reflect on our past, observe our present, and plan our future. Over time, the cumulative effect of one's situation causes a desire for better circumstances. At first everything in prison is new, but it soon gets old and you become dissatisfied, realizing that this is not the environment you want to be in. Well, change it!

As the saying goes, "it's better to light a candle than curse the dark." We have to see the need for positive change in our lives. Only then will we be motivated to do something. To change yourself is to change every situation. Do you want to be the same person in 20 or 30 years that you were as a teenager? I see old men who have been down since they were kids but haven't emotionally, mentally, or spiritually matured while they have grey hair, bald, bent and broken bodies. There's few things sadder than seeing a 50+ year old child. Maturity is growth, and growth is change. Growth can bring you either closer to, or farther from your goals.

Change can be frightening; but it can also be your friend, when guided, directed, or controlled. The time of prison coupled with the power of change will reveal the true self. Once the outer layers of the world's trauma erodes away, the tender core is exposed; if one dares examine it. Those who dare will be amazed, maybe appalled, definitely rewarded. Assessing the damage and determining where you wish to be will help you understand what work needs to be done, (and if you want to do it.) We rarely are the person we want to be. We've gotten off track by uncontrolled change, circumstances beyond our influence, at times. To better yourself is a difficult no matter who you are or where you are, but particularly so in prison. There are too many negative forces beyond your control. Everything seems to conspire against you. You'll get zero cooperation and no empathy. It's a slow journey, changing what's inside, that has been programmed and reinforced for decades. With persistent determination we can all change to become the people we want to be. No matter what society may think, don't allow anyone to convince you that somebody can't change; in prison or out. Personal transformation is done for oneself not others. Be you, for you have to live with yourself, every minute of every day.

Commit to change, because it's worth it, and it's real.
Dear Sir or Madame,

This is an open letter to the Education Department and to all concerned. I am writing you from Pennsylvania's death row. I ask that you not dismiss me for that reason but that because of my position you may take this letter more seriously. I am not attempting to shirk any responsibility for what course of events that lead me here. My intent is to make you aware of those things that I think could have been done to ensure a better result in my education and the formation of my young mind and others like me.

I graduated from Mount Carmel junior-senior High in Mount Carmel, Pennsylvania, Class of 1991. My disappointment with the education system goes back to the elementary level. I was treated as if I was stupid and even told so by many of my teachers; as well as berated and told I'd never amount to anything and put in "special education" classes. The problem with all of that is that it was/is entirely false. I was a poor kid, with glasses, a stuttering problem, as well as ADHD and Fetal Alcohol Exposure (FAE) all of which went undiagnosed. Instead of my "teachers treating me like a human being they treated me like an animal an just shoved me aside. To notice and treat my conditions would of been the responsible and professional thing to do. Abuse was easier, I guess.

Throughout Junior High I had teachers who would either paddle me at the beginning of the class before I had a chance to do anything or eject me from the room as a waste of their time. Anyone with any intelligence can see from my school records that I would do well for the first semester and then get lost with no-one to help me, then suffering frustration I'd give up. This is a usual accuracy for children with ADD and ADHD. My stuttering should of raised the question of the various speech therapists as to whether or not I had FAE. None of this was paid attention to, only my status as poor and the brother of trouble-makers. No teacher ever took the time nor made the offer to help me with my schoolwork after school or otherwise. These supposed "educators" had no interest in educating anyone that didn't get it the first time they taught it and how they taught it.

I was always good at anything that I could be shown. If I was shown how to take an entire engine apart I could put it back together. This is not a stupid or dumb person, just somebody who learns differently. I got A's in gym, shop, art, home-economics, and mechanical drawing/drafting. These are all hands-on classes. This too was a sign of my intelligence, industrialness, and that I only learned different from others. Instead of this being used for my
benefit it was used to further abuse and insult, ostracize and marginalize, demean and discourage me. Even when I enlisted to the Army pre-graduation, all my teachers told me I'd never make it. But I did and was sure to let them know. Nonetheless, I spent my whole life thinking that I am stupid, good for nothing, waste of life, just as these supposedly intelligent teachers told me. Who was I to question their assessment of me?

When I left our education system with whatever knowledge that had been bequeathed to me, I found myself ill equipped. No-one ever taught me to fill out a job application, write a resume', open a checking account, how to balance a checkbook, &c. &c What was one of the biggest gaps in my education (and I see that it is still so for the youth today) was what the law is and when you are breaking a law and what the penalties are. Again, I'm not blaming the school for my current predicament. But, for instance, I didn't know that Pennsylvania had the death penalty, nor that presence at a crime makes you a co-conspirator that gives you the same penalty under the law that the main perpetrators get. This is information that young adults should have before becoming responsible for their own actions. Actions have consequences and those consequences are a big part of what we choose to do or not to do. I feel that educating the young people of this country on the law and other real life knowledge and skills will create a better overall populous, and a stronger community, specifically.

When I came to prison I started to learn for myself. I figured out how I learn and I applied myself. I've never been lazy, which is why I made it through Army training. I read fiction books, at first and then, when my comprehension got better, I moved up to the weightier subjects of history, art, religion, and even philosophy. I learned to think for myself, something never taught to me by anyone else. Shouldn't this be the first thing that a person is taught? To not do so is to raise up a bunch of robots that have no thoughts of their own and only parrot back whatever was pumped into them. This lack of problem-solving ability and deductive reasoning made me ripe for any person who felt like using me for their own ends. How was I to reason if whatever that person said was true? I did not know how to tell. One should not have to come to prison to get educated but education should prevent incarceration. Nor should I had to of done it on my own out of the school setting with no guidance from knowledgable people who care about truth. The skill of reasoning, deduction, logic, cognition, these are critical not only to happiness but freedom. How can you be free if you are imprisoned by a lie?

I sincerely hope that whatever I've said in my own poor way will be helpful in creating a better tomorrow for everyone. Forgive me for anything I may have said that was offensive to you. I lack social graces.

Respectfully,

Kevin J. Marinelli

CC: PA Dept. of Education
I once had such a love
as if sent from up above
her voluptuous form I adored
of her passions never bored
our desires united in bliss
heaven revealed in every kiss
the strawberry of her lips
the shape of her hips
her soft and delicate hand
on which I wished to place a band
golden hair with locks of silk
a complexion the color of milk
the emerald of her eyes
and the thickness of her thighs
all this made the exterior
of which there is none superior
but within beat a heart of gold
a kindness and gentleness to behold
she gave herself fully to me
though I violated that trust continually
nobody ever taught me how to love
how to cherish that blessed dove
my stupidity drove me mad
until I lost all I had
I found myself forever caged
without her embrace I raged
though my love for her was strong
no longer allowing to do her wrong
I had to set my dear one free
all along knowing it must be
now my heart is shattered within me
because that love is lost eternally.

I relish her warmth
the weight of her body
we lie spent from passion
content in our lover's embrace
our youthful bodies entwined
I feel our souls joined
"the two have become one"
she is mine, I hers
slaves surrendered to love
April, my heart's desire
consumed by passion's flame
the world exists no more
only love, here and now
time suspended in time
now, love being eternal
The Eternal Fight

In the darkest depths of night
the Mysterious One takes flight
flitting throughout my mind
confusion making me blind
the sun has set within my soul
love has no more control
why, when, where, and how
is all my heart asks now
faith resides in me no more
even breathing becomes a chore
my drowning spirit thrashes about
is there anyone to help me out?
fear arises as I grope in darkness
panic as I await lights appearance
is it all a great fraud?
but how can one live without God?
seeking God is my reason for life
to endure the existence of strife
I need faith to indwell me
and God who makes me free
without either one of these
my soul will stagnate and freeze
so, please God hear my plea
from darkening confusion release me
allow the sun to arise again
and everything, anew, to begin

Do not allow Satan your reward to rob
Resist him in every guise
All his evil deeds despise
He comes masked as the true
For he wishes to destroy you
His lies are perversions of truth
Because he was evil from his youth
Beware of his cunning & experience
In yourself have no confidence
Rely on Me in all things
To protect from the destruction he br
Darkness is Satan's eternal abode
Despair and hopelessness his mode
So, rise up my child of light
And do as I say—FIGHT! FIGHT! FIGHT!

Everything has been made new
Now it all relies on you
Will you remain in this gloom
Or depart to a brighter room?
Will you wallow in despair
Or seek for that fresher air?
Turn again from doubt to faith in me
Then you'll be free internally
For a struggle continues on earth
Only in heaven is eternal mirth
But I will give you the strength you need
With Christ you shall succeed indeed
So raise your banner high
Until Jesus descends from the sky
Only then shall the war be won
If you've fought on like a faithful son
I've given you the armor for the job
Tortured Soul

My thoughts never cease
to torture my soul
They seem to only increase
spinning out of control
In this man-made hell
with no hope of relief
A misery one cannot tell
A soul's agony beyond belief

Execution would terminate
the torturous ticking of time
My sorrows to eliminate
At the drop of a dime
I desire that peaceful rest
after this arduous existence
Death I cannot request
they desire my resistance

The court sentenced me to die
I really wish I would
But no matter how hard I try
it seems I never could

Please, carry out that sentence
that my weary soul wants
I'd give them no resistance
despite all their stunts

To acquiesce to that mercy
causes lawyers and court to cry
Your not "fit", but "crazy"
truly they grievously lie
Volunteering for torture
is to choose this place
So hellish is that future
they'd never take my place

To rot, wither and decay
is no way to live
I wish not to stay
so, rest to my soul give
Madness is always near
teetering on insanity
Living my greatest fear
a lonely, solitary destiny

When they had said "death"
they were so very right
Ever since I lost my breath
out went the soul's light
My heart is now dead
abandoned and broken by grief
I now repeat what I said
grant this tortured soul relief.
The Commander in Chief

There is a wordly chief
Who raises himself above belief
I know not what spirit he is of
Nor if he is full of love
His rewards are only for here
While God is as near
He puts me in harm's way
Unable to save the day
He gives little compensation
Because he's only an imitation
I can only judge by what I see
He's not the commander for me

I have one and only commander
Among men, none grander
Him alone do I obey
And I wish to portray
He commands me where to go
And saves me from every foe
He gives me the armor for war
And provides weapons of honor
To whom else shall I turn
For Him does my heart burn
When I leave this battlefield of life
He shall quell all my life's strife
I'm grateful He's my Commander in Chief
Granting me heaven's final relief.

Not Safe To Feel

My heart has a seal
Made from bars of steel
Where it's not safe to feel
All that is, oh, so real
I bottle it all up inside
While here I must reside
From emotions I can't hide
Though I have so often tried
When will it finally be
That I can truly be free
To feel all that's in me
And be rid of this insanity
A pervasive decaying force
That has taken its course
And became my life's curse
As this torment I must nurse
*MISTY TORRENTS*

In the misty torrents of timely gloom
I travel a life full of despair and doom
My ignorance leads me to manly strife
Curiosity stirs my soul to question life

Whispering on the winds I hear
Wondering, to this I lend an ear:
"Within the rustling leaves of time you'll find
the answer to this curious plight of mankind."

Turning to where darkened corners lie
Hidden vallies where pride must die
I opened my eyes to inspired light
Seeing the world with new sight

Deception no longer enslaves me
Falsehood's shackles fall free
Dispersing the misty torrents of life
Revealing harmony and hope without strife
Camouflage

Every animal has a coat  
Not for which to gloat  
One that doesn't reveal  
But from predators to conceal  
Like Joseph's of many colors  
Not loved by his brothers  
Man has none of these  
Only skin which feels a breeze  
We err when we construe  
This exterior to be true  
It's a house in which we live  
For the spirit that God hath give  
The camouflage we take for real  
The soul we squash and steel  
At the expense of what's true  
That the camouflage is not you.

On the Wind

Voices call to prayer  
Warding away despair  
Not voices for hire  
But of the Spirit's fire  
From the heart they speak  
Of God's love they keep  
God in and above all  
No matter how big or small  
Loving the tiny and tall  
Love for and above all

Small voices on air  
Can never,ever compare  
To the reality they feel  
On their heart love's seal  
God's greatness unknowable  
His Person so loveable  
God's loving heart unphathomable  
His wonderous mercy unlimitable  
God's Patience without measure  
All this,God our treasure
RAINFOVER OF HOPE

DISMAL, DARK
FACING DOOM
THIS DAY A
RAINBOW BRIGHTENED MY GLOOM
ARCHING HIGH IN THE SKY
IT CAUSED A TWINKLE IN MY EYE
HOPE GROWING IN MY HEART
WHERE DOES IT END
WHERE DOES IT START
SHOW ME ITS MEANING
SHOW ME ITS SOURCE
CREATED BY GOD'S ETERNAL FORCE
IN HIS STRENGTH
IN HIS POWER
IT'S EVIDENCE AFTER A SHOWER
HOPE IS RENEWED ONCE MORE
I'VE SEEN HE'S THERE FOR SURE
WATCHING OVER YOU AND ME
THE SIGN OF NOAH IS TRUE
WHEN THE WORLD HAD A FALL
GOD HAD TO DESTROY ALL
SAVING ONLY THE RIGHTEOUS HE WOULD
SAVING THE RIGHTEOUS AS HE SHOULD
PROMISING DESTRUCTION BY WATER NEVER AGAIN
THAT'S THE BIRTH OF THE RAINBOW, WHEN IT BEGAN
A COVENANT IN THE SKY
A SIGN THAT DOESN'T LIE
GIVING ALL THE STRENGTH TO COPE
THE RAINBOW OF HOPE!

* WATCHER *

GUARDIAN ANGEL
WATCHER OF OLD
PROTECTOR OF BODY
PROTECTOR OF SOUL
STANDS WITH YOU ALWAYS
AND STANDS BOLD
STRENGTH OF GOD
MIGHT UNTOLD
FOREVER
TRUE
WATCHING OVER YOU
The lonely heart dies from lack of love
But not from our Creator up above
Feelings of depression and gloom ensue
All the result of a distorted view
When emotions of abandonment arrive
For thoughts of love we must strive
Bringing what's in darkness to light
Seeking that love which never takes flight
God's love for you will never die
Never abandoning you from on high
So, brighten your mind and heart with this
At every moment your soul does God kiss

O loving God so good and true
Touch this lonely heart so blue
With your wonderous might
Enfold me in your wings tonight
Whispering encouraging words to my soul
All those things to make me whole
Strengthening me from the dark
That to the light I may embark
My soul to know joy and peace again
Such happiness from You within.
Dear Alcohol

O my dear friend
   I embraced you so
Wherever you were
   there I'd go.
I figured you were
   all I'd ever need,
My every thought &
   desire you'd feed.

With you there was
   nothing I wouldn't do
All my inhibitions were
   gone because of you.
I perceived a canyon
   as a tiny lil'crack,
Oceans as puddles
   when you had my back.

Little did I know
   that all was false,
My dearest friend
   lacked a pulse.
He cared not for me
   because he couldn't feel,
All I thought so small
   wasn't even real.

I let my perceptions
   be distorted and altered,
All my logical reason
   was lost and faltered.
I'm bruised and tattered
   from all my doin's,
Now my life lies
   destroyed, in ruins.

The one I thought
   was my friend,
Ended up being a
   fiend to the end.
Trust me when I say:
   Alcohol is not your friend
Alcohol is a dead end.
I'm Country

whether you are country
is less about geography
and more about mentality
that's what makes you country.

You may never see a farm
nor work with your arm
but having that country charm
will do you no harm.

You may never live in the hills
nor the fields with sheep fill
but having that hospitality still
will do you no ill.

I come from a miner's town up north
but I was southern country from birth
learnt the country and hill-billy worth
to live life in simplicity and mirth.

We stand proud and tall
considerate of one and all
in need, on us you can call
we'll help you after a fall.

About family and nation we care
with much kindness and love to spare
tread on us if you dare
poorly shall you certainly fare.

Never mind your family tree
if you want to be country
take on that mentality
that's what makes you country.
Pain Made Me

Every tear I cried
Each part that died
Caused a change in me
Without pain who would I be?
Every hurt and bruised feeling
Each torn and tattered dream
Has established the bedrock
Without which who would I be?
Broken and battered I bleed
From every unfulfilled need
Struggling to hold onto me
Without all who would I be?
Evey whimpering cry
Each broken sigh
Questioning all I feel
Without it who would I be?
I see it so clearly today
All that caused such decay
Is what has formed me
Without pain who would I be?

An empty shell of me.

I Believed You

I believed all you told me
All the lies you sold me
How was I to know
'Twas nought but show
Parroting what you heard
With not an original word
Never asked what's true
They deluded you
Then you deceived me
So that I couldn't see
All of it wasn't real
My sanity you did steal
Trading truth for lies
As one's spirit dies
Now the consequences I feel
Housed in a cage of steel
Finding the Real You

I see the world through bars and wire
A life of freedom to which I aspire
My restraints are not made of steel
But of something much more real
Forged by scars and walls rooted in pain
The loss of things I can't regain

How can I once again be free
Experiencing all the world with glee
Who now possesses the golden key
So that I'm able to just be me
When will I be pulled from this mire
Such sweet release I truly desire

Seeking desperately for such relief
My soul being filled with grief
I haven't sought the answer within
For transforming healing to begin
Strength and courage it will take
To confront all that's painful or fake

"Know thy Self" is the highest ideal
A journey of little appeal
The greatest struggle deep within
Hoping for courage to begin
Such an enormously complex task
"Where do I start?", I ask

Looking deep inside this shell
There is something more I can tell
An ethereal principle resides there
That nothing material can compare
From where it comes or goes
This nobody really knows

I am not this flesh I can see
But the spirit residing in me
When this husk dies I'll be free
Who then will I truly be?
It is of no nation, race or religion
These are not it's original origin

It existed long before any of these
And will out live them with ease
I seek for it's ultimate source
To follow it back on that course
This is the work of a lifetime
To be done by all mankind
To this end we all desire
Even though we may tire
May we help each other rest
Knowing that it's a test
For if the soul's source is above
It's course is probably LOVE

Real Love

As I recline in my room
I think of this tune
All that it said
Ricochets in my head
About love and stuff
Things we hear enough
I desire what we can do
Little acts to show you
Love is oh so deep
Not frilly and cheap
Such love should be shown
As hatred we disown
This love I have for you
So love another, too.
Thoughts for Peace

In the darkest gloom
As I await my doom
Imprisoned in this tomb
My thoughts race about
Flitting from doubt to doubt
Trying to figure it out
Issues of such gravity
Never before accured to me
Until I wasn't free
Now I have time to think
From wisdom's fountain drink
With knowledge form a link
Religion, philosophy & mysticism
Breed only cynicism
Each man's own relativism
Let love be our way
And peace exist today
While forgiveness leads the fray
There's no law against these
Which create only ease
Let us all try it, please
Terminate hatred somehow
Let go of grudges now
Remove "self" as our sacred cow
What more can be said?
Without action we're all dead
May this poem be more than just read
Ode to the King

You are the Eternal King
To which we shall sing
You are the Most Holy One
Father, Spirit and Saving Son

To God this ode we proclaim
Saved by the Blessed Name
Of the Only Begotten of God
So the heavenly path we trod

Worthy of all Glory and Praise
To You our hearts we raise
Loving You for Yourself
Loving You and no One else

We deserve nothing by Your Hand
But receive all at Your command
Even the Most Beautiful Jesus
By Whom You graciously saved us

We shall praise God forever
For that final endeavor
Which bought our wretched soul
That we may be made whole.
Capitalism, Materialism, and the Poor

The world is being poisoned. Not only that, but we administer the toxic elixir willingly. I believe that most of us recognize this suicidal concoction for what it is, too. Nonetheless, we give all to aid in our own destruction. However, there are others who have been duped by the fancy packaging, flamboyant advertisement, and wide popularization of this insidious solution. Just as somebody would intervene to stop another from ingesting bleach, so too we must wake up to what we have really been imbibing.

Of course, the “poison” of which I speak is not literal poison, but a metaphor for the materialism of our era. With the rise of capitalism, materialism became more prevalent — with good reason, too. When money, the “bottom line,” and possessions are the sole indicators of success (and success is prized above all else), the individual is lost and even trampled upon to achieve the desired goal. When the profit margin isn’t great enough to satisfy the materialist’s desire, then he must raise prices or layoff workers, not caring that this affects others negatively. It’s all about the cold, hard numbers. Employers don’t provide adequate health care (if any) to their workers because it reduces their profits — never mind that it’s the right thing to do or that people can’t live off their meager salaries without adding to it outrageously high doctor bills. It has nothing to do with the human being, but with the gain to be had from the labor that that person provides to enrich the coffers of the bourgeoisie at any cost. The working class isn’t even treated as well as farm animals, which see a veterinarian when sick — horses are shoed, cleaned, housed and given enough food and water. What kind of world do we live in when we treat animals better than human beings?

The lower classes (to use capitalist terminology) haven’t helped themselves much either. They’ve bought the lie that capitalism is for all, which it’s not. Where is the poor person going to get the education AND money to start a business? “You have to have money to make money,” as they say. And who is to say that everyone is born with the intellect and aptitude to be an entrepreneur; so, then he’s relegated to a life of poverty through no fault of his own. The very basis of this system is based on the premise that there are employers & employees. If everyone was a business owner there’d be nobody to do the labor. So, the fat-cats just sit around getting fatter as the poor get poorer.

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America was founded because of money, not liberty. The decisive event in American history was the Boston Tea Party, which was the rich’s rebellion against England for too high taxes — money! However, the founders (rich persons all), convinced everyone they were fighting for freedom, but unwittingly taking on a new royalty as masters — the elite 10 percent that control 90 percent of the wealth. And if anybody, “til this day, threatens their authority (stock market, oil fields, etc.), it’s seen as a threat to liberty, freedom, and the “American way.”

Case in point: When Senator Clinton proposed free health care for everyone, she was shouted down as a socialist, communist, and enemy of the country, because it would be too expensive. Even though it’s the right thing to do, we can’t afford it; but we had no problem bombing Iraq, starting a war that has cost hundreds of billions of dollars, since that was the right thing to do.

Our civilization is claimed to be based upon this Roman system and we are going the way of the Romans — the rich got richer and the poor got poorer. Of course, the poor were the army, and when they got sick of it, and the barbarians came a’knocking, they stepped aside and let them in. Today we find ourselves in the same situation. Capitalism exploits the less fortunate to their own ends while claiming all men are created equal. As Orwell might add, “...but some are more equal than others.”

After the bourgeoisie firmly planted in the minds of the masses their false ideology, they then convinced us to be “consumers” which feed the beast. We create our own poison, if you will, and they charge us for it. So, we Buy! Buy! Buy!, trying to look and feel like we are our own masters even though we are slaves to the system (for, “You are the slave of whatever overcomes you,” wrote St. Paul). Loans are taken out, mortgages made, and credit cards charged; all sinking you further into bondage to the user — a unique parasite that feeds off one’s desire to have, possess, acquire and consume beyond their means, to keep up with the Joneses. We must have two cars, fancy clothes, all types of diversions like big screen TVs, video games, ATVs, etc., etc., even though we don’t own the ground we’re standing on because we got two mortgages and enough credit card debt to choke a horse. All to what end? You can’t take it with you...

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The teachers of all the great religions spoke directly to this. Jesus said, "What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world but loses his soul?" Buddha taught that "desire is the beginning of all suffering," and the Quran says, "Abundance diverts you until you come to the grave." We have lost our souls, been diverted from the true meaning of life, and are possessed by our possessions. It is one thing to provide for your needs, or the needs of others, and quite another matter to cater to every want or desire. Our possessions don't change who we really are inside, under it all. A new car won't make you beautiful, nor new, expensive clothes skinnier; a big house doesn't make you better than anyone else, just more superficial and egotistical. When you look in the mirror it's still the same person staring back. So, what do you want your legacy to be? One of shallow materialism, or an abiding lover of neighbor and self?

As the saying goes, "You came into the world with nothing and leave with nothing." Well, almost nothing, since your good deeds remain forever, resonating throughout time. Look at our dear blessed Mother Teresa, who, like her Savior, died penniless but left a legacy of love, mercy, and compassion that will never die. Of course we all can't live the austere existence of Mother Teresa, but we can find courage from her example, to simplify our lives, maintain our human dignity in the midst of the rat race, and help our fellow man. We need to spend less time slaving for "the man" so we can drive a BMW instead of a Saturn, and more time with our family or helping the elderly, sick, and poor. Let's live a life that will leave a legacy of love in the minds and hearts of all we touch.

*Note from the author: Although, Canada has socialized health care and their economy is better than ours. At this time, their currency is worth $1.06 compared to ours, worth 40 cents.
A Son's Love

A son's love is greater than any other
that is, his love of his mother
How can I explain it to you
all else drops out of view
It is grander than that "grand" canyon
deeper than the deepest phathom
It is brighter than the brightest sun
prettier than a day just begun
It is more beautiful than the most beatiful flower
higher than the highest tower
It is stronger than the strongest metal
more delicate than a rose's petal
It is more gentle than the gentlest breeze
easily moved with the greatest ease
It is softer than the softest kiss
more joyful than the greatest bliss
It is more glorious than the stars on high
more spacious than the wide open sky
What else can be said for it
A son's love will never quit
There is no love more pure and true
than my love, mother, for you.
The Broken Heart

A heart broken, battered, bleeding
In desperate need of healing
Too wounded to care
All love leaked from there

A broken vessel can't hold
Or venture to be so bold
As to love once again
Not knowing where to begin

Too scarred to trust
With a heart turned to dust
That withered long ago
Never recovered from the blow

When you let the sunshine through
There's nothing you can't do
Even mend that broken heart
That was brutally torn apart

Let teh healing begin
Allowing light and water in
That it may grow anew
Into all you once knew

Then happiness will return
And love's fires again burn
Purifying that injured past
Believing this heart will last
Powerless

Control is power
hour by hour
reigning from its tower

I have no control
in this little hole
all power they stole

Helplessly I sigh
its futile to try
this ruthlessness to decry

Frustration abounds
while hopelessness hounds
this inhumanity astounds

I have no clue
what I can do
but turn to YOU

In that is power
hour by hour
God reigning from his tower

Only He can help
this little whelp
as I continuously yelp

Powerless am I
except when I cry
to that Mighty Power on High
Thank You (Pen-Pals)

Reaching into the dark
Where I'm set apart
You have created a spark
In this gloomy heart

Compassion in this place
Is so very hard to find
While this reality I face
You decided to be kind

A little ink on paper
Seems such a small thing
A human connection
Sometimes its everything

Inexplicably you cared for me
Though we have never met
Touching my humanity
Not knowing what you'd get

You accepted my brokenness
My disturbing past
Showering it with gentleness
And friendship at last

May God Bless You
And all that you do
For I am no longer blue
Thanks to you, being you.
Discovering who we are

Futility exists in the heart
Vanity in the eyes
Foolishness in the mind
Stubbornness in the will
Love resides in the soul

Truth is found with the heart
Love by the will
Wisdom in the soul
Purity by the mind
Beauty in the eyes

To seek is to find
When looking aright
Finding is to know
When desiring aright
And knowing is to intuit
When feeling aright

The soul yearns for truth
The heart needs it
The mind seeks it
The will guides it
The whole being desires it

Feeling confuses the mind
Doubt weakens the will
Vanity blinds the eye
Desire destroys the soul
Thinking dulls the heart
Love is all we are
Peace in Time

As my head loses its cover
And my hands their grip
As my hair loses its color
And my thoughts their grasp

Youth is a faded memory
A past full of sorrow and regret
It seemed so temporary
Something I thought I'd forget

As my height is bent
And my hinges rusted
As my form is spent
And my windows busted

The past is a dim reality
Only the joys forgotten
Lost in youthful futility
While hurts turn rotten

As my years grow long
And my time drags on
As my pain gets strong
And my haunted life lives on

I've learned from the mistakes
That I can't change the past
Forgiveness is what it takes
To obtain a peace that lasts
In Limbo

I exist in a state
Not yet sealed by fate
Where hope is very slim
And that hope only in HIM
I cannot mourn what is gone
Nor let go and move on
My hope drives me along
To endure all that feels wrong
Giving up is to die
Too much hope is a lie
I accept what is past
Without hope I won't last
Is there a future for me?
How do I live this mystery?
There's no plans for a tomorrow
Only assurance of more sorrow
Where do I go from here?
Where's the end, is it near?
Just uncertainty do I know
In instability I try to grow
Stuck between the future and past
Please end this limbo at last.
Longing for Love

There's a longing in me I can't fulfill
At times it makes me mentally ill
I yearn for a love so divine
Somebody to love who is all mine
Who desires my exclusive company
And thinks about me constantly
The thought of whom makes me glad
Driving away the tears when I'm sad
One that melts away my stress
Calming me with the slightest curress
Being my heart's sole refuge
Without any fear of subterfuge
Whose smile makes my day
And is a blessing in every way
With whom every second is bliss
But when I'm not with I deeply miss
Which I could smother with affection
And make a deep and lasting connection
To be my closest, best friend
Faithful and true to the very end
Who I could trust with my every thought
And their love could never be thought
There's only one place such love is found
With God, whose love does abound
For all who fervently seek Him out
God's love is not in doubt.
LOVE

What is Love? Where does it come from? We cannot see it, yet it exists. It cannot be weighed or measured, although the scientist says it's only a chemical reaction. Love is a maddening force that brings us to the heights of irrationality and yet the sublimest of charity. It constantly gives of itself and yet is never diminished. What is this "love"? It is self-sacrificing yet never dies. Most psychoses come from either the inability to give or receive love. Psychoses are a defect of love. Love produces and creates, always reaching beyond itself. But where does it come from? Love arises up in us as if it was always there, like the seed germinating until it bursts forth to the light, reaching up until it is consumed by the light and brings forth its fruit, that ambrosia of love. And it has an infinite number of expressions - between spouses, friends, family; for God, country and the lonely or outcaste; it is compassion, empathy and intimacy. It is limitless in variety. Love never gets old and we never tire of it. O this love! How we yearn for it, and we are not satisfied without it. Love makes us whole. But love that is for itself is not love at all. Love always extends outward. To love is to be defenseless. No one is more vulnerable than the one who loves. It takes courage and trust, trust in love not the one loved. Objects can't be loved because the object is an end in itself. Love has no end, it is eternal. It doesn't know of self. Love seeks out more love waiting in the other. The lonely cry cries out for love, with tears and with rage. Action not guided by love is violence (love gone bad), rage is emotion not guided by love (love misunderstood). Jealousy is love turned sour, and obsession is love gone mad. Love is of the will. Lust, infatuation and desire aren't love though usually called by that name. The mind often doesn't desire to love but the will wills to love. Love is divine. When we love we are the most like God for God is love. Know God, know Love/know love, know God. No God, no Love/ no Love, no God.
BUT GOD SAID

The world said I look awful
But God said I'm so beautiful

The world said I'm unintelligent
But God said I'm so brilliant

The world said I'll never be anything
But God said I've given you everything

The world said I'm unruly and wild
But God said I'm His beloved child

The world said "You can't do it"
But God said I'll pull you through it

The world said You can't do anything right
But God said I've already won that fight

The world said you don't fit in
But God said My love is all-embracing

The world said you are here alone
But God said My presence is easily known

The world said this life has no meaning
But God said that this world is fleeting

The world said to live for yourself
But God said He is love itself

The world said that material things really matter
But God said that the spiritual is far better

The world said and I refused to hear
But God said and drove out my fear.

The world said all that produces hate
But God said that love is my fate

The world said war will never cease
But God said all that leads to peace

The world said and then faded away
But God said and is here eternally to stay.
What's with all the Hate

Curses and racial slurs
Ravings of some dope
What's with all the hate
Where's the hope?
Worthless rantings
Ragings of ignorance
Disunity reigns
People seek vengeance

What's with all the hate
Where's the hope?
Misdirected anger
Wounds of old
Digging up the past
Soul gone cold

What's with all the hate
Where's the hope?
Feelings of hopelessness
Now running through
Looking for answers
Don't know what to do

Where's all the hate
Where's the hope?
Truth residing in me
Found human unity
The reason for love to be
For all things, Harmony

No more hate
Nothing but hope!
Ashes Remain

You can't take it with you when you leave
All you have is what you believe
Money, Beauty and Fame cannot save
They only make you a slave

So hold onto what is true
Because all those things aren't you
Faith, Hope and Love try to obtain
For in the end only ashes remain.

The Choice

Faking, fronting, posturing galore
The ways of the world at your door.
What's cool, hip or in style
Only lasts for a while.
Public opinion means nothing,
Riches are fleeting.
Pleasure is for a moment
Ending in disappointment.
Choices must be made,
Time won't make it fade:
Letting the world define you
Or let the real you come through,
Being yourself or another,
Being Christ's or Satan's brother.
Choosing the eternal
Or trading it for the temporal.
The Cost

Done wrong
you sure know
totally lost
nowhere to go
seeking forgiveness
not deserved
living in torment
sorrow unreserved.
feeling helpless
unable to amend.
saying sorry
never enough
willing to end
grieving loss
death and life-
one to a grave
another to strife.
dying daily
forever lost,
counting always
the perpetual cost.

Off to War

You saw your son off to war
And waved good-bye once more
Remembering his first day of school
When you looked such the fool
Sent him with hugs and kisses and all
Recalling how he looked so small
Now he is a grown man
And you saw him off again
With hugs and kisses and all
Boy he’s grown so tall
He goes go help all others
Sons and daughters, mothers and brothers
Fighting for freedom, peace and justice
The basic rights of all of us
So dry your teary tide
For God is by his side
Protecting him in every way
To return to you some day
Beyond the healed bones
from "sticks and stones"
the pain still remains
My Name is... hurt

Beyond the chastity lost
there lingers a cost
a scarring of the soul
My Name is... shame

Beyond the crime done
and the repentance won
sorrow has not died
My Name is... grief

Beyond the addiction broken
and the apologies spoken
a shattered life yet exists
My Name is... regret

Beyond disease diagnosed
a life's misery confirmed
a stricken body felt
My Name is... pain

Beyond a love mourned
a heart left unadorned
and dryless tears
My Name is... lonely

Beyond all that's desired
belief like raging fire
a glimmer remains
My Name is... faith

Beyond what is seen
and everything between
you push on and on
My Name is... hope

Beyond the prayers said
and scriptures read
a heart full of joy
My Name is... love

The Holy Bible
given to us by God
Contains the right path
one ought to trod.
His decrees are just
His ways are true,
it's a loveletter
written for you.
Learn, love and live
all that's within,
And it'll keep you
from the travails of sin.
Trust in God's word
no matter what will be
For in it is salvation,
truth that sets free.
Prison is...

Prison is loneliness in a crowd
  hunger that can't be fed
  thirst never satiated
  desire unfulfilled
Prison is emotions you can't feel
  beauty unappreciated
  talented undiscovered
  love unexpressed
Prison is not really being seen
  knowing abandonment
  feeling only loss
  continually despairing
Prison is the grain fallen to the ground
  the sowing for a better harvest
  realizations or a brighter tomorrow
  a womb awaiting rebirth
Prison is the way you do your time
  the thoughts you cultivate
  the feelings you feed
  the emotions you harbor
Prison is what you make of it.

The World's Example

I came into this world a clean slate
With nothing like destiny or fate
Written on by time and experience
Taught by instutions ideas for adherance
I saw injustice and hypocrisy all around
I suffered pain, loss and heard lies without count
Deception and evil was taught from the start
To a child's pure and innocent heart
Then came the clear inevitable truth
  Of this misshapen and troubled youth
Nothing good in you can grow
When a world without love is all you know.
My Guardian Angel

As I lie in complete solitude
with weighed spirit and despairing mood
I imagine my guardian's concern
How his heart must yearn
to comfort and help me now
all the while not knowing how
So he lies down by my side
and spreads his wings wide
wrapped in which I hide
from all in life I can't abide
I know he's always there for me
lighting the way so I may see
He goes beyond his assignment
guarding me in this confinement
Many times I ignore his guidance
living a life of defiance
but he constantly remains true
no matter what I do
He is the one I can't see
the guardian Angel God gave me.

* I Am (in prison) *

I am as good as "a brain in a vat"
And the torso of all that
Arms too short to reach beyond the wall
Legs that won't make me that tall
Left to wither and lonely die
When comfort and freedom in so nigh
I am a prisoner of mercy lost
A warehoused human without cost
A result of society's mess
This they shall never confess
With them is where I belong
From them I learned to do wrong
I am a product of compassion denied
From their emotions they hide
Revenge is the eternal cry
"He has done wrong so he must die"
If their life was judged and tried
Then "mercy!" they'd have cried
I am the reflection which doesn't deceive
The end of all you believe:
A culture of greed, lust and violence
The offspring of a demonic alliance
My acquiescence to all you do
Now imprisoned as an image of you.
You Put Me In Prison...

You taught me humans descended from animals
but when I acted like it, you put me in prison
You taught me morals were relative
but when I acted like it, you put me in prison
You taught me that people are objects to be used
but when I acted like it, you put me in prison
You taught me money and fame are all that matters
but when I acted like it, you put me in prison
You taught me that God doesn't exist
but when I acted like it, you put me in prison
You taught me there is no afterlife
but when I acted like it, you put me in prison
You taught me to be violent
but when I acted like it, you put me in prison
You taught me the judicial system is fair
but when I acted like it, you put me in prison

YOU TAUGHT ME AND THEN YOU PUT ME IN PRISON

Wisdom

Wisdom is informed right action. Knowledge can be the same in two people but one breaks the law and ends up in jail while the other obeys the law and remains free. The only difference is right action, not knowledge. Arrogance is the killer of wisdom. The two cannot exist simultaneously. Intellectual pride will smother wisdom, thinking oneself wise they become a fool. Humility is the catalyst for wisdom - "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom"; "To say 'I don't know' is the beginning of wisdom". Knowledge is brought on by time and understanding through experience. The young know nothing while the old are knowledgable; the young have little experience, therefore not compassionate while the old empathize from vast experience. The mind of the wise is supple and pliable, molded by truth. Passion does not move wisdom, it doesn't conform to nothing but its goal - the good, the true, the right. To be compassionate is to act wisely toward the other, knowing from experience. To be wise is to have a pattern of right action, to consistently choose the right response in every situation. Wisdom is as wisdom does, but not the wisdom of this world. Be wise and Live. The wisdom of the world is death to the spirit, but true wisdom gives life to the spirit. Wisdom is courageous, the wise never fear, because wisdom strengthens and encourages them. Wisdom acts fairly, knowing what is right, the wise act equally, without bias or favoritism. Once the truth is known the wise follow it, wherever it may lead.