

FORGOTTEN ARTISTS:  
ART IS OUR FREEDOM



A COLLECTION OF STORIES AND POEMS  
FROM PEOPLE IN PRISON DURING COVID-19

# PREFACE

People in prison have immense talent, creativity and valuable stories to share with the world. Prison is also immensely isolating, isolation made worse by the COVID-19 pandemic response. Inspired by the important artistic voice and vision of people in prison, and aiming to reduce feelings of hopelessness and exclusion exacerbated by the daily realities of incarceration during COVID-19, the ART & Justice team gifted art kits to people in federal prisons across BC. These gifts were meant to remind people that they are not forgotten, provide some comfort through the act of creating, and offer an opportunity to create community through art and storytelling. There was an overwhelming response of artists and storytellers who were eager to share their work with each other and the world; this anthology honours their work and invites you to reposition yourself, from a passive viewer to an active participant in social change - to build community along with us.

Our team of researchers, Indigenous Elders, and Peer Leaders with lived experience of incarceration - based out of the UBC, School of Nursing - have been working in partnership with the Correctional Service of Canada to conduct research on the impacts of meaningful work and creativity in prisons since 2014. At the beginning of the pandemic, all non-essential activities, including research, correctional programming, visitation, and Elder support, were suspended indefinitely. Knowing that COVID-19 was intensifying social isolation and worsening mental health for incarcerated people in Canada, our team launched this arts-based initiative to support the well-being of federally incarcerated peoples. We gifted art kits to institutions in the Pacific Region and invited individuals to share the resulting artwork. To date, 756 art kits have been distributed across federal prisons in BC, and about 88 artists have shared over 1000 art pieces with us, including drawings, sculptures, paintings, poetry, and short stories. We intend to support holistic mental health and wellbeing for people in prison during the pandemic and beyond, and to explore ways to strengthen and expand benefits through community building, creativity, and storytelling.

## **Why are the artists anonymous?**

ART & Justice is possible because of our ongoing partnership with the Correctional Service of Canada, who have strict policies around confidentiality. Additionally, and perhaps more importantly, it is in the spirit of focusing on the artists' immense talents and their skillful and creative forms of resistance that we will not be sharing their identifiable information; in the words of one of the artists featured in the show, sharing their art with the world is a way to show "who we are and not what we have done wrong."



## Won't you be my...?

THROUGHOUT MY TIME in prison I've noticed a strange phenomenon that I've come to call, neighboring. A long time ago, I fell in love with this long fantasy series of books about knights and magic and stuff. The main character was this big burly dude named Sparhawk. He had a particular peculiarity of always walking up to strangers and saying, "hi neighbor." I don't recall much of the series, but that unique oddity always struck me as being revolutionary.

Think of it as a quality of friendship and shared humanity that may develop among prisoners. Most remarkably with those left to their own devices probably wouldn't associate with each other. Through nearly thirty years in prison, some of my best friends have been guys I'd never have to say hi to if we hadn't bunked together or slotted a door or two apart.

There are many different types of people in prison with various histories, backgrounds, social structures, and most certainly perspectives who's doing time for what. But something we usually have in common is having no say in our cell placement, especially when we arrive at a new joint or living unit. Perhaps over time we can move and change, but most always we start where we start either as cellmates or next door to whoever. I've seen neighboring more often when double-bunking was rampant and – while it may seem counter-intuitive –most prevalently in the relative isolation of maximum security. I'm not sure that is because of or despite, the hardships of that environment. Maybe both. One thing's for sure though, I've seen neighboring year after year here at Mission-Medium, and it gives me hope and encouragement. There's a unique quality to the kinds of relationships that can build over time through shared experiences: things like, lock-downs, winters with no heat, and any number of ridiculous scenarios that pop up when a dissimilar group of people are not only forced to live together, but practically in each other's lap's laps.

Funny thing about the timing of neighboring. It seems to want to take shape by 3 months. Don't ask me why, the magic usually comes at the 90-day mark. For whatever reason this is when it tends to put down roots.

Neighboring might start with something as simple as two guys nodding to each other as they pass on the range. Then it moves to conversations about that last Game of Thrones episode, the hockey game, or maybe a guard someone's having trouble with. Whatever the shared experience, something simple as the random living arrangements can sometimes lead to, well, closeness. Against all odds, two people with backgrounds, personalities and cliques (or lack thereof) at the opposite end of the spectrum find themselves becoming downright friendly. They share a laugh, go halvesies on an expensive canteen snack, lend a hand with a program assignment, work out together in the gym, and even be sounding boards for family troubles on the outside. Before long, two guys who started out as strangers with very little in common besides their captivity become great friends.

Some of the most profound examples of neighboring I've seen are changes in mental prejudices. Take for example, buddies (a) and (b):

Buddy (a) has a sentence more acceptable to the general population. He finds himself living next to buddy (b) whose in the opposite category. Queue the neighboring. The two begin talking and get to know each other. Then after a while they're just two guys splitting a bag of Munchie Mix and watching the common room TV. Seeing this, someone with an axe to grind walks up and makes a snide remark.

"It's okay," says buddy (a), "I know him."

Come to think of it, the whole process can feel downright organic. So I'm going to wrap things up with another plant based analogy:

Even withered sprigs in a barren wasteland can take root and come back to life. All it takes is a handful of guys to pick up a hoe here, a watering can there, and before you know it, connections grow. It just goes to show, given half a chance a little neighboring can bring out the Mr. Rodgers and the Jolly Green Giant in all of us.

ONCE UPON A TIME THERE WAS A SHADOW & A RAY OF LIGHT. THE SHADOW MOSTLY CAME OUT AT NIGHT & PROWLED; CASTING & COVERING, KEEPING THINGS IN THE DARK. THE RAY OF LIGHT HOWEVER MOSTLY CAME OUT IN DAY ENLIGHTENING & WARMING. KEEPING THINGS CLEARED & EXPOSED.

THEN ONE DAY & THE ONLY TIME IN HISTORY, THE EARTH SPUN ONE ROTATION IN REVERSE...WELL EVERY ENTITY ON EARTH WAS CONFUSED. THE SHADOW & THE RAY OF LIGHT ENDED UP IN THE SAME PLACE AT THE SAME TIME! IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE OR THE SNAP OF FINGERS; THE PHENOMENON PASSED, BUT THE RAY HAD SEEN IT. THAT BRILLIANT RAY OF LIGHT, IT WAS BEAUTIFUL TO THE SHADOW & THE SHADOW AND THE SHADOW KNEW FROM THIS MOMENT ON IT'S LIFE WOULD NEVER BE THE SAME. ALL THE SHADOW COULD THINK ABOUT WAS THE BRILLIANCE & THE WARMTH OF THAT RAY OF LIGHT.

THE SHADOW NOT KNOWING ANY BETTER, WAS AFRAID OF LOSING IT'S DARKNESS. BUT NOT SO AFRAID THAT IT WOULDN'T RISK IT TO SEE THAT RAY OF LIGHT ONE MORE TIME.

SO OFF THE SHADOW WENT INTO THE LIGHT OF DAY TO LOOK FOR HIS INFATUATION, THE BRILLIANT BEAM. DARTING IN & OUT OF COVER, THE SHADOW ENCOUNTERED A LESSER SHADOW THAT WAS CAST FROM A WEAK LIGHT. IT HAD ACTUALLY SEEN WHERE HIS BRILLIANT RAY OF LIGHT HAD COME TO REST. EUREKA!! THE SHADOW HAD GIVEN THOUGHT TO THE DANGER, HE KNEW THIS WAS NO ORDINARY RAY OF LIGHT & IF IT WANTED TO IT COULD DESTROY HIM. FOR HE WAS NO DEEP DARK SHADOW THAT COULD COVER THE BRILLIANCE OR DIM THE POWERFUL LIGHT. HE KNEW THE GREY CONSEQUENCES & STILL OFF HE WENT TO WHERE THE GLOW WAS COMING FROM IN THE PARK.

THE SHADOW MOVED ALONG THE ROCK WALL THAT AFTERNOON IN THE PARK & SKIRTED FROM TREE TO TREE. THIS ATTRACTED THE RAY OF LIGHT'S CURIOSITY. THE RAY OF LIGHT MOVED TO THE VERY TREE THE SHADOW WAS AT. AS THE LIGHT APPROACHED THE SHADOW SHRANK BACK, CONFUSED & INSECURE. THE LIGHT HOWEVER WAS PLAYFUL & CONFIDENT, NOT A THREAT AT ALL. THE BEAM FOLLOWED THE SHADOW ROUND & ROUND THE TREE UNTIL YOU COULDN'T TELL WHO WAS CHASING WHO.

THE LIGHT WOULD GLOW & GIGGLE, THE SHADOW WOULD DEEPEN & SNICKER. IT WASN'T LONG AFTER THAT THE SHADOW & THE RAY OF LIGHT WERE COMFORTABLE ENOUGH TO VENTURE INTO EACH OTHER'S REALM. THEY ENCOUNTERED & EXPERIENCED ALL VARYING SHADES OF GREYS; AS WELL AS SOME TIMES BEING TOTALLY ENGULFED IN DARKNESS, OR CLEARLY EXPOSED TO THE WARMTH OF THE LIGHT.

CENTURY'S PASSED AS THEY PLAYED. THE EVEN CREATED A COUPLE OF SPECIAL BEAMS OF LIGHTS. THEY COULD HAVE CREATED SHADOWS, BUT BEAMS OF LIGHT WERE HARDER, SO THEY POLISHED THEIR LITTLE BEAMS UNTIL THEY WERE BRILLIANT. THE SHADOW KNEW THEY WERE SPECIAL BECAUSE WHO EVER HEARD OF A SHADOW PRODUCING A BEAM OF LIGHT, LET ALONE TWO.

THESE TIMES SHOULD HAVE BEEN PROUD TIMES FOR THE SHADOW, BUT IT WAS CONFUSED. WITH SO MUCH LIGHT AROUND, THE SHADOW WAS LOSING IT'S DARKNESS. DARKNESS WAS ALL THE SHADOW KNEW UNTIL THE RAY OF LIGHT ENTERED INTO IT. THE SHADOW BECAME POSSESSIVE OF ITS DARKNESS, TO THE POINT OF DEFENDING IT'S COLDNESS. THE RAY OF LIGHT HOWEVER HAD NOT LOST ANY OF IT'S BRILLIANCE, OR IT'S WARMTH EVEN AFTER EONS OF TIME AROUND THE SHADOW... THIS WAS NO ORDINARY RAY OF LIGHT. IT WOULD NOT DIM.

DESPERATE & CONFUSED THE SHADOW REGRESSED BACK INTO THE NIGHT... THE DARKNESS. MINGLING WITH THE OTHER SHADOWS, HE SENSED SOMETHING WAS WRONG. WHAT COULD BE WRONG? THIS IS WHERE IT CAME FROM, THE DARKNESS. THIS WAS THE SHADOW'S IDENTITY... OR WAS IT?

THE SHADOW HAD SPENT MANY CENTURIES WITH THE BRIGHT RAY OF LIGHT. IT HAD LOST MOST OF HIS DARKNESS & COLDNESS. SOME OF THE DARKEST SHADOWS NOTICED THIS & DECIDED THAT THEY COULD RECREATE HIS LOST DARKNESS. THEY EN-CIRCLED THE SHADOW & ALL WENT BLACK. IT WAS TOTALLY BLACK...LONG ENOUGH FOR THE SHADOW TO START MISSING HIS RAY OF LIGHT. IT WAS SO DARK THAT THE SHADOW THOUGHT IT WOULD NEVER FEEL THE WARMTH OF HIS LIGHT & HE WAS DARK & COLD.

THE RAY OF LIGHT WAS STRONG, WARM & BRILLIANT. BUT AFTER CENTURIES OF HAVING THE SHADOW TO PLAY WITH, THE RAY OF LIGHT MISSED HER SHADOW. WHAT GOOD IS IT TO BE A RAY OF LIGHT IF YOU CAN'T CAST A SHADOW THE BRILLIANT BEAM NOW THOUGHT.

THE RAY BEAMED FIERCELY AS IT ENTERED THE DARKNESS CAUSING THE SHADOWS TO SCATTER, DANCE & DISAPPEAR. SHE FOUND HER SHADOW WITHDRAWN IN THE DARKNESS. AS THE LIGHT APPROACHED, THE SHADOW GREW. THEN THE BRILLIANT RAY OF LIGHT SPOKE, "A RAY OF LIGHT MUST CAST A SHADOW TO BE COMPLETE & WITHOUT A RAY OF LIGHT THERE CAN BE NO SHADOW ONLY DARKNESS." THE SHADOW REALIZED THAT WHAT HIS RAY OF LIGHT HAD SAID WAS THE ABSOLUTE TRUTH...& WITHOUT EACH OTHER THERE COULD BE NO BALANCE. HOW HE ADMIRES THE BRILLIANCE OF HIS RAY OF LIGHT IS STILL EVIDENT TODAY, CENTURIES LATER. YES THEY ARE BOTH A BIT GREY NOW, BUT BETTER FOR IT & THERE IS BALANCE IN THE UNIVERSE.

## TIME

I WAS SITTING IN MY CELL WHEN BUDDY CAME IN & ASKED "HEY, DO YOU REMEMBER OL'-WHATS-HIS-NAME?" A BIT PERPLEXED, I SAID; "NO, ARE YOU SURE THAT YOU HAVE THE RIGHT GUY?" WITH A PUZZLED LOOK ON HIS FACE HE SAYS, "YEAH! WHERE DID HE GO?" THIS GUY IS STARTING TO IRRITATE ME FOR SOME REASON, SO I RESPOND WITH "I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT." "I THOUGHT YOU GUYS WERE FRIENDS." HE COMES BACK WITH. I DON'T KNOW IF IT'S HIS PERSISTENCE OR MY OWN INABILITY TO FOCUS ON HIS REALITY, BUT THIS PUSHES ME OVER THE EDGE. "I DON'T HAVE ANY FRIENDS, THIS IS PRISON!"

"WHAT DO YOU MEAN NO FRIENDS IN PRISON DON'T YOU CARE?" "I USED TO CARE, HELL I EVEN THINK SOMEONE USED TO CARE FOR ME. IT'S BEEN SO LONG, I'M SURE SOMEONE USED TO WRITE OR CALL FOR ME, BUT I'M NOT SO SURE, MUST BE WISHFUL THINKING." "YOU MEAN YOU DON'T CALL ANYONE OR NO ONE WRITES YOU?" "TO BE HONEST, I CAN'T REMEMBER." IT'S AT THIS POINT THAT I REALIZE HOW LONG I'VE BEEN IN, OVER TWO DECADES OF INCARCERATION. I THINK, IF I VANISH NOW WHO WOULD CARE. THE KID WHO WAS BUGGING ME AT MY DOOR? I DOUBT IT. THEY SAY YOU ARE NOT REALLY DEAD OR GONE UNTIL THAT LAST PERSON SPEAKS YOUR NAME. I HAVE AN UNDER-STANDING OF WHERE PEOPLE GO WHEN THEY DIE, BUT WHERE DO YOU GO WHEN YOU'RE FORGOTTEN? PRISON - CAN YOU REMEMBER ALL THOSE GUYS, WHERE ARE THEY? IT'S MORE THAN CONCRETE AND STEEL, IT'S A STATE OF MIND & SOCIETY PERPETUATES IT. IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE I JOIN THE FORGOTTEN. THEN DO I REALLY EXIST, I THINK.

## An Old Native Story

(As told to me by Elder Michael Thrasher)

THERE'S THIS EAGLE (as most Native stories will have) that gets wounded and falls near a chicken farm. The farmer finds the Eagle and not knowing what else to do, places it in his chicken coop.

The wire fence and plywood kept the Eagle safe and over time it began to heal. But with only chickens around it begins to copy what it sees. Day after day, it pecks at the chicken food, sleeps in the chicken beds, socialises like a chicken and even clucks and bobs its head like one. The Eagle does this for so long, it comes to believe that it's actually a chicken itself.

The seasons come and go, and one day the farmer notices the Eagle is whole and healthy but hasn't flown away yet. This baffles him since there's no covering on the coop and even a flightless bird like a chicken should be able to hop up and flap its way out if it wanted. But the chickens never tried. It wasn't their nature. The farmer picks up the Eagle and tries to bring it outside, but it flaps and clucks and makes such a ruckus that he tosses it back in the coop. The Eagle promptly goes back to clucking and bobbing and pecking at the chicken feed. With no other ideas the farmer locks the gate and leaves the Eagle be.

One day an old Native man happens by the farm. Seeing the great and beautiful Eagle sleeping in the middle of the chicken coop, he runs up to the farmer's house and shouts "Just what do you think you are doing?!"

The farmer comes out and explains how he found the Eagle and how it healed, but that it hasn't wanted to leave for a year now. "What else can I do?" he asks.

The Native man scratches his head and asks to take the Eagle out.

The farmer agrees, hoping someone else might have more luck.

The Native man takes care to wrap the Eagle in a blanket, then carries it up the mountain to the edge of a cliff. Once there he opens the blanket and says "It's okay you're free now."

When he tosses the Eagle into the air, it lets out a great squawk and flutters its wings, then plops to the ground, bobbing and pecking and sauntering around like a chicken again.

The Native man picks the Eagle back up and says, "Listen, you are not a chicken. You are a majestic Eagle. You should be soaring the heavens, not down here pecking around in the dirt." And with that he tosses the Eagle up again. This time it flaps its wings a few times, but still drops to the ground and goes back to its chicken routine.



Dumb-founded, the Native man watches the Eagle for a while and considers the problem. When he picks it up for the third time, he notices it's getting used of being held. Then he tells it a story:

"You were hurt and you lived with a different kind of animal for a long, long time. Now you have forgotten who you are. You started to think and act like those around you. But that is not who you are. You are the son of Eagles. Your parents soared high in the sky, and your great grandfather hunted these lands proud and free. The other Eagles loved and respected him, and even the people of the land prayed to him.

"You are the descendent of these. You carry the promise and truth of their lives in your flesh and blood."

As the old Native man continues to tell the Eagle of its heritage, its history and its family, the bird shifts and stretches its wings to span nearly six feet. It's all he can do to hold the Eagle chest high as he tells of the life before. Of the flights and the hunts. Of finding its mate and raising young Eagles of its own. Of how Creator has chosen it to carry our prayers. And of the long and rich life waiting there just ready for it to take.

The more the old Native man talks about the Eagle's true, free and proud life, the more it begins to flap its wings and puff its chest. Finally, the Eagle lifts its head and pierces the sky with a mighty cry before launching from his arms. It lurches a few feet and almost tumbles, but then remembers how to use its muscles and ride the air to lift itself high.

After soaring for a time in the open sky, the Eagle circles back and calls down to the old Native man gazing up with tears in his eyes. Then it sails off into the distance. Once again true to itself. Once more Free.

## In memory of the Eagles



*Creator, Grandfathers and Grandmothers,  
please open the door for your strong-winged beautiful creatures,  
that have left us far too soon.*

*Let their healing energies be absorbed within your life-force currents,  
as their wisdom is graciously passed down to us,  
your humble servants and caretakers of the land.*

*We miss the whispered beating of your wings and throbbing heartbeats,  
your piercing cries for justice and soul awakening shouts for victory and joy.*

*Your constant attention to details will be missed but not forgotten.*

*Prayers I send for your family and friends that will forever miss you each passing day.*

*I pray that your new journeys' flight be shared and filled with newfound wonder,  
clearer understanding, and true enlightenment.*

*All My Relations.*

Was, Is and Will Be

Hey-ya-hey-ya Hey-ya-hey-ya-ho  
Hey-ya-hey-ya Hey-ya-hey-ya-ho  
Hey-ya-hey-ya Hey-ya-hey-ya-ho  
Hey-ya-hey-ya Hey-ya-hey-ya-ho

I remember how things use to be  
Beautiful rivers, a cleaning smelling breeze  
All of our people we were happy we were free  
Whatever happened to our ways to our creed

Hey-ya-hey-ya Hey-ya-hey-ya-ho  
Hey-ya-hey-ya Hey-ya-hey-ya-ho  
Hey-ya-hey-ya Hey-ya-hey-ya-ho  
Hey-ya-hey-ya Hey-ya-hey-ya-ho

Help us Creator, help us to see  
How to make it in the new world's industry

Hey-ya-hey-ya Hey-ya-hey-ya-ho  
Hey-ya-hey-ya Hey-ya-hey-ya-ho  
Hey-ya-hey-ya Hey-ya-hey-ya-ho  
Hey-ya-hey-ya Hey-ya-hey-ya-ho

Thank you Creator, thank you for me  
For showing me favor in a place yet to be

Hey-ya-hey-ya Hey-ya-hey-ya-ho  
Hey-ya-hey-ya Hey-ya-hey-ya-ho  
Hey-ya-hey-ya Hey-ya-hey-ya-ho  
Hey-ya-hey-ya Hey-ya-hey-ya-ho

O, Great Spirit

*O, Great Spirit can you help me walk this road*

*Children are crying, women are dying and men are on their own*

*O, Great Spirit can you help me walk this road*

*We've traded peace for war. Love for hate. Not being thankful for the day*

*Don't you know we're all the same. It's not going to change.*

*Why can't you accept our ways. It's not too late. We can start today. We can make it to a brighter day.*

*O' Great Spirit can you help me walk this road*

*Children are crying, women are dying and men are on their own*

*O, Great Spirit can you help me walk this road*

*We've traded humble for pride. Truth for lies. Not wanting to make things right.*

*Don't you know we're all the same. It's not going to change.*

*Why can't you accept our ways. It's not too late. We can start today. We can make it to a brighter day.*

*O, Great Spirit can you help me fill this road*

*No more crying, no more dying and no more on our own*

*O' Great Spirit can you help me fill this road*

*Don't you know we're all the same. It's not going to change. We're going to make it to a brighter day.*

**\*SPIRIT\***

As I sit in my cell, at four in the morning,  
Outside my window, snow falls, the ground adorning.

Memories from my past, I feel returning,  
Lost loves and joys, deep inside burning.

I tremble and sigh, a tear in my eye,  
For a moment I ask, why, oh why?

The answer is clear, for me to see,  
The spirit is strong, and must be free.

The walls and the steel, the chains and sounds,  
To the spirit, are, but mole-hills and mounds.

The body is trapped, momentarily in time.  
But the final victory, will always be mine.

For the bricks and bars, games of the mind,  
Will only hold us, if we allow them to bind.

# Soul

Living Loving Soul

Dispel the works of Darkness

Defeat the deeds of Evil

Enter the recording room of Memories

Enter the dark room Guilt and Shame

Enter the secret room of Sin...

Hidden or Forgotten.

Living Loving Soul

Come and Forgive all that is me

Living Soul come and set me Free

Loving Soul scatter the Darkness

Living Loving Soul

Draw me closer to Humanity.

## Negative Thinking

Negative thinking you may go, I have no use for you. I never did. You have taken too much from me. Consuming me, I never realized how much you were consuming me, until I learned how to understand you. I have learned tools to defeat you. I will continue to empower myself with the tools I have learned and utilize them. I am aware now how toxic you are to me, you have lived in my head for far too long. I am evicting you. You all must go, positivity is taking over. You can no longer haunt me.

To the negative thoughts that told me, “you are no good, no one will like you or love you,” I say those thoughts will no longer hold power over me. To the negative thoughts that told me, “I am no good and would amount to nothing,” I say, I have good qualities, I am educated, I am a good listener, I am a volunteer, I am independent, I have always had a good job.”

To all the negative thoughts that bounce around in my head, I will challenge you with positivity until I have bounced you all out of my head. I only have room for positive things in my life. It has taken me too long to realize this. There will only be green grass for me, for now on. I may slip, but I have learned the tools to make wise decisions. Those tools will be utilized, and I will be in awareness so I may stay in the green grass, it is safe there.

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I am 56 years old. I came in when I was 42. This is my first offence. I had so many negative thoughts I made some poor choices. I didn't know how to manage my emotions. Thanks to courses/programs available to me I have learned how to deal with my emotions in a positive way. I've learned to love myself now, I have no negative talk, I feel I can.

SOMETIMES WE LIVE  
JUST TO BEAT THE ODDS.  
WE ALL LIVE IN THE SAME WORLD,  
I JUST GOT TO SEE  
MORE OF THE UNDERBELLY OF IT.  
HOW MUCH TIME DO WE HAVE?

MY WORLD IS SHRINKING  
AND THE FOUR HORSEMEN OF THE APOCALYPSE  
ARE COMING...  
THEY'RE NOT BRINGING FLOWERS,  
WHICH MAKES IT REALLY HARD FOR ME  
TO ORGANIZE MY DAY.

HOW MUCH TIME DO WE REALLY HAVE?  
HOW MUCH?  
REALLY.



## Dead to Me

Taking a journey deep through my emotions  
Multi personalities challenging my devotions  
Adversed in agony  
Hoping you will pray for me.

A mental breakdown  
I'm lost and full of hate now  
No escape for heaven's sake  
Tired of people being fake  
Out of time and out of my mind  
Spending my time out on the grind.

Why am I thinking all of these thoughts  
God, help me fill in the dots  
A pharmacological holocaust  
Never was in a place I was so lost.

End up another screaming victim  
My chances of finding love seems slim  
Everything is dead to me  
Lose touch with reality  
Everything is dead to me.

fucksakes  
oh for fucksakes, could it really be  
that everything previously experienced  
every bit of it really happened  
only in a reality which never actually was?  
like we didn't even exist  
our thoughts were just echoes, subversive hallucinations  
empty hallways bent into shapes  
weaving formless form into a round ball  
before whipping it into the stratosphere  
with my transcendent mind  
yes, that's pretty much all it would take  
to fade the pale where once was you  
the visual interpretation of a viral life form  
which received birth and re-entry inside of a nebula  
exploring star showers as your unsanctified beauty returns  
in the form of a deliciously alluring and provocative slut  
driven by insatiable lust and addictions to feed  
magnetically drawn towards fragmented souls moving effortlessly from one to the next  
dancing precariously in and out of a holographic universe  
absorbing the reverberating sounds of a predictive tone  
which each of us feels as dynamic vibrations  
sent down from a heaven created elect  
circumspect magnificence swept my heart away  
and now penitence is demanded from me  
even though your evanescence always haunts me  
in the blissful preponderance of my fucksakes

CRY MY LIFE AWAY

IN MY DREAMS WE MEET AGAIN,

I BREATHE HER BREATH, FEEL HER LOVE

I HOLD HER FACE LIKE A DOVE

FACE TO FACE I DO DISCOVER

THIS FACE I'VE LOVED FOREVER

IS THE POSSESSOR OF MY SOUL

THE WORLD IS OURS, IN THIS TIME

OUR WARMTH, OUR LOVE IS SO SUBLIME

OH HOW I CHERISH MY RESTLESS SLEEP

WHERE I DREAM & SOMETIMES WEEP

GOOD OL' DAYS & TIMES WERE ALWAYS FUN

SUCH WAS A LIFE, WE WERE FOREVER YOUNG

WHAT IS REALITY, EVEN ASLEEP

THE POWER OF LOVE MAKES ME WEEP

FULLY AWAKE I FEEL THE PAIN

LIVING A LIFE WITH NO MEANING OR GAIN

THE CHANCE OF DREAMS I'VE DISCOVERED

IS THE ONLY PLANE WHERE MY LIFE'S RECOVERED

AWAKE I FEEL GREAT LOSS & DISMAY

I WISH MY TEARS WERE BLOOD

SO I COULD CRY MY LIFE AWAY.

## LOVE

SO, WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT LOVE? I KNOW IT SO WELL. I'VE FALLEN IN IT, I'VE HAD IT, I HAVE LIVED IT AND NOW I MISS IT. THE WARMTH, THE AROMA, THE SNUZZLE. NOSE DEEP IN HER HAIR, CARESSING HER NECK, TICKLING HER EAR. BOTH OF US SHIVER. THE SHIVER THAT HAS OUR BREATH RISE & PEAK AT THE TOP OF OUR CHESTS AND THEN FALL WITH A SHUDDER. RELAXING INTO EACH OTHER, KNOWING THE WELCOMING EMBRACE. IT ALL MADE ME FEEL SO SECURE... AS I SIT HERE NOW AND THINK ABOUT IT - I WISH I WOULD HAVE DIED THERE IN HER EMBRACE. THE MELANCHOLY, THE LONELINESS, THE CHAOS, THE DAMAGE DONE. I SIT HERE LIKE AN INVALID, TRYING TO PLACE THE PIECES OF MY SHATTERED LIFE. I WAS PROUD, VALID & SATISFIED...

CALL ME ARROGANT OR SELF-RIGHTEOUS, I WON'T, I CAN'T SETTLE FOR ANYTHING LESS THAN WHAT I'VE HAD. I DO KNOW NOW AFTER THIS PROLONGED PERIOD SELF-LOATHING, BORN OF THE MOST COMPLETE & UTTER DEPRESSION, FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE DEEPEST PIT IN WHICH THE HUMAN SOUL CAN FIND ITSELF;

LOVE IS RARE AND BEAUTIFUL GIFT. IT CANNOT BE MANUFACTURED REGARDLESS OF HOW HARD YOU WISH OR TRY. WHAT DO I KNOW ABOUT LOVE? THE LOSS OF LOVE CAUSES CONFUSION & OUT OF THIS CONFUSION THERE CAN BE DESIRE... DESIRE FOR SELF-ANALYSIS, SELF-DESTRUCTION, SELF-PRESERVATION & FINALLY SELF-DETERMINATION. I REALIZED I AM A STRONGER & MORE COMPLETE HUMAN BEING FOR GOING THROUGH IT. I WOULDN'T & I WOULD RECOMMEND LOVE FOR EVERYONE TO EXPERIENCE THIS BITTERSWEET MADNESS.

LOVE...

TOO LATE I CAME TO KNOW  
THE EGO AS THE NATURAL ENEMY  
THE TREASURE OF A LOVE FREELY GIVEN  
THAT TRUE LOVE ALLOWS HONEST SHORTCOMINGS  
AND OVERCOMES LESSONS LEARNED  
THAT THE COST OF THE GIFT OF LOVE  
SQUANDERED, IS EVERYTHING.

AND NOW I'VE LIVED LONG ENOUGH  
TO BE THE WOUND...  
NO LONGER, THE WEAPON.

STAND STILL YOU EVER-MOVING  
SPHERES OF HEAVEN,  
THAT TIME MAY CEASE, AND  
MIDNIGHT NEVER COME.

TO-MORROW § TO-MORROW AND TO-MORROW  
CREEPS IN THIS PETTY PACE, FROM DAY TO DAY

## *Love*

*Love is friendship that has caught fire.*

*It is quiet understanding,*

*Mutual confidence, sharing and forgiving.*

*It is loyalty through good times and bad times.*

*It settles for less than perfection*

*And makes allowances for human weakness.*

*Love is content with the present,*

*It hopes for the future,*

*And it doesn't brood over the past.*

*It's the day-in and day-out chronicle of irritations,*

*Problems, compromises, small disappointments,*

*Big victories and working towards common goals.*

*If you have love in your life,*

*It can make up for a great many things that are missing.*

*If you don't have love in your life,*

*No matter what else there is, it's not enough.*

### **Rainbows...**

Lemons, limes, oranges and cherries. Raining from our sky  
The creation of wonder. How and why.  
Embrace on a shoreline  
Now looking back if only to sigh

### **Farewell...**

Night birds haunt your dreams from on high  
A new day unfolds the dawning of the morning lights  
Wild mountain flowers fluttering in the winds of bright blue sky.

### **Coyote...**

Our coyote brother will sing us all to sleep.  
Howling at the moon so dark and deep.  
The day's new beginnings he'll ever keep

### **Our summer holds...**

The red tipped blackbird seems to have become our conductor  
While golden chickadee's sing of what summer brings  
Emeralds and blues keep in tune from thier homes in the forest.  
The black masked bandits then fall into harmony with all the rest.

### **Shipwreck...**

Sun setting on our bay.  
Tossed by the sea.  
Waves roll on in.  
Sunbeams of hope break on through  
Setting sail for the mist you'll take the helm once again.  
Nothing ever missed

### **The darkness is your canvas...**

A visionary journey cascading through days gone by  
Celestial beings ever sharing your path  
The winding road of beauty captured within youro memories

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