

THE INSIDE SCOOP

Produced by the participants of the John Howard Society literacy program:
The best of prison literacy and art, created by inmates for inmates

September 2011

DEAR MAMA

I sit within these concrete walls
My world had crumbled
Yet you stand by me, most beautiful of all

I think back these 16 years
My college days, my paralegal career

How life can change
How quick one falls
Yet still you stood by me through the worst of it all

Since dad had passed, you've been so strong
All my regrets, I've done so wrong

You've given me strength
You've seen me through
Dear Mama, I've realized my true friend is you

I know Dad is looking down from the sky
He's shaking his head and wondering why

How could I be so foolish, so dumb
I was raised well where I came from

I've surely found me within this prison cell
I've done it all wrong, but I can still
make it well

This time I must be the daughter you need
This is how dad had left it
Dear Mama, it is just you and me

I can never bring back our cheated years
I can never dry up those crying tears

I can only now cherish our remaining days
And make the best of new memories
in so many ways

I've written this poem, solely for you
Please carry it with you and I'll carry mine too

There is now nothing that'll take me astray
I love you, I need you
Dear Mama, your friend's here to stay

I thank you for everything that you have done
It's never too late, a daughter you've won.

Sherri



We Have a Winner!

Congratulations to Sherri, the winner of the 2011
"Speaking Out From the Inside" Poetry
Contest! Read on for the many other very
talented winners and runners up!



THE JOHN HOWARD SOCIETY
OF MANITOBA, INC.

THE WEATHER MAN

I've been running like a river my whole life. When I was doing my time in Headingly it made me realize how much life I had ahead of me. How will I live it?

Will I do right? Will I break down and have a drink tonight? I think not, where would that take me, back to where the days are long and the nights are heavy. It was too much weight to carry on my shoulders not being able to watch my children getting older. Everybody makes mistakes, some are worse than others. I think a change for the best is what's in order.

So I'm changing with the seasons. I've been as dark as the winter for too long now. Now I'm as new as, as the springtime. I'm gonna shine like the summer. And I am never going to fall again.

It's been so damn long since I've been happy. When is enough enough and how am I supposed to know. The only thing I've done is walk out that door. I've always been a runaway kind of guy,



never dealing with my problems, always telling lies. My smile is nothing but a cheap disguise. How did I turn into this man that I despise? Sometimes I kick and scream and swear into the sky. And then think back to the beginning and I wonder why. I never really gave it a shot or even tried. I'm just a product of my own demise.

So I'm changing with the seasons. I've been as dark as the winter for too long now. Now I'm as new as, as the springtime. I'm gonna shine like the summer. And I am never going to fall again.

What can I do to make you see that it's true, that I'm changing? I won't leave you hanging anymore. I can see where I've been wrong now I'm gonna be strong I'm gonna pick up the pieces I've scattered on the floor.

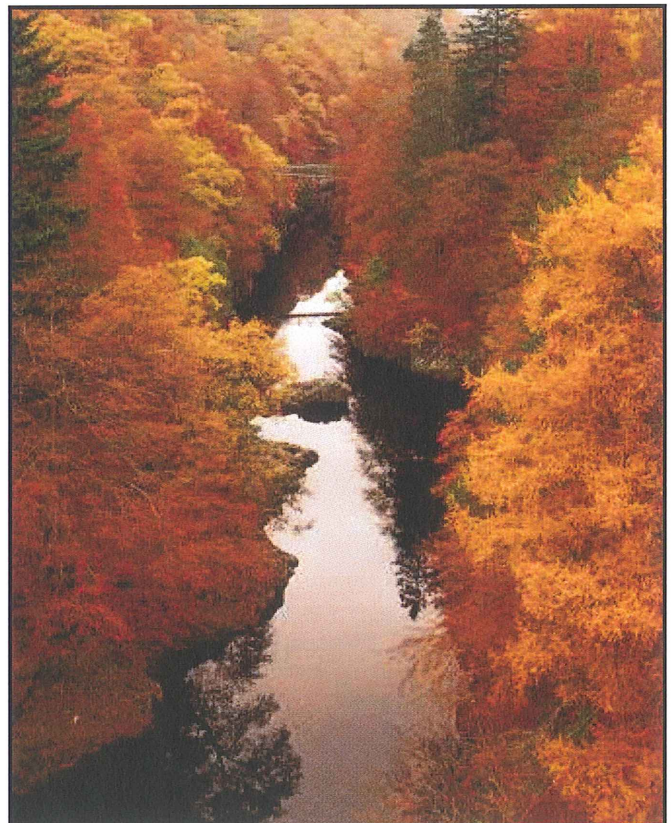
So I'm changing with the seasons. I've been as dark as the winter for too long now. Now I'm as new as, as the springtime. I'm gonna shine like the summer. And I am never going to fall again.

Christopher James Bennett

UNTITLED

Days go by, one by one,
Trapped in a cage, nowhere to run,
The same routine morning to night,
No grass, no trees, nor a flower in sight,
Concrete all around, beneath and above,
Cold to the touch, no presence of love,
Fences and wire, night lit up as day,
A hundred black eyes, making sure we stay,
Is this a dream, or is it real?
Hopeless and alone, is how I feel.

"Guilty Until Proven Innocent"



HONOURABLE MENTIONS

UNTITLED

The power is in our hands
To triumph over struggle.
Thunder past shame and indignity
But remember the gift.
Search deep within yourselves
To find the light.
For when we use this light
We allow others to do the same

Kevin/Two-standing

REQUIEM FOR A PLANET

The pilot guided his spacecraft down
Through the viscous, swirling sky
The total destruction already clear
From a hundred miles high

His crewmates gazed with wonder and awe
At the scorched and battered land
Nothing but carbon and acres of glass
Where there should have been forests and sand

After landing the team suited up
To explore the hostile terrain
They knew no living thing could survive
The seething soil and the toxic rain

Their mission since finding this barren world
Where water and life should have been;
Why was it poisoned and hostile and black
When it should have been fertile and green

The clues are all around them
Before long the mystery is solved
This planet once was teeming with life
Till the dominant species evolved

Their technology stripped the planet bare
All nature's resources depleted
But still they refused to reign in their greed
Till the rape had been completed

Send Us Your Stuff!

Got poetry, artwork, stories, letters or jokes
you want to see in print?

Send them to:

The John Howard Society's Inside Scoop
583 Ellice Avenue
Winnipeg, MB
R3B 1Z7

The oceans turned to a toxic brew
On the land the animals died
They refused to listen
To those who knew
In the name of progress
The truth was denied

Under the weight
Of relentless abuse
The biosphere had collapsed
Since the start of the runaway greenhouse effect
A thousand years had elapsed

They discovered the name of the species
Who had turned abundance to dearth
They once had called themselves human
And had once called their planet Earth

Robert Ehinger



HONOURABLE MENTION

GOT PROGRAMMED

Layin here, every nite on the floor on my mat
My mind's goin in all directions
Don't know what to think, to feel or even
How 2 act in certain situations
Got programmed
Slowly losin control of myself
So unsure of my darkened future
Uncertain of what layz ahead
Why worry? I don't care.
Got programmed.
Can't taste or feel the freedom no more
What iz it?
2 immune 2 what the system offers
Living like a robot being programmed
How to respond to the onez in blue
Who am I?... Just a number
A dummy to fuck wit – 2 release all their
Stress and anger
Don't know what to think or what to do
How do I feel? Don't know, got used to it...
The verbal and emotional abuse
Don't know whatz wrong or right no more
Can't feel it – got programmed
Can't show no pain, no anger, no tears or even
Joy. Like a robot.
I don't even feel like a real person. No more
No heart, no emotions and no tears, 2 numb 2
Realize each day whatz real
I'm just a numbered inmate, a programmed
Puppet to kick around 'til I expire.

Star B.



FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome readers, to the special fall edition of the *Inside Scoop*! Ever since we started running our poetry contest three years ago, the September edition has been devoted to showcasing all of the entries, including the winning poems.

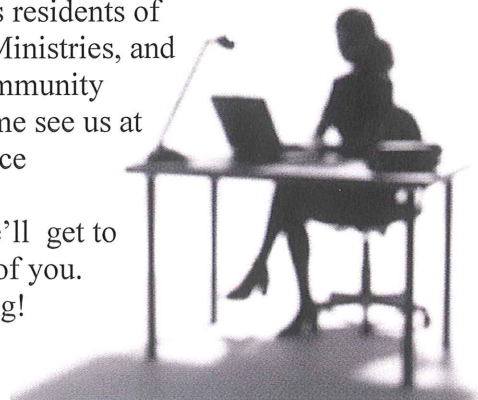
Our judging team wants you to know that they absolutely agonized over picking these poems! There were dozens of amazing entries and it was almost heartbreaking to have to narrow them down. Thanks to our celebrity judges: novelist Jake MacDonald, author of *Juliana and the Medicine Fish*; Cree poet and storyteller Duncan Mercredi; and Lyall Catagas and Neewa Mason from Segweh, a local rock band who have won numerous awards, including Best Rock Album at the 2010 Native American Music Awards.

Winners of the contest receive gift certificates to local bookstore McNally Robinson, and will also have their poems featured on Segweh's website. If you didn't get to enter a poem this year, or you entered but weren't chosen a winner, stay tuned for next year's contest. We usually announce it in the spring edition of the *Scoop*, and accept entries right up until the middle of August.

And of course, if you've got a poem (or story, or letter, or editorial, or drawing) that you want to see in print as soon as possible, don't hesitate to submit it to the *Inside Scoop*. This newsletter is published four times per year by the John Howard Society literacy program, a program that helps inmates and former inmates with their reading and writing.

Our literacy program is currently working with folks on the fourth floor at Winnipeg Remand Centre, as well as residents of Forward House Ministries, and anyone in the community who wants to come see us at our office on Ellice Avenue.

Hopefully we'll get to work with some of you.
Happy reading!

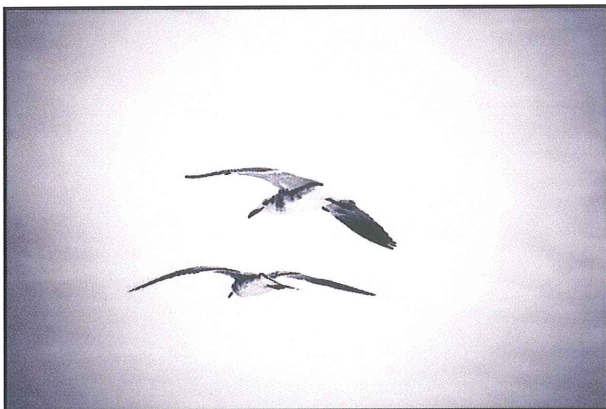


POETRY

LOVE

Is love a word or a feeling?
When I think of it I can't find a meaning
I know it's something I want to find.
Something I would cherish if it were mine
But if I did find it
I don't know if I'd be able to pull through
Sometimes I wonder
Would it be my saviour,
Or would it be my plunder?
Would it strike me as if it were thunder?
Would it be something that heals me,
Or would it be something that kills me?
Let me tell you you're as beautiful as a dove
So please be truthful when I ask you about love
We're locked in something like a cage
and there
A lot of rage of just wanting to be free
Like two birds over the sea
But I can't leave, I got to live this life as
a slave
If one day you were granted a wish, what
would it be?
Would you wish to be free
Or would you stay with me?
That's when I ask
Is love just a word
Or is it a feeling
Cause when I think of it
I can't find a meaning.

Boone



BABY I'M SORRY

I loved your love
I miss your hugz and kiss
Thought 'z thinking of you make'z me reminisce
I never ever in my life felt so free
When you were beside me
Honestly sometimes I shed a tear
Wishing you were here
I take full responsibility for my mistakes
I take full responsibility for your heartbreak
Forgive is not a sin
Forgiveness is a win
Forgive you'll never lose
Forgiveness makes you more humble in you

Silence

MY EVERYTHING

You mean the stars, the moon, the planets,
the heavens
And anything and everything I fail to mention
You're the highest mountain, the deepest ocean,
The air I breathe, the ground I walk on,
The sun after it rains that makes flowers bloom and
blossom
You're everything great, everything awesome
My good side, the gleam in my eye
The very reason I smile
You're my pride, my glory,
My life, my story
That can't stop, won't stop
You're above it all, posted on top
Higher than the highest buildings,
highest antenna
You're my best friend,
my homie, my one love,
my bandana.

Big Bad Lance



WHAT A CHILD GOES THROUGH

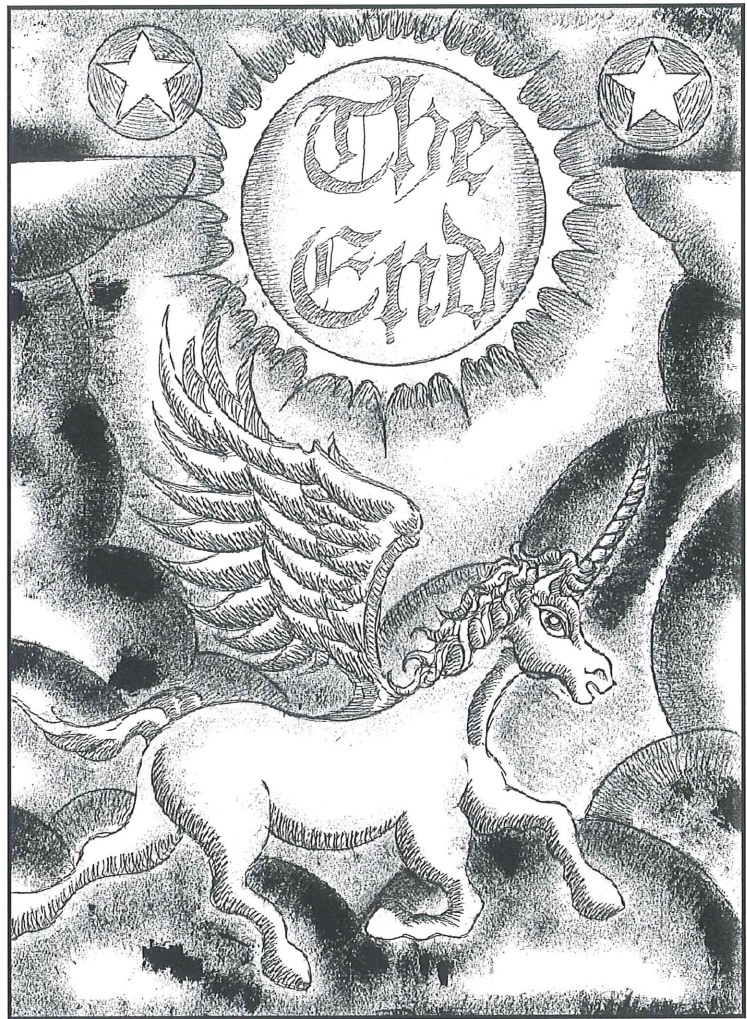
What a child goes through
is hard to explain
We've been through stress
anger, hurt and pain
Adults know what a child
goes through

Because you see, they've been
through it, too
What a child goes through
is sometimes
insane
Sometimes people offer us
drugs like cocaine

And now and again
on scary nights
We hear sirens and gunshots
because of gang fights

Death takes family
and friends
Divorce takes
them too
Oh, if you
only knew
what a child
goes through.

Gigglez (Loud Mike)



Artwork by SKETCH

INSIDE

Inside my head I see a vision,
outside I see a prison.
Four walls as far as I see,
locking me away.

The picture is nice, but not real.
The one outside is cruel and demented.

Picture perfect world, I think I'm visually defected.

The two become one, madness is fun,
but only if you know it's for real.

Hallucinations of grandeur, reality is no splendour,
I think I'll stay inside to play.

Willie L. Couture

OUR HEARTS

Our half hearts stitched together
Through the bars with barbed wire leather
Bleeding from the gaping wound
Drinking it until we are consumed
A dance of dark doves
Seeking in one another for our great love
Two of a kind
Up in the clouds leaving all others behind
Despicable dark angels love blind
Waging war on the kingdoms
of heaven and hell
Evening the score for all the times we fell
No one there to catch us
But always strong on the surface
Now my wings will catch your fall
My arms will hold you tight when you bawl
Taking your pain as quick as it came
We will put all others to shame
For we are good, we are evil
But most important, we are real
Someday our kiss will seal
The way we feel
My love is great
And hopefully so is...
Our fate.

Robert McLeod
AKA Big Rob



HARD 2 LOVE A G

Babi I cold neva turn my head and call u a stranger
It's hard 2 love a G, I can clearly C.
I pray each and everyday, dat u won't lay wit tha
dead,
days gettin' deadlier, so baby u gotz 2 b careful.
I'm in love wit a Gangsta and dat how it b.
No matter tha situation, I'm by ur side, cuz I'm
ur down ass shaty and datz how it gon' b.
Foolish tears runnin' from my brown eyes, itz 4 in
tha mornin' and I still haven't hurried of u.
You awt wid boiz in tha streetz all alone,
Somethin' inside tellin' me, somethin might b wrong.
Wat am I 2 do when I got a thug 4 a man, there's
so many things day is hard 2 comprehend.
Baby u kno' it's hard 4 me not 2 hear ur voice,
U kno' it's hard 2 find a guy like u in dis world 2
trust. That's why I gave u my heart and everythin I am
and 2 kno'! Lettin' u do wat u wanna do, but u alwayz
stay true. You have 2 trust dat you'll fit, datz
why I gave u my heart babez,
neva find a man like u in dis
world, u my Gangsta boo, I'm yo G-babi.
My life is so isn't life wid awt u, it's sooo cold.
Neva leave ur side, neva show no fear!
You always show me u care, love u babez,
cuz datz how it gon b.

2 "Woody", from "Beezee"

DRIFTING APART

So we left without explaining to each other but whatever I came to terms that we're not meant to be together. As I sit here wondering where did we go wrong it was me that really tried to make things work. But you out of all people let this relationship fall apart with your cheating ways and you let this ladie down in so many ways. And now here I am picking up all the pieces you left behind and also stuck with a broken heart but that's alright cause in the end you're the one I left behind. So now all I have left is my pride and joy and that's what gets me through every day that goes by. I'm fed up with your bullshit and can't stand your cheating lies so baby boy I'm sorry to say my love belongs to some other guy. You used to be my gorgeous gangster I didn't care about any other dick, I just wanted to be your down ass chick. So this part right here goes out to her: so listen up here's what I gots to say. You should of left me and my man alone just let us be cause we both know in the end he only loved me. But whatever I knew I had my doubts now I'm the one that's fucken dipping outs.

Cha-Doll Young

STUDENT ART



WHEN IT'S YOU

How can I move forward
When it's you I need
How can I look at him
When it's you I see
How can my heart heal
When it's you that bleeds
How can I say enough is enough
When it's you that's fed up
How can I still love you
When it's you that no longer loves me
But wait. How can I be so selfish
When it's you that I want to be happy
Even if it's not with me.

Telly

CHAINED UP INSIDE

I sit in a room of four walls, and a steel door.
But still I feel free? For I am chained up mentally
With no reason to believe
I'm stuck here inside, deep in my thoughts, I'm
Trying to see through these blind spots.
I feel like a slave, trapped in my dreams
My crime plays a role burning into me
There's a smile on my face, but hate in my eyes
Pushing my hate within, out and into this disguise
I put on a smile and laugh at stale jokes
No one knows how I feel, guards don't
even know
I can't trust anyone, to tell them in truth
Or they'll have me in seg, in a barney suit
Mide as well say I'm happy, hide it with a smile
I'm good at that, building it up, hold it in for
awhile
Time to take a deep breath and walk out these
doors
I wake up and realize the door is still closed
It's cold and quiet, when I wake from this daze
I remember how to breathe and think, "It's only a
phase."
Life is yet to come.

Tess Cook

SLEEP OF DEATH

I feel like taking the sleep of death.
My heart feels empty, and my spirit is broken.
Life seems hopeless and nothing enlightens me.
The emptiness that floods my soul
causes me to see no light in any direction.
I want to be happy, but am dragged down
into the abyss that awaits us all.
Doom is bound in my blood,
and bitterness entangles my dreams.
The roots of peace have left
and my enemies surround me in all directions.
I want to be strong, but my strength is drained
Like a wild shower cleansing the earth.
Deep darkness covers me like a cloud,
And I've nowhere to run.
I run, I hide behind every corner.
But the plague of death finds me,
And overshadows my life with pure hate.
There is no relief in what I feel.
There's no escape in things I try.
It seems bitterness of life will drown me
and steal my soul forever.
Why should I beg any longer
When destruction is my sure fate?
Why should I struggle any longer
When victory awaits me?
My life is dying slowly, and my integrity
shows me
There is nothing in sight that will shine light in
my life again.
I will bow down and close my eyes forever.
I will sleep "The Sleep of Death"
once and for all,
In Hades I will rest, eternally yours

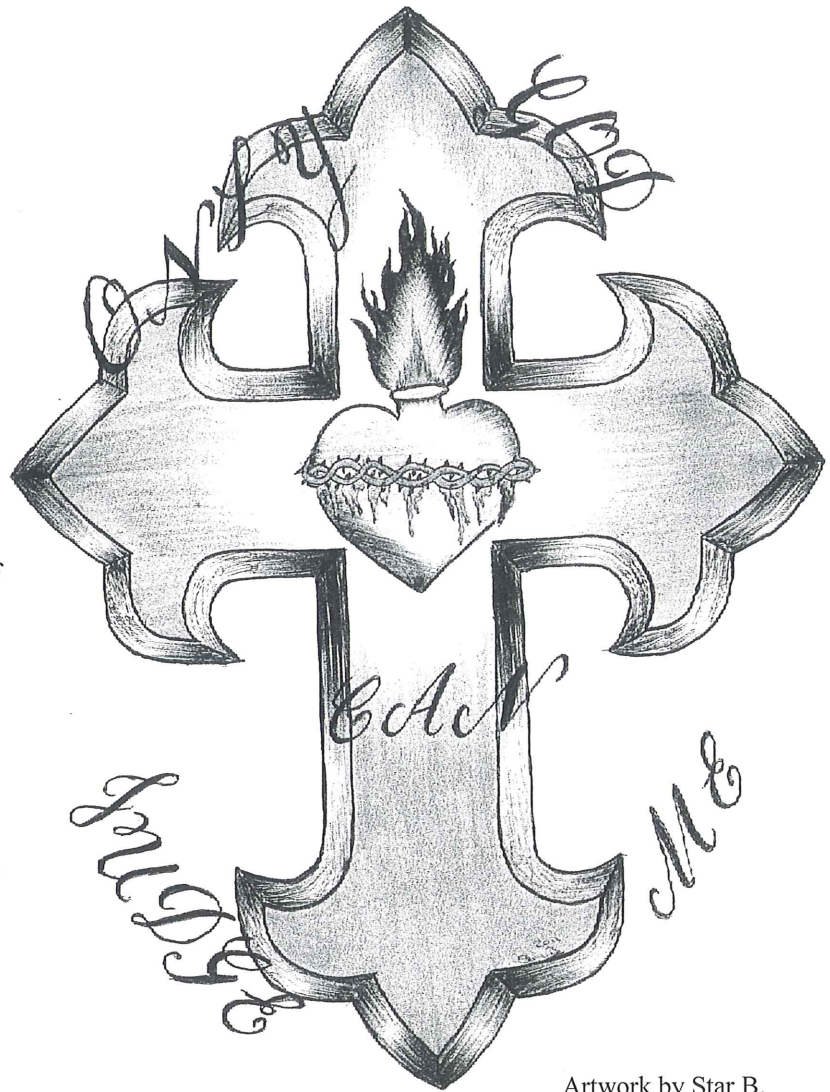
Redcloudthundersky AKA Ojibwe



THE PRISONER LIVING IN ME

So confused with nowhere to run
My thoughts are killing me inside,
weighing me down like a ton.
I feel like I'm being held captive,
in my own body and mind,
Always looking for the right place to
hide.
and never knowing what tomorrow's
gonna bring.
Tomorrow's here and look what it
brought...
An evil little girl trapped in her own
thoughts.
Someone save me from hurting myself
She says I need to change from
my destructive ways.
So she searchez in her soul for the
right path, only feeling God's wrath,
And she comes to find a light, a bright
light shining in the night.
She sees what it is, it's our
Lord Jesus Christ!
Taking all the darkness and evil away.
Praying that one day she will be set
free, free from being the prisoner,
the prisoner living in me!

Leanne Mae Daniels

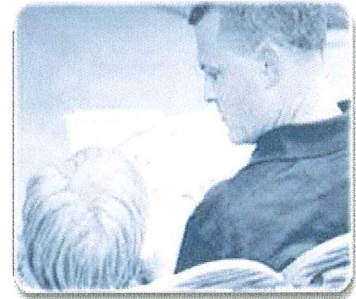


Artwork by Star B.

Hey Dads, Want to Read to Your Kids From Jail?



The John Howard Society has a story-books-on-tape program, where fathers in Remand Centre can record themselves reading a story, and send the recording and book to their child (or niece or nephew, or little brother or sister...).



The program is free and open to everyone, as long as you don't have a no-contact order relating to your child or child's caregiver, and as long as your child's caregiver consents to the gift.

If you are interested, contact Jacquie Nicholson at 775-1514 ext. 303, or write "Get the Story Out Program" on a green request form and send it to John Howard Society. (For female readers, Elizabeth Fry Society offers a similar program. Contact them at 589-7335).

SOBER AND REALIZING

Thinking about how life used to be
Being locked up has made me finally see
All of the things I could've had
Missing out on so much, it just makes me sad
I do believe this is another chance in life
To think twice before I pick up another knife
So much in life I have done wrong
Being sober and realizing, I have to be strong
To stay away from alcohol or drugs
I was just trying to fit in with the ones
they call thugs
I got to change the person I was trying to be
Because now for that I'm paying a fee
Wishing I can go back and try to change my past
Being in jail, has made the years go by so fast
What I did I just can't take back
So much guilt that has been packed
All I can do right now is just do my time
For this damn fucked up crime

*Andrea Bunn
Aka Andy*

CHOICES

Sometimes we might use and abuse drugs
Mama said pick your friends wisely
but don't choose thugs.
Maybe your thinking that your limits gone sour
Lose track of time as minutes seem like hours.
Another repeat, your knee deep in it
with no power
Life's far from easy but they say death is
The mind is so reckless when it's not
thinking clear
Popping X for breakfast, along with
drinking beer
You'll assume it's all fine
but you crossed the line
I've been down this road but never lost my mind
Block out the voice that wants a hit
You have a choice if you want to quit
Either way, I gotta say life's a bumpy ride
But I got nothing to hide because at this moment
I'm speaking out from the inside.

Ozzy Mink

BYE BYE

On a scale from A to Z, I'm G-rated, to most I'm
hated,
Strictly for explicit content, so gangsta my mom
resents, everything I represent,
But it's my life, therefore she respects my
shady side,
B-cuz I'm her only boy soldier, now that her
baby boy's life is over,
Taken away by a couple shots, mistaken for
something he was not,
For everything I am, what I am, he paid in full,
goddamn.
Now I'm forever in his debt, I'll pay till death,
with the chin checks and billaz
I'm like December get the chin chillaz
For my heart's frosted, so cold I lose it, my mind,
my conscience, look what is costed,
My only brother, from another, mother fuckin'
dead beat,
Now all I ever wanna be is a better Dad,
something growing up we never had,
Something like a superman, whose S on the chest
doesn't represent solid, cuz he on the bottle,
From the bottom of my heart, I know I should
have been a better role model from the start.

Tenacity

SLEEPLESS NIGHTS

To you my dear, my heart so true
I know right now you're feeling blue
Even though you're far away
In my heart you're here to stay.

All the walls are crumbling down
I cry at night without a sound
My mind is racing my thoughts are fast
I really don't know how long I'll last.

I close my eyes and I see your face
It takes me from this horrible place
I'm fighting all the terrible pain
I know I'll be with you again.

Rob

TRANSPIRE MY JARGON

"In bold printing," one poem it said to enter,
let's devise it as four and all sit in the center
Fundamentals and prevail on grand adventures,
to instil, flourish, and transcend from this cell
Perpendicular I fell.

"No need for recognition my ideology is"
Isn't it sincere to excel and sustain life
we all have to work together?

Expand mind depth things will get better!

Our anthropology, no one is perfect, one life,
one earth for the children it's worth it.

The ability to instil change we all carry,
different opinions, different ideas,
but indifferent we aren't, says my skeleton.

Good orderly directions come as a mission, or missions

At least reading this caused eardrums to listen!

Which stem from high concentrate of peripheral vision.

One day someone sincere will say,

we all have the choice of doing things in a right way,

To the creator I pray, mind powers to share,

our quote of the day:

"Equality and those who represent integrity!"

Siyisi Dene, By the People, For all People



Need Some New Duds?

If you're getting out of jail and
need some new-to-you clothes,
call our reintegration
department at 775-1514 about
the JHS Clothes Closet.



We've got
jackets, shoes,
shirts and
pants,
especially in
larger sizes.

UNTITLED

I need a fan, a bowl and some matches
Let me cleanse, let me cleanse
I feel freedom once again

Through smoke I find hope
Make sure I don't choke
The smell is in my coat

The elders find the smudge
For me and my buddies just a bunch of
thugs
We sit in a circle and hug

The rest of the world got its culture
This is a Native American practice
And I am the follower

I pray to god and the Creator
I ask for forgiveness
And to live forever

I need a fan, a bowl and some matches
Let me cleanse, let me cleanse
I feel freedom once again.

Erik Flamand

WHY I LOVE YOU

I don't think you'll ever understand
The way you make me feel
Even though it might not always show
I swear to you that it is real

I laugh all the time
You make me smile more than you know
And whenever it's time to say goodbye
I just can't let you go

If I seem a little attached
Or maybe just close
It's because I'm scared to lose you
The girl that I love the most

I can sit in there every night
And stare at the ceiling
But no words come to mind
When I try to describe this feeling about you

When you leave the house
And I simply cannot explain
How every second that you're gone
I completely go insane

When you say those words to my face and
Touch my skin when you look into my eyes
I can't describe this trance you put me in

It's you that comes to mind
When I think of being happy
Any other girl from the distant past
Means absolutely nothing to me

I like you for not only who you are
But who I am with you
I like you for what you're making of yourself
And what you're making of me

You bring out a side of me
I never thought I knew
The simple kisses on the lips send secret smiles
The way we look at each other
Our love will be worthwhile and well
Never be breaking, love that will last forever.

Allen Wuss

NO TITLE

Don't know where to start, I guess from the heart
All I know is this jail is making us fall apart.
Your heart seems so cold,
These games are getting old,
Your negative talk is pushing me away,
Don't let that light fade,
I admit I've done wrong, I've stepped up to the plate,
Now won't ya forgive and forget if not grab ya gear
and skate,
Cause I ain't down for part-time lovin', instead of
putting me at the top
You decide to fuck with my head while I'm locked up,
Time to give your head a shake
Cause baby you're the icing on my cake
Start treating me like your queen, your lover,
your best friend
Put a rock on this finger so you can have me till
the end.
When I heard your voice you give me that tingly
sensation,
You're my hope, my love, my motivation
Call me a ruffer,
I'm just missing when we was together
Confusing me saying it's me and you forever
Then flipping it and sayin we're done
Damn baby brush it off and put me back number 1
Locked behind these walls, still tryna give you my all,
So please no hater conversation when I call,
Wanna give you my love,
to wake with you by my side
Bodies together feeling your heartbeat with mine,
So please baby don't let the past, this jail, the time, tear
us apart
Cause all I wanna do
is hold it down
and love you
with all my heart...

Am-Roberts



THE ONE

This is to the One who takes the air out of my lungs
Who brought me into the light when I was down in the slums
Who took me into her home cause she knew what was best
It was like a bullet filled with black smoke that caused a pain in my chest.

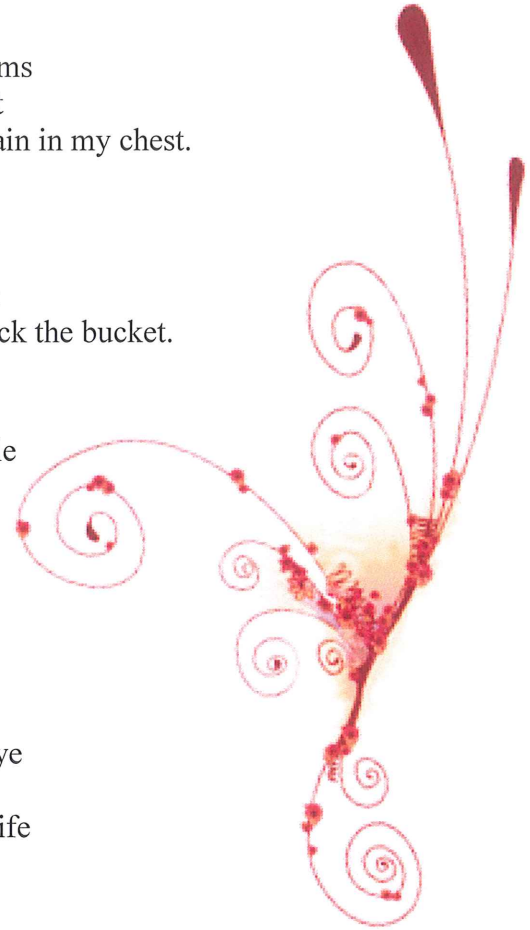
This is to the One who took the screaming and pain
From the jealousy-fueled fights that created such a flame
From the times we would walk out and wanna just shrug it
You'd be the only thing on my list for when I croak and kick the bucket.

This is to the One who liked to flex her muscles
I wish I woulda listened when you wanted to stop my hustle
But now it's too late and I'm doing a three-to-five
Believe me when I say I'm sorry,
it's coming from the goodness inside.

This is to the One who seen right through the darkness
Who took the hatred out of me and built up some arches
To stand underneath and look up into the sky
With rain rolling down her cheeks and that crystal in her eye
From the time we met till the day we die
I whisper in her ear, you're the only woman I want in my life

And finally,
This is to the One who has an aura that's glowing
With a hard hardened heart
for what's up and coming but not knowing
So to end this poem with words so true
Coming from the bottom of my heart, baby I love you.

Chris Yetman AKA Twist



FORGIVENESS

Can forgiveness be good or bad?
Can it make us happy or just really sad.
I don't know, I've not learned the art of
forgiving people that have ripped me apart.
I've never been good at letting things
go, when others just seem to go with the
flow, I hold things right down deep inside
and walk about pretending to be full
of pride. But I have no pride, and no
forgiveness, I've never been treated like
some little princess. No one has ever
put my life at ease, so why the fuck
should I live to please? So forgiveness
what is it? How does it work? When
all my life has been full of hurt
But I'm still here to live another
day and the art of forgiveness comes
my way.

Shanastene McLeod AKA Sassy

Sincere

A father and son story

There was a father and a son purposefully sitting side by side one another, enjoying a summer day in the inner-city of Winnipeg. The son, age seven and with an abundance of questions, asks why the earth is the way it is, with regards to the bad things he sees and hears.

The father, who grew up without his own father to look for guidance and who now wings it as one himself, answers to the best of his knowledge in little people talk: "There are humans who don't understand why life is so important. Earth is being treated without respect and consideration and not really knowing it's all we have to show for life, disdain."

"Why?" the boy says.

"Water," replies the father. "It's the essence of life and most important thing on our planet, but in time there will not be enough for everyone. Never waste it – 'blue gold' – and show great care for it, assiduous. Food: imagine there was only six kids in your class, and one was always hungry, hardly any food at home to eat."

"Air," he continues.

"What do you mean?" the boy says.

"Older people make it smell bad. That's why I told you about energy – the green kind."

"Like my favourite colour?"

"Yes, like your favourite colour."

"If it was always used, the air would be different."

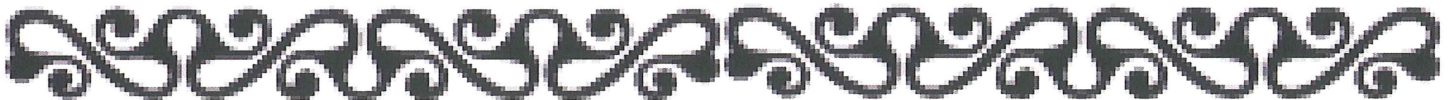
"Oh!" the boy said, still listening.

The fathers says, "The three R's – remain ready and remember my teachings. J.M.K. Elementary School taught a kid the three R's once, back in 90-91, and he was given an Inner City Voice Award for his message, out of his whole school. Age 12 he was; you're seven now, and now you have to care about the earth."


The boy says, "I think kids should take care of the earth!"

"My boy, you will. Just be sincere..."


Love Dad, 2011



THE MIRACLE



I'm gonna put my best foot forward to pave my daughter a golden road
This ain't about me no more it's about that miracle that happened 6 years ago
A miracle that graced this earth to teach passion to a man that was heartless
to teach structure to a man that is foolish to shine light in a man's darkness
to be that hope when hopeless seemed much easier than to get on his feet
she is that help up her frail body has strength the visual eye cannot see
I've searched high and low for answers and the answer was next to me in a crib
It took me countless thoughts in a jail cell to see the real truth in this kid
The future is an empty canvas and it's on us humans to paint a beautiful picture
with her gracious spirit she is the ink I'm just there to assist her
So with that my daughter Nevaeh Lexi is the miracle that saved a man's soul
I'm gonna put my best foot forward to pave my daughter a golden road...



Monty AKA Bad Conscience

I'M SORRY

It's not only me that I've hurt
I had a brother once but he's lost
Too much drugs and alcohol
I hit rock bottom
I'm back in here
Where I once before
Wanting to leave
Knowing I'm sitting here
Behind these cold steel green doors
And cold walls
For those I've hurt
I'm truly sorry
I feel what you feel
In a different way
By living here where
All I seem to see
Is hate and anger
Jealousy and danger
Worse than the outs
The loss of my little bro
Give me the grieve
And took it on drugs and alcohol for help
I hope I change my pride
Before I rest in peace like my nation
Knowing I'll be missed with tears
Sorry for hurting you

RTM #15

FEAR NOTHING SECRET HEART

From the corner of my eye
False memory seizes the night.
Blamed a murderer, must fear nothing.
Dragon tears hideaway, trying hard
To get through my days.
Cold fire inside,
This is a bad place.
With twilight eyes I watch the lightning
Midnight passes on by.
Strangers with masks seep into my head,
Only one speaks, "when dark falls,
your enemies will call".
It sends cold shivers up my spine,
Which begins to make me shiver.
Please let this be a dream!
My heart gives up dark rivers, strange highways,
And shattered tears.
What does this mean? Tick-tock goes the clock.
Intensity strikes the nerves.
The eyes of darkness come from a shadowy fire,
When it reaches my feet, I fall to my knees
and ask myself,
Could this be some sort of fear? Face it I will.
My eyes open, damn! It was a dream.
But still blamed a murderer.

Traper P. Cook

JHS's Reintegration Department Anger Management, Parenting and Employment Information

The John Howard Society of Manitoba offers programs and services to all clients who are unsure of the resources available to them, who need to know who to contact, and for those who need guidance. These programs are available to them while they are incarcerated or after they have been released. It lets them know how they can use their time in jail productively rather than simply "doing time". Staff and volunteers offer support and guidance, often referring clients to community programs and specific assistance provided by the Society. Contact Linda at 775-1514, ext. 308.



THE JOHN HOWARD SOCIETY
OF MANITOBA, INC.