

Cheers Dad

When I was young my dad said to me
Stick with me son
We'll live a life of crime
The moneys great
But you might do some time
So here I am sat in my cell
I'm on basic
So all I've got is a light and a bell
But what's worse and really sad
It's the safest home
I've ever had
Cheers dad thanks a lot
You are so crap
But you're all I've got
So put pen to paper and drop me a line
Because compared to you
I've turned out fine
Callum Dunn - HMP Exeter

Words

Words are my weapon
Words are my shield
No fists, no fights
No armour do I wield
Words are all I have here
They keep me plodding on
Words are here forever
When all I have is gone
The clothes that I stand up in
Are all that I possess
No house, no home, no nothing
Not even an address
Not long ago, four months or so
It all came to an end
And now that I have nothing
The words they are my friends
Laura Coghlin - HMP Eastwood Park

These Days

The years have run
Their journey over me
Too hard and far, too fast now
I'm sorry our love wasn't built stronger
Time to forget my past and end my aimless wanderings
I'm an uneducated man that dreamt my life away
The nets closing in
I can see the four corners now
There are far too many lows these days
Do not put your trust in me to save you
I will only let you down again
My promises will succumb to nothing
Look at the horizon for that is your destiny
Goodbye my promises

Matthew Coleman - HMP Leeds

insidepoetry

voices from prison



PRESS RELEASE

Inside Poetry - voices from prison

Inside Poetry - Voices from Prison is a collection of 205 poems by 170 prisoners selected from over 2,000 poems submitted to the prison newspaper *Inside Time* between March 2009 and May 2010.

In her foreword to the book, Poet Laureate Carol Ann Duffy writes:

To read this anthology is to be taken in to the heart and soul of the prison system in this country and to take the living pulses of its inmates. Individually, the poems offer up single voices; but cumulatively they become a huge, human, hurting chorus that we should all listen to with the greatest of attention and humility.

The poetry section and supplements in *Inside Time* have become hugely popular. The contributors come from different backgrounds and have different educational abilities. Some are working with writers in residence and produce professional copy, some scribble on scraps of paper. Each poem expresses heartfelt emotion, often filled with love for a partner or child, accompanied by pain and regret. Some manage to find humour in their situation. All offer unique insights.

Inside Time is proud to publish this second volume of prisoner poetry. We hope it will not only be read inside prison but also attract readers outside.

Inside Poetry – Voices from Prison will be launched on National Poetry Day Thursday 7th October 2010 and available for sale £9.99. Copies will be donated to all UK prison libraries free of charge and available at a discount price direct from *Inside Time*. It will also be available through all the usual high street and online channels.

Inside Time the national 'not for profit' newspaper for prisoners distributes over 55,000 copies of each monthly issue free of charge throughout the UK prison estate and sent to many prisoners held overseas. *Inside Time* also has a growing online readership with over 30,000 unique visitors to www.insidetime.org each month and accessing from over 80 different countries.



**BARONESS
HELENA
KENNEDY QC**

“ Over many years of contact with prisoners I have often received cards containing carefully honed verse. It is one of the secrets of prison life that poetry flourishes in such unlikely soil. Poetry gives people permission to write about experiences that are intimate and sometimes painful - the best and worst aspects of life - without the constraints that are felt in letter or essay writing. That liberation from prose allows truth and authentic feelings to emerge in an intensely moving way. Inside Poetry is a wonderful celebration of creativity and the triumph of the human spirit over adversity ”



**ERWIN
JAMES**
(writer and
ex-prisoner)

“ Anyone looking for an authentic flavour of what prison life really means for those who have to live it need look no further than this powerful new collection from Inside Time. Normally hidden from the world and each other - the pieces in this book reveal the most private thoughts and feelings of the people who make up the incarcerated community across our penal estate. Within these pages are cries full of hurt, laughter, rage and hope and all deserve to be heard ”



WILL SELF
(Novelist &
Broadcaster)

“ A scintillating and moving collection of verse - Shelley said that poets were the unacknowledged legislators, these ones don't even have the vote, but that doesn't stop them contributing to an urgent debate ”

Innocence, Interrupted

I found myself in the city
With crowds of people but no friends;
I moved from shadows of darkness
To lanterns and neon lights
Taunted, tempted by sensual voices
From four corners of the street
Pockets empty, pulse racing
A stranger to love torn nights
Breathless with guilty pleasure
My country life disrupted
For I was just a boy
My innocence, interrupted.

N. Jarrett - HMP Swaleside

Imagine If ...

Imagine if all violence just stopped tomorrow
Thieves stopped stealing and decided to borrow
Shoplifters walked in shops to put things back
Drug dealers destroyed their crack and smack
Prostitutes chose not to sell themselves
Fraudsters went legal to obtain wealth
Ram raiders ceased smashing up stores
Counterfeit goods weren't produced anymore
Armed robbers hung up balleys and didn't do blags
Muggers left alleys and stopped snatching bags
Banned drivers turned off engines and chose to wait
Kids were safe playing outside even if it was late
Guns and knives were all destroyed
Nuisance neighbours turned down that noise
Then we as people would be more respected
Shops wouldn't need cameras or store detectives
Doors wouldn't be locked because there are no burglars
Mothers wouldn't lose anymore sons through gangland murders
Junkies would progress positively 'cause they'd stay clean
Courts could do away with affrays and sec 18's
Towns and cities wouldn't have red light districts
Kerb crawlers, peeping toms or misfits
You wouldn't need an alarm on a car or building
We wouldn't have to worry as much about the safety of our children
Right across the board insurance prices would fall
You wouldn't wonder if it's a con when you answer a call
I for one wouldn't go out on the rob
Police and screws, what would they all do for a job?

Matthew Brown - HMP Onley



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insidetime
the National Newspaper for Prisoners