

# CAPTURED WORDS

*Free Thoughts*



a publication of  
Urban/Champaign  
Books for Prisoners



The Poetry Workshop

at the Champaign County Jail

Vol. 3 Prison Arts Festival  
Spring 2007

# The Second Annual Champaign-Urbana Prison Arts Festival

April 20-21, 2007

Sponsored by the University of Illinois  
Center on Democracy in a Multiracial Society

## Friday, April 20, 8:00 PM Art Opening and Dance Party

Come view art made by prisoners from around the state of Illinois. Heartbreaking and funny, gorgeous and ugly, forgiving and accusing, terrifying and joyous, the art speaks to the humanity and potential of those the state chooses to warehouse. Follow your art viewing by shaking the night away with Desafinado, a Brazilian dance band.

## Saturday, April 21, 1:00-3:00 PM Film Screening of Mario's Story

*Mario's Story* is an award-winning film chronicling Mario Rocha's long road to justice. Falsely accused, wrongfully convicted, and unjustly imprisoned, Mario nonetheless used his time in California prisons to become a renowned poet, essayist, and activist. Then, after ten years of imprisonment, lawyers and activists finally won his release. Filmed on location in California prisons, and full of interviews with leading activists and artists, *Mario's Story* demonstrates how, despite overwhelming odds, institutional racism, and the trials and tribulations of gang-related life in Los Angeles, one young man chose a path of dignity and honor. Discussion following the film will be led by Susan Koch, the director of the film.

## Saturday, April 21, 4:00-5:30 PM Town Forum on the "Schools-to-Prisons Pipeline"

In a country where increasing numbers of young people end up with a prison record rather than a high school diploma, some activists have begun identifying a Schools-to-Prisons Pipeline. What are the consequences when resource starved schools turn to law enforcement to deal with discipline issues and manage students? Local school reform activist, Imani Bazell and Professor Erica Meiners, author of *Your Right to be Punished* and Midwest activist, will begin the forum with short presentations. We'll then ask members of Champaign-Urbana Citizens for Peace and Justice, other local activists, and audience members to help us construct sensible answers to this dilemma.

## Saturday, April 21, 7:00 PM-late Poetry Reading and Hip-Hop Celebration

To help us close the Prison Arts Festival, come hear local poets—including formerly incarcerated poets—share their remarkable poetry. Last year's poetry reading left the audience howling with laughter and crying with rage, so don't miss this exceptional demonstration of beauty and dignity in the face of oppression. And because all poetry is musical at heart, we'll then dance the night away to the heavy grooves laid down by U.C. Hip Hop. Come renew your commitment to peace and justice; come meet fellow activists and artists; come celebrate the empowering dynamism of poetry and music!

All events are FREE and are held in  
the Independent Media Center  
(the old Post Office building in downtown Urbana)

For more information contact Stephen Hartnett:  
hartnett@uiuc.edu or 333-1593

Back cover art by Larry Brent  
Danville Correctional Center

# The World is Coming 2 an End

Patrice Daniels B70662  
Stateville Correctional Center

Chorus—The world is coming 2 an end,  
haven't u watched CNN?  
The world is coming 2 an end,  
every day, every play,  
again & again.  
The world is coming 2 an end...

Verse 1—W/a grain of salt,  
is how I was taught.  
The media blitz,  
all this scary shit.  
Don't drink the water,  
don't leave your home.  
Beware of everything,  
it goes on & on.

(chorus)

(solo)

Verse 2—The constant humdrum,  
of danger,  
on the airwaves.  
The noise would make anyone,  
go insane.  
Insane w/anxiety,  
insane w/fear.  
You'd think we were all dying tomorrow,  
oh yes,  
the end is near!

(chorus-til fade)



**Chris Garner**

Danville Correctional Center

## Death Brings Peace to the Dead

Sammy "Da-Wolf" Lupo B55099  
Menard Correctional Center

Fingertips, cold to the touch  
Face serene, doesn't look like much  
Eyes dull, out of focus  
Alive or dead? Hocus Pocus...

Painful, yet not a sound  
Shock? Surprise? No-one around  
Bleeding like a faucet, without noise  
Body composed, held poise...

Sticky sweet odor fills the room  
Bodily fluids add to the fumes  
Gasping breath heard like thunder  
Stomach clenching, not from hunger...

Mind floods with flashing lights  
Heartbeat erratic, struggles to fight  
Pupils dilate, can't seem to see  
Lungs clog, throat closes, wheres the MD?

Thoughts scrambled, messages mixes  
Body parts failing, now I'm pissed!  
Steady calm over-rides the soul, fills the head  
In contrast, Death brings peace to the dead...

## Straw that Broke the Camel's Back

Tyrone Daniels B01240  
Tamms Correctional Center

This pungent examination of an impalpable tragedy will  
not ingratiate  
Myself to the key holders of the fates...  
No cause celeb here, just a brief discourse  
About a man  
Who they say took his own life...  
Excuse Me,  
No!  
I don't feel all apologetic and nice...  
Today I'm understandably livid, enraged, angry,  
furious and  
you should be too!  
They joked,  
9 minutes he hung!!!!!!!!!!!!  
No one said a word, no marches, no demonstrations,  
just a family left in misery to mourn.  
But there was another protest...  
And even the news media showed up...  
Oh.  
that was about the officer's union and an issue with  
the lights.  
Now that's the straw that broke the camel's back!

# Between These Walls

Shane Hart S502835  
Pontiac Correctional Center

Between these walls,  
Is where I live.  
Day after Day  
Night after night  
The time I spend between these walls,  
Is the time I'll always regret,  
And the time I will forever and ever,  
Try to forget.  
Life has so many opportunities  
And promises  
That I haven't reached yet.  
For the things you people take for  
Granted beyond these walls,  
Are the things we prisoners  
Cherish most of all.

The love,  
The hugs,  
The kisses,  
To watch our kids play and grow.  
As you can see all of that,  
Can be taken away.

Between these walls,  
There is no laughter,  
There is no fun,  
There is no love,  
Just the harsh reality,  
Of the time we got left,  
'Til we reach home.

Between these walls,  
There is nothing but pure,  
Hate, shame, and guilt.  
Because we know the time,  
We have wasted between these walls,  
Is forever gone.

Between these walls,  
All we have to look forward to,  
Is life beyond these prison walls.

Beyond these walls,  
If I could ever change the past,  
I would never be between these prison walls.

Between these walls,  
You learn life is too short,  
To be locked in an 8 x 10 cell everyday.

Between these walls  
Is where I'll live,  
If I never change my ways.  
But for now,  
Between these walls,  
Is where I live.



**Quinten Smith**  
Danville Correctional Center

## **The Cravings of a Convict**

Patrice Daniels B70662  
Stateville Correctional Center

Sometimes I long for the laughter,  
the sweet sound of my mother's chuckle.  
Sometimes I long for the scent of collard greens  
cooking on a Sunday afternoon.  
Sometimes I long for the warmth of a loved ones  
unexpected embrace.  
Prison is so cold,  
prison is so sterile,  
such a lonely place.  
Sometimes I long for my little cousins waking  
me up on Saturday morning so I can cut their  
hair like I promised the night before.  
A promise I made long before I got drunk & passed  
out on the living room couch.  
Sometimes I long for the sounds,  
the sounds of a family dispute over this or that.  
Sometimes I long for the freedom 2 eat what I want.  
To go where I want.  
To wear what I want.  
To say what I want.  
Things free folks take 4 granted I sho' do miss.  
I'm locked in a room,  
a room I can't get out of w/out someone else opening  
the door.  
I got a man looking up my butt every other day  
checkin'  
for contraband.  
This is an unnatural environment.  
Hut 1, hut 2,  
this place tries to destroy the u in you.  
The strong survive,  
the weak,  
well...they cease.

## Crying Voices

Gretchen Alvarez Vaillant

voices fill the air  
heads hang down  
in the cold of the night  
blues fill the air

in every cell women talk  
about their lost babies  
and cry all day  
    and all night  
        and all day

we all hope for another chance  
yet bitterness fills our minds  
while time kicks our behinds

everyone is lying, saying  
*this is my last time*  
or everyone down on your knees  
*let's say a prayer*

and then a voice fills the hall:  
*officer, officer, I need to make call*  
*to let my loved ones know*  
*I won't be coming home*

## This Thing Called Life

Donald Christopher Stokes

At one point in my existence,  
    I had lost control  
        of my ability to be human  
I felt like an animal, wild and untamed  
    lacking all self discipline  
My emotions got the better of me  
    and ravished my soul  
They tortured and tormented me,  
    I was out of control  
I was lost in total darkness, I was  
    blind and could not find my way  
Death was tugging on me, as if the grave  
    had opened up to swallow me  
No human strength could pull me out  
    of the mire I had fallen into

Then a voice called out to me, saying  
    *here I am, take my hand,*  
    *I'll never let go,*  
    *no matter what happens*

That voice said *believe in me*  
    *trust in me*  
    *and I will help you*  
    *make it through*  
    *this thing called life*

## destiny

Arthur Holmes B20732  
Lawrence Correctional Center

i want to tell myself i'm sorry for  
disrespecting, neglecting and oppressing the man i  
was destined to be

for i lied and tried to hide my true  
aspirations that flowed so free

it was easier to be the failure they  
thought i would be

i thank all who nurtured the light  
that lived inside of me

if left to my own vices would my  
light have died

the tears you've witnessed for years  
don't belong to the shell of i

they flow from the man within who  
screams with tears i'm still alive

he dares me to set him free and allow  
the truth of light to shine

now the time has come to free the  
man who lives inside of me

no longer will i disrespect neglect or  
oppress my destiny...

## Hello Again

A.C. Chambers

I've seen you somewhere  
I know your face  
this isn't the first time  
you've been inside these walls

you told me you wouldn't be back  
said "kiss my ass" as you left  
"this is the last time" you said  
hell, I'll take that bet

what happened this time?  
who will you blame?  
the police? your girl? me?  
you asshole, *look in the mirror*

you know what to expect  
nothing has changed  
'cept maybe the year or the crime  
you've been here before  
so you know the deal:  
keep ya mouth shut  
& never squeal

'round and 'round we go  
innocent or not  
this merry-go-round  
will never stop

with arms wide open  
I will always accept you  
stop the dumb shit  
and you don't have to see me  
keep fuckin' up &  
I'm always here for you



## --LIFE--

Buford Smith III R34754  
Hill Correctional Center

As the sun rises to give light to our existence the night recedes and gives way to the day, as dark shadows fall and cease to exist.

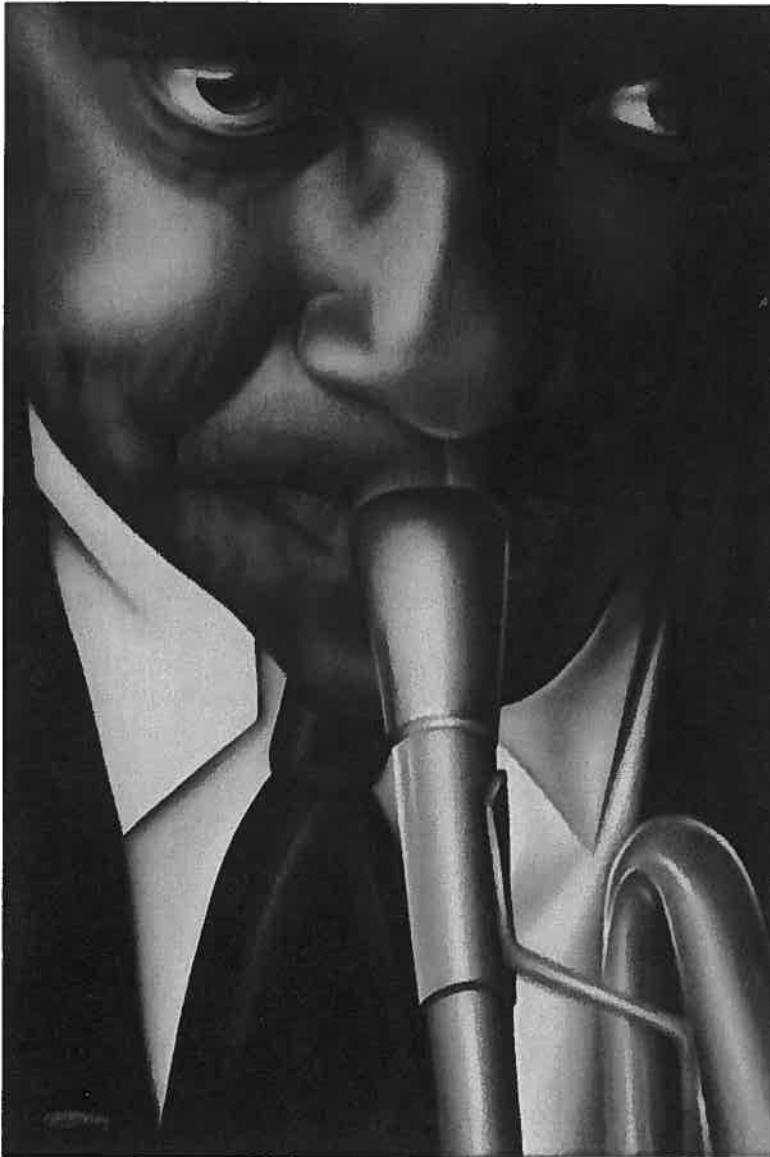
A light silently breaks window panes. Some leave their beds to start their chores, while others lay, bodies entwined as they snore, still from the open others flee to secluded places with hope of keeping hidden mischievous acts from night concealed.

Where as a woman lays in pain and takes breathe only between screams, as the pain subsides here face gives way to a smile as she waits to hold her new born child.

Somewhere someone checks on the aged and the old while a father nuzzles his child's nose.

Still somewhere someone takes their last breath, where as someone breathes life but finding every breath filled with grief looks to the sky and ceases to believe.

Yet a child is born to breathe the breath that will bring it's death, and they do not grieve. Somewhere someone realizes this is life.



**May Adams**

Danville Correctional Center

# Flipping the Script

Patrice Daniels B70662  
Stateville Correctional Center

Sometimes people can be extremely critical of felons who proclaim to have changed for the better. I'll be the 1<sup>st</sup> to concede that a lot of us are NOT as sincere about our commitment to change for the better as we may declare. The evidence in many cases makes the naysayers overwhelmingly accurate. I myself have heard guys say, "once I get out I'm never coming back," only to see them return to prison a month or 2 later. But having said that, I DO know that there are individuals who have sincerely & wholeheartedly changed for the better. I'm speaking of genuine & meaningful change.

Which is a doubly difficult task, when you consider prison is not an environment that is conducive to changing for the better. There's a lot of hard work that goes into combating & resisting all of the negativity one is faced w/ daily in prison. This is not a touchy feely place. There are a lot of hardened hearts walking around. Successful, peaceful, goal oriented inmates often become the targets of lost self-hating & self-loathing inmates. Your advances are constant reminders of their perceived failures & shortcomings.

Real change in prison is a very difficult task. Nevertheless, it IS possible. Changing for the better involves a tremendous amount of effort as well as commitment. Maintaining the status quo takes no effort at all. I speak from experience. I myself have changed for the better. I call it "flipping the script." I know what is possible. I know 1<sup>st</sup> hand how hard it is. I know 1<sup>st</sup> hand all of the challenges one faces when they decide to tackle such a thing. It's far from a cake-walk. You not only have to contend w/overcoming your own coping deficiencies & self-imposed obstacles, you have to contend w/staying physically safe & also remain focused on your objective.

Also, I want it to be clear that my decision to change is not a part of some scheme. I am doing a LIFE W/OUT PAROLE sentence for crimes I confessed to willingly. I admit my guilt. I regret my actions & I have remorse. But my point is, I did not "flip the script" to impress a parole board. There's no parole board to impress. I WANTED to be a better me. Despite the fact I'm doing life. And there are others just like me who have sincerely changed for the better.

I've had bad guys in here challenge my authenticity as it related to changing for the better. They'll commonly say, "man, the only reason you are chilling out & staying out of trouble is you have a TV & radio. If they take that TV & radio you'll snap out & you know it." At 1<sup>st</sup> I gently laugh & then begin to explain how incorrect that kind of rationale is. I say, "I've been doing better for over 5 yrs. now. There's no faking it for that long. It's virtually impossible. Life & its circumstances are the same today for me as they were 5 yrs. ago. I am still faced w/the same problems that I've always been faced w/. The different thing is how I RESPOND to the things I am faced w/. I've been able to successfully rewire my brain (for lack of a better analogy). My way of thinking is different. Look at all of the rich people you hear about that stay in trouble w/the law. You hear about them all the time. They seemingly have everything & yet they continue to find themselves caught up in situations that are detrimental. The point is, you can have 100 TVs & radios (or be rich) & if you're a jerk, you're still a jerk. No amount of wealth or distraction is going to change that."

I usually wind it down w/this, "the TV & radio may be able to temporarily camouflage me being a jerk, but eventually it is going to shine through. Unfortunately, you are wrong man. I'm who I am today by choice. It has absolutely nothing to do w/having a TV or radio. Man I wish it was that simple." My motivation for sharing this w/readers is that I find so many people (from the outside world) who are so uniformly dismissive of the possibility that real change for the better can occur in a prison setting. I never hear anyone talk about the guys that really DO change.

The verbiage is always so jaded & cynical when it comes to this subject. I feel like I need to challenge that belief a little. Especially when you consider I am living proof of what can truly happen in here. Even while living in utter chaos & not really knowing where I was headed in this effort. Some guys do change for the better. Just something for you to consider from now on. We all aren't incorrigible. Some of us do truly care about those we've harmed by our actions. Some of us have also taken it upon ourselves to better ourselves so that no one else is ever hurt as a result of our actions. Thank you for your time & I hope I've added something to the discussion/debate about prisoner rehabilitation/prisoner self-improvement. God bless.

# Of Hope and Forgiveness

Donald Christopher Stokes

Fear, doubt, mistrust, uncertainty—  
why can't I get this right, what's wrong with me?  
Has pain torn a whole in the crevices of my soul?

I've tried so hard to hold on to that special someone  
but trouble tends to creep in. . .

I did everything I could to show you my love  
not knowing that it was all in vain  
My only wish, my only prayer, my only hope  
was that you would love me  
as much as I loved you

But NO  
you had to do that vile thing  
you brought into our marriage a monster, a devil:  
*you cheated on me*

Or maybe it was me  
who brought this trouble  
or maybe it was us

Now we argue and fuss and fight  
about any and everything  
because of the hurt  
caused by unfaithfulness

Yeah, you said some things that made me angry  
and in return I said some things that made you angry  
So you put me out in the streets and called the  
police  
and now my anger boils like the lava of a volcano  
that's been waiting too long to erupt  
Baby, baby, I want revenge  
I want revenge  
I want you to feel the agony I feel  
Yet deep down in my soul I feel mostly sorrow

So do I get even with the woman I love?  
Do I turn and walk away?  
Do I try to learn to live and love  
despite the anger and hurt I feel?

Aaah, yes, there is hope. Yes.  
I can see a flickering light  
at the end of my pain and anger  
and that light is called hope and forgiveness

I just have to get back on my feet  
and realize that prayer and time will heal  
the brokenness and pain and resentments  
littering my existence  
Yes, yes, I will vow today, right now:

I AM A MAN WHO LOVES  
I FORGIVE YOU  
PLEASE FORGIVE ME

## My Life as a Chevy!

Travis Justice R41763  
Pontiac Correctional Center

I recently pictured my life  
as a '57 Chevy Bel Air.  
heading toward the Gates of Heaven,  
oh how I want to get there!

No my life wasn't always so good,  
it once was an old rusting Ford Escort,  
with a four banger under the hood!

That old life sure was a disgrace.  
I wouldn't have came in second,  
even in a bicycle race!

Now let me tell you, the insides were a mess,  
all dirty, torn, and tattered,  
and I believe it's too kind to say, the outside was  
battered.

I found this classic Chevy  
on an old used car lot.  
It's faded sign said "bible,"  
yeah it's owner sure taught me a lot!

I left that ancient Ford,  
in my makers' hands,  
upgraded to this '57  
and headed toward the promised land.

Well this old road still winds,  
twists and turns,  
but not I let my worries fly  
out in the wind with the birds.

With the Lord beside me,  
in this sleek Bel Air.  
No matter how rough life gets,  
I'm always riding on air!

No, I didn't start this trip,  
intending to be the driver,  
I had to hand the wheel to God,  
so that I could be a survivor!



**Micheal Boone**  
Danville Correctional Center

## NO COMFORT ZONE

C. Demetrius Hicks, Sr. B61670  
Pontiac Correctional Center

Back achin'  
Sleepin' on steel frames  
Escorted ev'rywhere  
Shackled in waist-chains  
Inmate no-name  
Numbers represent human identity  
A statistic  
Subject  
Replicated foreign entity...

FREE MUMIA!  
Long Live the Move!  
Six hundred years oppressed and the still can't stop  
our groove!  
Discombobulated American society  
Still boasting over stolen propriety  
Propagation "Trick-nology"  
Lobotomized Original Kemetite history  
Too shameful to admit  
What you did to my people and me...

Hip-Hop's taken over  
All hail Russell Simmons  
Created the forum  
Now "bitch" denatures Black Women  
Bling-Bling and 26s  
Material matters of the day  
Black male adolescents  
Mic hoggin' with nothin' to say  
Decay...

Privatizing Social-Security  
Shifting medicare obscurities  
Corporations renege on pension annuities  
Social Reforms government non-approval  
Deficit sky-high  
Richer gettin' richer  
And the poor? Oh well  
The usual  
Inexcusable...

Can't let the dead rest  
Terri Schiavo  
G.I.'s murdered over oil  
I.E.D.s exploding all over the place  
Separating soul from bone  
Sold American citizens a dream  
No Comfort Zone

# Of All the Ironies

William T. Smith

of all the crazy circumstances  
of all the damned ironies  
I'm contemplating this cage  
this nasty situation when  
on the television news  
I hear about a couple who suffered  
a "nasty car accident"  
    miss congenial anchor-person said  
"nasty," *nasty*, with all the inference  
of it's being a dirty word  
an offensive incident  
    what a way to go  
what a terrible tragedy  
I imagine they were traveling  
to some beautiful place  
where death was not invited

nasty nasty nasty the word  
compels the mind to wander  
toward unkempt situations  
about unsanitary conditions  
    close to death perhaps  
    even to prison

and then I wonder, is it true?  
does your whole life flash before your eyes  
in those last precious seconds?  
and is that with no commercial interruptions?  
'cause it would be a rotten shame  
if the last thing you saw  
on this blessed earth  
was an ad for some pet food  
or toothpaste or breakfast cereal  
    or even worse  
some miraculous household cleaner  
    that promised to make  
        nasty problems  
        the very last thing  
you ever had to worry about

# Prison Industry

Derek Walsh R13880  
Hill Correctional Center

When will you learn  
that you can't fix all your problems,  
by hiding them in a closet?  
That prison is reformless,  
and only serves as a  
social partition;  
a black curtain over all  
the ills you wish to not see,  
"let's lock them all up,  
then we'll have our peace!"

And by "peace" are you to mean  
the freedom you so readily deny,  
to those of us who  
do not know why,  
we were born in the image  
of your impoverished class,  
and no matter what we do  
there's no way to overcome  
the story of our past?

So here we'll sit  
all shackled and chained,  
products of your profitable  
prison industry;  
the legacy of your shame.

## Revolution

Derek Walsh R13880  
Hill Correctional Center

From the pulpit  
of blind patriotism,  
you preach to me  
about god and nation;  
this so-called  
"land of freedom,"  
built on the backs of slaves  
through genocide and exploitation.  
And in the name of god  
you murder without reservation,  
the men and women who  
resist domination.  
And with that you expect  
me to salute and wave,  
the blood stained banner  
that you so proudly wave,  
as a symbol of freedom  
and justice for all,  
yet the day will come  
for you to be called,  
to answer for the crimes  
that you've been committing,  
and when it does  
we'll all be signing,  
a song of triumph  
and liberation won,  
a ballad in the name  
of Revolution!

## That's the Way the Cookie Crumbles

Patrice Daniels B70662  
Stateville Correctional Center

I know u never planned,  
for prison 2 be,  
the place where I'd become a man.  
Looking into my eyes,  
hearing my newborn cries.  
So proud,  
of your 1<sup>st</sup> born boy.  
The apple of your eye,  
a bundle of joy.  
Sometimes life's design,  
has it's own mind.  
Things occur,  
& from there,  
it's all a blur.  
I can't help,  
but ruminate,  
& yet,  
it's much more than fate.  
Something that's almost sinister,  
at the same time though,  
u & I both know,  
it's not like,  
if things had turned out right,  
I would've been a minister.

# In Search of Salvation

William T. Smith

Oh Lord, you say *Far too long*  
have I been absorbed with  
the destructive manners of man  
for the spirit stands willing  
but the flesh is weak  
and though I am covered with sin  
you peer beneath to see  
the lost child running wild  
running from truth salvation  
and the purity of thy word  
running headlong into oblivion  
as if I had never heard your truths

I constantly take disastrous routes  
that lead to nowhere  
and sit on the bottom steps of negativity  
with head hung low  
pleading begging demanding  
that you rescue me Oh Lord  
like I have a right to demand anything!

Yet always when I fall  
through devices of my own making  
I assume you'll be there Oh Lord  
to pick me up  
dust me off  
and send me about  
my merry, destructive way  
time and time again  
until one day  
it will be too late



**Anthony Lanier**  
Danville Correctional Center



## THE PIT

Sammy "Da-Wolf" Lupo B55099  
Menard Correctional Center

MENARD C.C. USED TO BE TOUGH AS CAN BE  
NOW THAT THE GUARDS HAVE CONTROL IT'S MORE LIKE P.C.  
TUCK YOUR SHIRT IN! LINE UP 2 BY 2!  
STEP OUT OF LINE? THERE'S A TICKET WAITING FOR YOU...

PUT YOUR PROPERTY AWAY! CLEAN UP YOUR CELL!  
IS THIS A PRISON OR A MAN-MADE HELL?  
CATCH AN ILLNESS? GOOD LUCK GETTING HEALTH CARE!  
THEY'D RATHER SEE YOU SUFFER OR EVEN DIE UP IN HERE...

LOCKDOWN HAPPENS OFTEN, YARD TIME NOT OFTEN ENOUGH  
SHAKEDOWNS SUCK! ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY TEAR THROUGH  
YOUR STUFF  
PRIVACY? NOT A CHANCE! DIGNITY? YEAH RIGHT!  
THE PIT WILL WEAR YOU DOWN, MAKE YOU WANNA QUIT THE  
FIGHT...

SO IF THE PIT APPEALS TO YOU, COME ON DOWN  
BUT I GUARANTEE YOU YOUR SMILE WILL TURN INTO A FROWN  
WANT TO BE TRATED LIKE A PUPPET? THIS IS THE PLACE TO  
BE  
BUT TAKE IT FROM ME, I WOULDN'T WISH THIS ON MY WORST  
ENEMY...

## Whose Maze is This?

Mark Parsons R14204  
Menard Correctional Center

The maze isn't very large, and  
when you pay to get in you  
have no idea who's in charge.  
It's easy to get lost in the maze.  
I once got trapped for many days.  
A lot of times it seems like I'm the  
only one in there, I always scream  
for help, but nobody seems to care.  
When lost in the maze all I do  
is look for a bed, when I sleep  
that's when I realize the maze is  
in my head.

# EDITORS NOTE

The writing in this publication was solicited through correspondence with inmates in the Illinois correctional system undertaken as a part of the **Urbana-Champaign Books to Prisoners** program. Additional poetry came from the **Poetry Workshop at the Champaign County Jail**.

**UC Books to Prisoners**, a project of the Urbana-Champaign **Independent Media Center**, accepts book request letters from Illinois inmates, finds books that meet their needs, and sends them out with a personalized letter. Currently UC Books to Prisoners is working with volunteers from our community, public libraries and officials from the Champaign County Sheriff's Office to staff lending libraries in the local downtown and satellite jail. In addition to providing thousands of books (donated by our community) to the library, our volunteers staff the library each week and interact directly with the inmates.

For more information, or to volunteer with Books to Prisoners, please visit our website at [www.books2prisoners.org](http://www.books2prisoners.org) or email us at [bookstoprisoners@lists.chambana.net](mailto:bookstoprisoners@lists.chambana.net)

Meeting every Monday for the past year, the **Poetry Workshop** provides a space for imprisoned writers to seek empowerment and solace in the strength of poetry. When we have collected materials that we like, we publish a magazine such as the one you are now reading. If you are imprisoned and would like to contribute to the next issue, or if you are free and would like to lend your assistance, or if you are wealthy and care to make a donation to our humble efforts, then please contact: Stephen Hartnett, Department of Speech Communication, University of Illinois, 244 Lincoln Hall, 702 South Wright Street, Urbana, Illinois 61801. You can also reach us by phone at (217) 333-1593, or by email at [hartnett@uiuc.edu](mailto:hartnett@uiuc.edu).

# Prison Addresses

You can write to the poets in this publication at the following addresses. Be sure to include the inmate number in all correspondence.

Danville Correctional Center  
3820 East Main Street  
Danville, IL 61834

Hill Correctional Center  
600 South Linwood Road  
P.O. Box 1700  
Galesburg, IL 61402

Lawrence Correctional Center  
Rural Route 2  
Box 31  
Sumner, IL 62466

Menard Correctional Center  
711 Kaskaskia Street  
P.O. Box 711  
Menard, IL 62259

Pontiac Correctional Center  
700 West Lincoln Street  
P.O. Box 99  
Pontiac, IL 61764

Stateville Correctional Center  
Route 53  
P.O. Box 112  
Joliet, IL 60434

Tamms Correctional Center  
200 East Supermax Road  
P.O. Box 2000  
Tamms, IL 62988

The **Independent Media Center** is a grassroots organization committed to using media production and distribution as a tool for promoting social and economic justice. The IMC is not owned or funded by corporate sponsors and advertisers and we are in need of your support to sustain our efforts.

In addition to keeping Indymedia alive and vibrant in Urbana-Champaign, membership in the UCIMC comes with benefits. Members can:

- \* Work with Books to Prisoners
- \* Produce your own radio show on WRFU 104.5 LPFM
- \* Get involved with the Public i newspaper
- \* Plan and promote shows / music events
- \* Use our facilities & resources for your media idea

learn more at [www.ucimc.org](http://www.ucimc.org)



If you would like to join the movement fighting for a sane criminal justice system, then please contact:

THE SENTENCING PROJECT: [www.sentencingproject.org](http://www.sentencingproject.org)

CRITICAL RESISTANCE: [www.criticalresistance.org](http://www.criticalresistance.org)

CHAMPAIGN-URBANA BOOKS TO PRISONERS: [www.books2prisoners.org](http://www.books2prisoners.org)

THE ANTI-WAR ANTI-RACISM EFFORT: [www.anti-war.net](http://www.anti-war.net)

THE PRISON ACTIVISTS RESOURCE CENTER: [www.prisonactivist.org](http://www.prisonactivist.org)

THE JOHN HOWARD ASSOCIATION: [www.john-howard.org](http://www.john-howard.org)



TC BOOKS TO

PRISONERS



**CDMS**

Center on Democracy  
in a Multiracial Society