

GRATER FRIENDS

The Creative Issue

SUMMER 2026

My Life is a Poem

Matthew Garcia of SCI Chester

My life is a poem depicting continents of feelings, a plethora of thoughts representing pictures of happiness and sadness, depraved people, venerably assembled souls, disapproval, gratefulness, venturesome actions, profound intense states of being, breaks, dreams, imagination, visionary creations, motivating purposes, goals and hurdles, friendships and foes, wisdom and foolishness, consumption and retribution, disaster, rejection, election, direction and the lack thereof.

My compositions at times have a calmness, and some are furious; yet, I write with composure. My words are like soldiers, fighting to be heard, but especially felt like braille, but not with finger tips more like when your hearts are in it, deeply enough to enlighten and carry you like cargo ships breeding an understanding of how hard it gets or how love begets the most beautiful gifts that should be known to all that exist, or the agony of geographical tragedies, ghetto casualties this all components of a poets anatomy, my poetic faculty. The same albeit its heavier and so much colder.

Is redemption only in the hands of the controller? Many of us have been hurt badly, with no loud promotion of aid; seeming unworthy, feeling ineligible of ever being saved. So the game is played, and we become articles of nonsense in prison or the grave. It is the true interest to confine and not correct. Even though there are decades of service paying for bright futures, death is the only debt. What's the justification for only 6 states using this theory? When we have overcome being destitute of knowledge beacons of change, real assets are seen clearly. We have successfully learned from the harms we caused and all of the blunders.

Realistic pardons should be available to all our sisters and all of our brothers. because an eye for eye will keep us all blind and everyone will suffer. 3 billion dollars every year has to have some purpose. But we all know the same old same old isn't really working. Ask the prisons, morticians, lawyers, judges and surgeons. Ask the neighborhoods, hospitals, masjids and churches. Change is necessary, change is urgent. I am just saying that I changed. I am not saying that I am perfect.

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Letter from the Editor

Dear Readers,

With the weather warming up, I think the submissions you'll see in this issue match the warmth the summer brings. This is best summed up by the writing prompt David provided our writers about Serendipity last year. By definition, Serendipity is the occurrence of fortunate, pleasant, or valuable discoveries by accident. It's important that everyone keep looking for moments of serendipity in life, even if they are small.

I wanted to take this time to acknowledge the departure of one of our volunteer editorial team members: Taelor Jones. Taelor joined the Graterfriends team in 2019 and was the only team member to stay onboard when the pandemic hit. Taelor was the person who took every handwritten submission from our authors and typed them up, doing her best to keep everyone's style and voice intact. Taelor became a mom, took maternity leave, and came back for another two years. She was a rock for me as I took over Graterfriends in 2020, and we are so thankful for her 6+ years of volunteer work on Graterfriends.

I want to also continue to thank our authors and readers. I mentioned in my last note that we are working on an archives project, and I'm excited to say the Prison Society's summer interns will be working hard on this. We would love to hear from our readers and authors who have been with us for 10, 20, 30 years on how Graterfriends has impacted you and what some of your favorite submissions have been to either read or write.

We brought back the Literary Issue during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. I hope, for many, the reinstatement of this type of issue brought lightness in dark times

— Noelle Gambale on behalf of the Graterfriends Team

To Komrade Kayla from Komrade Sha

Don Carvica Hoque (Komrade Sha) of SCI Houtzdale

You're beautiful and strong,
You're the revolutionary's song,
Full of gratitude and pride,
Don't ever choose to hide.
Remain on the vanguard,
I'll write you from the bond yard.
I mean, like from my grave,
In the extreme with rage:
Something you'll always feel
If you're wounded.
You'll heal from the heart and soul
In the dark and cold.
The warrior's word,
The souljah's surge,
The rise the power,
We live, not die, this hour.

You read as I write,
And I bleed for life.
To one day live,
To some way give,
In name of the struggle,
Against the flames of trouble,
That haven't burnt me down.
I'll ride until the final round
And my thoughts to you I'll send
As even though I'm caught with you I win - bang.

The people's press is real,
At the apex made of steel.
We're genuine and not fake,
This menu we cannot escape.
There's no getting out alive,
It's a real do or die ride

At court, we all went to trial.
In the dark, we wear our "fuck them" smiles.
We're all men, none of us be rats.
The righteous sin and revolutionary strapped
The three "p's" punk-pig-police
The three "K's" the ku-klux-klan
In every way, against them we stand
Life sentences, we may never go home.
At height, these trenches we forever roam,
Representing the innocent and the oppressed,
Never relenting, no repent in this death.

We keep it deep real and ultimately true,
That's why I feel you.

I miss my mutha tonight,
From the gutter I write.
With so many thoughts,
While here in the dark:
Life has been a bitch.
Yet I have never snitched,
Not upon friend nor foes
I have komrades on death row.
I have komrades who've died,
Took their final breaths on the inside,
And damn I represent them all
And, Damn Kayla, I just cannot fall.

I have no choice except to stand,
As the baddest be my brand.
"We're-all-in-the-extreme"
There's no in the between.
We're kommitted; our lives gone,
Though we're enlisted to rage on.

Konkrete brick and steel,
The revolution, be our shields.
Real swords we karry,
To the wars for liberty we're married.
It's not a game nor joke,
And we ride death for our folks.
Yes, true many of us be stukk,
However for guerrilla kombat we're signed up,
Down for life until the end.
And I stay hyped with the baddest of men

The Family Suffers Too

Andrew Martin of SCI Camp Hill

Addiction is Evil; it's the Devil dancing on your back,
Your soul gets depleted, but you got numb to that fact.
Head down don't want to look people in the eye,
You're sad and broken, but trying hard not to cry.
Family praying-where's the end to this strife?
Please change now before its the end of your life.
Want support, frustrated, at a loss of people to pay?

Scared to change, but also scared to stay the same.
Besides yourself, who do you expect to share the blame?
Free will: People have their own choices to make,
Lost opportunities; you have a chance to be great.

Fork in the road, you turn right or you go left.
People got fed up: get yourself right or you get left
Love knows no bounds, but in the end, there's limits.
You'll find yourself dead or in jail, counting hours and minutes.
Drug games a deadly business: you don't win, just lose
Family and Friends, cemetery and jail. Which one do you choose?

I've walked in your shoes, the more you wait, you just suffer.
Do it for mom and yourself and to be a good mother.
Take this from big brother, we all love you and care
Go to rehab, get right come back, we'll be here.

I love you lil sis. Get right. Love big brother.

Enlightenment

Matthew Kemp Sr. of SCI Greene

A moment of madness in the moonlit night,
Frantic, exuberant testing the boundaries,
Becoming real.

Transcendent, lucid, illuminated, perpetual;
Grace in a place of truth, nothing so absolute
As wisdom denied.

Logic and perception collide, distant memories,
Vague understanding within the confines of My mind.
Enlightenment completes the cycle to evolve your
Reality; realize your vision and touch the truth...

My First Beer

An excerpt from James. Brausch's memoirs

James D. Brausch of ISCI 10 Center

My only view of outside was the backyard from the kitchen sink. At first, the only thing that looked interesting was a rusty, broken swing set. As the summer began, I noticed children occasionally peeking through a broken board in our back fence. Their odd metallic white houses peeked a couple of feet higher than our fence. Now, I understand that it was a trailer park.

Occasionally, the kids would get enough nerve to come into our backyard to retrieve a lost ball or to sneak onto the mostly broken swing set.

The side of our yard in the direction of the bar was bordered with a short chain-link fence. Three boys lived next door. They bathed in a metal tub that was also used by their mother for laundry. Lots of toys were scattered around the yard. I had no toys. Later, Sissy would get dolls and I would get a Smoky-the-Bear stuffed animal and a few books, so I could teach Sissy to read. I was jealous of the boys and their toys... and them bathing outside and running free naked while feeling the grass under their feet. Somehow, I knew that the grass was protective and Sissy's feet could touch it without her getting dead.

We visited Uncle Bob and Aunt Emma while Sissy was still a little baby and couldn't walk yet. They were living very nearby (walking distance for my dad) in a truly big house. It was just as old and rickety as our house though. They had a fireplace with a real fire in it in the living room. After seeing the rest of the house, that is where I stayed and talked to Reuben, Lisa, and my other cousins. It felt odd that they seemed to know me.

They had a room with a pool table next to the living room. Apparently, my dad now came here to drink beer and play pool instead of the bar. Bob and Emma drank Coors beer out of cans all day long every day. The kids were allowed only one can per day. Lori was a baby, like Sissy. She went to bed with a beer bottle. I watched how it was made correctly so I would know how with Sissy. The beer came from the case on the floor in the kitchen, not the refrigerator. That way it did not have to be warmed up.

The entire kitchen was warm from the slow cooker with stew that was always cooking for the kids. They had no real meal times. Bob and Emma didn't have to

eat. The kids all helped themselves to the stew whenever they got hungry.

You fill the bottle about half full of beer and then hold your finger over the nipple and shake it up several times to burp it. Then, when the fizz is all gone, you fill the rest of the bottle with warm water and send Lori to bed with it. It has no milk and it makes babies sleep better.

Emma handed me the half-empty beer can when my mom refused a beer bottle for Sissy. I took it into the living room and drank my first beer by the fireplace. I don't remember the rest of that visit.

Maybe it was the next summer when I talked my mom into letting us go into the backyard as long as I kept Sissy on the grass. Somehow, the metal tub ended up in our yard, so we started to play with a bath. It was hot outside so I didn't worry about getting Sissy dry quickly. It was the best day of my life. We just got into and out of the tub any time we wanted and ran around naked just like the boys next door.

We even talked to them although there was only dirt (no grass) a few feet from the fence, so we couldn't go right up to the fence. We also couldn't approach the swing set for the same reason. There was no protective grass in that area.

All of my fond pre-school memories were in that backyard. We had a white kitten for a while that liked to roll into a ball so I could throw it. It always landed on its feet and ran back to be thrown again. We called it Snowball although I had no idea what snow was.

The teenage boys on the other side of us babysat us once. They loved Snowball. But, Snowball didn't belong to us. It lived in the trailer park and one day it stopped visiting us.

When we got older, dad fixed the swing set and Sissy could touch the dirt. She was really good at climbing and hanging upside down. She talked me into doing it, and I fell on my head and broke my neck. I was in bed for months from that. I didn't play on that swing set ever again.

Gideon's Heart

Stephen Burton of SCI Houtzdale

Splinters on my forearms, back and neck as I carry my cross,
I follow the rules of my confinement but they not.
Jesus, I know your disappointed with the way I act;
Nobody around me qualifies for the circle of trust and that's a fact.

Birds of the same feather group together; so I keep an empty nest.
I study the psalms and proverbs so I don't get wild like the west.
I release my rage in the yard when I push the pedal;
My lane has no breaks or steering but I push the pedal.

My mother's DNA and the y-chromosome is the only female in me.
Any cellie will be tripping if he thinks I am gonna squat when I pee.
I retreat to my cell so I kneel to talk to the Lord;
Mentally, Ford tough, so no CO gonna find me hanging by a cord.

I don't play video games, silly rabbit, tricks is for the kids.
I am just buying my time; I don't do birds.
I don't call for money; she's not my husband or mom,
Leaving sucka's in the dust, fast and furious like my name is Dom.

Scared

Matthew Feeney of Minnesota DOC

I'm petrified of getting shot when I get pulled over,
Or go to a church, a mosque, a grade school, a parade,
A protest, a hospital, a music festival, a nail salon,
Congress, a movie theatre, a grocery store, a bowling alley,
Or even the mall.

For once, weirdly enough,
I'm glad I live where I do:
NO GUNS ALLOWED!
Even cops can't carry here.
I'm lucky I live in prison,
Where it's so much safer.

Death Row Railroad

Kevin Brian Dowling of SCI Phoenix

Suddenly, a shrill whistle blows and pierces the stillness of the new dawn. A train approaches you at a rhythmic gait until it stops to take you on a most unwanted journey.

You are unsure of your destination, but not given any choice but to comply. You assume the tracks are solid and the course is plotted, trusting the crew to guide you safely to your station.

Without any warning, the locomotive diverts onto a treacherous downhill grade, a dead end line with fatal consequences. Your journey has evolved into a life or death struggle. The hurtling juggernaut tosses you about, as you attempt to make sense of your predicament.

You manage to work your way forward, only to discover that the engineer and crew are asleep and refuse to awaken.

As it happens, you are the sole passenger. You see, the engineer is a judge and the crew are public pretenders. It was the police and prosecutors who diverted your train in an act of sabotage.

The smooth rails of truth and righteousness have been replaced with the warped iron of lies and deceit.

Emblazoned on the screaming engine is the name 'Justice' Your destination was the place called "Freedom", but that is not where you are headed. Your ticket is stamped "One Way Only" and was compliments of the house.

There is only one stop on the Death Row Railroad. Prepare to disembark.

The Apple Orchard

Bonnie Vang of NJ DOC

Sun was rising
Moon was waning
Whatever February weather
Permits the birth of
Whichever fruit; whether
Or not there's enough
Rain.

The apple doesn't fall from the tree.

Land is caving.
Dirt is uprooting.
However wide the soil stretches
A couple feet away.
Somehow an apple treads into the trenches
And plants itself for another day-
Refrain.

To be pecked by a bird.

New Path

Joe Ellermeyer of SCI Forest

I left eastside when I went over to west side,
I walked and I walked.
I kept walking and walking, never turning around.

Then, I began to realize that the old path was grown over.
It would need room for new trees to start growing sooner than later.
But, there was no room for this on the old path.
The men got rid of the old path and made sure I was on the new path.

I'll never find that old path.
I enjoy my new path more than my old path.
I only stay on the new path.

Protracted Penumbra

J. Adam Herbert of Delaware Department of Corrections

Beside a prison vampire I sat on the sickcall bench,
Spotless shoes, perfect hair and nails — a dandy of a creature
Years deprived of sun, the limpid skin of this mensch
Beside a prison vampire I sat on the sickcall bench
Queer musty airs, had he just crept out of a trench?
Many passed us by, still only I sensed his true features
Beside a prison vampire I sat on the sickcall bench
Spotless shoes, perfect hair and nails — a dandy of a creature

Skin Deep

Yassin Sin Raws Mohamad of SCI Phoenix

Visually, I see colored skin
And don't at times see within.
Skin colors, black, red, white
The natural things that people use to fight.
But what's the color of the heart?
And brain and soul that's torn apart.
Wars has been started because the color of our skin
So when will anyone lose or win?
Angry because of each other melanin
Hating between BAHAJAHS and HELENS
Racist against the creators of humankind
Even racist towards the IQ of the mind.
Categorized by the color of our skin
But neither black nor white is within.
Trying to change nature's order
So for our color we get disrespected, ostracized and slaughtered.
Why not judge by the good and bad someone does?
And no by ones religion, history and skin color that's us!
Where you was born and not where you come from
In all actuality hating skin color is so dumb
This is a worldly topic that causes many deaths alone
But after we die our skin color will turn to the color of bones.

The New Vessel

Bruce Sankey of SCI Mercer

The Bible says, "We are made in His image".
We are all vessels that go through trials and scrimmage.
Tribulations arise that move us so lite,
And in time we vibrate to the edge of life's height.
Then once in a while an earthquake shakes us,
We fall to the floor that shatters and breaks us.
Then Jesus comes by and gathers us up,
He molds us and shapes us into a new cup.
With His loving hands, He makes are sides nice and tall,
To hold all the blessings, He has given us to share with all.
So the Potter's wheel is not a bad thing to be on, for sure,
For it is where the Potter's touch rebuilds us, to endure.
I'm not the same vessel I was before I broke,
But thank God for His Son Jesus, who gave me a new Hope!
Now I stand all new, not perfect, but ready,
To do God's will and show Christ to many.
So if you don't know Jesus, you should ask Him into your heart,
For His promise to you, is that He'll never depart.
Eternal life is waiting in Heaven above,
To all those who believe in the Son of God.
That day is coming when the last trumpet's sound,
The rapture, the judgment, the tossing of crowns.
For He alone is worthy, as we bow at His feet,
It's Jesus my Savior, I hope you too will meet.

The Special in You

Yassin Sin Raws Mohamad of SCI Phoenix

The special in you is so transparent -
This makes you such a valuable and lovably parent.
I smile when I see your face and hear your voice -
Choosing another women to be you I will forfeit my choice.
There's no other that can take your place -
A special woman like the most expensive wine taste -
The special in you makes you who you are
Like Allah used the vast sky to house the wonderful and attractive stars.
The men of this world that won your heart -
Had to see that you were the whole future and not just a part.
How can you be described without mentioning beautiful, special and great -
It will be like mentioning a day, month and year without a date.
Your love and support make me strong when you're around -
And your presence turns my frown upside down.
Prison may hold me physical -
But you free me mentally and emotional.
Mommy we love you -
Adore you -
And admire you -
Because of THE SPECIAL IN YOU -
This is definitely you!

These Four Walls

This is a selection of a longer poem.

Luis Fuentes of Curran-Fromhold Correctional Facility

Everyone talks about these four walls:
The ones that shut me in,
The ones that keep you out.
Facilitated, reforming,
These four walls,
But no one counts the six we're in.

As if the floor and roof don't exist to them,
These four walls,
These four,
Locking me in,
Like an animal in a pen.
Does an animal write?
Can he use a pen like a man?

But, still, I'm locked in this coffin,
This isn't Egypt
But my cell is the sarcophagus.
This facility the pyramid,
Reminding me of the man I am ,
Of everything I did:
Who I was,
Like the colors of a canvas,
Does these blotches of colors speak for the man?
Or is it the one streak of red,
That has marked me for conviction,
Painted me among the dead,
Who are dug through the floor,
And will never reach past the roof.

Minutes hours days and weeks,
Every passing month,
Reaches farther into the deep,
God says to reach for him,

And man puts a roof over his brother.
Prayers sent are plead,
To the father that the boy inside the man.
He wants to hold his mother,
Just to hold his mother,
Everytime he reminds me of mine:
My mistakes.
My problems.
My habits.
My father:
The losses and failures,
How faith pushes further,
Like a flower planted in concrete,
A dandelion by the road.

Maybe the man who built his house on sand
Knew this was a temporary home.
Perspective is everything.
How you see the world
Reflects on the face you give it.

For me,
It's getting hard to see the beauty
Outside my window.
The house of corrections-
That's how life seemed to me.

A house of corrections,
Fall short and get set straight,
Mess up and get punished,
Like misery has an attraction.
And the void has a pull,
Life has grown grey-scale:
Dull.

Serendipity

Jamiel Williams of SCI Houtzdale

In life, we stumble and fall into negative road-blocks that hinder us, as people on our journey, whatever it may be positively for growth as a person and for us in life, to be looked at as a productive citizen.

As I was experiencing change from wrong doings in my past, God brought a childhood friend back into my life that made me today, look twice about my ups and downs in life. It also made me think twice about my life as a whole, what I want for my future (hopes and dreams) and what I have to do educationally to achieve that goal.

I was told, “Your grandmother (Nanny) did not raise you to be like that; she taught you morals and

values. So, become the man she raised you to be.”

When I was told that by my friend Ebony, I was incarcerated in New York State. I decided to write an article and I found my passion in writing. Since that conversation, I wrote and published 13 books in a few different genres. I was featured in many newsletters, including this one (Graterfriends). I was offered to be part of a writing program from Prison Journalism Project to get a certification in journalism.

Now, if that isn’t Serendipity, I don’t know what is. Writing is my life now, and I want to pursue teaching so that I can teach other incarcerated men and women the value of using this platform as an emotional release. That to me, is like a breath of fresh-air.

Serendipity: An Ironic Occurrence

Anonymous

In response to the ‘Serendipity’ writing challenge

Frustrated with my situation and everything that was going on in my life, dealing with my mental health issues, and on the brink of snapping, I finally finished it: book one of my upcoming novel, “One Life to Lose.”

I’m not done writing. I’m going to finish the other 3 books in the novel. When I get home, I can publish it.

A week after this, the Graterfriends magazine comes in the mail and I’m feeling the same frustrations about my artwork. But, it’s therapeutic. It keeps my mind going. I’m going to stop doing art until I get out and can frame it and sell it in an art gallery

without it being tampered with.

If you want something done, you got to do it yourself. But, I open the dictionary and I see a picture that I was wanting to draw my own version of. And, I do.

My math teacher was not impressed; I was not a Picasso, but something like it: A King Killa Chrome. Then, I open up my Graterfriends magazine and I see the writing contest and see that Serendipity is the topic. How ironic! And, I wrote this essay as a creative writing entry for what the words means to me.

Real talk!

CON*Star Ankle Bracelets

“We’re like Star TV...for Cons!”

A Collection of 7 Comedic Commercial Television Scripts
(Commercials 1)

Matthew Feeney of Minnesota DOC

Commercial #1:

30 Second TV Spot Featuring GPS Tracking

GRAPHIC

White CON*Star Logo on a black screen.

SPOKESPERSON (V/O)

CON*Star provides 1-touch Navigation Services for all inmates.

EXT. WOODS- DAY

INMATE in orange prison jumpsuit is running wildly through the brush – stops, out of breath.

CU – FINGER PUSHING BUTTON ON HIS CON*STAR ANKLE BRACELET

CON*Star CHIME sounds

CON*STAR OPERATOR (through speaker)

This is CON*Star, how may I help you Mr. Conway, #285730?

INMATE

(out of breath)

Uhm, hi there, uh, ya, I’m lost.

CON*STAR OPERATOR (through speaker)

No problem Mr. Conway! Our GPS sensors indicate you’re in the woods 2.3 miles north of Goose Lake Prison. Continue straight ahead for 800 yards, then turn left at the unnamed service road and continue approximately 1 mile to County Road 44. Would you like me to dispatch an Uber to wait for you at your destination?

INMATE gives thumbs up and a big smile.

GRAPHIC

White CON*Star Logo on a black screen.

CON*Star CHIME sounds

SPOKESPERSON (V/O)

CON*Star: Helping Cons find their way home since 2015.

Commercial 2:
30 Second TV Spot Featuring GPS Tracking

GRAPHIC

White CON*Star Logo on a black screen.

SPOKESPERSON (V/O)

CON*Star service includes Voice Reminders and Fully Customizable Voice Responses

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY

WORKER in hard-hat is standing on pile of construction rubble. VIBRATING SOUND.

CU – FINGER PUSHING BUTTON on his CON*STAR ANKLE BRACELET

CON*Star CHIME sounds

CON*STAR OPERATOR (through speaker)

Hello Mr. Obstebo. Reminder, you have a Meeting with your PO today at 1pm. Would you like to reply?

WORKER

Yeah. What are my options?

CON*STAR OPERATOR (through speaker)

Your Preset Options are:

#1: Yes Sir, Thank you. See you then Sir.

#2: Si Senor, no problemo.

#3: Aaight.

#4: I'll be late due to traffic.

#5: I'll be late 'cause I don't give a damn.

#6: FU! Catch me if you can you wanna-be copper!

WORKER

(snickering)

Respond with #5.

GRAPHIC

White CON*Star Logo on a black screen.

CON*Star CHIME sounds

SPOKESPERSON (V/O)

CON*Star: Helping keep jails filled since 2015

Support your Fellow Incarcerated Authors

Check out the following works written by some of our fellow Graterfriends contributors!
Please note, the Prison Society does not endorse any of the opinions in these books.
We also cannot guarantee all books will be approved by the DOC.

Most of these works are available on Amazon if not otherwise specified.

DANIEL CUMMINGS, *A Cry for Justice*

"The story of Daniel Cummings was highlighted and given national exposure 20 years ago on the Geraldo Rivera Show entitled "Spouses of Rape Victims..." When the heinous crime of rape has been perpetrated upon a man's wife, and the culprit has been identified by the victim, and that identity made known to the agents of law enforcement, it is reasonably expected that justice will occur. When the culprit has been positively identified as the rapist of the victim; and those agencies empowered with the authority to arrest the culprit and thereby mete out justice, consciously refuse to perform the duties they have been sworn to uphold, cite their own lack of confidence in the process of the justice system, as the reason they will not perform their sworn duty; they have by their own inaction, aligned themselves with the rapist and closed the doors to even a resemblance of justice. What does one do, when coming home from a hard day's work, and finding that your wife has been brutally raped by someone you know? What would you do?"

DERRICK GIBSON,

Before Orange was the New Black: The Camp Hill Story

"He describes a prison riot in central Pennsylvania in 1989 that was so devastating that it caused millions of dollars in damages to the prison complex. It was humiliating and embarrassing for prison officials. The officials went out of their way to keep this incident out of the mainstream news; most inmates in the same county prison system had/have not heard about the 1989 riot. To this day, talking about this riot is taboo in prison. The author's writing skills and storytelling skills are sure to impress. This book will peak your interest, captivate, humor and even anger you."

GREGORY WHITESIDE, *3P's - Please, Pain and Passion*

"Includes 185 poems that cover everything from love, to heartbreak, from joy to sorrow, from the spiritual to wordly subjects too."

JAMAL STEVENS, *House of Brittle Bones*

"House of Brittle Bones is a collection of stories which all have an unexpected twist at the end of each. If you like shows like Twilight Zone, you will love these beautifully crafted tales. The house is the book, and the bones (stories) are my very DNA. The stories are brittle because nothing is ever as you expect it to be or turn out. A story will crumble before your very eyes, thus revealing an entirely different dimension.

JAMES HAIRSTON,

Federal Nightmare: An Urban Crime Story

"Is an urban crime drama that will take you deep into the world of South Florida's drug trade; a world not described in any of the tourist brochures; a world of cunning betrayals where enemies are abundant and friends are few and far between. To survive in such a world, one must be ruthless while holding on to their sense of humanity; if such a feat can be achieved."

JEREMY MULLIGAN, *Coming of Age Series*

JEROME WILLIAMS, Poverty Poetry

"Poverty Poetry is a poetry book filled with numerous varieties of poems that express every element of people's lives from happy to sad, and the ups and downs they experience. Survival of real-life events, of experiences based on Romey Romello's life and that of his family and friends' lives, everyone living from urban to suburban communities can relate to different experiences of poverty."

JEROME WILLIAMS, Focus For Ever

"Focus Forever is a mental health, eye-waking, self-help book to motivate and consistently remind people around the world and people in poverty to stay focused under all circumstances. This book contains information, tips, and stories to help people and give them wake-up calls to focus on transforming their current negative, unhealthy mental problems into future positive healthy situations. And motivate people to push every element of their focus to the limit."

JOHN GRIFFIN, Sequence of Protocol

"He describes a prison riot in central Pennsylvania in 1989 that was so devastating that it caused millions of dollars in damages to the prison complex. It was humiliating and embarrassing for prison officials. The officials went out of their way to keep this incident out of the mainstream news; most inmates in the same county prison system had/have not heard about the 1989 riot. To this day, talking about this riot is taboo in prison. The author's writing skills and storytelling skills are sure to impress. This book will peak your interest, captivate, humor and even anger you."

JOHN GRIFFIN, First Shot Fired

"Sulee Niger is twenty-two years old and has just returned to Philadelphia from New York, after being away for seven years. Little does he know the entanglements in a drug oper-

ation and the murder of others he would face. Sulee decides to investigate and solve the murders. As he works on the case, he finds himself in the middle of a drug war that has broken out between all those involved. He has a decision to make and he has to do so wisely.

JOHN GRIFFIN, *A Letter to My Father*

"This is an extraordinary autobiography of a young black man growing up in a loving and supportive close-knit family, who finds himself struggling through what he sees as the minefields established by the racial and oppressive nature of White America. As the title denotes, "A Letter To My Father" is a revealing conversation of a son to his father."

JOSEPH MANDER (Soundcloud Music Account), Username: SSJoeyBishop

JOSEPH MCBRIDE, *Confederacy 666*

"This is a biblical numerical study/Reference Guide based on Revelation 13:18: "Here is wisdom. Let him hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred three-score and six." English is the world's business and aviation language. USA is the world's global superpower. The matrix is based on the English alphabet. Six is the number of man, so the English alphabet in increments of six. The 1,000 generation promise that God gave to Abraham is up and the mystery of the beast in Revelation 13:18 is finally revealed. Once the reality of this book becomes real to you, you will never be the same."

KEESHAWN CRAWFORD, *Traits and Emotions of a Salvageable Soul*

"All people have their own remarkable intrinsic value, and it's time we recognize it in ourselves and share it with the people in our lives. From the wisdom of elders comes Traits and Emotions of a Salvageable Soul: A Conversation with a Touch of Class, a guide to growing and healing ourselves so that we can live the quality of life we were always meant to live. From life's hard lessons, Crawford offers the reader encouragement and truth, a path for using life's challenges to overcome and even thrive. Don't give up, he reminds us. Every one of us has great potential and purpose. We just need to have faith in ourselves and courage."

KENNETH CANNON, *Dear Mama, Closer to the Truth...*
"A novel written by Kenneth Cannon, HH-4008, SCI Frackville, which shines light on poverty, drug abuse, parenting, and the life inside incarceration"

KERRY MAX COOK, *Chasing Justice: My Story of Freeing Myself After Two Decades on Death Row for a Crime I Didn't Commit*

"In 1977, at age 19, Kerry Max Cook was arrested and wrongly

convicted of the capital murder of a young woman in Tyler, Texas. On death row, when Cook wasn't struggling to survive amid vicious inmates and inhumane conditions, he was fighting a justice system determined to muzzle him and loath to admit their horrendous mistake. Through his perseverance and the hard work of a team of crusading lawyers, his death sentence was reversed-11 days before his planned execution in late 1996. Here is Cook's story, in his own heart-breaking and moving words."

MALCOLM ROWE, *Ghetto Prophecy 7th Street, The Untold Story*

"Urban street culture has since changed with the passing of the times. There is no such thing as respect, honesty, trustworthiness, or loyalty anymore. Most of these young street guys who are now running around controlling the hustle game have all but lost their moral integrity. Brothers are crossing their own brother while sisters are crossing damn near everyone, solely on the strength of their commitment to their baby daddies...With this novel, I will be making a desperate attempt to bring the dysfunctional plight of a race of colored people who had so much hope and promise to the worlds stage. The sheer brilliance of the average street hustler is so amazing that the talent can only be compared to major business CEOs...This is a powerful Philadelphia story, so Philly readers definitely should not be left out of the loop."

MARVIN "RUNNING RIVER" BANKS, *Our Ancestors are Proud*

"My wishes are that the readers research the vast history of this land and understand that, if they were born here, you too are indigenous to this land, and this land had a name, a culture, and an identity way before it was labeled America. And it still does."

MUMIA ABU-JAMAL, *Jailhouse Lawyers: Prisoners Defending Prisoners v. the U.S.A.*

"presents the stories and reflections of fellow prisoners-turned-advocates who have learned to use the court system to represent other prisoners—many uneducated or illiterate—and, in some cases, to win their freedom."

REGINALD LEWIS, *Leaving Death Row*

"A book of poetry, Leaving Death Row is Lewis's 'florid, ever-unfurling dream, my winged chariot of imagination and memories escaping this low-slung mass of steel and stone and bullet-proof glass that seeks to imprison their flight.'"

REQUESTS FOR RESOURCES

In lieu of a list, please request resources directly with this form. Please allow one month for a response.

Pennsylvania Prison Society
ATTN: Resources

230 South Broad Street, Suite 605
Philadelphia, PA, 19102

Complete and mail to the Pennsylvania Prison Society:

Name, ID Number, Facility
If Applicable: Returning County for Re-entry Resources

Resource Description
Note: The Prison Society does not offer financial assistance

Buses Are Back.



The Prison Society is providing low-cost rides for your loved ones from Philadelphia to six state correctional institutions: **SCI Benner, SCI Frackville, SCI Laurel Highlands, SCI Mahanoy, SCI Muncy, and SCI Somerset.**

Tell your loved ones to purchase tickets one of two ways:

- **Online:** Visit www.prisonsociety.org/services/transportation
- **In-person:** 230 S. Broad Street, Suite 605, Philadelphia, PA 19102 (Monday - Friday, 9 AM - 5 PM)
- **Call** our office at 215-564-4775.

READER SURVEY

We welcome comments and suggestions from all readers.
Please complete this form and mail it to the Pennsylvania
Prison Society.

Pennsylvania Prison Society
ATTN: Resources
230 South Broad Street, Suite 605
Philadelphia, PA, 19102

Name, ID Number, Facility

Comments and Suggestions

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