

# **Poetry Behind the Walls**

**a project of  
Hillbrook Youth Detention Facility  
4949 Velasko Rd.  
Syracuse, NY 13215**

**In collaboration with**

**Youth Empowerment  
Le Moyne College**

**and**

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## HILLBROOK

Jahari

Hillbrook

Stressed out, locked up, secured

Hillbrook

Boring, tired, painful

Hillbrook

I don't wanna be here

Hillbrook

How did I get here

Hillbrook

Sometimes I wanna tear

Hillbrook

Tears me in half

Hillbrook

I just think about the past.

Hillbrook

Life moves to fast

Hillbrook

When I leave I'll never look back

Hillbrook

I can't believe I just said that because now I'm back

Hillbrook

It just ain't right

Hillbrook

is not where I wanna be.

Hillbrook

Hillbrook

Hillbrook

The end

**HOME**  
**Jahari**

Home is where I wanna be  
Home is where I can see  
Home is where I can sleep  
Home is where I feel needed  
Home is where I'm undefeated  
Home is a place of love  
Home is where I see the angel above  
Home is where I can eat  
Home is where I can't be beat  
Home is where I wanna be

## **QUESTION FOR GOD**

**Jahari**

Dear God,  
I wanna thank you for givin life

Dear God,  
Am I livin rite

Dear God  
Can I make it through the pain

Dear God  
I feel no fear

Dear God  
Are you there

Dear God  
Can you catch my tear

Dear God  
Can I count on you to be there

Dear God  
Sincerely my thoughts

**TRAFFIC**  
**Jahari**

Speed, speed, speed

Horns, horns, horns

Every minute a baby is born.

Speed, speed, speed

Lights, lights, lights

A mom lost her son she can't sleep at night.

## **THE COMMUNITY**

**Jahari**

The Community

A place of love

A place with God above

The Community is

Where the young play

Where you laugh and giggle each day

The Community is

A place to sleep

A place to keep pride and joy

The Community is

Where you meet new friends

Where you stick together till the end

The Community is

A place with no crime scenes

A place where no muggers should be seen

The Community

**WHAT AM I**  
**Jahari**

I am,  
Independent  
Smart  
Responsible

I am,  
Lovable  
Caring  
Respectful

I am,  
Thankful  
Warmhearted  
Courageous

I am,  
Somebody

**FRUSTRATED**  
**Jihad**

Board behind wires, walls, and windows

Separated from outside from friends and family

Frustrated with staff, teachers, rules  
and the fact I am in here

Frustrated that I am not in regular school

Frustrated with this work

Frustrated with the lack of freedom

Frustrated without being able to see her

Frustrated with others

Frustrated with me

I don't want to be frustrated



**THE WAY YOU WHISPER TO ME**  
**Jason**

All the things you do,  
are why I love you.  
The way you smile.  
The ways you go the extra mile.

The way you talk  
The way you walk  
The way we hold hands  
The way you etch our initials in the sand.

The way you look at me  
The way you describe what you see  
The way you stare at me  
The way you stroke my hair.

The way you touch my face  
The way you call me  
You will always be my buddie.

## **GOD LESSONS**

### **Jason**

I'm so surprised to be here  
It was such an awesome start  
With no one to care  
I wind up with a broken heart.

I didn't see it coming  
But now it makes sense  
As sad as I am  
I guess I'm pretty dense.

You been embarrassed to be seen with me  
Yet in private, called me cute and smart  
When we are alone you teased and flirt  
But when friends mocked I am hurt.

I tried to satisfy it all as a stage  
But I hang in there to the end  
But what about those faces  
One for me and one for your friends.

So it is time to gather up the pieces  
To put me back once again  
I found someone more involved  
One fact, one act, and one friend, the end.

**I MISS YOU**  
**Jason**

Hello God  
I just wanted to say  
I loved you and miss you  
And wish you had stayed.

You were my best friend  
A friend pure as gold  
My most favorite best friend  
If the whole truth be told.

Do you miss me  
Can you feel the pain in my heart  
I'd like to believe we're not real apart.

I'm playin my music  
It always bring me tears  
If only we had been together  
For a couple more years.

I love how you listened  
Will I sing you and I  
As you now sing with angels  
Do you see how I cry.

Know that I miss you  
And I need you still  
Even if you're in heaven  
Know that I always will.

So keep watch over me God  
My very best friend  
And know that I always loved you  
You're the truest of friends.

## **NEW GIRL**

**Jason**

There someone who is different  
As different as can be  
She walks into my classroom  
I hope she sits by me.

Like me she is wearing braces  
Her hair is black and straight  
Dark eyes look at our faces  
She knows she new and late.

My curious eyes are on her  
Most staring blank and grim  
But my eyes are open and hopeful  
But my heart invites her in.

And in that arching moment  
When my throat feels dry and light  
I volunteer to help her  
And make her first day right.

## **BABY GIRL**

**Jason**

Baby girl, baby girl, you on my mind  
I think of you all the time  
I dream of you every single nite  
Thoughts of you floods my days with light.

Every day my heart grows fonder  
Even though I have no wonder  
Is this true is this real  
I can't control the way I feel.

Can I kiss you, Can I call  
Say yes, I will give you my all  
The pain I feel when we are apart  
I tell you now it breaks my heart.

Baby, baby you're on my mind  
I think about you all the time  
I dream of you every single nite  
I love you, so love me too - all right.

**Lonely  
Cody**

I am so, I cannot think.

I am so, so lonely

All I can do is blink.

I feel so helpless,

I can barely move.

I feel so lonely, I need to talk.

I feel so lonely, I need to walk.

Now I feel so lonely,

I can barely think.

I feel so lonely

All I can see is pink.

Go away loneliness!

**Life behind Barbed Wire**  
**Cody**

Behind barbed wire I feel alone. It's so dark, I wanna go home. I feel like I'm alone. I have no one to talk to over the phone. One day when I got mad, I laid on my bed thinking I was bad. Then someone told me it was all right, as long as you have the might to get on your feet. He told me when I was stressed to relieve my soul. I asked how do you do that? He said, "Just let it go!" Thanks to that person who helped me when I was mad. You helped me out and now I'm glad!

**Friends**  
**Cody**

These are my friends.  
They are my friends.  
They are important

Friends, friends, friends.

They are there  
When you're sad,  
And even when you're glad.  
Oh how many friends  
I had.

They can be crazy.  
They can be fun.  
They can be lazy,

And you only need one.  
Friends, friends, friends.  
Friends are there.

You can choose your friends anywhere.

I love my friends.

We love to laugh,  
We love to talk,

And we can walk the walk.  
Friends, friends, friends.



**Hillbrook  
Cody**

When I came to Hillbrook  
I was so mad,  
Maybe even sad.

There were kids,  
Kids there were.

I was so lonely and  
Had no one to talk to,  
Sometimes I wish I had you to talk to.

I want to leave Hillbrook,  
Yes, I do.

I want to leave Hillbrook,  
Please let me through.

I want to go home,  
Yes, I do.

Please help me get out of Hillbrook, please.  
Thank you!

**Girls  
Cody**

Girls.

Girls are pretty.

Girls are nice.

Girls can be witty

And hopefully, without lice.

Girls are awesome  
And so I say,  
“Girls are the prettiest things in the world,”  
Everyday that’s what I’d say.

They wear nice clothes  
And are so nice.

I like a girl that’s worth  
A good price.

Girls.

**Bling  
Cody**

Blingage is so shiny.

It is so cool.

Blingage is so shiny.

It makes you look like a fool.

It makes you look cool.

It comes in gold or silver.

It makes me quiver.

It is so cool,  
That it makes me shiver.

Thanx to the bling,  
We look like gangstas.

It makes us sing,  
This is the bling, bling.

**Life in the Dark**  
**Cody**

Life in the dark, life in the dark,  
I could have sworn I heard a dog bark.

It is so dark, I am so scared,  
I cannot see it is so dark.

I felt something rub against my knee.

I can't see I feel as if I'm blind,  
Someone please kick me in my behind.

I hope the lights come on soon  
Because I can't live life in the dark.

**Time 2 Change**  
**Ali**

I need 2 make a change  
Good for my health.

Do it for my parents,  
Do it for myself.

Time 2 make a change,  
I need a little help.

Do it for myself,  
Not for anybody else.

**I'm Sorry**  
**Richard**

I'm sorry for all the times I lost my temper, for the times when I was rude, for all the gifts that were given and never received "thank you." For all the love you've given me and I haven't given back. For all the times you were patient, a virtue that I lack. I'm sorry for all the people to whom I was so cruel. To all the people I laughed at, I acted like a fool. I couldn't see past your imperfections. I couldn't see past my pride. You're feelings I trampled all over, on my high horse I wanted to ride. I'm sorry for all the times I lied. For people I hurt along the way. Not a day goes by that I don't regret it and I'd take it back any day. The only person I cared about was me and only me. Now I'm truly sorry. I only wish I could make you see, I'm sorry for everything I've done, for all the people I've let down. I'm only asking for a second chance, so I can turn things back around. I know that it's a little late, my deeds can't be undone. I realize now that I was wrong and I'm sorry everyone.

**I Am  
Richard**

I am a poet writing of my pain.

I am a person living a life of shame.

I am your son hiding my depression.

I am your brother making a good impression.

I am your friend acting like I'm fine.

I am a wisher, wishing this life weren't mine.

I am a boy who thinks of suicide.

I am a teenager pushing her tears aside.

I am a student who doesn't have a clue.

I am the boy sitting next to you.

I am the one asking you to care.

I am your best friend, hoping you'll be there.

**Learning from my Past**  
**Richard**

As the days pass slowly and the weeks creep by I find myself obsessing about ways that I could die. I lay awake at night thinking of my pain. There's no way it can get better, I have nothing left to gain. Suddenly thoughts of death are controlling my every move and every battle with my mind, I always seem to lose. I no longer want to be around the people that I love. All that I can think about is what's waiting up above. I cut my arms with razor blades to dull the pain inside, but that can only last so long. I do not want to be alive.



**Have you Ever  
Richard**

Have you ever lived my life? Spent one minute in my shoes? If you haven't told me, why you judge me as you do? Have you ever woken up in the morning wondering if this was your last day on Earth? Have you ever left your house unsure if you'd return? Have you ever seen your friend get shot outside his favorite store? Have you ever seen a friend die from drugs, he'd never used before? Have you ever seen your mom get beat up by your stepdad messed up on booze? Have you ever had an unwanted pregnancy forcing you to choose? Have you ever sat beneath the stars hoping God will hear? Have you ever seen your friend drive away after way too many beers?

**Time has come  
Richard**

My time has come  
And so I'm gone,  
To a better place  
Far beyond.

I love you all,  
As you can see,  
But it's better now  
Because I'm free....