

POETRY BEHIND THE WALLS

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ABOUT PBW

POETRY BEHIND THE WALLS (PBW) IS ONE OF THE ONLY ONGOING JOURNALS IN THE U.S. THAT IS DEDICATED TO WRITINGS FROM YOUTH THAT ARE INCARCERATED. PBW IS A COLLABORATIVE PROJECT BETWEEN SAVE THE KIDS AND HILLBROOK YOUTH DETENTION CENTER.

GOAL OF PBW

THE GOAL OF PBW IS TO PROVIDE SPACE FOR YOUTH TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES NONVIOLENTLY. PBW ALSO SUPPORTS AND ENCOURAGES YOUTH WHEN THEY SEE THEIR WORK PUBLISHED.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

WE VERY MUCH WANT TO THANK ALL OF THE KIDS, STAFF, AND ADMINISTRATION AT HILLBROOK YOUTH DETENTION CENTER FOR SUPPORTING THIS PROJECT.

SUBMISSIONS

POETRY BEHIND THE WALLS IS OPEN TO ALL INCARCERATED YOUTH THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

WE WOULD LIKE ALL WRITING TO ADVOCATE POSITIVE EXPRESSION AND HOPE. IT DOES NOT MATTER WHAT KIND OF WRITING ABILITY THE YOUTH EXHIBIT. PLEASE SEND SUBMISSIONS VIA E-MAIL TO: ANTHONY J. NOCELLA II - ANTHONY.NOCELLAII@CORTLAND.EDU (WITH THE SUBJECT TITLE - "POETRY BEHIND THE WALLS," INCLUDING FULL CONTACT INFORMATION, AGE, FACILITY, AND WILL SEND YOU BACK A CONTRACT TO FILL OUT).

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ABOUT SAVE THE KIDS

STK IS A GRASS-ROOTS NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION FOUNDED IN 2009 DEDICATED TO ESTABLISHING A MOVEMENT THAT ADVOCATES FOR ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION THAT ARE PEACE ORIENTED SERVICES FOR YOUTH AND THE COMMUNITY, WHICH HELPS TO TRANSFORM THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM AND END COMMUNITY AND INSTITUTIONAL VIOLENCE.

"KEEPING KIDS OUT OF INCARCERATION AND AWAY FROM VIOLENCE."

WWW.SAVETHEKIDSGROUP.ORG

UNTITLED

BY: SYLVESTER

STREET'S CRAZY WHEN PEOPLE'S HOODS DIE DOWN
YOUNG ONE'S GO TO JAIL
THEY SAID IF YOU DON'T PRAY YOU WILL GO TO HELL
LOOK AT ME I'M LOCKED UP IN A DETENTION CELL
JUST WAITING FOR THE JUDGE TO SENTENCE ME OR LOWER MY BAIL
JUNK STRESSFUL BEING AROUND MEN ALL DAY
9:00 I GO INTO ROOM A OR B WHERE IT'S FOUR WALLS
I'M A YOUNG KID AND BEST BELIEVE I DONE SEEN IT ALL
DONE SMOKED WEED, SOLD A LIL' DRUGS
ME BEING IN HERE,
I MISS MY MAMA'S LOVE
WHEN I WAS 13, I THOUGHT I WAS A THUG
MY DAD NEVER WHIPPED ME TILL HE SEEN BLOOD
I CRIED, CRIED MY EYES OUT
I FEEL SORRY FOR PEOPLE BEHIND BARS
THAT ARE NEVER GETTING OUT
I'M A YOUNG KID, BUT I NEVER LET MY PAIN OUT
ME AND MY BOYS JUST SMOKE A LOT OF WEED AND HANG OUT
WE USED TO ROB PEOPLE AND TELL THEM TO EMPTY THEIR CHANGE OUT
MY BOYS SCARED TO PULL ALL THEIR PAIN OUT
THEY THINK THEY TOO HOOD TO GO TO SCHOOL
THROW AWAY THE DRUGS AND THE BIG JEWELS
I WISH I WAS HOME TO EAT SOME REAL SOUL FOOD

MY LIFE

BY: ANTHONY

LIFE IS REAL CRAZY

KIDS GETTIN' KILLED AND 13 YEAR OLD GIRLS HAVIN' BABIES

WHEN I HEAR ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE DYIN, THAT STUFF DOESN'T PHASE ME

WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO SAY?

THAT STUFF AMAZES ME, NAH

MY MOM ALWAYS TOLD ME TO GO TO SCHOOL

BUT MY HARD HEADED SELF WENT SKIPPIN WITH THE OLDER DUDES

EVEN THOUGH I LOVE MY MOTHER TO DEATH

EVERY TIME I SEE HER CRY, IT FEELS LIKE I GOT A BIG HOLE IN MY CHEST

WHEN I THINK ABOUT MY FAMILY

I PUT THE HOOD TO THE SIDE

CAUSE IT'S NOT FOR ME

GOT TO STAY IN SCHOOL AND STOP SCREWIN THE 40

I USED TO ROB PEOPLE WHEN I DIDN'T HAVE MONEY

AND THE STUPID THING IS, I DID IT BECAUSE I WAS HUNGRY

THOUGHT IT WAS COOL, ROLLIN' DICE

THEN I HAD TO CHILL AND DO RIGHT

BUT THIS IS ALL ABOUT MY LIFE.

THERE SHOULD BE NO SEPARATION

BY: ALEC

DISCRIMINATION, SEGREGATION, SEPARATION
ALL UNDER ONE NATION
HOW DO YOU LIVE UNDER ONE FLAG,
HAVE THE SAME EDUCATION
BUT STILL ARE SEPARATED
PEOPLE THINK JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE WHITE
THERE'S NO SEPARATION
EVEN THOUGH THE DAY OF CIVIL RIGHTS MAY BE OVER
WE STILL HAVE OUR OWN FIGHTS
WHY DO PEOPLE THINK WE'RE DIFFERENT
WE'RE NOT AT ALL DIFFERENT
JUST BECAUSE WE'RE DIFFERENT SHADES
DOESN'T MEAN ANYTHING
I CAME HERE AND HAD A GENERAL OUTLOOK ON KIDS FROM THE HOOD
BUT WHAT I REALIZED IS
THEY'RE NO DIFFERENT FROM ME AND YOU
SO WHY DO Y'ALL THINK THEY'RE SO DIFFERENT
WE'RE NOT
AND IF YOU DO
THEN SHAME ON YOU
JUST SHAME ON YOU

GIRLS

BY: LESLIE

I WANT 'EM
I NEED 'EM
THEY'RE FUN
THEY'RE DIFFERENT
THEIR BODY IS DIFFERENT
I LIKE THEIR SHAPE
THEIR BEAUTY
THEIR EDUCATION
I LIKE THEIR HAIR DONE
AND CLOTHES NAME BRAND
BUT WHAT I LIKE MOST
IS STAYING THE NIGHT WITH THEM
KNOWING THAT IT WILL BE FUN
THE NEXT DAY I GO HOME,
EAT, AND GO TO SLEEP,
WAITING FOR ANOTHER NIGHT

THE SYSTEM

BY: LONNIE

I'M TIRED OF THE SYSTEM
I WANT TO GET OUT OF THE SYSTEM
THE SYSTEM IS BROKEN
IT'S NOT A PLACE TO BE
THE WALLS ARE WHITE
AND THE FOOD IS GARBAGE
I CAN'T SLEEP AT NIGHT
BECAUSE I MISS MY FAMILY
MY BACK IS HURTING
MY MIND IS RACING
MY PRIDE IS GETTING TO ME
AND NO ONE WILL LEAVE ME ALONE

SHUT UP, GET OUT OF MY FACE

BY: DEWAYNE

COUNSELORS, SHUT UP
ADULTS, SHUT UP
YOU, SHUT UP
GET OUT OF MY FACE

YOU'RE IN MY FACE TO ANNOY ME
YOU'RE IN MY FACE TELLING ME WHAT TO DO
ALL OF HILLBROOK IS IN MY FACE
THE COPS ARE IN MY FACE
CAUSE YOU GOT NOTHIN' ELSE TO DO

EVERYBODY'S IN MY FACE
SHUT UP

TIME GOING BY

BY: ALEC

TIME GOING BY IS LIKE WAITING FOR A MIRACLE
GOOD TIMES GO BY ALONG WITH BAD
YOU THINK ABOUT YOUR TIME AS NOTHING
BUT WHEN YOU LOOK BACK, YOU WONDER
WHY DID I WASTE IT?
TIME IS MORE THAN YOU THINK
TIME IS ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING

ONLY YOU

BY: ALEC

A PERSON CAN MAKE YOU FEEL HIGH

A PERSON CAN MAKE YOU FEEL LOW

BUT THE ONLY PERSON YOU CAN BLAME IS YOU

HOW DO YOU BECOME STRONG,

WHEN YOU FEEL SO DOWN?

KEEP YOUR HEAD UP FOR THE MOMENT,

'CAUSE IT MAY BE THE ONLY THING YOU HAVE

SCHOOL

BY: LESLIE

I LIKE SCHOOL BECAUSE IT CAN GET YOU ANYWHERE IN LIFE.

SCHOOL CAN ALSO BE TOUGH, BUT NOT IF YOU LISTEN TO THE TEACHER.

I AM REALLY GOOD IN MATH AND SCIENCE.

WHEN I GO TO COLLEGE, I'M GOING TO PLAY COLLEGE FOOTBALL.

FOOTBALL HAS ALWAYS BEEN MY NUMBER ONE SPORT.

MY DREAM IS TO GO TO THE NFL.

LIFE

BY: LONNIE

HARD LIFE

STRUGGLES

LIVING DAY TO DAY

RAINY

FOGGY

SNOWY

JUST LIVING

TRYING TO SURVIVE

ANGER

BY: LONNIE

ONE MORE YEAR

TIME IS SLOW

I NEED TO GO HOME

I NEED TO GO HOME

I MISS MY FAMILY

I'M FRUSTRATED

I'M ANGRY

I'M LONELY

GROWING UP

BY: ANTHONY

MY NAME IS ANTHONY, BETTER KNOWN AS AMP, AND I'M GOING TO TELL YOU ABOUT ME... GROWING UP I HAD ONE BROTHER AND TWO SISTERS. I DIDN'T REALLY SEE MY FATHER THAT MUCH. HE WAS A BAD MAN, GETTING INTO FIGHTS, DOING DRUGS... JUST DOING THINGS HE SHOULDN'T HAVE BEEN DOING... SO THAT'S WHY I DIDN'T SEE HIM. WHEN I TURNED FIVE, I HAD A NEW BABY SISTER. I WAS THE MAN OF THE HOUSE SO I WATCHED OVER MY SISTER, LIKE I DO NOW. I JUST KEPT HER OUT OF TROUBLE. WHEN I TURNED THIRTEEN, MY COUSIN PASSED AWAY. HE WAS TRYING A WRESTLING MOVE AND HUNG HIMSELF ON ACCIDENT. MY MOM MADE A COUPLE BAD CHOICES TOO. SHE SOLD DRUGS OUT OF THE HOUSE FOR EXTRA MONEY TO FEED ME, MY SISTERS AND MY BROTHER. SHE WENT TO JAIL FOR A LITTLE WHILE BUT SHE CHANGED AND GOT A JOB NOW AND WE ARE DOING GOOD.

FOOTBALL

BY: SHAI

I AM A BEAST
YOU CAN'T STOP ME
YOU'RE SLOW, I CAN SEE

I'M DANCING WITH MY FEET
JUKING & HITTING MOVES
SO FAST THAT I FLEET

AS YOU CAN SEE
I'M A BEAST
SO GIVE UP
CAUSE I'M UNDEFEATED

FITCH STREET

BY: SHYKEEM

YO,

YOU KNOW MY NAME IS SKY

I STAY AWAY FROM THAT 45

AND IF YOU WANT BEEF

YOU NEED TO GO TO A BARBEQUE

LIFE IN HILLBROOK

BY: LESLIE

I DON'T LIKE HILLBROOK BECAUSE THEY KEEP FEEDING ME THE SAME FOOD.
AT HOME, I CAN EAT ANYTHING I WANT TO.
I ALSO DON'T LIKE THAT WE HAVE TO WEAR THESE RAGGEDY CLOTHES.
I'M USED TO WEARING HOLLISTER AND ABERCROMBIE & FITCH.

STREETS

BY: SYLVESTER

YOUNG KIDS ON THE BLOCK, FLIPPING PACK
BUT YOU CAN'T WALK AROUND WITHOUT THAT GAT
I'M ON THE BLOCK AND THE YOUNGEST GOT THE GAT.
I WISH THE WORLD WAS DIFFERENT,
BUT SOME ARE GOING TO RAT.

THE BURNER

BY: SYLVESTER

IN THE STREETS YOU GOTTA HAVE A BURNER ON YOU
EVERYWHERE AROUND HERE, GUN SHOTS
AND YOU PRAY TO GOD IT'S NOT YA HOMIE
ALL THESE OLDER DUDES OUT HERE KNOW ME
WHEN I WAS OUT I WAS ALWAYS WALKING WITH AN OLDER HOMIE
I HAD THE NINE TUCK
MY MAN HAD THE BURNER ON HIM
MY NINE WAS TUCKED
12 YEARS OLD LOOKING FOR A STICK UP
THEY ON THE BLOCK TALKING ABOUT
ROLL THE PIFF UP
LIFE IS HARD, IT IS SHOOT OR GET SHOT
NO PEACE IN MY LIFE, BECAUSE OF THE PIECE IN MY LIFE

HILLBROOK

BY: JESUS

THE ROOMS ARE COLD
THE FLOORS ARE OLD
THE PEOPLE ARE COOL
BUT THE FOOD IS NASTY
AND THAT IS MY POEM

WHEN I GO HOME

BY: ANTHONY

WHEN I GO HOME

I AM GUNNA EAT A BIG MEAL

LIKE IT'S THANKSGIVING

AND I'M GUNNA PLAY FOOTBALL WITH MY SISTER

LIKE I USED TO

IT'S LIKE THE OLD DAYS

WHEN I USED TO MY WITH MY COUSIN

AND HANG WITH MY FRIEND

WHEN I GO HOME

HILLBROOK

BY: ANTHONY

HILLBROOK IS A BAD PLACE TO SLEEP

IT IS ALSO A BAD PLACE TO SPEAK

BECAUSE IT IS HARD BEING IN A TRAPPED HOME WITHOUT A TREAT

THAT'S WHY I SIT IN MY ROOM WHEN I'M BORED AND MAKE BEATS

JESUS

BY: JESUS

CHANGE MY LIFE

GET OUT, DO GOOD

GO TO SCHOOL

HELP MY FAMILY

GET A JOB

HELP OTHERS

MISSING

BY: SHYKEEM

HOW IS MY FAMILY DOING?

I'M IN HILLBROOK

I WANT TO KNOW

WHAT'S GOOD WITH MY BOYS?

AND I WANT TO KNOW

HOW IS MY MOM,

MY FAMILY AND MY STUFF DOING?

SURVIVING

BY: RAMSI

LIVING IN THE STREET
IS LIKE LIVING IN THE CREEK
SMOKING WEED GETS MY BRAIN ALL CLOUDY
WHEN I GET MONEY
I BLOW IT ON THE HONEY'S
CAUSE I'M SWEET LIKE HONEY

SCHOOL

BY: JAVON

SCHOOL IS WACK

SCHOOL IS CRACK

MY SCHOOL'S BLACK

YOU CAN GET OUT OF MY FACE

BEFORE YOU GET SMACKED

I'M ABOUT TO GET A STACK

AFTER I LAY ANOTHER TRACK

I DON'T LIKE

BY: SHYKEEM

I DON'T LIKE,
WHEN PEOPLE PICK ON ME
OR I WILL WANT TO FIGHT
THAT'S WHY I DON'T PICK ON PEOPLE
I DON'T LIKE,
WHEN PEOPLE TALK ABOUT PEOPLE
THAT'S NOT NICE
TO TALK ON PEOPLE
OR PICK ON THEM

BASKETBALL

BY: DEWAYNE

BASKETBALL IS MY FAVORITE SPORT
IT'S WHAT I LIKE TO DO WITH MY SPARE TIME
SOMEDAY, I WANT TO GO TO THE NBA
JUST LIKE LEBRON JAMES
BUT BETTER
OR MAYBE LIKE KOBE BRYANT
BUT WHEN I GET OUT OF HILLBROOK
I WANT TO PLAY BASKETBALL
MORE THAN I WANT TO PLAY FOOTBALL
...AND GO TO THE NBA

TURNING MY LIFE AROUND

BY: DEONTAE

MY LIFE IS BORING
BECAUSE I AM HERE
A DUMP THAT TURNS YOUR LIFE AROUND
WHEN I GET OUT I'LL BE GOOD
FOR MY WHOLE FAMILY

BASKETBALL AND PEOPLE

BY: LESLIE

I LIKE BASKETBALL BECAUSE IT IS A GOOD WORKOUT
IF YOU ARE NEW IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD
YOU COULD GO TO THE BASKETBALL COURT
MOST PEOPLE MEET AT BASKETBALL COURTS
BY GETTING PICK-UP GAMES WITH RANDOM PEOPLE
SOONER OR LATER, PEOPLE WILL GET TO KNOW YOU BETTER

I LOVE FOOTBALL

BY: SHYKEEM

I WANT TO GO HOME AND PLAY FOOTBALL
AND I MISS MY FAMILY, TOO
AND THEY MISS ME, TOO
BUT REAL STUFF..
I MISS PLAYING BASKETBALL
BUT REAL STUFF..
PEOPLE OUT THERE LOVE ME
AND THEY WANT ME HOME
AND I COULD BE GETTING OUT SOON

HURRICANE OF LIFE

BY: ALEC

LIFE IS CRAZY LIKE A HURRICANE
EVERY MINUTE OF A HURRICANE IS PAINFUL
JUST LIKE THE STRUGGLE THROUGH A HURRICANE
LIFE IS A GIANT STORM
BUT WHEN YOU REACH THE EYE,
IT'S THE MOST BEAUTIFUL THING YOU EXPERIENCE
THEN THE STORM COMES BACK AGAIN
AND YOU FALL DOWN
AND GET TORN APART
BUT WHEN THE STORM DISAPPEARS
YOU REALIZE WHAT ALL THAT FIGHT WAS FOR
THIS IS MINE, YOURS, EVERYBODY'S,
HURRICANE OF LIFE

SCHOOL

BY: SHYKEEM

I LIKE IT FOR THE EDUCATION
I LIKE IT FOR THE GIRLS
I LIKE IT FOR THE TEACHERS
AND I LIKE IT FOR THE PEARLS

SCHOOL IS MY FUTURE
SCHOOL IS MY LIFE
SCHOOL IS MY FAVORITE
AND SCHOOL IS MY KNIFE

FAMILY

BY: JESUS

MY BLOOD

MY PEOPLE

MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS

MY GRANDMAS AND GRANDPA

THEY MEAN EVERYTHING TO ME

THEY ARE HAPPY, WHILE I AM SAD

THEY ARE FREE, WHILE I AM LOCKED UP

THEY ARE THE PUZZLE, AND I AM THE PIECE

UNTIL WE ARE TOGETHER, WE WILL BE INCOMPLETE

WOODY

BY: CHRISTOPHER (STK STAFF)

WHEN I WALK DOWN THE HALL, AND
YOU HEAR THE JINGLE OF MY KEYS
I NOTICE YOU PRAYING ON YOUR KNEES
SIGHING, AS YOU TAKE A DEEP BREATH
ANOTHER FRIEND SADLY SHOT TO DEATH
SOMETIMES I SEE THE SADNESS IN YOUR EYES
THAT YOUR HOOD HAS NEVER ALLOWED YOU TO CRY
THROUGH OUR TALKS, I FEEL YOU WANT TO CHANGE
SADLY, YOU WILL END UP ON A SHIRT
IF YOU STAY THE SAME
CHERISH YOUR YOUTH, IT'S OKAY TO BE A CHILD
LOOK IN THE MIRROR AND CHANGE YOUR LIFESTYLE
SEVEN MONTHS, YOU WILL BE BACK ON THE STREET
A STORY OF SUCCESS, NOT DEFEAT

REASON

BY: SHA'KEITH

EVERYTHING HAPPENS FOR A REASON.
WHEN SOMEONE GETS SHOT,
IT HAPPENS FOR A REASON.
WHEN YOU GET LOCKED UP,
IT HAPPENS FOR A REASON.
WHEN YOU GET INTO A FIGHT,
IT IS FOR A REASON.
WHEN YOU GO IN FRONT OF A JUDGE,
IT HAPPENS FOR A REASON.
WHEN MY MOM COMES TO SEE ME,
EVERY WEDNESDAY AND SUNDAY,
IT'S FOR A REASON.

TOUGH TIMES

BY: SHA'KEITH

TOUGH TIMES DON'T LAST LONG

TOUGH GUYS DO

WHEN TOUGH TIMES COME BEYOND YOU

YOU'RE STUCK WITH THE PEOPLE THAT'S CLOSE TO YOU

TOUGH TIMES MAKE YOU THE PERSON YOU ARE

TOUGH TIMES ARE NOT WHEN YOU BRAKE IN A CAR

TOUGH TIMES ARE WHEN THINGS HURT YOU AND NOT LEAVE A SCAR

DYING BEFORE HIS TIME

BY: SHYKEEM

MOOK IS COUSIN

HE'S GONE NOW

HE GOT KILLED

THE SHOT WAS NOT MEANT FOR HIM

WHEN I HEARD THAT, I WAS MAD

I'M MISSING HIM NOW, MORE THAN EVER

THERE ISN'T A DAY THAT GOES BY THAT I DON'T WANT HIM BACK

BULLETS FLY, FUNERAL RIDE

23 YEARS OLD IS TOO YOUNG TO DIE

WHEN I FOUND OUT YOU PASSED

I THOUGHT IT WAS A LIE

UNCLE SCOOB BROKE THE SAD, SAD NEWS THAT NIGHT

YOU BEING DEAD JUST ISN'T RIGHT

I REMEMBER RIDING IN THE GREEN CAR

YOU MADE ME FEEL LIKE A SUPERSTAR

R.I.P. MOOK

HILLBROOK

BY: QUINTON

HELL

INCARCERATED

LOCKED

LONELY

BORED

REAL

ORDERED

OBSERVED

KID

HATIN

BY: DREQUAN & STEPHEN

HATIN' ON ME BECAUSE I'M BLACK
HATIN' ON ME BECAUSE YOU'RE WACK
HATIN' ON ME BECAUSE YOU SMOKE CRACK
YOU HATIN' ON ME BECAUSE I'M ON TRACK
YOU ALWAYS GOING TO HATE IF YOU DON'T HAVE A STACK
THEY'RE HATIN' ON BECAUSE OF WHAT THEY LACK
THEY'RE HATIN' ON BECAUSE I PACK
PEOPLE JUST NEED TO STOP HATIN' AND THAT'S A FACT

My Hood

BY: RASHAUN

MY HOOD, A TERRIFYING PLACE
DON'T MATTER WHAT'S YOUR RACE
JUST KNOW YOU CAN CATCH A CASE
PEOPLE, EVERYDAY, GETTING SHOT IN THE FACE
MOTHERS CRYING, THEIR KIDS ARE DYING
COPS ALL AROUND IN MY HOOD
BUT NOWHERE ELSE IN TOWN
ALL MY FRIENDS GET LOCKED UP
EVERY NIGHT PEOPLE SHOOT THE BLOCK UP
EVERY WEEK SOMETHING HAPPENS
WHY CAN'T WE ALL JUST GET ALONG?
SING A SONG, NO, WE HAVE TO SETTLE IT
IN A FIGHT, THAT AIN'T RIGHT!
EACH AND EVERY CORNER
DRUGS GET SOLD ON
WEED AND CRACK MONEY IS NO GOOD
IT'S JUST FAST MONEY
PEOPLE WANT TO BE IN MY HOOD
MY HOOD, MY HOOD, MY HOOD,
A TERRIBLE PLACE
BUT IT'S MY HOOD, UNDERSTOOD?

WHAT DOES 'BEING BLACK' MEAN TO ME?

BY: TYRAE

BEING BLACK MEANS, FROM THE KINGS AND QUEENS
TO THE CHAINS AND WHIPS
FROM THE AFRICAN SLAVE SHIP WE WENT
FROM THE DEATHS AND DISEASES
TO THE HILLS AND FIELDS
HOW THE BLACKS WORKED HARD FOR A TRASHY MEAL
FROM THE CIVIL WAR TO THE CIVIL RIGHTS
HOW FREEDOM CAME AND HOW HARD WE FIGHT
FROM THE FLESH AND BLOOD
TO THE SWEAT AND TEARS
HOW MY BLACK PEOPLE SURVIVED SO MANY YEARS
HAVING DIFFERENT RIGHTS FROM BLACK AND WHITE
FIGHTS TO THE BLACK LEADERS
THAT DIED DURING THE FIGHT
AND CHANGING SO MANY RIGHTS
TO MARTIN TO MALCOLM TO ROSA TO CORETTA
TO HUEY TO HAMPTON
TO OBAMA MAKING IT BETTER
FROM THE STRUGGLES TO THE FIGHT
FROM OVERCOMING THE HEIGHTS
MY BLACK PEOPLE ARE STILL STANDING UPRIGHT
WE ARE STRONG
WE ARE RIGHT
WE ARE POWERFUL, ATHLETIC KNIGHTS

A PUERTO RICO STORY

BY: JESUS

BEING PUERTO RICAN IS IMPORTANT TO ME
BEING PUERTO RICAN MEANS A LOT TO ME
BEING PUERTO RICAN IS ALL ABOUT THE FOOD
RICE, BEANS AND CHICKEN
TIME IS A TICKIN', BUT I AM IN HERE
BEING PUERTO RICAN
IN THESE WALLS, COLD ALL THE TIME
I THINK ABOUT MY FAMILY, AND WHAT THEY HAVE GONE THROUGH
HERE ALONE, NOTHING BUT TIME
I WISH I COULD BE AT HOME, AND EVERYTHING WOULD BE FINE
EVERYONE AROUND ME IN HERE CAN'T RELATE
BECAUSE I'M THE ONLY ONE THAT SPEAKS SPANISH
THEY LOOK AT ME AND TELL ME EVERYTHING
FROM BRUSHING MY TEETH TO SHOWERING AT NIGHT

NO MATTER WHERE I AM
I AM ALWAYS GOING TO BE PUERTO RICAN
THEY CAN TAKE MY CLOTHES
THEY CAN TAKE MY SHOES
THEY CAN TAKE MY MUSIC
THEY CAN TAKE MY CAR
THEY CAN TAKE MY GIRL
THEY CAN TAKE MY JEWELRY
THEY CAN TAKE MY PHONE
THEY CAN TAKE MY LIFE
BUT THEY CAN'T TAKE MY RACE
I AM PUERTO RICAN
HEAR IT LOUD
I AM PROUD!
I AM PUERTO RICAN!

FOOTBALL

BY: RAHMEEL

SUMMER, SUMMER, SUMMER
FOOTBALL SEASON IS HERE
HELMETS, GLOVES, SLEEVES
TACKLE, SMASH, BLOCK
PASSING IS THE KEY
WIN THE GAMES, WHAT CAN IT BE
IT'S FOURTH QUARTER
DOWN BY FOUR, TWO YARDS TO GO
RUN, RUN, FAST! AND NOT TOO SLOW
SPIN ON THE FIRST, JUKE ON THE RIGHT
RUN A COUPLE OF YARDS
THEN YOU'RE OUT OF SIGHT
TOUCHDOWN!
FANS ARE SCREAMING!
FOOTBALL, FOOTBALL, FOOTBALL
SUMMER, SUMMER, SUMMER

SNEAKERS

BY: RAHMEEL

THEY COME ALL DIFFERENT SIZES
RED, BLUE, AND WHITE
TAKE 'EM BACK IF TOO TIGHT
JORDANS, NIKE'S, REEBOK
THEY KEEP YOUR FEET WARM
EVERYONE LOVES THEM AND THEN SOME
YOU CAN RUN IN THEM
BLACK, WHITE, AND ORANGE
YOU CAN WEAR WITH ANYTHING
SNEAKERS ARE SO GREAT
WHO WOULD DARE TO HATE?

YANKEES

BY: JESUS

JETER, A-ROD, TEIXEIRA

HITTING HOMERUNS EVERY DAY

THEY PLAY, THEY RUN, THEY CATCH

THEY BEAT THE BOSTON RED SOX

THAT'S WHY THEY ARE CONSIDERED THE BEST

JESUS

BY: JESUS

JUSTICE

EVERYTHING

SERIOUS

UNDERSTANDING

SAVE ME

FEELINGS

BY: ALEC

HOW DO YOU FEEL WHEN YOU'RE LOCKED UP
ARE YOU IRRITATED, ANNOYED OR ANGRY?
YOU FEEL EVERY EMOTION IN THE WORLD
AND YOU CAN'T EVEN EXPLAIN IT
BUT WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT
WHAT DO YOU REALLY FEEL?
YOU'RE BEHIND BARS AND
CAN'T EVEN SAY WHAT YOU'RE FEELING
IF YOU COULD TURN BACK THE TIME YOU WOULD
TO SEE WHAT YOU WERE FEELING
WHEN YOU GOT YOURSELF IN HERE
FEELINGS ARE GOOD AND BAD
IT'S THE WAY YOU USE THEM

BOXING

BY: JESUS

MUHAMMAD ALI WAS THE BEST
WITH HITS TO THE FACE & TO THE CHEST
HE DIDN'T FEAR ANYONE
ALL HIS OPPONENTS WOULD RUN
HE WOULD KNOCK YOU OUT WITH A PUNCH
AND TALK ABOUT YOU TO YOUR FACE
IT DIDN'T MATTER WHAT WAS YOUR RACE
HE WOULD PUT YOU IN YOUR PLACE

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

BY: RAHMEEL

MOM AND DAD ALWAYS FIGHTING
I JUMP IN, AND GET HIT IN THE FACE
I WONDER WHAT DID I DO
TO DESERVE SUCH A TASTE?
I CRY AND WONDER IN TEARS
WHAT MAKES PEOPLE DO THIS?
IS IT LOVE OR HATE?
CAN'T THEY JUST SETTLE IT
IN A DEBATE, NO!
IT STARTS WITH ARGUING, THEN SCREAMING
FIGHTING, WHILE MY SISTERS ARE SLEEPING AND DREAMING
I'M UP, MOM THROWS A PUNCH
IT CONNECTS AND DAD'S TEETH JUST CRUNCH
DAD CHOKES HER, SHE'S CHOKING, I SAY STOP
I WILL CALL A COP, HE TOSSES HER, I'M MAD
NOW I DON'T LIKE HIM AS A DAD
I DON'T WANT TO BE LIKE HIM, NEVER
BUT WHAT CAN I DO BUT FIGHT HARD
TO NOT BE LIKE MOM AND DAD
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
BAD AND TERRIBLE
WE NEED TO STOP THIS IN THE COMMUNITY
AND SOLVE THE PROBLEMS IN A BETTER WAY

HILLBROOK

BY: DEWAYNE

ID RATHER BE HERE THAN ON THE STREETS
THE TIME I AM HERE I AM GOING TO DO RIGHT
THIS IS MY FIRST TIME HERE, BUT I'LL NEVER COME BACK
I HAVE LEARNED A LOT WHILE KIDS HAVE BEEN GETTIN' SHOT
MY HOOD IS A PLACE OF RESPECT
PEOPLE TAKE CARE OF EACH OTHER
WHEN THINGS GET HARD
WE MAKE THE BEST OF IT
I WILL BE GONE MONDAY, AND IF I DON'T
I WILL DO MY TIME, AND NEVER COME BACK

My Hood

BY: RASHAUN

A SHOTGUN IS MY ALARM CLOCK
I WAKE UP IN FEAR
DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN
FRIENDS AIN'T AROUND
DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED
MY HOOD IS DANGEROUS ON THE STREETS
DON'T KNOW WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN
PEOPLE GETTING SHOT
DAY BY DAY
KIDS KILLING EACH OTHER
DAY BY DAY

LOCKED UP

BY: RASHAUN

CHILDREN IN THE CELLS
DON'T KNOW WHEN I'M GETTING OUT
BEEN LONELY SINCE I GOT LOCKED UP
HAD TO MAKE MY OWN MONEY
TRYING TO STAY ALIVE IN THE STREETS
GETTING IN TROUBLE
GETTING SHOT AT
THIS IS MY LIFE

THE CORNER

BY: QUINTON

ON MY BLOCK

TRYING TO GET A COUPLE BUCKS

COPS STOPPING ME

TRYING TO GO TO SCHOOL

I TAKE, TO HAVE GREATER THINGS

TRYING NOT TO GET SHOT

MAKE MY PEOPLES HAPPY

TRY TO HAVE A FUTURE

SOMETIMES YOU GOTTA KNUCKLE UP

HILLBROOK

BY: RAHMEEL

HEAT

IMMEDIATELY

LOCKED UP

LOVE

BROKE

READY

OPTIMISTIC

OBJECTS

KIND

THIEF

BY: RASHAUN

BREAKING INTO HOUSE AFTER HOUSE

TAKING OTHER PEOPLE'S STUFF

TAKING THINGS

GETTING SHOT AT

DYING

CAN'T COME BACK

PEOPLE CRYING

CRYING CAN'T STOP THE VIOLENCE

CANDY

BY: RASHAUN

CANDY

CANDY

WHERE'S MY CANDY

SWEET

SWEET

SWEET

MY CANDY

EAT IT ALL

EAT IT ALL

CANDY

CANDY

GET ME SOME CANDY

SELL IT

BUY IT

EAT IT

I MISS

BY: SHYKEEM

I MISS MY HOUSE

I MISS MY GIRL

I MISS MY ROOM

I MISS MY FRIENDS

I MISS MY MOM

I MISS MY FAMILY

I MISS UNLOCKED DOORS

I MISS SLEEPING IN

I MISS LONG SHOWERS

I MISS PLAYING SUN GAMES

I MISS MAKING OUT

I MISS OPENED DOORS

WHAT I MISS

THE MOST

IS MY FAMILY