

POEMS BY C.D. WRIGHT

Your Honor,

these are but a few impressions of pain

Now you talk I'm losing my voice

It does get old

If you change your mind let me know

Up yours

I'm in the book

What if it's the guns, Stupid

The way we do things

These are only words you too have penitentiary potential

We may meet in a steel mirror

behind rows of amaranthus and vortices of razor wire

What are you looking at screamed the perp's sister

after the verdict was in

kicking the tires of the victim's kin

How do you get rid of dirty chi

Once and for all

Ask Jeeves

A case of late-afternoon hysterics

Hopelessness against hopelessness

A woman is better in the gun tower than a man

less hesitant they say to shoot a man on the run

Think upwards

It's too hot

One last word:

NO ONE NO BODY IS BAD FOREVER

Aaron don't proclaim foresight

It's 99° at 7:54 the real feel temperature is 114°

the Jewel of the Dial is next

Can I take off my tie yet

Do you want to

shut down sleep restart

It gets old

The way we do things

I am all stirred up

And so, I took out her tintypes

And drew the prisoners around me

Dear Child of God,

If you will allow me time. To make a dove. I will spend it
well. A half success is more than can be hoped for. And
turning on the hope machine is dangerous to contemplate First.
I have to find a solid bottom. Where the scum gets hard and
the scutwork starts. One requires ideal tools: a huge suitcase
of love a set of de-iced wings the ghost of a flea
Music intermittent or ongoing. Here. One exits the forest
of men and women. Here. One re-dreams the big blown dream
of socialism. Deep in the suckhole. Where Lou Vindie kept
her hammer. Under her pillow. Like a wedge of wedding cake.
Working from my best memory. Of a bird I first saw nesting.

In the razor wire.

After the Housefire

Count your children

Count them again

Count the reasons you came into being in the first place

Count your nickels

Count the days you've got left before your next check

Count the staples in the back of your head

Count the wrong turns you took to get here

When the spirit entered her cousin it left cuts on his chest that said F---
you;

then he went to school and drew a ouija board on the chalkboard and THE
EYE MOVED; then her aunt had a big vase and the spirit cut it dead in half
no crumbs or nothing;

He should have never dropped out of 4-H

Improves head heart hands

What's your DOC#

Dear Errant Kid,

Remember the almighty finger on the wrong answer button.

Dear Damned Doomed and Forgotten,

Mother Helen has a bad feeling—the rehearsals for your execution have already begun.

Dear Fugitive,

No one's beat the dogs yet.

Dear Virtual Lifer,

This is strictly a what if proposition:

What if I were to trade my manumission for your incarceration. If only for a day. At the end of which the shoes must be left at the main gate to be filled by their original occupants. There is no point and we will not shrink from it. There is only this day to re-invent everything and to lose it all over again. Nothing will be settled or made easy.

PS: Difference Between Natural and Virtual Lifer :

I can't do ninety-nine years even on the installment plan—

The Last Heel Stringer d. 1999, aged 71

Natural lifer

Don't even ask

Dear Unbidden, Unbred,

This is a flock of sorrows, of unoriginal sins, a litany of obscenities. This is a festering of hateful questions. Your only mirror is one of stainless steel. The image it affords will not tell whether you are young still or even real. In a claustal space. Hours of lead, air of lead. The sound, metallic and amped. You will know the force of this confinement as none other. You have been sentenced for worthlessness. In other eyes, crucifixion is barely good enough. The strapdown team is on its way. The stricken, whose doves you harmed, will get a mean measure of peace. The schadenfreudes, the sons of schadenfreudes, will witness your end with “howls of execration.” Followed by the burning of your worthless body on a pile of old tires. None will claim your remains nor your worthless effects: soapdish, vaseline, comb, paperback. All you possess is your soul whose mold you already deformed. You brought this on yourself. You and no one else. You with the dirty blonde hair, backcountry scars and the lazy dog-eye. You shot the law and the law won. You become a reject of hell.

Prison towns prison motels prison movies prison books prison dreams

Voices in the air conditioning

Convict hate convict sweat convict voices in the toilet tank

This cell is your dwelling; this grave your garden

Dear Prisoner,

I too love. Faces. Hands. The circumference
Of the oaks. I confess. To nothing
You could use. In a court of law. I found.
That sickly sweet ambrosia of hope. Unmendable
Seine of sadness. Experience taken away.
From you. I would open. The mystery
Of your birth. To you. I know. We can
Change. Knowing. Full well. Knowing.

It is not enough.

Poetry Time Space Death

I thought. I could write. An exculpatory note.
I cannot. Yes, it is bitter. Every bit of it, bitter.
The course taken by blood. All thinking
Deceives us. Lead (kindly) light.
Notwithstanding this grave. Your garden.
This cell. Your dwelling. Who is unaccountably free.