

"THE

BEAUTY

BEHIND

THE

BAR'S."

By:

LAUSTEVEION JOHNSON

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### INTRODUCTION

Hi, my name is Lausteveion Johnson, and I am the Author of, 'The Beauty Behind The Bars.' This is my 2<sup>nd</sup> Poem Book. This book is comprised of profound poems that ranges in subject matter, From my thoughts, feelings, and love that I have for my son, my only child, to my feelings and love for my family, God, politics, culture, My thoughts on inequality, prison struggles, etc. etc.

I really pierced my Heart and allowed it to bleed out and Pour upon these pages. I hope that you like and enjoy the Book.

I would love to hear your feedback, not matter If it's positive or negative. So feel free to write me at:

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THE BEAUTY BEHIND THE BARS:

Poem Titles:

1. Identical Twin (Dedicated to my son)
2. Why Not- Shouldn't I Be Hot (Dedicated to Sean Bell - R.I.P.)
3. Equality
4. Going Crazy
5. When You're Away From Me
6. Momma, Pay A VISIT To Your Son
7. Sinking In Quicksand
8. Scorn
9. M.O.B.-
10. To Walk In My Shoes
11. Rescue Me
12. BITTER.

" Identical Twin (To my Son - O-Lijawon) "

O-Lijawon,

Through Paper and Pen, — I'm sending you Bear Hugs and Big Kisses —  
Until we meet again. — Until we meet again.

And Son, you're so unique in style, that when you smile,  
I can't help but grin,  
For you're my Bestest of Friends, and my closest of Kin.

And we are so much alike, in looks and character,  
Similar to identical twins,  
But you are our Better Half,  
You are the Reason I Laugh,  
The Reason I Smile, and  
When I'm Missing you, you're the Reason I cry,  
And when I need inspiration — you're the very Reason I  
write.

Yours so Pure in my Sight, — so Good and Good-Like,  
And you're the only reason why, that I could look up at the  
Sky before I go to Sleep — and call it a Night.

Son, when you Smile, you strengthen my Heart,  
And I Love when you do it, because sometimes it Feels like  
I'm falling apart.

Son you are the definition of Love,  
You're the very essence,  
And you are a Blessing.  
These are not just words in motion,  
No — you're really a Blessing.  
And the Best of Blessing, besides when my Life is —

Up and I'm residing in Heaven.

But until then,  
You're my Bestest of Friends,  
And my closest of Kin,  
And I'm sending you Bear Hugs ~~and~~ Big Kisses,  
Until we meet again,  
Until we meet again.

Love you Son."

## POEM

## "WHY NOT-SHOULDN'T I BE HOT"

(This Poem is dedicated To Sean Bell, who was senselessly gunned down and Murdered by the NYPD. Rest In Peace to Sean Bell.)

"Why Not-Shouldn't I be Hot!?"  
 Why Not - Shouldn't I be Hot, when all of my people  
 Got shot!?  
 Why Not shouldn't I be Hot!?  
 Why Not shouldn't I be Hot — with 400 Years  
 And 50-SHOT!

With 400-Years of Slavery,  
 And 50-shots, Shot at Sean Bell, when he didn't even  
 Brandish a Heat (gun).  
 And the Police were acquitted,  
 OOOOOOH Weee — how it angers me!  
 Why does the Law want to strangle me?  
 You tell me where the Justice is at?  
 Better yet, you tell me where all of the Brotherly Love  
 Is at!?

You see, with me — 27-Years of Bravery!  
 And ISLAM and ALLAH were the only things saves me!  
 I tilt my head — To Honor those Two human-beings who  
 Created.

I stand as a MAN,  
 And he will Fall because he's Less of a MAN!  
 Because, if you don't STAND for nothing, then you'll FALL  
 For anything,  
 And if he sales you a DREAM — I'll buy 2 for \$15.00

So, why not shouldn't I be Hot? Why not

- "Shouldn't I be Hot when all of my people got SHOT?"

We contracted the Highest rates of,  
H.I.V. and A.I.D.S. — O— Now I-C-That,  
Me and my People are, Under attack..  
And we're under attack, for the simple Fact, that  
Our SKIN IS BLACK.

So when will you acknowledge it?  
And when will you stop all of this wishy - washy  
shhhhhhh!?  
And when will you — Black man,  
Stop - Killing off the Black man,  
Back to Back slapped — with the backhand —  
STAND!

One Nation! One Religion! One Love! And One  
God!

Please don't depend on the odds.  
Because History shows that We have been BRAINWASHED  
For 500-years!  
And Understand, That we have cried more than 5-Billion  
Tears.

But dry your eyes — because I got the game on how  
you can clear those Tears,  
You have to inhale Knowledge like it's essential to LIVE.

Like, you tell me, how we — Liven  
In the 70's in the slums,  
Without even a car to our name,  
So surely without a plane,  
How we were able to snatch up Opium Plants — to inject —

"Heroin into our veins!?"

And you tell me, how we, Liven in the Ghettos in the 80's,  
How we were able to produce a whole generation of  
Crack-Babys!?

From coca-leaves, from Columbia,  
That's a lot of flying,  
From someone living on Foodstamps, Welfare, and Childcare.  
SOMEONE'S LYING!! And while you're in the mist of trying  
To think of -WHO-, more of my People are dying!

And in those places where we Live,  
That we call our BLOCKS and our SETS,  
Could you please tell the public why you really named it,  
THE PROJECT.

Tell the public - that it was literally a 'PRO-JECT-IN-  
PRO-CESS! A science experiment, — psychologically BRAINWASH-  
ING my People and setting us up a Platform of IMPRISONMENT.  
With opium-plants, cooking up coca-leaves, and originally injecting  
Us with the Virus of - H.I.V. through I.V.'S

Now you say that you want the Black-on-Black  
Violence and crime rate to cease.  
But everytime a Powerful Black Power Movement arises,  
You go out of your way to make sure that their voices are silenced.  
Martin Luther Kings Movement went silent!  
Malcolm X's Movement went quiet!  
And The Black Panther Party went up in smoke in a riot!

So you tell me,  
Why not - shouldn't I be Hot!? Why not shouldn't I be Hot, when ALL  
Of my People got shot? Why not shouldn't I be Hot Why not shouldn't I be  
Hot, with 400-years and 50-Shots! "

R.I.P. - Sean Bell. 8



## "Equality"

"Equality is a word that is often used in press-conferences  
And in campaign speeches. The definitions of the words, equality and  
Greed are completely different. And there is only room for us to practice  
one of these, in the lives that we lead.

Equality is a Need, and is absolutely necessary  
For humanity,  
That is, if we are ever trying to run this World equally and correctly.  
But it upsets me when you use the word Equality, solely to enhance  
Your image.

But then you quickly renege on your promise, when it comes time  
For you to turn your words into your Actions.  
And my reaction is dissatisfaction,  
Because you rushed! You rushed headlong into Greed and Selfish  
Ambitions.

And all I could do is, look to the sky and ask God, 'WHY?!'  
And wonder, if we, as God's creatures, could ever change?

God has abundantly provided for humanity, all that we  
Need in life to sustain ourselves, collectively.  
But because of our Gluttony and Greed, we have not only become  
Morbidly obese, but we have failed to distribute it evenly,  
Which has given birth to **object** poverty, homelessness, and envy.  
Everyone striving to get their piece of the pie,  
Or striving to get Too Much of — The Pie.  
So now you have too much, yet you still fail and refuse to get  
To those who don't even have enough. So where is the Equality?

Those same ones who were preaching  
Equality, are the same ones who are inflicting and

Enforcing Poverty!

No one is STOPPING them,  
But everyone is STOPPING me — From speaking.

The message is simple;

To whom Much is given — Much is expected.

Responsibility!

Rid the World of poverty —

Equality. ☺<sup>21</sup>

"GOING CRAZY"

"I think that I'm going Crazy.

You say, 'Why, is it because of a particular event?'

I say - Now, But do you know how everyone speaks to themselves,  
To a certain extent? Or write their thoughts down on paper so that they  
could read it in print?

Well yeah - I've exceeded that,  
Because now the walls are talking and my words are walking.  
I don't just talk to myself and the people that are surrounding me,  
I talk to my family members when they are nowhere around  
And can't even hear a sound from me.

In the Hole - in the penitentiary, They scream all Night,  
Kick doors, and send Hates - To arrange Fist Fights.  
So I can't sleep at Night.

I can only sleep during the Day,  
And in a way - My Days have become my Nights and My Nights  
Have become my Days.

And the only time that I find Peace - is when I Bow Down and Pray -  
Hey! — The only Time that I find Peace is when I Bow Down  
And Pray.

Asking God to forgive me of my past and to Help me through the  
Day, and to help me in my future because my Freedom awaits.

Sometimes I have thoughts of escaping - Am I Going Crazy?  
Then God talks to me and tells me to have patience.

I think I'm going crazy, you be the Judge, you decide,  
I'm serving all of this Time,

Plus I'm wasting Life,  
And I've given Birth to a Life,  
And He (my son) deserves his Father because he was Birth with the Right.  
The world's distorted view of me is hazy,

But I could care less,  
They can continue to call me Crazy!"

Poem  
"WHEN YOU AWAY FROM ME."  
LAUSTEUGEN JOHANSON

"I'm not depressed — I'm at Peace!  
Yet still feeling empty when you are away from me.  
But when you're in my presents, — you set off and send to me,  
Some sort of an amazing energy.  
My mind is so comforted by those memories,  
Those memories of me and you.

Your voice is like a song to me,  
And you feel like Home to me.  
You could do no wrong — to me.

I'm restless and breathless — and can't sleep  
Because I am wishing that you were next to me.  
Will I ever have the chance to repeat,  
But this time — give you the very best of me?  
I want to give you the whole of my soul,  
And whatever's left of me.  
Is there a space in your World that is kept for me, or  
Left for me?

You make it so easy to love you  
I imagine our life so exciting, yet still so simple.  
And by no means, I do not frown on you, or look down at you  
But I'd rather crown you as — My Queen!

And my Dream is, To be at Home with you,  
And Alone with you.  
And if I'm lucky, you'll also crown me as your  
King. I love you."

Form  
"Mamma — Pay A Visit To Your Son"

"I know that I made my Bed, but it's too Hard to lay in,  
I'm sinking in quicksand, that's the only reason why I'm stranded.

In this World everythings unexpected, and it's too hard to plan in

It  
So Mamma, could you please pay a visit to your son?

I'm distressed, clueless and troubled, can you tell me what it is?

Mamma, could you please pay a visit to your son.

Why, because I am getting my days and my nights mixed up.

And I think that I'm getting a day and a life mixed up.

I pour beans and rice mixed up — in a cup,

I guess I made a meal.

Life is tough, that reality is now way too Real. . . .

Psalms 27 says that, "If my Mother and Father abandoned  
Me, that the Lord would take care of me."

So if my mather has abandoned me, then I beg God to take care of  
me.

So Mamma, could you please pay a visit to your son,  
Who dares to care for a man who's out of sight, and out of mind,  
— Shackled, chained, and confined,

And to Love, he is blind.

He can feel it, but just can't see it,

Because it refused to show it's face.

If I know nothing at all, it is that,  
The struggle continues. And as for request for you Mamma,  
I only have one.

And it is,

Mamma, could you please just pay a visit to your son?"

Poem  
"Sinking In Quicksand"

"Early in my life, I was walking across the Land, and when I Stopped, I stopped in a patch of quicksand.

I fought and I yelled, throwing out both of my Hands,  
But there was no one willing to Help - while I was sinking in quicksand.

This sinking situation is enough to Drive a sane man crazy.  
I've been ———— Loosing it lately! I've been ———— Loosing it lately!  
I'm ———— Loosing myself, inside of myself.  
And if I fully fall in - I'll be forced to cut off everybody else,

Meaning - Emotional attachments, physical attractions,  
And my family Foundation is only an Illusional acid.

I'm Sinking in Quicksand!  
The More that I Scribe,  
The More Years pass by and take Flight.

This quicksand is simply too Hard for one man.  
And I often question, 'Where are my so called friends?'  
The people who claim that, 'They adore me,' because my anticipation  
Bored me.

Longing and waiting. - Longing and Waiting!  
And forcing myself to hold on to this thing called Patience,  
This while my life is passing away,  
Flashing right before my eyes.  
It is torment and torture to sit helpless,  
Just watching yourself die.

But I can't cry.  
Why, Because out of all of these years,  
I have cried so much, that I have ran out of tears. —

But don't worry, because I'm still hanging on.  
I'm still hanging on — Barely.

And I'm not done yet, as I'm sinking in quicksand,  
I'll continue to try to make it until I reach dry-land."

Poem  
"SCORN"

LAUSTEVENN JOHNSON

" No wound is as serious as a wounded Love.

And no Heart hurts more, or as much as a Heart that  
Has been broken.

I Feel like my Heart has been stolen,

I Feel like my Heart has been stolen.

If I could choose,  
I would have chosen to give it away.

But not to anyone — only to the woman that is meant to  
share my space.

A wound,  
How does it Heal?

I Feel like I could never Love again

I've already allowed it to Burn,

But here it goes — Burning all over again.

Excruciating Pain — Piercing my skin,

Piercing my mind,

Piercing my Heart,

And taking my wind — again and again.

No wound is as Serious as a wounded Love.

And no Heart hurts as much as a Heart that has been broken.

A wound that Hurts and burns so deep that,

I don't know if I could ever Love again.

SCORN! Scorn since the day I was born.

I Loved Life, but it didn't Love me back.

I showed more than enough Respect, but she didn't return

The Favor.

My Heart has collapsed and deflated,

So call the Coroner because I don't think that I'm gonna make it. —



Tina said, "Who needs a Heart when a Heart could be Broken?"  
 My eyes burn and they are burning because I'm Herd of  
 Looking at your pictures.

I miss you,  
 Wishing that I could go back to those days that I used to  
 Kiss you

SCORN, Fragments of my Brain are torn-apart,  
 I guess my Love choosing skills weren't up to par.  
 I used to have a Heart, but not anymore,  
 Because when she left, she took it and carried it off in a cart.

Now smothered in misery,  
 Smiling faces is merely a memory — History.  
 And I know that it's far-fetched,  
 But I wonder, I just wonder if she's missing me.

I guess I'm a Fool.  
 But to be Real with you, if I had the chance to choose—  
 I'll become a damn Fool all over again.  
 Because if I had the chance I would go through this same  
 Love with you — all over again.

Scorn."

## "M.O.B. - MOVEMENT OF BLACKS."

"This here is - The Movement Of Blacks! I've tapped into  
A Spiritual Climate — Adolescents stay silent!  
While you remain in a Gray area, Stagnant and still blinded,  
This is a thorough demonstration on how you sleepers and start  
Climbing.

You see, that False and Fraudulent Movement, that  
You are currently pursuing — is at best, if you only knew it,  
An Aimless delusion!  
And an unbalanced hallucination, either you're sincere or you're  
Faken.  
But Now it's time to awaken! Now it's time to awaken!

I am a Bonifide Black Messiah in a sense,  
Like Huey P. Newton, spiritually joined it.  
Some say that I'm too vicious, as I throw cerebral balls at my oppressors,  
But I refuse to let her overtake me,  
And I refuse to let her break me.  
But look at you, I can see that you have submitted and bowed-out  
safely! Though ungraciously!  
Man, I Thank God that He made me !!

When it comes to Fighting our oppressor, I'll stand by myself  
If I have to — Like a Statue, but my presents being wide  
Like a castle! Standing strong and Never fragile,  
Mentally — overly prepared for The Battle.

And for my Black People, I'll strive a Black Mile,  
And go Hard until I pass out, but Never throw in the Towel.  
Black man and Black woman, stand with me like steels,  
And stand with me For Real — If only words could kill! —

Imbedded in me — in my Heart of Hearts is - Misery,  
But it is overflowing with Black Love like a chocolate city,

The nitty gritty is the Command — For you to place your  
Right hand, clinched, in thee air — right next to mines,  
And look how it shines. Just look how it shines.  
And I don't know if you havin' notice, or if you are just hopeless.  
But we are the best of creation, so just stand and have patience.

This M.O.B. Revolution seems like the only ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> Official  
Solution. We have not been upholding the Dreams of our Fallen  
Soldiers.

Instead, we've been losing our Queens to Prostitution and Slot-machines.  
And our Kings, our Kings have turned into niggers, pimps, and dope-dealers!  
My people — you're losing the Race because you are not  
In your nature state.

We need to start using our Minds, because Frankly I'm tired of all  
of this Black-on-Black, on top of, all of this Black-on-Black  
Crime!

Invision the Blood-shot eyes of the Slave-master, holding  
The whip. Now look at us, holding the whip, as Blacks and Crips!  
You have been Fruitless and Lead leftovers.  
Ruthless — look how geniuses have become clueless.  
From being so emotionally strained, from centuries of pain —  
It must of had a profound effect on our Brains.

Black man, when you call me the 'N-Word', it's like  
A heavy-handed slap in the face,  
Because we are still marching, but we're just marching in the  
opposite direction.

Movement of Blacks! It's time for you to place your  
Right Fist in thee air right next to mines and look how it shines.  
Look how it shines!!

Like the Songs of Solomen, 'I'm Dark but I'm lovely.' —

- And I Refuse to except the False statement that, 'I am Nappy-headed, Black, and I'm ugly!'

Truth be told, I am nothing less than the Original Thing! And Who else could stand beside me, but the Original Queen?

All of creation is waiting for us to fall in line and Take our rightful position as Leaders of the World, On a Rightly Guided Spiritual Mission!

And Islam is at the forefront, just follow my lead. God wisely created me— piece-by-piece.

He took a little of Malcolm-X, and put it in my Brain.

And He took a little of Shocka-Zulu, and put it in my Frame.

Then He took a little of David, and put it in my Eyes.

Then He took a little of Jesus, and put it in my Stride.

And then He took a piece of Blackness, and put it in my PRIDE!

But pride only in a sense, because I'm just proud (Happy) to Be alive!

Allah placed M.O.B. in my Sight, and I implemented It into my Mind. And then He stacked up meat, Beef on top of Beef, with the exclusion of Swine! Then He took me from Street-to-Street, and looks how I Survived.

So rise and shine! Rise and shine my people—

Because it's TIME! Time for you to place your right fist in The Air, right next to mines,

Because this M.O.B. is a Fact! And we move in Facts! With One (1) Heartbeat Together as,

The Movement Of Blacks !!!<sup>11</sup>

Poem"To Walk In My Shoes"

"I have heard of and seen people commit suicide,  
From going through only half of what I've been through,  
What I've gone through in life and in prison.

And I only said that to say this,  
It aint easy to Walk in the shoes that I'm in."

It aint easy to Walk in my shoes.

My shoes have traveled threw dirt and mud and  
Have gotten damp, heavy, and smelly,  
These shoes that I walk in.

These shoes have gotten torn-up, ripped up, scuffed up,  
And then sown-up and worn again,  
These shoes that I walk in.

These shoes have Holes in the very Souls of them,  
These shoes that I walk in.  
Their fabric has loosened and changed shape,  
They are barely being held together,  
They feel like they are about to completely unravel and  
Fall apart, They shoes that I walk in.

The struggle that they have gone through  
Has created their character,  
They are very conscious, and possess great humility,  
These shoes that I walk in, have gone through the struggle  
And survived.

For they are survivors.  
To Walk in my shoes";

Poem  
"RESCUE ME"

"Like a Mouse caught in a trap, I plead for someone to rescue me.  
 For the Boot that is on my Neck, is a part of a Body,  
 And that Body, is a part of an Army,  
 And that Army circles around and surrounds me,  
 Frowns, and looks down upon me.

I'm a Warrior, in the middle of a War, with no allies,  
 Only enemies.  
 How many can I possibly take on? Are my thoughts as I size up  
 My opponents.  
 One man is only so strong! Who's going to stand up and aid me,  
 In the Face of this Injustice?  
 The whole world sees, and decides to do nothing!  
 It's an unfortunate Truth, but surprisingly - it's nothing New.

Everyone sees this, but no one has the morals nor the Courage  
 To lift a hand,  
 They'd rather just sit back and watch this Cruel and Unusual  
 Punishment being unjustly inflicted upon a man.  
 I wonder how human emotion could stomach it.  
 I wonder how they could stand for it.

They advise me to go to sleep and they assure me that,  
 "I'll be okay. That I will wake up tomorrow and start a new day."  
 But there is no New Day!  
 Because when I wake up tomorrow - I'll only be continuing  
 Today.  
 My Oppressor will only start off his assault from where he  
 Left off yesterday.

So I pray, asking God to rescue me.  
 Well, whatever's left of me.

I hope that there is still light and love left in me.

I figured that, as a warrior,  
 That I was born to go through this war.  
 That I was born to go through this struggle.  
 That I was born to lift this weight.  
 That I was born to gain this muscle.  
 That I was born to live through this experience,  
 So that I could accumulate the mettle to fulfil my purpose.

Everything without God is Hopeless,  
 And this is Islam in Focus."

## "BITTER"

" Maybe I'm Bitter because I've heard so many Lies,  
So many consecutive times, From so many different Lips,  
DAMN — Life's a Trip.

Maybe I'm bitter because I am no longer moved  
Or amused by the sight of Diamond and Silver, Glitter and  
Gold,

Or Blond-haired women in short clothes.

My Head is above water and my glass is half-Full.

Maybe I'm Bitter because I'd rather not imagine  
Something Fake, because I would Rather FEEL Something REAL.  
Now-a-days I don't laugh much, because I don't find much  
Funny.

I see, I see things Lucidly,

I can point out so many flaws, but it's hard for me to see the good  
In man,

Because it seems as though Love, Loyalty, and Respect is not Honored  
Anymore.

Bitterness has spoiled me, and because of that —  
I have no more cute thoughts,  
All of my thoughts are ugly.  
I feel as though the whole World is against me,  
Crucifying me and condemning me!

I feel as though I am fenced in —  
Grin. Naw, I'd rather Growl!  
Spit in your Face, and spark my Black and MILD! Wow! —



Maybe it's a Bitter disease.

Maybe I'm Bitter because the World's Ignorance has me  
Feeling this way sometimes.

And sometimes, I feel as though, Bitterness has been taped  
And tattooed in - the insides of my eyelids, forcing it to  
Penetrate my psyche and plant itself into my subconscious.

A wise man once told me that, 'I have  
To let it go and to cry it out with tears.'

But I then had to explain to him that,  
Through-out the years, I have cried so much - That I  
Have ran out of Tears.

But I knew that I could no longer  
Live this way,  
So I was compelled to Bow Down - with my forehead to  
The ground and Pray,

'God rid me of this Bitterness Today!'