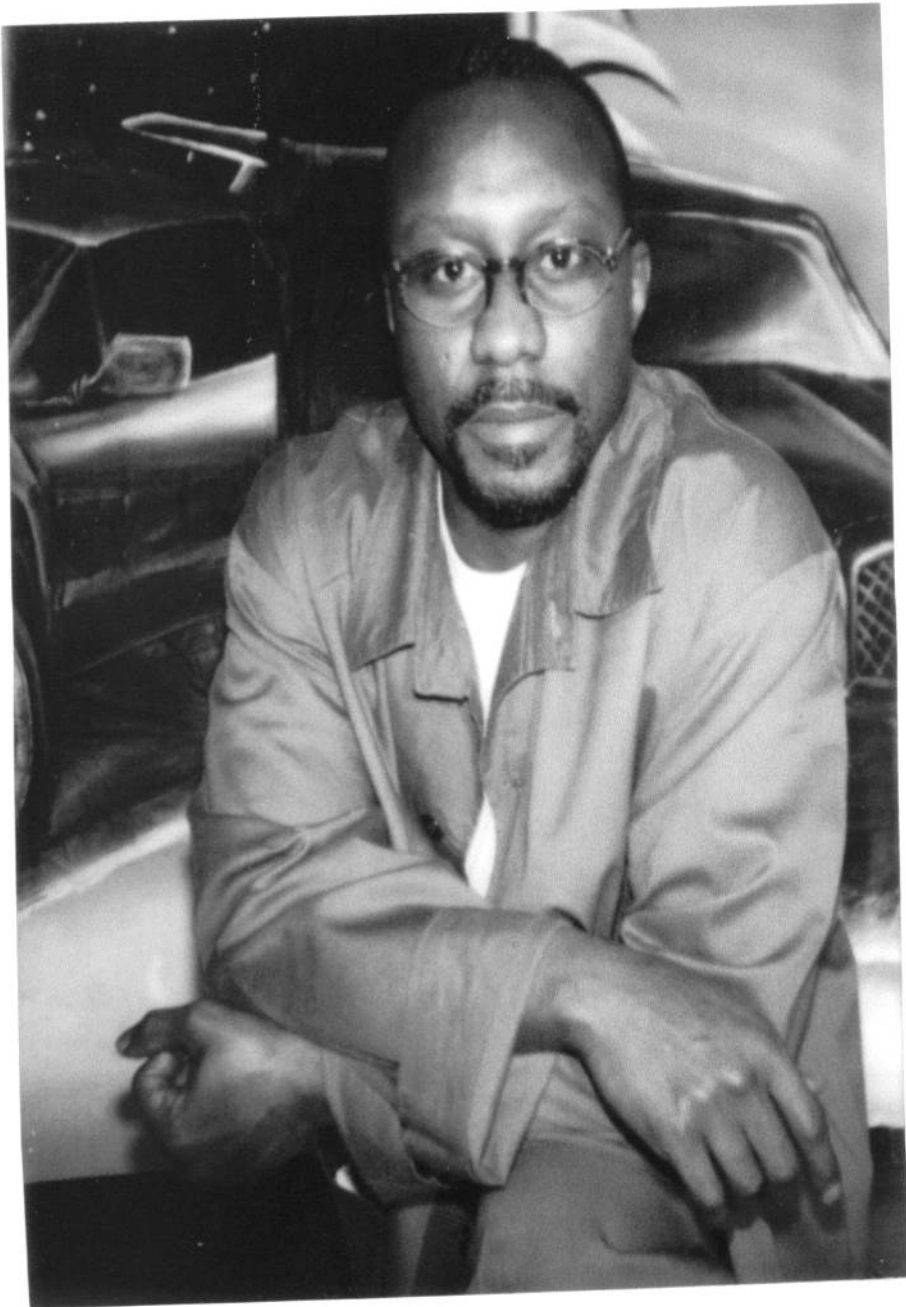


THOUGHT'S INSIDE THE MATRIX
(A POETIC JOURNEY)
VOL. I

BY



April 2013

POETRY

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**THOUGHT'S INSIDE THE MATRIX
(A POETIC JOURNEY)
VOL. I**

BY

STEVEN "QUADREE" BLEAU

Take this poetic journey with Quadree as he debut six invigorating chapters of cogitation. Form growing up in Brooklyn's Bushwick projects, to surviving 25 years in state prison (the matrix), this innocent poet is sometimes raw, but always real.

You'll ride through his "Sanctuary of Love", then be fed with "Encouraging Food For Thought", before landing in his "Quadrazone".

Quadree's inspiring Anti Crime Messages to the youth and Socio-political perspectives on the "N" word through essay may be controversial, but they're "Just His Thoughts".

To keep up with Quadree's future releases, i.e., a play/book expressing views on the use of the N-word; an intriguing urban novel; volumes two & three of poetry; his memoir and more, join him on Facebook @ QuadreeBleau.

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PREFACE

When I first started writing poetry, it really was a private thing. I had no intentions of making any of it public. However, when I did share them with some people, their enjoyment became the impetus for this book. I hope you get the same enjoyment out of it, as they did. There's a mixture of poems I've written during my early days of writing and during my stay in state prison. I've also enclosed a couple articles I've written prior to compiling this book. Some may seem a little controversial, but I hope you find them interesting as well. Hopefully, you enjoy it enough for me to put out another book and other work soon. In the mean time... enjoy.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this book to my mother Sarah E. Woodside-Bleau. You're always in my heart. Rest in peace.

*

*

*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to thank God for giving me the talent to create this book, the determination to complete it, and the opportunity to share it with the public. I also want to thank all the people who helped me in one way or the other, whether big or small. You know who you are.

Those who believed in me and encouraged me, thank you so much for that. As for those who doubted me, know that I never set a goal that I can't reach.

CHAPTER I

YOU THOUGHT YOU KNEW ME HUH

KNOWING SOMEBODY
IS REALLY NOT WHAT YOU HEAR
IT IS WHAT YOU FEEL

I HAVE ARRIVED

I HAVE ARRIVED at a place of tranquility
A serene state of existence
I HAVE ARRIVED with a purpose
Like the natural elements are to the universe
I HAVE ARRIVED to set the record straight
To prove the haters wrong
I HAVE ARRIVED with strength from the creator
Who helped me pass through the negativity surrounding me
I HAVE ARRIVED as the father, brother, husband and son of
tomorrow
Whom I tried so hard to be yesterday
I HAVE ARRIVED with the knowledge of self
Focused-determined to rebound above the misty fog
I HAVE ARRIVED to be a lesson for the youth of today
'Cause I've been there and done that
I HAVE ARRIVED to be the business man I was striving to be
Not the criminal you expect me to be
I HAVE ARRIVED to the dismay of my enemies
Despite the forces against me
Yea! The DOC has my body
But they don't have my mind
Soon they're gonna back up off me
'Cause I HAVE ARRIVED!

REPENTANT MAN

He sits alone in his cell
as he thinks about
the world outside
His world is not like yours
things you enjoy
he now miss
Did he break the law
Is it really true
What is a repentant man to do?

He searched his heart and soul
regrets some of his past
that part of him was a fool
today he's a better man
No longer taken life for granted
No longer a fool
focused on the positive
Isn't that what a repentant man
suppose to do?

IF I MUST DIE

(prayer) Oh merciful God. May those who are happy for my troubles be disgraced, and those who shower injustice upon me be dismayed and defeated. May those who want me to die imprisoned be proved wrong and humiliated. They want me to die and be forgotten, but I know you won't let that happen. If you do decide that it's my time, I ask that you protect my children from the evils of this world. Contemplating death is something most people avoid. I don't, 'cause we all have to die some day, so I might as well be ready.

If I must die know that
I feared nothing in this universe of masquerads
only the creator of us all.
As I struggled out the womb of wisdom
my struggle continued
but I stood the test of time.
No one can be an angel and
we all can be misunderstood.
Yes, I battled my way thru the chicanery of life.
Sometimes I tip toed
other times I moved too fast.

If I must die know that
life dealt me a set of cards from a stacked deck.
I played my hand better than most though.
I kept my head up and my mind right.
Had a 10 of hearts that manifested into a queen
synthesizing two ten of diamond
which grew with grace into queens.
The moon represent the beauty they possess.
The stars the bright spots in their lives.
They are my world, they are my world.
If my death would ease their pain and struggle
then I am ready, I am ready.

If I must die know that
it only took one wrong decision
to turn my life upside down,
but I always stood straight up.
My captors tried to conquer my being
but it was only wishful thinking.
Little did they know my righteous blood made me
immune from emanate evil.
The cloth I'm cut from is stain proof,
'cause I was born a warrior and raised a soldier.
Yea, my gators turned into
potato tip boots of 2¢ leather.
My Armani suits into khakis.
My stetson into a brown knit hat.
And my full length leather coat
into a three quarter corduroy
courtesy of the D.O.C.
What does it all mean?
Somewhere along my journey - I lost my way.

If I must die know that
my mind was never incarcerated.
I have illuminated and elucidated
the hideous rhetoric
from those who said they knew me.
The envious and plain ol' haters.
They can forever kiss my ass,
'cause I found my map and no longer lost.
My map took me to a higher octave of wisdom.
I understand who I am.
I understand my purpose in life.
I understand why I must die.
No more pain, no more struggle,
flowing streams that ease the mind await me.
So, if I must die, if I must die,
I am ready.

AGAINST ALL ODDS

Bushwick - Bed Sty
Yea home to Jay-Z
I'm from Bushwick projects
just across the ave from Marcy
Jay was right
the hood is a hard Knox life
Still, I tried to do what's right.

AGAINST ALL ODDS

Things didn't turn out exactly as planned
In the hood that's common for most
especially a young black man
fresh out of high school
eventually got a job
\$150 in New York
doesn't take you very far.

AGAINST ALL ODDS

Nineteen with a baby on the way
lost my job
my girl in labor
all in the same day
So little time
not many options
family had to eat
Refused to live in poverty
couldn't wait no longer
forced to hit the streets.

AGAINST ALL ODDS

Club hoppin' between coke ups
twenty one, just tryin' to put my thing down
creepin' nocturnally in and out of town
running the streets
neglectin' my girl
smokin' sess
chasing dead presidents.

AGAINST ALL ODDS

Two cars' and motorcycle
Yea - thought I was the shit
Don't get me wrong
I worked on goin' legit
Started my own business
even moved to the Village
That's a high class part of Manhattan
out of my element?
more than you could fathom.

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AGAINST ALL ODDS

I moved back to BK (Brooklyn)
That's when my life took another turn
this time in the worst way
Felt good to be back in Brooklyn
but things just didn't feel the same
business came up in Florida
had to jump on the first plane.

AGAINST ALL ODDS

Daughter getting older
had to maintain
This was my last move
time to get out the game
Two weeks back in the city
got a call to go back out of town
Didn't like the vibe this trip
so I didn't hang around.

AGAINST ALL ODDS

Heard police wanted to question me
Somebody got busted in Pennsylvania
wanted a get out of jail card on me
Paid a top lawyer
tried to prove my innocence
Up against blue suits during the day
white hoods at night
invisible prejudice.

AGAINST ALL ODDS

Judicial apartheid
Found guilty?
Off to the Penitentiary
Won't let it keep me down
My body might be incarcerated
but my mind NEVER touches the ground.

AGAINST ALL ODDS

I'm a very determined black man
this time I'm staying legit
My INNOCENCE won't let me quit
Refuse to let my life amount to nothing
I'm motivated to the bone
AGAINST ALL ODDS with the help of God
I'll soon be coming home.

ANOTHER MOUNTAIN

God I don't need another mountain
I think I've climbed them all
So make if you will
A small soft hill
To cushion me when I fall

The road I've traveled
Has been very long
But along the way
You've made me strong
Thought I've been lead a stray
You've stayed by my side
Forgiving me
Over and over again
That I can't deny

With you by my side
I'll surely win
God I don't need another mountain
I'm done with the life of sin

QUADREE

TIME TO BE GONE

Patiently waiting for that magic day
When they tell me BE GONE
Be on your way
Back to the life I left behind
With family and friends
And lifes grind
Learning and repenting the errors I made
The feelings of guilt
For letting my family down
Time to put into practice
All I planned thru out the years

A road to the front gate
Nothing but happy tears
Thinking of the times
I both loved and hated
My debt is paid
Finally a clean slate
Here comes the keys
confinement is over
Damn! I'm finally free
TIME TO BE GONE!

CHAPTER II
SANCTUARY OF LOVE

LOVE MUST HAVE THE TASTE
OF FINE WINE, AND FEELING LIKE
A WARM BUBBLE BATH

QUESTIONS OF LOVE

WHAT IS LOVE?

Some say, it's the quintessence of our inner emotions
others say, it's the air beneath our wings
I say, it's like a garment that keeps us safe from the elements
of life..

IS THERE ANY CERTAINTY IN LOVE?

Some say, it's nothing more than a question mark
Others say, it's mind over matter
I say, it's as certain as the sun rising everyday

CAN TRUE LOVE BE RECOGNIZED?

Some say, you'll know it when it happens
Others say, it's like goose pimples moving thru
the surface of your soul
I say, you'll know it when you smile
just thinking about that special someone

HOW CAN IT LAST FOREVER?

Some say, nothing last forever
Others say, it'll last as long as there are stars in the sky
I say, respect it - listen to it
Let it become necessary like the air you breathe
A respirator of happiness
like the universal language of love - music.
DOES THAT ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS?

WE WERE MEANT TO BE

Certain life occurrences have caused our paths to meet
Destiny has joined our hearts, and made our lives complete
Not all paths that cross produce a union that is strong
Fate can some times turn, showing us that we were wrong
Fortune has confirmed our love is not a disguise
Our love is some thing in time we'll maximize
Some thing rare is happening
God has given us a chance
There is some thing natural and true in our romance
Days are so delicious
Time a pièce de résistance
Our minds are free
Our love perpetual
Cause we were meant to be.

ALL ABOUT YOU

Let's take a simple walk on the beach,
and become links on a chain of love.
Go ahead, lay your head on my comfort zone,
While the stars watch us,
and the sand cascade thru our toes.
Is it too breezy for you baby?
Let me be your quilt and,
the oil that heats up your boiler room.
Would you like that?

Damn! I feel the electricity of your love.
You are truly one with the universe.
Your eyes twinkle like the stars,
Your hair glows like the moon,
and your touch soft as the clouds.
You're my best kept secret.
Our love will travel thru time... Age-less-ly.

QUADREE

JUST LET GO

How do you let go of someone so dear
and close to your heart
How do you let go of someone so dear
who never really shared 50/50
How do you let go of someone so dear
to those days and nights of the past
How do you let go of someone so dear
when you gave your heart and they never cared
How do you let go of someone so dear
who suddenly up and disappeared
What do you do?
JUST LET THEM GO!

CRAVING CHOCOLATE

You're the back bone of the family
You're the foundation of our home
with this in mind, without a doubt
you should never be alone.

It doesn't matter if your're
tall, short,
thick or thin
Your figure is always mesmerizing,
truly heaven sent.

Sure you have beautiful skin tone,
and high cheek bones,
but your real beauty is found
deep inside your love.

You're strong, so proud,
soft spoken, but
sometimes loud.

I find strength in you,
when you think I can't.
I listen to you,
when you think I don't.

You're a gift from God.
A precious jewel
with enticing sexiness.
You do things,
no other woman can.

A heart of gold and,
shear desire,
you set many hearts on fire.
You're like a flower blooming in season,
created to be free.

Free from all the pain
and lifes miseries.
Keep your faith in the creator,
and stay true to your man.
Always believe in yourself,
do the best in life you can. 15.

Remember you're delicate,
but very strong.
You came from a part of man and,
that we know is true.

QUADREE

However, in case no one told you lately,
man will always love you
and always crave chocolate too.

IF (Part one)

If I can pick you up,
I'll never let you down.
If I can hold you,
I'll never let you go.
If I can love you,
I'll never hurt you.
If I can turn you on,
I'll never turn you away.
If I can lead you,
I'll never lead you astray.
If I can help you,
I'll never hinder you.
If I can't find a solution,
I'll never stop trying.
If I can't treat you right,
I'll never treat you wrong.
If I can't be there for you tomorrow,
I'll be there today.
If I can't trust our past,
I'll always have faith in our future.
If I can't be your lover,
I'll always be your friend.
If I can't save our love,
I'll always cherish it.
If I can't give you the world,
I'll die trying.

CHAPTER III
FOOD FOR THOUGHT

WHAT DO YOU PREFER
TO EAT KNOWLEDGE OR EAT FOOD
IT'S JUST FOOD FOR THOUGHT

INSIDE - OUTSIDE

The prisons and streets are taking
how do we win the war on crime
Is it reality or all in our minds
Conversations flow in every common place
tryin' to solve problems
within our human race.

The babies are cryin', the youth are dyin'
What do we do, what can we do
Approximately two million children
have a parent in prison
Are you kiddin'
Statistics show these children
will eventually become incarcerated
perpetuating a disturbing cycle of
crime and despair
Does anybody care?

Undeniably, unquestionably
our life been challenging
At what point do we take responsibility
and turn our conditions around
At what point do we recognize we helped create
some of whats happened to us
'cause of the choices we've made in our lives.

The war on crime, war all over the world.
hangin' chads, World trade Center
Enron, come on
police brutality
Unconstitutionally
Profiling me
Injustice anywhere is
injustice everywhere
You know the rest.

The path to personal redemption
begins with self examination
never compromise who you are personally
for who you wish to be professionally.

WHY DO YOU DO WHAT YOU DO

You say you're for your people
for your brother
for your hood
but you really mean them no good.
You have a poisoned concept of self preservation
With no hesitation you get on the stand
to help the government
put your people in the slam
and you call yourself a man or woman
Why do you do what you do?

The golden rule you learn in school is
"if you do the crime
you do the time"
What's up with you
have you lost your mind
You'll tell on your sister, brother
even your own father and mother
Do you have no shame you lame?
Why do you do what you do?

Your nothing but a cold hearted bitch
who should be dragged in the woods
and thrown in a ditch
Come again?
You call yourself a citizen
Man please
you're a coward, a chump
a nut ass punk
Your the real scum of the earth
you piece of dirt
You ask me why do I call you all these names
I ask you, why do you do what you do?

Some of the people you sacrificed were innocent
but you don't care
You hurt and ruined a lot of families everywhere
The government uses you like a tool, fool
and what is done with a worn out tool
it's thrown away
So, I say to you
get yourself together
get some integrity, morality and some guts
Do everyone a favor

don't do anymore crime
you made it very clear
you can't handle doin' time
You need to check yourself
your life
and everything you've done
Then ask yourself
Why do you do what you do?

HEY GIRLS

I looked at my calendar today,
Wishing I could be there.
If I could rewind the years of yesterday,
God knows I truly would.

But life isn't that simple,
Complications all the time,
Even thru those dilemma's,
You're always on my mind.

You mean more than you know to me,
There's no other way to say it.
Distance and time a part,
Could never change or fade it.

You each started as cute infants,
And became a smart child.
Now you've become beautiful young ladies,
Know that your father is proud.
Don't ever doubt my love for you,
even when you're sad or down.
Call on me whenever you need me,
'Cause when you think I'm not...
I'm around and always will be.

GAME OVER

His life is still in ruins
Greed stole his soul
Day by day time slipped away
Time drugs took full control

Now he sits in prison
Within a lonely cell
A tomb made of concrete
Man made mental hell

There's always someone out there
That he can somehow reach
To school them on the drug game
Which depleted his veins like a leech

If you can't feel these words
Then find out for yourself
Just keep in mind
The end game is always the same
Your family will also hurt

LOVING A CONVICT

Loving a convict might hurt some times.
It's mostly loving him with nothing to hold.
It's being so young,
Yet feeling so old.
It's hearing him whisper his love for you,
Knowing the pain he feels too.
An occasional shared kiss,
A promise to wait,
Knowing the parole board holds his freedom date.

Constant visits you go.
Sometime's dying inside,
From needings him so, but
You keep a smile.
In loving a convict,
You shed many tears.
Weeks turn into months,
Months into years.
Time passes slowly,
Yet it's gone at last.
Like waking from sleep,
It's a thing of the past.

Loving a convict isn't always fun,
Yet he's worth the wait,
If you're lovin the right one .

BETTER DAYS AHEAD

You struggled at birth
from your mothers womb
A start to the lessons of life
day by day you were groomed

Your growth and development
was constantly being enhanced
travelling thru the music of life
is all a part of the creators plan

As you come from under the umbrella
and into the rain
Remember life is a struggle
be patient, stay on top of your game

Life won't be fair all the time
especially for a young black sister
Listen to your parents wisdom
And stay on your mission

Some people around you will become jealous
and try to pull you down
Stay on the right path
Stay strong, focused and dignified
Keep both feet on solid ground

You'll accomplished alot
to reach your point in life
and you'll receive alot of praise
It's only the beginning of your journey
so when times get rough, don't stop
Instead pray for better days.

QUADREE

CHAPTER IV
THE QUADRAZONE IN PRINT

WHERE IS THIS WORLD AT
IS IT REALLY MOVING UP
OR GOING DOWNWARD

THE MATRIX

Illusions of justice
Illusions of equality
A world within a world
Where dark clouds stand motionless
Over prisoners of war.

Reminisce of ancient history lingers
New millennium edition of Willies program
Correctional Industries
Replaced the plantations
Still makin' the almighty millions
Off the sweat and labor of...
The usual suspects.

I hate to use this analogy but
Slave mentality still around
House nigga here
Field nigga there
Between it all
Rebels with a cause
The ones still fightin' for freedom
Fighting for justice.

The house nigga doin' the same shit
Tryin to please those in charge
In hopes of gaining his freedom papers
Tap dancin' to the coffee machine
Boss, you want some coffee
We workin' late tonight
Fake-facilitating programs
all in the name of...
Recidivism -not- Rehabilitation.

The field nigga even worse
Boot lickin'
Workin' their ass off for 19¢ an hour
Ear hustlin' for homeland security
Even when there's nothing to tell
Around the police so much
They actually think they are one.

I use to think they were just mis-guided
Nope, just some stupid mother f**kers
They just don't get it
This is big business
They're back on wall street
Dow Jones says
Business is boomin'.

Lock them up - we're paid
Gotta build more prisons
My son need a job
Let a few go but
keep their asses on a leash
Bring them back - we're paid
Another job for my nephew
Gotta keep them in the Matrix
Gotta keep them in the Matrix.

BELLY OF THE BEAST - BEWARE

Here's your new home
where do you want your body sent
in case of your death
Click, click, click, click, click,
the gate slowly close - BOOM!

Fifty foot barb wire
first line of defense
Behind concrete and steel bars
missing the world ever since
Disinfect and cigarette smoke
linger all in the air
Walking down gloomy hallways
with rush hour atmosphere
Why you starin' at me kid?
You don't know me!

Nothing on their minds
talkin' non-sense
playin' cards, liftin' weights
It's like knight takes pawn - checkmate - checkmate
Blind to the psychological warfare of mind control
Passified with a basketball - lost souls
Walkin' with eyes in front and eyes in back
keep it tight and your shank right
You're not home, you're in the war zone
Always stay battle ready and prepared for warfare
Never sleep only rest
One eye open as you lay in bed.

Wasted talent, wasted lives
nothing goin' on, just doin' time
It's misery you feelin' me
No place to be, don't waste your life
and hurt your family
No rights of passage here
you get no strips
It's worst than a homeless person
sleepin' on street corners at night
Many leave in body bags, others old and gray
Those who leave smarter than they came
NEVER come back to this place!

QUADREE

Stick ups, dealin' on street corners
and ridin' fancy cars
might seem like the shit right now
until you're in a coffin
or life behind bars
Love boat smokin, drinkin' all day
gun tottin' like the wild, wild west
No guns behind bars kid
so take that "S" off your chest.

Your right of passage is to do good with your life
stay on the bricks and get the real strips
Get your mind right kid
be smart, don't be a fool
you only get one life to live
make the best of it - stay in school
Life isn't fair at times
you'll always get a little drama
just remember keep the mind of a leader
never the mind of a follower.

Listen to your family, and elders too
That wisdom will come in handy one day
that's the Gods honest truth
If you really love your family
just do the right things, or
the next few years you see them
will be in a picture frame
Take it from me kid
been there, done that
Twenty in
Think about that.
One love.

WHITE MAN THIS-BLACK MAN THAT

Hey, what's up with you?
You fallen' off course
get yourself together.
You can't?
Why can't you?
There you go again
blaming everybody but yourself.
WHITE MAN THIS-BLACK MAN THAT.

Your mind is stagnated in a time zone
come on back to the land of the living.
What you waiting on
a silver spoon, a magic carpet?
We've been strugglin' all our life.
Just 'cause you run into a few road blocks
doesn't mean you just give up the fight.
Deal with opposition as if driving
and debris is in the street.
You either drive thru it
or drive around it.
You feel me?
WHITE MAN THIS-BLACK MAN THAT.

There are two types of people in this world
those who let things happen
and those who make things happen.
Which one are you?
You not gonna have it easy
atleast in your life time.
So, come to grips with that
we're people of strong minds.
We've seen all the marches
heard all the speeches
It's time to step up and stop talking about
WHITE MAN THIS-BLACK MAN THAT.

Intention is the seed, action the fruit.
Now what are you prepared to do?
I know your answer before you say it.
'I don't know, those devils got me so confused."
Not you?
Well read, most knowledgeable one.
You know the old saying
You're so smart that you're dumb.
So, stop complaining about
WHITE MAN THIS-BLACK MAN THAT.

Who forced you to call your brother a nigga?
Who forced you to shoot at your brother?
Who forced you to hate and envy each other?
Who forced you to drop out of school and don't go to college?
Who forced you to disrespect and abuse your woman?
Who forced you to abandon your man and abuse your children?
Who forced you to disrespect your parents and the elders?
Who forced you to sell and do drugs?
Who forced you to sell your body and have unprotected sex?
Who forced you to hate - yourself?
Yeah, yeah, yeah,
WHITE MAN THIS-BLACK MAN THAT.

Don't let no one define who you are
or what you can accomplish in life.
You don't have to be in the army
to be all you can be.
But keep in mind one wrong decision
could land you in the penitentiary.
Sisters, it is said your body is a temple
and that's no lie.
Dignity and respect for self
will bring a whole new meaning to your life.

And brothers, stop calling each other a nigga
we're greater people than that.
Use the strength you're born with productively
and you'll see much more sunshine in your life.
The key to the 60 & 70's
was a five letter word called "unity".
Compare then to how we act today.
ponder on that for a minute.
Is it fiction or fact or
should we go back to that.
WHITE MAN THIS-BLACK MAN THAT.

GUILTY TIL PROVEN INNOCENT

Drivin down the ave
everything is fine
Between my legs a cup
on the side a fifth of wine
I stopped at a red light
and took a taste
turned my head
a mans at my window
with a hood on his head
and a gun in my face
Get out of the car nigga
Yeah, that's what he said
He attempts to shoot me
the gun jams instead
My mind filled with the remnants of wine
Heart filled with rage
Everything turning black now
Why is this happening to me today

I opened the paper the next mornin'
dead mans face on the front page
there's a knock at my door
cops question me 'bout yesterday
this can't be
mistaken identity
The gavel dropped
all I heard was guilty
I closed my eyes
then opened them up
next thing I know
I was on death row

Screams of brutality ring thru the halls
23 hour lock down
no mail and no one to call
Handcuffed to the shower
to see my lawyer and family
I exercise in a dog kennel - no publicity
There were 1300 inmates on the row when I first came
down to ten thirty years later
mid evil nights and dark days
The governor and his posse walkin my way
My heart pumpin to the sound of their shoes
I pray for life one more day
They stopped at my cell and handed me some papers
Is it a death warrant or commutation

QUADREE

I know the deal
24 hours to live
Lawyers came to see me
my family came and cried
Damn! I'm innocent!
in ten hour I die
Off to a new world
Off to a new life
Here come the guards
with that look in their eyes
Ate my last meal
Last scripture read
Hard to believe
in ten minutes I'll be dead

Dead man walkin'
strapped to the gurney
Do I have anything to say
Freedom or death is my motto
you can kiss my ass anyway
One minute left
finger on the button
The phone rings
it's the governors office
Straps come off
lawyer walks in and says
you're a free man now
thanks to god and DNA
How many other brothers are trapped
this system must change
my mind all messed up right now
I almost had poison stuck in my damn veins

THE MOTHER LAND

Old Zaire - New Democratic Republic of The Congos
What Democracy
What they really want territory, diamonds or the gold
Villains rampage dusty roads
collecting body parts for souvenirs
Fatigue soldiers having nervous break downs
Ancient history
I don't think so
it was 2003
Rwanda all over again?

Decease and starvation moving thru
the Continent like venom
Over three million Congolese dead
There were only three million
and change in the capital
Where were the so called UN peace keepers
They weren't there to protect the people
Why did they pull out their troops
What's their purpose
What's their definition of terrorism.

Transfixed on Iraq
Invisible weapons of mass destruction
50,000 dead in Ituri
In Bunia 500 slain in 9 days
On the verge of genocide
Where are the super powers of the world?
My bad - no oil there
They're cynical
They personify the ruthlessness of
an African Hyena.

Thunderous days
gloomy as the Congo River in the evening
Two roads, can only take one
Which one are you taking
Two hundred languages spoken there
Which one is originally yours?

Country rich with mineral wealth

yet the people are starving to death
An African holocaust
Ethnic discrimination
Autocratic misrule
Economical deterioration
What more can they lose
Things must change
there has to be a way
We must not forget the motherland
We might wind up back there one day.

QUADREE

CHAPTER V

IT IS WHAT IT IS

LIFE IS EXISTING
BUT IS EXISTING ENOUGH
STRIVE FOR GREATNESS ALWAYS

HARD KNOX LIFE

He rised up out his tomb
swimming thru his daddies sacks
and decided to rest in his momma' womb
He crept out the crack waters of life
no longer consumed
Cradled in the bosom of the hood
comforted but doomed
He heard the streets whisper to him at night
Spoke of things he never thought would dictate his life
Seen everything transpire by the grace of lights
prepared for the street fight.

No longer is anything as he'd like
Captain crunch mornings, penny candy afternoons
replaced by hecklers and crack balloons
Odor emitting from the corners of stairwells
light dust cover sticky surfaces where beer fell
remembering soldiers who were slain at a young age
trying to cope seein' tragedy after one page
Fear fills his insides
his daddy told him fear is nothing
stand strong son
this is how we ride.

He searched the streets for salvation
found confort in a glock
forty cal, one clip, nine shots
only thing guaranteed in this world is a pine box
Tragedy hit hard at his blind spot
Survivors cry rivers at funeral processions
First burner he saw was a Smith & Wesson
Light shimmer glimmer of the paint of a new car
Entry into the street life made him a hood star.

Seen his future in the tears of his mother
as she wept for him
Conflict between his heater will be the death of him
Fiends hit the block tryin' to escape this foul nation
worshippin' him like their savior
Women throw him ass for his bank and name sake
Never knew how deep pain sank in his heart
Felt the icy presence of death loomin'
Chased weed and liquor just to numb the confusion.

BLESS THEM ALL

When family or a friend become ill
some people think the worst
while others chill
Those who chill believe in the creator
seeks his guidance and mercy first.

They don't pull their hair out
they trust in him
'cause they know the angels
are around them.
They don't like to see them suffer
or even go away
but they know the creator has to work it out
So they stay keep the faith and pray.

SOUNDS OF THE BING

23 hours a day
you sit between four walls
Your nose and ears
replaced your vision
As laughter comes from one wing
Screams come from another
A citrus aroma pierce your nostrils
while H²O saturates
the yeast in your belly
Chit-chatter of the streets
fight thru the air waves
as keys jingle from a distance
Listen - can you hear it?

Script writing
at 60 miles an hour
paper crumbles
somebody done messed up their letter
Mailman does a drive by
Does anybody care
out of sight
out of mind huh
Can't make out the language
somebody praying next door
Sounds beautiful
God help us all
Listen - can you hear it?

The jingling
gettin' louder
like a step team
movin' aggressively
The oppressor trin'
to execute their mission
in the cover of darkness
Gotta keep your gear on
and your boots tied
ready for warfare
three hundred and
sixty five
It can pop off
at any time
Cuff goin'

QUADREE

click, click, click
while toilets flush away
Constitutional rights
HELLLLLLLP!
Listen - can you hear it?

QUADREE

TODAY

Tomorrow is another day
it hasn't got here yet
Yesterday is history
that you can surely bet.
Yesterday we can't change
tomorrow we may not see
Today we have the time
to be all that we can be.

Whatever your endeavors
whatever your world view
there is always someone
who view it just like you.

So, today just say "I love you"
to those who share your stay
remember tomorrow isn't promised
today is the day
It's Today.

LIFE HANGIN IN THE BALANCE

My life hanged in the balance
Like a chandelier
As the ring master snapped his whip
To start the show in his circus
I whispered to myself
"Is this for real"
"These people aren't my peers"
My peers live in the hoods of the ghetto
These people look like they're from Wall street

Never had a drink with them
Can't say I ever will
How can they know me in a few days
It took my parents years
Bubble gum evidence presented by the prosecution
The truth doesn't matter here
Never been in this predicament before
Only seen this on Law an Order
Everybody know the script but me
I guess the best performance wins huh

My percentages of winning are 50/50
like playing roulette in Atlantic city
I better add another 20% for my skin color
10% for being from New York City
And another 10% for being young
Oh Shit!
That's 90%
Damn - I don't stand a chance

Found out after the fact
They needed new workers
At their Industrialized Institutions
For the criminally blind
Yea, I said blind
You have to be blind
If you can't see the method
To their madness
A design to cease fire
Our process of pro-creation
Leavin a husbandless wife
And fatherless child
Don't think it can't happen to you
I though the same thing too
Justice only recognize two colors
White and green

QUADREE

NO MORE

I once had a treasure
A rare and precious stone
She slipped through my fingers
I'm all alone now
The days and nights blend into
Gray and cloudy times
The sun is truly gone
I wanted to stop her from walking away
truly I did, but
I was too proud to beg her to stay
She's found a new life
and I've found mine.

IS IT HER FAULT

Dad name Crack Daniels
Mom - Irish Rose
Nocturnally club hoppin
Shaken what her momma gave her
Dollar, dollar bill girl

Pole swingin -G- string jinglin
Her hair glides toward the moon light
Benjamin Franklin grabs her by the ankle
As her ass reveal a smile of gratitude

The thread of dawn hover over this
Smoke fill'd play ground of ecstasy
One more lap dance to go
S.A.T's in the mornin

General Grant waves from a dark corner
As she sensually walks that way
Staren him down like a cold beer
On a hot Summer night

Her strawberry lips move side to side
Her strap slide off her shoulder slowly
As if peelin a banana
Got to make that paper
Bills got to be paid

An elongated evenin doesn't matter
'Cause she never miss a class
She's focus'd on her education
Despite shakin her ass

Although she swims in dark waters
She still see her way pass sharks
Survival her assignment
Success her callin
She always stay sober
To keep from fallen

Does anybody have the right to condemn her
When no one will lend a hand
A college girl with a baby
livin alone with no man
Is it her fault?

CHAPTER VI

JUST MY THOUGHTS (ESSAYS)

WE'RE LOSING THE YOUTH
TOO MUCH SIMILAC THESE DAYS
THEY NEED MORE BREAST MILK

WITH EVERY CHOICE - THERE IS A CONSEQUENCE

Isn't it strange all you read in the newspapers, see on television, or hear on the radio is crime or sex. They say ex-convicts are still committing crimes on the street, that crime is up, that they need stiffer sentencing, and more prisons. They didn't tell you why the name Penitentiary, which stood for Penitence, changed to State Correctional Institution/Department of Corrections (DOC), which stands for money. They didn't tell you that Correctional Industries Corporation is on the stock exchange. They didn't tell you that during the last quarter of the 20th Century, state prison systems grew from 592 to 1,023 nationally, an increase of 73% (Source-Urban Institute Justice Policy Center, 2006).

They didn't tell you that the U.S. census counts prisoners as part of the neighboring town, and county community population, to distribute federal funds to them based on that data. They didn't tell you that recidivism keeps the economy flowing via jobs. They didn't tell you that prisons have inadequate rehabilitative programs. They didn't tell you that many prisoners rehabilitate and educate themselves so they can legally provide for their families and be productive citizens on the street. They didn't tell you despite prison being a revolving door for African Americans many are released, and don't return. They didn't tell you the unemployment rate for Africans Americans are twice as high as it is for whites. (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008)

Do I need to tell you how many men incarcerated are black and latino. Do I really? Statistics of black men incarcerated have reached near pandemic proportions. Even more than 100,000 females now fill U.S. prisons, and nearly two-thirds are women of color. Of course the court system plays a part in it all.

The sentencing disparagement between whites and blacks are outrageous. If you don't have money for a private attorney, you get a public defender attorney, who suppose to work for the public. Their pay rate is so low, they refuse to work any harder then their getting paid to work. Even if you have money available for a private attorney, as I did, the prejudice is so strong against you that as good as the attorney may be, you can't win.

A trial is like a play, everybody knows their part except you. The district attorney, doesn't look to the truth, instead, only seeks to win - convict you. The name of the game is, who is the most persuasive in court. Russian roulette with your life. You get millionaire bail and felony one sentencing for misdemeanor crimes. They say you suppose to get a jury of your peers, but that's a joke. How many in your jury would actually have a drink or go to dinner with you? None of them. The deck is stacked against you from many aspects. They aren't the peers of most urban defendants. A "peer" is defined as, "a person who is the equal of another in abilities, qualifications, age background, or social status." -Random House Webster's College Dictionary.

The so-called experts only give us academically theoretical roots of the problems, and/or solutions. Thus far nothing has been accomplished, other than more people going to jail and, prisons being built. The fact of the matter is, the powers that be don't want anything to change. Why? 'Cause many jobs would be lost. Imagine the national crime rate dropping to 10%. Policemen, Correctional Officers, Probation & Parole Officers, Court employees, etc., would be laid off/fired. You see they may put on their political faces of concern, but in reality, they really don't want to solve the plight of crime in this country. Hell, government politicians are just as big a criminals as anybody

else. In any case, these problems are there, and will take a century of work to correct. It is up to each individual to avoid putting themselves in bad positions to be caught up in that madness.

Also, it is up to the parents to grab hold of the young and misguided a little tighter. Big brothers must keep a closer eye on little brothers, and the youth must realize that with every choice - there are consequences. By no means take any of the above as an excuse for the behavior of our young people. They need to take responsibility for their own destructive actions. People say you become the company you keep, and that might be true, but I do not agree with the theory that you become the product of your environment. There are young people who live in the projects and bad sections of urban communities, who are doing well in school, and have stable careers. The sad part is the majority are not, but can.

Parents have to take more charge of their children. Stop letting them dictate their life so young. Stop being friends and start being parents like the old days. However, it is important parents have their life in order to. If not, the young ones won't respect their judgement. You young people need to do more contemplating on where you're at in your life. Ask yourself, "am I happy with the way my life is?" Then go farther and ask yourself, "Is my present quality of life stable enough to maintain me and my family until I get to retirement age? Then go a little farther, and ask yourself, "Is it enough to maintain a comfortable quality of life when I'm old and can't work anymore? If you can't get pass those questions, you know whatever it is you're presently doing to get money - has to change. All you young people who don't know this, know now.

The same way the world evolves, you must evolve. Find your hidden skill or talent, and try to make it work for you. Those of you who sell drugs, believe it or not, it's a skill. You've become good at selling things, organizing and managing business. You have an entrepreneur mentality, you're just using it on the wrong side of the fence. We all know what's on that side of the fence, death or prison. Yea, you'll make some money, but it's nothing more than what I call, "unpredictable temporary money". You don't know how long it will last, or if it will be there for you when you're old and gray. You might be shot, killed or sent to prison for a long time, before you can spend it all.

Now, I know in the heat of making that street money, not too much of those thoughts cross your mind, but subconsciously it does. How do I know; I've been there. You're in survival mode. You think you're helping your family, but in the long run, you hurt them. Yeah, you can't get the right job, bills has to be paid, and the babies have to eat. It's a serious dilemma and moves has to be made soon as possible. What you don't realize is, if you put that same amount of time and energy you put in illegal endeavors, into legal ones, you will get successful results that last. I was in my early 20's, owned and operated a prospering painting business, while holding a job as a supervisor of a 60 unit apartment building in the prestigious Village section of Manhattan, New York. I was making money on the high end of five figures a year, with one child. The problem was I got greedy, didn't let go of the street hustle money, and didn't have any patience or anyone in my ears telling me otherwise.

One wrong decision cost me and my family a life time of pain and grief, along with prison time. I say my family to, because it also affected them. They did time mentally with me.

I lost everything, and struggled to re-group and re-gain some of what I lost in life. Some friends died, and I lost contact with others while family relationships went stray. Of course, now I realize you can't play on both sides of the fence. The risk is to high and costly. Was it worth it? No! Would I have stayed on the illegal route, if someone was in my ears trying to keep me solely on the legal route? No! If I could rewind my life, would I do things differently? Absolutely yes!

Most people living in urban communities probably have friends or family that are either dead or in prison as a result of their street activities. It's not a good feeling seeing your father, brother, sister, mother or child in prison. Let me tell you first hand, prison is no play ground. Only the strong survive. It is a dangerous environment contained in a small populated area. No where to run, and hard to avoid trouble when it comes. I have see a lot of men get killed in prison, and others died of unattended health problems. You have to stay healthy so the inadequate health care don't kill you, and stay in shape to defend yourself against any drama that might come your way, at any given time. Don't think you have to do something wrong to get drama either, it could be as simple as someone not liking where you're from. That is prison life, just as dangerous as the streets. No guns in there, so you better be able to handle yourself.

The feeling is even worse seeing a love one laying in a coffin. So imagine how your family feel about you in the streets, when they hear gun shots or heard your friend got shot, and they're not sure if you were shot too. These are the burdens put on your family. No matter what state you live in, it's going down in every hood in urban communities through out the country. You only get different results in life when you change your way about how you think or do something. It doesn't matter where you come from, its where you're going. Remember, with every choice, there is a consequence. That consequence could be a good one or a bad one, depending on your course of action. Just choose wisely, because that choice could be life altering. It will affect more people than you.

These are just my thoughts, just my thoughts.

NIGGA WHAT - NIGGA WHO

Some say the word nigga is raw, full of hate; a painful reminder of slavery and Jim Crow days. Others say the hip hop generation has neutralized the word, took the sting out of it. During the 17th and majority of the 18th century, the word was neutral in content. It derived from the latin word "niger", which means black, then it turned derisively into "nigger", retaining a pejorative english meaning. By the end of the first third of the 19th Century, nigger was officially an insult. Websters College Dictionary defines it as, "Disparaging and offensive... A second class citizen."

Is it politically incorrect to use in any type of circumstance? Is it socially correct to use as a term of endearment? The artistic expression of black Comedians, Actors, and Rap Artist today attempt to debilitate the word by making it part of their act. The urban community has attempted to do the same by making it apart of their street slang. Some people find it hard to erase the connotations it carries, because the history behind it is so dark, and ugly.

We can say whatever we want to try and camouflage the feeling, and meaning of that word. We can say it's for us to use, not other races; that the meaning has changed, and doesn't mean an epithet when used by African Americans, instead it's a term of endearment etc., etc. All that sounds good but, at the end of the day, it is what it is, and do what it do. It has a semantic ancestry that evolved from the lips of racist people, who tortured, sold, and killed black people - to - the lips of the very people they victimized in past and present generations.

How many of you ever heard Billie Holiday's 1939 anti lynching song called, "Strange Fruit".

"Southern trees bear strange fruit
Blood on the leaves and blood at the root
Black bodies swinging in the Southern breeze
Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees."

Chilling verses, isn't it? If that doesn't move you, how about Nina Simone's song, "Mississippi Burning". If these are too far back in time for you, let's go back to June of 2006. A white man named Nicholas Minucci, age 20, from Howard Beach Queens, New York, went on trial for beating a black man Glenn Moore, age 23, with a bat while yelling the word "nigger" at him. He received 15 years for that hate crime. You see, not much has changed despite the urban communities attempt to convert the meaning of the word. The method of discrimination became more modernized, and the feelings behind the word more bogus. It is a valiant effort on the part of the urban community, but does it do more harm than good, or more good than harm?

Users of the word call those who oppose its use old fashioned, and out of touch with the times. The people who oppose it call them confused. Can we deny the fact that what we characterize ourselves as, plays a role in our psyche? If you say you're a player, will you act like one? Just look at the amount of respect and unity black people had among each other during the civil rights and black power era of the 60's & 70's. They addressed each other as brothers and sisters; not niggas and bitches. They weren't a bunch of saints back then, but compared to us today, it's a big difference. Now I can't go that far back, but I do know some of my cultural history. I know calling someone that word back then would have gotten your teeth knocked out.

I know that if an African American was in distress, others would have come to his or her aid whether they knew them or not. I know we were able to have neighborhood block parties without someone shooting it up. I know there was respect for the elders, and neighbors looked out for each others property and children. Even the gangs had respect for parents and children. If they wanted to get you, and you were with your mother or child at the time, they gave you a pass until another time.

These days, you'll get shoot standing right next to your mother or child. The mind set was different, because we viewed ourselves as greater than what society said we were. That takes me back to the theory of how we characterize ourselves. Why did the urban community decide to pick that particular word as a sign of endearment? Out of all the words in the English language, why that word? Why do African Americans have so little regard for the life of another, whereas they'll kill you over little or nothing disputes. So many questions, with so little answers. And what happened to black music which use to express concern for African American plights. Don't get me wrong, I'm not putting the blame on todays music, because it didn't start there.

However, where did the message in our music go? Out of all the problems African Americans are experiencing today, you can't say there's no material to write about. How about one million or more people in the U.S. with HIV; half of whom are African Americans. It's cool to have a little party/dance music, but we can slip some serious issues in there from time to time. It seems like the poets are the only entertainers today writing about social issues. What does music have to do with the use of the word? Well, we know that it is used in some artists lyrics. We also know a lot of the young people copy cat some of the slang words from artist lyrics. If how we characterize ourselves plays

a part in our psyche, it plays a part in how and what we write lyrically, and poetically. One can only think that it plays some part in how we feel toward one another too. Do it?

Remember the impact James Browns, "Say it loud, I'm black and I'm proud," record had on African Americans psyche back then. Most of the young people are not even aware of these records or know its historical significance to African Americans. The word was presented to them in the context that it was for the first time, so it is hard for them to understand why people opposing its use feel like they do. Parents and elders need to get off their "see no evil - hear no evil" state of mind, and teach the youth some African American History the schools don't teach, so they can get a better understanding of how the word relates to prior generations experiences. Maybe they should start by saying, "stop calling each other a nigga". Who knows if any of what I've written makes sense, or is of any real importance worthy of discussion. I do know there will be some that say it's worthy, and some that don't think so. It's all good though. I guess it will be an argument continued through the next few generations to come.

These are just my thoughts, just my thoughts.