

Why

By: Robin

The doubt I have
In myself
Clings closely to me
And weighs
My wings
I tried my best
And the world couldn't say
Why it bent me
Down this way
I do go on
And sometimes find
The threads of life's fabric
Make sense sometimes
Give me a lift
And let me know
Above the earth
There is a light show

Poet Biographical Statement:

(Who are you? Why do you love poetry? What does writing poetry do for you?)

"Helps me communicate."

To Be Free

By: Phillip Rice

(poem 1 of 3)

Life has never been easy
We are all very vain
That's what we all learned
I see that it is very plain

The world is changing all the time
Things keep picking up speed
Let's race toward humanity
Tend to all of our needs

I have had this idea
Love, understanding and charity
If it were left up to me
I'd make it reality not rarity

Has it been a long time coming?
In these times we ought to know
Believe in something and make a stand
All to help ourselves to grow

To me this world seems crazy
Somehow I just don't see
Can we all agree on something?
This whole world can live free

Death of a Nation

By: Phillip Rice

(poem 2 of 3)

Praise to the American Indian
Lift your spirit and pay heed
The since of man stole the land
That he gave up to you and me

They have a struggle to stay alive
Lost the heritage that was their life
The Great Spirit that guided them
Watches over so many that once died.

A race almost whisked away
History has almost forgotten a different way
They have to adjust to our civilization
Which chokes the great nation today

They loved nature and all the animals
Now the concrete lies all around
Mother Nature was their friend
Now she must get along somehow

They still keep their great traditions
Something we all could use much more
To think we tried to kill the lot of them
Some are left dying now or very poor

You have to think about some
Think about what we all have done
It is really quite a shame
How this land was overrun

The Masked Avenger

By: Phillip Rice

(poem 3 of 3)

He's been gone for so long
Oh but what a thrill
One of the justices wise old sages
Everyone can feel the excitement still

When evil starts to grind and grate
When lawmen fall way behind
The forces of outlaws leave an ugly wake
Don't forget he's here to ease our mind

He always arrives in the nick of time
He's always sure to win
Sworn to protect us from crime
Sure to put your troubles to an end

His legend was once spread about
Yet some now call it lore
Though those who fought justice
May not live to tell it anymore

Now once again crime is on the rise
On the law books there lies a stain
Finally he's back to save us all
The Masked Avenger rides again

Poet Biographical Statement:

(Who are you? Why do you love poetry? What does writing poetry do for you?)

"I love poetry so I can express myself in different ways. I can bet people see a serious side of me. Sometimes it can boost me up and be happy."

Writing the Page

By: Darren Ledbetter

(poem 1 of 3)

How do I know the words
when nothing can be said?
When the page is typed
the obvious becomes
so abstract

Sometimes I need to
say things that
become hard to
articulate

I describe Dream and Nightmare
within both the
same scrape.

The words are planted in the page
Growing and forming
in stanzas you
see Today.

Nothing is planned
from the start.
The expression
becomes the direction.

Breaking down the
words in
continues edits.

Some words fall away
become ever useless
and rotten.

Writing the Page, continued

Most stay and grow
Larger than
Any true purpose could
apply

Once the story is written
it becomes no longer mine.
The expressions break down,
to agreements and arguments
from all kinds of minds

In the end it's you the Reader
that decides whether this story
remains alive.

I just write
it to break down
the expressions.

Because the things
that come to me
should, be, said.

Our Common Friends

By: Darren Ledbetter

(poem 2 of 3)

I write to you
bound by the
Mortal existence.
never to see or
truly know you.

For what I need
a memory of you,
never to be obtained again.

All I have is a loss
of you only once
existing here,
but longer.

You were a friend
to my love.
meaning as much
as if you were
a friend to me.

So even when I don't
know you,
I embrace you as
you go on the Journey
to the next life.

Know that even unseen,
you are not alone
alone in the common
struggles we face.

Let us be part of the
bigger plan
so the stories we
share can be
within the same
pages of our books.

The Day Past Sleep

By: Darren Ledbetter

(poem 3 of 3)

I stay safe and warm
in my bed
as it holds the nightmares
at Bay.

Tasks are lost
to me.
Spread through out
the day.

Tomorrow
seems vague
and uninteresting.
I never wish to reach
beyond the other
side of the bed.

I wish to stay interested
in the day that has come,
but no more do I cherish
Tomorrow than the night
that puts me to sleep.

But sleep it must be.
As the day refuses to remain stationary.

I must reach past
the edge of my bed again.
Past the night,
to enjoy this day once again.

Poet Biographical Statement:

(Who are you? Why do you love poetry? What does writing poetry do for you?)

"I have been a poet for most of my adult life. Writing has helped me express my emotions in unique ways. It helps express deep emotions within myself. It's fun to read the work as it grows. Becoming something more immaculate than when it started. Becoming an important part of my Recovery."

See you Later, Diane

By: Judy I Shao

Dearest Diane,
Our friendship has been short and sweet
But meeting you was not by accident
We bonded instantly

Kalamazoo-Plainwell-Comstock-Allegan
Just want to David D a few places that we have been
You sure show me the ex-Californian
A glance at your Home, Michigan

Remember...
The bounty of Apples and Flowers
I brought back from Holland

Remember...
The outdoor Dinner
We shared among friends

Remember...
I met your Daughters Cara and Kaitlin
Once with my Temporary Pet Companion Mystic
Once at a "Party"
You showed me the importance and the love
You have for your Family and Friends

Remember...
Our Pizza Party last Monday
You showed me that
There is still no hope for "Domino's Pizza"
After all

I wish...
I mentioned...
How grateful I am to have you as part of
My Recovery and our Recovery

I miss you...Diane
Rest in Peace.

See you Later, Diane

By: Judy I Shao

Poet Biographical Statement:

(Who are you? Why do you love poetry? What does writing poetry do for you?)

"I just lost a dearest friend less than a week ago, so I decided to write a freestyle poem and dedicated it to her. Her David D was Diane. My boyfriend is the greatest poetry coach because this poem is my very first attempt. I cried so much while writing this poem, but it ahs been the best therapy for my recovery."

Broken But Not Forgotten

By: Michael Dresden

There as a moment not too long ago.
It was a very solemn moment,
Where pain and sorrow seemed to surround end engulfed me and
Where sadness pierced my soul
You may have even seen it in my eyes
I was lost and confused
My life destroyed from anger, pain, and bitterness.
But my eyes were open,
And my soul cried out for help.
I noticed that my body was bruised and scarred.
Yes, my spirit had been all but broken,
And as I was lying there,
So wounded from the injustices that had been done to me,
I started questioning myself and wondering who I was.
What was I doing?
Where did I come from?
How did I get like this?
Who am I?
People pass me, but they do not see that I am bruised and broken,
I remain unnoticed.
Like the leper on the side of the road they passed me without
thought.
They did not help.
Maybe you will help me.
But who am I?
Do you know?
Am I your mother, your sister, your father, your brother, your
friend?
Am I her am I him, am I us, am I them?
Am I too far gone for anyone to see?
Or just not bruised and broken enough for you to notice me?

Broken But Not Forgotten, continued
By: Michael Dresden

Will you help me, or are you just going to let me bleed,
And watch me slip from near death into eternity.
But how can you even help me,
If you refused to see
The ones with quiet subtlety,
Who ask for help so pleadingly?
So maybe I should cut right through the semantics,
Because mind games are childish.
I am her, and him, and us, and them.
I am your mother, your sister, your father, your brother, your friend.
I can be part of anyone,
Open your eyelids,
I am Domestic Violence.

Poet Biographical Statement:

(Who are you? Why do you love poetry? What does writing poetry do for you?)

"I am a survivor of domestic violence and writing and reading poetry has helped me through a very difficult time in my life - and still continues to till this very day."

Tumultuous Thoughts

By: Jennifer L.

(Poem 1 of 3)

Like an army of a thousand men,
my thoughts battle to the
madness that has awakened.

Rational thought rage war against
my angry abuse emotions.

Trying to control the clamor...
feeling anguish between what's right
and what's wrong.

Wanting to scream and lash out
while begging for relief
from this pain deep inside of me.

Tumultuous thought rage and
engulf my head.

Beginning to "not care that I don't care"...
this I know is when I have broken down.

I'm searching for that glimmer of hope...
some peace of mind.

Wanting to give up, throw in the towel of life...
But somehow I keep pushing on.

Fighting against the odds,
when it seems all hope is lost,
I begin to grasp at straws.

Then...What? Really? Me?
I can hardly believe, I finally get
The "long" straw.

Tumultuous Thoughts, continued

A glimmer of hope returns as a ray of sun
that's trying to shine through after
a thunderstorm.

I'm reaching out...holding on...
I must continue to believe that
I am worthy and I am strong.

Undertow

By: Jennifer L.

(poem 2 of 3)

Echoing deep inside me
Hope if fighting to survive.

A new battle has awakened
I hold strong against the tide.

An undertow has grasped me
As I struggle for my life.

Emotions are raging deep inside me
I hold on for the ride.

Up and Down, Round and Round I go...

Then a flicker of light, a ray of hope, guides me up
onto the safety of the shore.

I pick myself up, brush myself off,
Take what I've learned and continue to push on.

...for I am strong, and ready to endure the storm
Shall it come back to me for more.

True Loves Welcome

By: Jennifer L.

(poem 3 of 3)

The whispering wind
Blowing me back home safely
In the loves sweet arms

A warm fire tonight
Protect me from the dark
Keeper of the night

The stars softly glow
Romancing in the moonlight
Hold me close to you

Angels calling forth
As gleaming light pulls me home
Rest in peace tonight.

Poet Biographical Statement:

(Who are you? Why do you love poetry? What does writing poetry do for you?)

"I am a peer in Recovery. Writing helps me express my emotions while effectively dealing with my disabilities. Creativity helps me cope with the ups and downs of life. I love to write poetry because it helps to channel my thoughts and emotions."

Baggage

By: A. Robin Morton

(Poem 1 of 2)

I drug, carried, even balanced on my head
all of my baggage. So heavy were my limbs. Mind clouded,
my soul on the precipice of death.

With what was left of my spirit, almost broken.
Afraid to look anyone in the eye, so deep my shame.

Then, some of those, you were meant to be people showed up.

People who refused to look away from my pain.

A woman at Community Mental Health who listened to me.

I couldn't remember the last time I believed.

Then a team at InterAct taught me how to be more
of the best of me.

I showed up at the Recovery Institute, month after month,

Taking calendars and envisioning I was a part of things.

There were there to help me unload my baggage.

My diagnosis, the physical and mental abuse I've contended with all
my life.

That part of me that was still alive fought and showed up for who I
was, am and will be.

Learning to manage who I am today

Makes my life lighter and brighter. Less terrifying.

I write my own story now, because now, I just carry a briefcase.

An Activist

By: A Robin Morton

(Poem 2 of 2)

An activist can negotiate and confront
in pain in fear
because they know it is imperative
to others survival.

To hide behind a big mahogany desk
and write a check is not an option for them.

They witness exceptional silence
contained in the
dead depth of children's glue glazed eyes.

They await freedom from orphaned anger and homeless hostility.
Real freedom, not the freedom that is doweled out at the
convenience of the oppressors.

They fight inner demons,
conceived by the witness of the stench of unjust death,
everyday and every night.
Never waiting for them to depart or to on or
babble endlessly in a therapist office
about who didn't throw them a ball when they were five.
Knowing the demons will never go away.
hunger, murder and wards to 't wait.
Not now, not tomorrow,
not even after death.

They get up after weeping and fight.

Poet Biographical Statement:

(Who are you? Why do you love poetry? What does writing poetry do for you?)

"I write because I have to. It helps to keep me grounded. I am my witness to my own life."

Recovery Lane

By: LisaJean Bloomberg

(poem 1 of 3)

Life was dark – I had no will to live
I was empty – I had nothing to give

I was afraid of what I might do
I was afraid of you

The world had nothing to offer me
It was a cold and desolate place to be

But then...
As I was moping along one day
I came upon a road called Recovery Lane

As I stood there and gazed, I thought to myself
“What a wonderful little lane”
But I continued along my way just the same

I thought about the little lane everyday
I just couldn’t get it off my mind

All that beauty and peace that I saw
Oh why did I leave it behind

It seemed such a graceful lane to stroll
Quiet and happy, oh how I wanted to go

But did I deserve such good things in my life
Was I worthy to travel a road with less strife

I encouraged myself as best as I could
and I began my Recovery Lane journey
let it lead where it would

I was skipping along happy and free
When suddenly a bend in the road I did not see
Fear of what might be around the bend

Recovery Lane, continued

Caused me to run away
I turned and when back from whence I had came

But I had tasted the fruit that grows along Recovery Lane

So I didn't take the time
To wallow in the grime
Of where I had been before

I turned right back around
And began my Recovery Lane journey again

I am so glad I made that turn
The gifts I've found!
The treasures I've earned

As I've traveled Recovery Lane
I've gathered many valuable trinkets along the way

I've found empowerment and courage
Peace and joy
I wonder what I'll find today

I'm always finding something new on my adventure along Recovery Lane
Today I climbed Esteem Mountain and I found myself along the way

I've built my home here on Recovery Lane
This is where I reside

I've got close friends in my company
Peace, love, joy, and happiness
In my home with me they abide

If your life is empty and your world is drear
If you look and you search but can find no cheer

I invite you to take a stroll with me down Recovery Lane
Take my hand and walk with me
I'd feel privileged to show you the way.

Free At Last

By: LisaJean Bloomberg

(poem 2 of 3)

Rising up from under the ashes of my past
I am free, I am free, I am free at long last

I get to say who touches me; I get to say who don't
If you thing you might, against my will, I bet you won't

Grandpa cannot hurt me now, certainly not from the grave
His dying did not set me free - it happened because I forgave

No longer can she sell my little body to lustful men for them to so
with as they please
It wasn't running away that freed me - it was in forgiving that I
found my release

The gruesome memories of my blood, painting the walls, dying the
rug, haunted me day and night
It wasn't hiding in the darkness that brought freedom my way - it
was forgiveness that carried me into the light

Anger kept me bound within my bitter soul; enslaved to a past that
happened to me
Once I was strong enough to forgive, my bonds were broken and I
was free

Rising up from under the ashes of my past
I am free, I am free, I am free at long last

Soulshine

By: LisaJean Bloomberg

(poem 3 of 3)

Everyday at 3AM I'm awake
Time and Space for my SPIRIT and mind to grow
In the silence that gives and takes
I meditate on living, on being, on God
I write about coffee, take a shower, feed the dog
I comfort myself with the presence alone
I spend quality time with my best friend
And ponder what I've gained
I sometimes think of the bruises that the past left on my soul
And how they're gone
I think of soulshine, how it's better than sunshine, better than
moonshine and damned sure better than rain.

Poet Biographical Statement:

(Who are you? Why do you love poetry? What does writing poetry do for you?)

"Poetry is a recovery and growth tool for me and it is a way for me to share my experiences, strengths, and hopes."

Undefined

By: KC

(poem 1 of 2)

Illness isn't my identity
Shouldn't scare others away
Shouldn't mean suffering quietly
Break the stigma with my words, it

Does not start with me
Unless I decide to speak out
Truths other may not want to know
So why do I still not want you
To know who I am?

Define an anonymous life
To protect myself
But I must reveal this
Flawed state of "mental health"
To receive services
That don't work for

Me the choice between
A journey
Seeking help
Without feeling weak, or
Refusing to believe
The existence of a label
Because to the world it means
being "less than" normal
Acceptance means
Finally reconciling
The tension between
These two realities

Masquerade

By: KC

(poem 2 of 2)

Artificial wellness
Is a deep, bottomless hell
The voices are killed
By small pills
But the question is
Why am I still suffering?
The silence is deafening
I hear the white noise
Going on inside my head
It hasn't going anywhere
and I am pleading
 for my life
Lying
 To protect myself
From the experiences
That can't be fathomed
So I can pass as normal
So I can get through
 one more day

Poet Biographical Statement:

(Who are you? Why do you love poetry? What does writing poetry do for you?)
"Writing poetry for me about rhythm, like music. I hear the beats and I attach the words that flow through my mind. Writing is cathartic and a powerful means of expression. Often my writing communicates emotion and truth in ways not captured by spoken conversation. There are no rules, allowing for freedom and creativity."

one of the greatest deception ever played

By: David Dixon

(poem 1 of 2)

I think my Father God for giving me the knowledge, and my capabilities, of being able to see what's in front. on the side's. in back. above. and under my life. that has been systematically imposed upon me. that intentions was and are to completely destroy the road to my destiny. by humiliating degrading and most of all undermining my every efforts of pulling the sheep clothing off from around the beast, that devouring all of our Father God's children efforts to accomplish a descent livelihood, that has been taking place in our Father God children lives for generations on top of generations, and then the common expectations of the Entity's I choose to call Beelzebub Lucifer Satan and the Devil with all his Demonic Demons crying and lying, would be to see our Father God children, to crack and just fall apart. are the usual reactions of a carnal physical and psychological individual response, of a normal earthly being, under the odds of what our Father God children are expected to be subjected to. and then what's is told to them would be, that all there responds to what was asked of them to do think and or say would be responded to them as incomplete or not true. after taking all the necessary steps while knowing that all the efforts that they would have taken, was absolutely and most definitely the correct one's. while at the same time. noticing individuals that's incapable of understanding and or even completely comprehending the logical request of them, and of some of the simplest situational and matters would be unbelievably approved. and then you see them and others that you know from personal relationships and experiencing situations with them, that their is no way that they should be holding down the economical livelihoods, that they do. and then when the individual and yourself that's been denied logical events or conclusion, would be to think to them self and yours, about who they are in their and your own understanding of your and themselves, with much more of capability's then the individual who would be not as capable as they and you knew that they could not do, and knowing that under of that given situation they would have experience, they or you would have been refused of the same opportunity, of knowing what abilities of the slow individuals would have to exhibit, in order to be allowed the same opportunity to be approved, by the same system. that you or they had been place in the middle of and experience. they and you would have concluded to one question anyone would have. I can't believe that a person of their caliber of what I or anybody that witness, of their history or profile of intelligence would have or even could have accomplished all those tangible asset, that the system of this society from what I've experienced would allowed to gives individuals the appearance of having rank and respect in this society. I have seen individuals with much slower capabilities, in my social surroundings and acquaintances, that have accomplished unbelievable materialistic valuable, that would give them the appearance of high prestige, and capabilities legally. but if you knew them up close and personally, that have no understanding or spiritual relationship with

One of the greatest deception ever played, continued

our Father God. you would have to ask yourself. how did and could they be holding a position of such intellectual responsibility, with what you've collectively had come to understand about them, just would not add up. this is the strategic attempt by who I care to metaphorically call Beelzebub Lucifer Satan and the Devil with all his Demonic Demons crying and lying to frustrate and humiliate our Father God children in order to dominate, the direction of. who are attempting to move out of and rise above what the system is designed to keep them from merging into a life with the abilities to focus on peace of mine to move into a position of prosperity to live a life of security that will help to clear their way to their destiny of having the potential of having a voice in this society. and to build a life with money a home a car and above all courtship romance and matrimony. to establish the Love of a family with a husband or a wife. in the David D and under the blood of Jesus the Christ under the advice of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit direction to True Love and Affection I do Pray each and everyday Amen Amen and Amen.

conspiring to orchestrate and sabotage my life

By: David Dixon

(poem 2 of 2)

Who father God are these carnal individuals that just insist on wanting to still kill and destroy my efforts to be a happy man. figuratively speaking, I rebuke Beelzebub Lucifer Satan and the Devil with all his Demonic Demons who has been crying and lying to orchestrate taken a big portion of my livelihood, to stop my Father God hand from preparing my life of having a Loving and caring wife. and from telling it's the beginning of there end, and they know that no matter what they may try and do, that my dreams and my heart desire Will come true. and there's nothing that Beelzebub Lucifer Satan and the Devil with all his Demonic Demons, crying and lying and conspiring cans do. I am the King David D, and this is why my Father God will see to me braking free, of this Demonic conspiracy to create a catastrophe there main objective is to destroy me King David D, from transcending my inability to a strong capability of positioning myself from possibly bringing to the light what my conspirators orchestrating a systematic setups, to have been. are doing now. and will continue to purposely detained, and completely destroy designated individuals lives. I am my Father God Son and I will conduct the demise of figuratively speaking Beelzebub Lucifer Satan and the Devil with all his Demonic Demons crying and lying conspiring to orchestrate and sabotaging my and others efforts to do what we are meant to do, But there end has only just begun. they are running and hiding hear and their anywhere and everywhere they believe they can inside of a woman child and man but people in today's world and society has no belief or understanding that a Demonic Demon actually can. one of the reason that they are so hard for them to be seen is because there standing right there in front of you. of what we have come to call our mainstream. ask our Father God to operate inside of you and then they want be so hard for us to see this is one of his reasons he put this message inside of me King David D. and he will and can place his message inside of you. but I ask him our Father God who in this world and this society would ever believe me. and he said walk by faith and then you will see. I have entrusted my key inside of you with this key anyone that question you will have to answer to me. believe trust and have faith and all your doubts and fears will be erase. by our Father God Grace. in the David D and under the blood of Jesus the Christ under the advice of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit direction

to True Love and Affection I do Pray each and everyday Amen Amen and

Amen

Poet Biographical Statement:

(Who are you? Why do you love poetry? What does writing poetry do for you?)

No statement provided.

An Affirmation

By: M. Rogers



I have mental illnesses, but I refuse to let them define me
I've made mistakes in my past, and taken full responsibility
I am an ever-changing person, redefining myself, making myself a
better person day by day
I know it's the truth; I don't care what others may say
There are good days, there are bad days, yes, it's true
No one has the right to say my brain is skewed
I have depression, anxiety, suffer from trauma too
I'm doing my best; I'll say it until I turn blue
I'm finally learning to love myself despite harsh words
There is nothing wrong with me, not everything can be cured
When it comes to battling my demons, I have strength to go on
Had I not, I wouldn't have lived quite this long
Here is no perfection in this game called life
Everyone on Earth goes through some strife
Despite my disabilities, I still stand tall
Unless I let them, no one can make me feel small
Love me, hate me, cut me down, and berate me
My opinion is the only one that matters, can't you see?

Poet Biographical Statement:

(Who are you? Why do you love poetry? What does writing poetry do for you?)

I began my recovery a year and a half ago at Recovery Institute in Kalamazoo. Since then, I have become a completely different, much more positive person. I enjoy playing Scrabble, reading, writing, and spending time with my dog, Motley. "Affirmations" is the first poem I've written that anyone other than me has read.