

“ALL PLAY TOGETHER NOW”

Right-to-Write (R2W) Project

Fall 2024 Anthology

Westchester County Dept. of Correction Writers

x Sarah Lawrence College

Table of Contents

- I. Women's Group Community Poem
- II. K. Hite AKA G-BABY 300_
- III. Khaliek Hite
- IV. Toc Pierre
- V. Erin (Red) Todd
- VI. constance f. koeper
- VII. Patricia Dolan
- VIII. Roxxanne
- IX. *About Right-to-Write*

I. Community Poem

Exquisite Corpse Community Poem

Exquisite Corpse is a game originating from the Parisian Surrealist movement. Each player writes a word or (as in this case) line and folds the paper to conceal it, then passes it on; nobody is aware of what anybody else has written. Our only directive was to begin our sentences with the word "we."

We the women of this multipurpose not-chapel
sending out words from plastic chairs,
we document our present, together.

We the people of the United States of America
nominated Trump

We laugh and we cry in order to breathe.

We are Beautiful People Because
we are Successful & we love Animals
We play together, but one day we all will - all
of us. Let's all play together now.

II. K. Hite AKA G-BABY 300_

aspiring B/ath

Testifying	Babe
Justifying	barber
Retiring	baby
Hiring	boss
Firing	bass

Untitled

I was outside looking for a Job that was hiring. first day on the Job my boss was firing. my mans got laid off said it was retiring. then he got into two situations and started testifying.

III. Khaliek Hite

Untitled

Nervous - My first day of high school. When I was walking down the hallway I was so lost I did not notice nobody at all.

Derrick just bought a Volkswagen and crashed the second week having it.

Why would he want a tuned up stage 2 2024 BMW. When I drove the bmw I was driving carefully so I won't crash.

Hopeful - When I had got to my first period class I sat next to a female named Ashley she introduced herself and told me we could be friends.

Educational - When fourth period came along I saw Ashley once again. We sat and she helped me through my algebra semester.

IV. Toc Pierre

Aspiring

Expiring
Justifying
Inspiring
Firing
Hiring

Bath

Half
Frat
Calf
Crush

Untitled

In jail I'm steady thinking about this cash
Got my foot on the pedal hoping I don't crash
I'll ever get behind me promise I'ma do a dash
Went through so much pain they don't know the half
Growing up I ain't have it remember they use to laugh

IV. Erin “Red” Todd

To My Audience

Thank you for taking the time to read
a very deep part of me. When I envision someone
reading I can imagine them feeling what I felt.
the happy times, the sad times. the dark and
the light. the nights spent up with tears hitting the
page or mornings woken up with the golden sun
hitting my face. I am a woman still trying to find herself.
I am a warrior at heart because I wouldn't have been
dealt the cards I have played if I didn't know how to
handle or play the games.

I am 27, I am from New York & the only thing keeping
my sanity is filling these pages up.

I am grateful to a lifelong of more, God willing.
I am thankful everyday for a new day to be able to
rise fully functioning and to believe in a power
so greater than myself, because without that
I would be a lost, desolate soul.
Thank you for reading.

xoxo Erin
"Red"

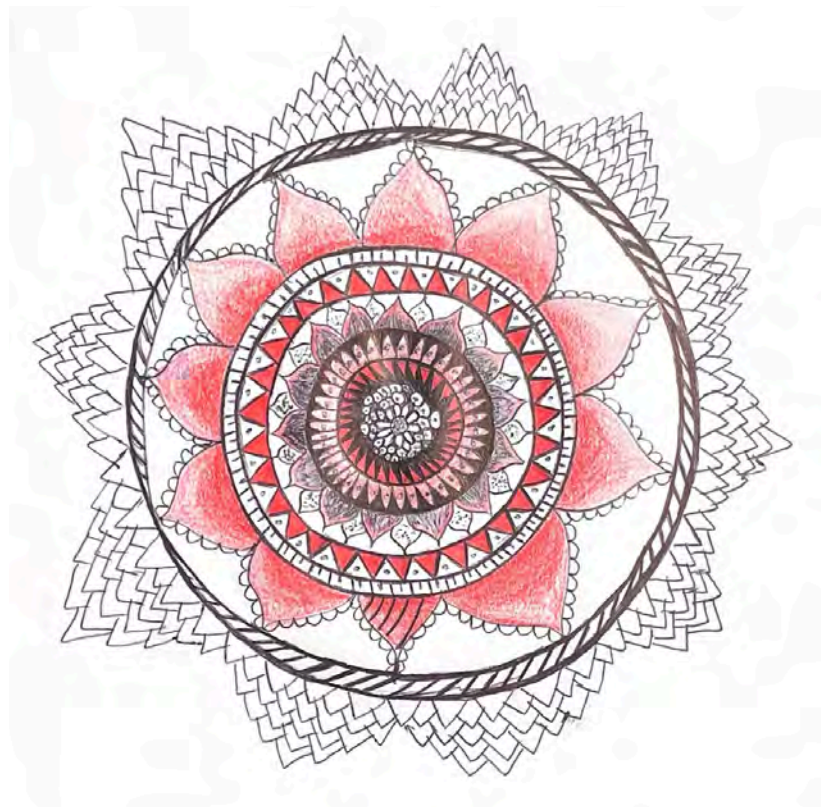
Red

My name is erin. Meaning Ireland the beautiful country with endless green rolling hills and pints of guinness. Erin Go Bragh meaning long live Ireland. Then we go to E. The 5th letter of the alphabet. High 5 - Red Star - 5 points on a star. Then I was blessed with Red. My alter ego. A dear friend coined the name and it just stuck because of my long red hair. My Dad's nickname and his brothers' nicknames were also Red. I guess my sister didn't fit the script to be Red. Then we have Redness. Reddington the infamous R-E-D. Sexy Red (the white version) and my favorite out of them all my best friend twin gave me is E.dot. It fits so well because my last name is todd so e then dot is todd backwards. That's my heart, my Right hand my best friend. I love you maine & I hope you're not mad at me for being here. I learned everything i know in this life we live

Day by Day out by May

Yesterday All my troubles seemed so far Away
but now it looks as if they're here to stay
for a little while longer but I can't
count the days it gets easier to count
moment by day counting the minutes
I'll be out by May 7 months to go
that's 210 away few to give or take
a few sleeps and a wake I'll
be out of here before I know it
Just hold on to May.

- E.Dot
10/22/24



Untitled

Oh I believe in yesterday and with the swipe of a
pen/my life could be/terminated or free/
but that's not up to me/that decision is
in the hands/of someone who doesn't even
know me/And that might be crazy to
seem/or hard to read/but all I can do is
pray to the Lord Above me/pray that
he saves me/makes a miracle happen before
Me/Now and then/and with the swipe
of that pen/that man before me/determines
my fate/looks at me with hate/thinks
I'm not so great/but he's only reading/
what's on that plate/And that plate reads/
on and on/words that mesh/into a
blur going on/about things that do not
determine who I am/Just words on paper
can seem so dim/but it can determine
my life with the swipe of a pen.

Edot 10/22/24

Waking up at home A place I miss so much

A Bright warm beam of sun makes its way through my curtains. Its reflection off my bright blue walls gives me a warm, groggy wake up. I can smell my mom's coffee freshly brewed from the keurig I can hear her stirring in her cream to her coffee. I can almost taste the hazelnut undertones to the bold cup of coffee she is about to ingest. Further in I can hear my father's classical music playing from the basement as he hums along to the tune. A little deeper in I can hear the distant patter of the singer sewing machine punching its needle & thread in and out of the leather material that he is making into a masterpiece. The sun Shines in a little bit brighter whispering, "Erin wake up." As I roll out of bed and go to say Good Morning to mom, I set up my cup of coffee and take a step outside onto the deck. I hear the phone ring and Dad answers from the basement, yelling "Mary Ellen it's for you" when she could've easily picked up but he's so eagerly waiting for another customer to call. I hear my coffee stop dripping, grab my cup and to my sacred space of my back deck I go. Claire comes and gives me the warmest of welcomes as she takes a break from barking at the deer in the grass. Good morning Bearies as I lunge towards her and she steps up on her hind legs to give me a hug. My bestest friend. My Dog niece. love this human animal with all my heart. As I take my first sip of coffee I pause because it's the best feeling letting the warm delicious flavors envelop your tastebuds. I take a few seconds before lighting a cigarette to take a deep breath of the fresh June air. light and sweet. Just how I like my coffee. Then I ingest the toxic chemicals of my newport short and inhale the new experiences today has for me and exhaling the negatives of yesterday's memories.

Consciousness

Every Morning I Seem to be waking up
from this endless nightmare my thoughts
race, my body sweats. My eyes move underneath
my eyelids, so rapidly, watching this movie
I don't want to watch. Until my body
jerks itself awake I look around. Gather
my surroundings. Smell the crisp Air. See the
early morning sky. Hear the hum of
machinery in the distance. And feel the
Sweat on my body. As the golden sun starts
to creep up over the trees, the darkness
fades out of my mind and I tell myself it was
just a dream.

Blinded by the light

A lamp when turned on can bring brightness to a dark room. When off may also bring total darkness. A lamp without light can be a piece of art per se sitting on the mantle collecting dust. I've seen some pretty beautiful lamps used as pieces of art. lamps with no lights. Turn to match the dusty interior of the living room. I wish these lamps had lights to show off their beautiful stained glasses and Tiffany fixtures. But the owners just bought new ones and put light bulbs in and stuck the old ones on the mantle to collect the dust. They've been forgotten.

With the lamp on we can see in the darkness. We can see and maybe find things we've been looking for. With the lamp off, in the dark we may be trying to hide from things the light may show. Personally I like it better with the lights off. I feel I have trained my brain for night vision and to also not be seen. like im in the background, a bystander just watching what is happening in the light. wandering into the dark. I am a wanderer but you will not find me on the mantle. I will never be forgotten. from the outside may look dark but all it takes is turning on one switch and letting that light shine through.

Serenity

Every night I cry. I write about my grief
trauma+loss & cry everynight myself to sleep

I Sit & weep

All the lost souls gone to keep

By the God in the sky

So far Away so High

And I sit here & wonder why

Why not I?

I want to go

I want to float

Far away from here

far from here my dear

Somewhere memories don't seem clear

Somewhere I don't feel fear

Somewhere Serene

That picture I paint in my every day dreams

Take me there take me Now

Ive seen the path I just don't know how

To get there on my own Ive tried so hard

Everytime I get close I feel so barred

As if its not meant to be

As if its not a place for me

but why cant I go? Why is it a No?

So I sit here & tear cuz the end feels so near

but it's a long road ahead

A long time till I end up dead

haven't you realized it's not your time?

13 times later do you need a reason why?

looking for answers, looking for clues

but I keep getting stuck in

these black + grey hues

Some other days it's the dreary blues

theres one other thing telling me keep on the move

that one thing Im not so sure

What it even is, is it some Cure?

I know there's no cure, it's an everyday fight

I guess thats why God chooses

his strongest soldiers to fight

the hardest battles I will not lose tonight

I love you + Thank you for

keeping me safe. Amen

Who knows what tomorrow will bring

Thank you for this Day

The Art of Writing

The Art of writing Saves me everyday
It Saves me from the sorrowful feelings of dismay
Getting my feelings out in different ways
Brings up so many things I deal with everyday
Sometimes I laugh, Sometimes I cry
But I'm grateful to know there's a good reason why
It's my source of healing gutting out what's inside
What I've buried & hidden from what feels like All my life
I want the chance to heal, to feel that saving grace
But I can only save myself & do it at my own pace
I can't expect it to be tomorrow, or have
expectations at all. It could happen
tomorrow or tomorrow we may fall

I want to be free

I want to be free, up in the clouds
not surrounded by this overbearing crowd
I want to be free, not locked in a cell
Not be in a place that reminds me of Hell
I want to be free and let go of my pain,
my grudges, my fears, & what my soul has to gain
I want to be free from my negative thoughts
All the things that have been battled and fought
I want to get out but they say I can't leave
"Another month To Do" My soul has to grieve
It gets too much and the tears start to fall
But I knew I'm going to get through it after All
One day at a time is how I get through
At least it's not a full year I have to do
These people get me angry all sorts of tight
But I know smacking a bitch will not be right
I pray to God to remove them Away
and someday, somehow they end up going
out of my way, out of my sight
I know relying on God will get me through
the night

Untitled

A lot has happened in my journey. SO much to say So Much has been seen. A lot of what I write about is my grief, trauma, and loss and how I work through it Day by day. Every Morning And Everynight I write to God, my higher power. I express my gratitude and thank him for another day and for keeping my family and loved ones safe and healthy for another Day. My connection with my Higher Power is very strong especially in writing to him. Everyone's experiences are different.

I think as a little kid I thought of "talking to God" or "Praying" and thinking "Well, he never answers, so what's the point" and I veered off my spiritual path. But it took damn near a million life experiences to learn that God is real in my life, He is listening, and just because He doesn't verbally answer, doesn't mean He's not there.

It took me a million life experiences to open my eyes, look a little closer and actually have faith. In front of my face was the works of God happening right before my eyes. It was having faith and patience and believing something greater than myself would handle the things I was not capable of. It took a million life experiences to learn it is something I must do on a daily basis because if I don't keep a conscious guard up, the reset button (which I call the devil) will get pushed so quietly and quickly and my will is Right back in my control.

Here I am now, on my millionth and one life experience. Surrendering my will to my higher power. Because even in a controlled environment there is always temptation. I learned yesterday, we are living in the Devil's World. It's Heaven which is the kingdom of God. And not everyone makes it.

I think I need to thoroughly beat the Devil and escape from his grip. Because he has had me for oh so long. It's time I broke free and gave my will to God so I may walk a spiritual and sin free path on my way to the Kingdom of Heaven
Amen.

Gratitude

Dear Heavenly Father,

Thank you for waking me up sober today.
Thank you for keeping my family and loved ones safe and healthy and allowing us another day on your Earth. I am grateful to see another day. Thank you for the continuous blessings and answered prayers everyday. I am grateful to be woken up everymorning fully functioning with food, shelter, clothing, and a safe place to Recover. Thank you God for the strength and guidance to go on another day. Everyday, for we, is a stride towards becoming a greater version of myself. Grateful for the opportunity. Amen.

Baby Blues

Dedicated to TRAVIS H.

Everytime I think of him, tears
welled up in my eyes / Knowing he's
gone forever and I didn't get to
say goodbye / I thought he was
My soulmate / going to be my
forever / He just didn't know / how
much I loved him / His first love
blinded him / from even seeing me.
His first love wasn't a person /
it's what took him out of this world /
If I could kill that bitch before it
got to him / I would have him in my
Arms / He had the most dreamy blue
eyes / gorgeous blonde hair / A smile
that would make you feel / like you're
the only person in the world when he
looks at you / An embrace so captivating
you never want to let go / But when I
did let go / I didn't know it was going
to be forever / Rest in Peace / My love
My Angel in the sky / I know you're at
Peace / not suffering anymore / I'm so sorry
I never said goodbye./ I will love you forever
Travis - until we meet again - Erin ♥

*“I live in a world where the two
truths coexist; where both
hell and hope lie in the palm of
my hand.”*

- Alice Sebold



Love is the key

God is a flame, igniting my heart,
fueling my Breath from the very start.
the vastness of the world, all that I see
the splendor of choices living in me.
Embers, coals, sparks lit from within –
electricity, light waves glowing on skin,
Love ever dancing, love is the key
Love is the answer, Love sets me free

IV. constance f. koeper

constance f. koeper: psychic/healer (rids of negativity from curses and the like as well as healing any cracks in a spirit. 10 years experience). loves creative writing, comedy and composing.

Write about your name (~20 mins)

9/24/24

(Constance and her dad)

My parents decided to name me Constance.

They picked it before they ever saw me.

I always wonder how do you know what a baby is before you see them?

The other option they picked for me if I was born as a girl was Chloe. If I was born as a boy, they decided to name me Bernard. My father liked the name Bernard which I think is crazy - Constance, Chloe or Bernard.

I am most grateful that I stand here before you not a Bernard.

What would I even do as a Bernard?

Obviously, I would be born in khakis and a sweater vest. By the age of 6, I'd be carrying around a briefcase, inviting other kids in my kindergarten class to meetings, claiming we'd need to go over things in their file.

Write whatever comes to mind when you think of a lamp (5 mins) 10/1/24

I love lamp (movie quote)

The lamps with statues of women dancing around the base that was in my parents' bedroom

Tiffany lamps - I always wanted one

Stained glass church windows

My friend Chris Kelly and his child Mia

Tropicana juice in the smaller bottle, specifically the shape of the label

A turned off TV, specifically in room 805 of the marriott residence inn in white plains

A phone store on mamaroneck ave in white plains (not boost mobile, the one close to the church near the Ritz)

dialogue (10-20 min)

10/1/24

"Do you think the world is going to end?"

"No, do you?"

"Yeah... Yeah sometimes I dream that... honestly elizabeth there is something I'm scared of..."

WHAT...

(searches Peter's face. Peter is looking down hiding his eyes from her) WHAT IS IT I'm scared that I'm... I'm going to end the world because I've dreamt about it alot

LIKE WHAT WHAT DO YOU MEAN

YOU'RE GOING TO END THE WORLD...

...

} they exchange glances

...HOW COULD YOU

Even believe

It has been like everydream my whole life. First, I'm always about to be killed or something and then... (?)

AND THEN...

AND THEN MY SOUL LIKE my soul like eats the guy I don't know

Whatever comes to mind with the word water. (warm-up)

10/8/24

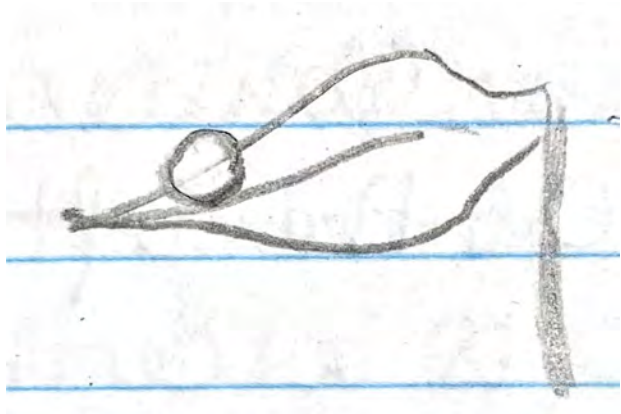
ice; 2x states of water (liquid and solid)

“be like water” (“Bruce” “Lee”)

have agility; bend equal to the extension
of the punch

water droplet; george lynn

“The Very Hungry Caterpillar”; happiness



setting piece (10-15 mins)**10/8/24**

The closet is on the right side when you walk in. It's likely a folding door. The space that makes up the closet is an inset in the wall larger or wider than a doorway. The closet door is either white or wood slotted panes. On the left wall when you walk in is a certificate with a name on it, middle initial P. The bed is directlyish in front of you when you walk in. Clothes are on the floor in front of the bed. The bedding is yellow and blue. There is a bedside table on at least the left side of the bed (the left side if you were walking in the door). There is a fan on the bedside table. There is a silver sedan BMW poster on the right side of the bed (if you walk in right side). There is a window by the fan. It is raining. The fan is on.

deeper setting piece (~10 min)**10/8/24**

The rain is hitting outside. The window is a little more than cracked. The white, square fan Alex turns on is by the window. The bed feels comfier then. There is a BMW poster of some silver BMW sedan on the wall by my side of the bed. I think the walls were blue. Does Alex like BMWs? Why else would he get that poster? What an ugly car! There is a certificate with Alex's name on it on the other wall. His full first name is Alexander. That's so much better than Alex. His middle initial is P. What is the P for?

After “July 4, 1974” by June Jordan

10/22/24

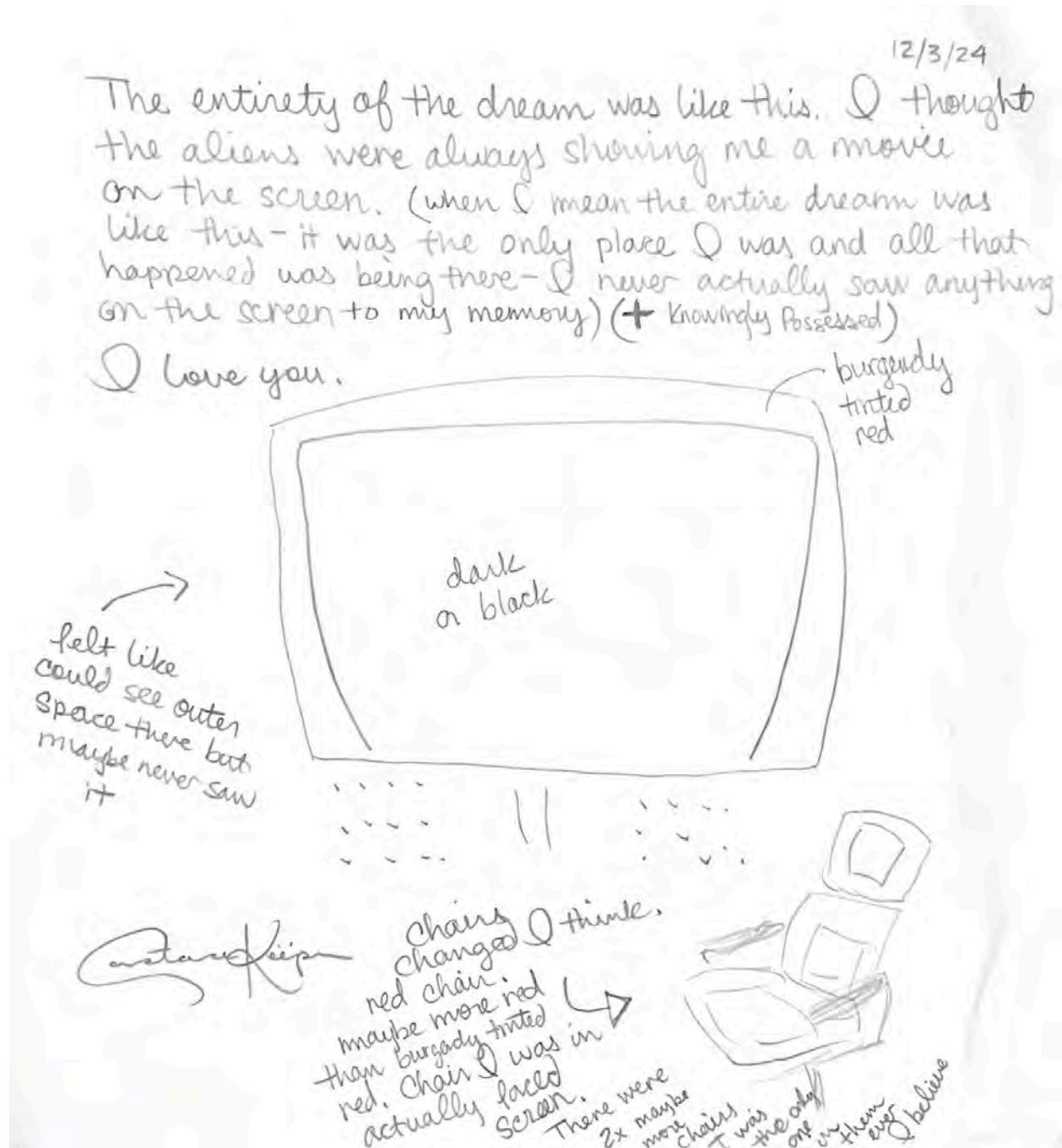
July 4, 1774

oh say can you see
great britain from here
no you can not
yet they penetrate our God

Write about a dream you had

10/29/24

I was on a spaceship and aliens took me - I didn't see them I think ever maybe (this was a dream I had everynight almost for probably a few years when I was <10 years old) and I was in front of a screen I was watching it was sort of like a huge spaceship window - but a screen or also a screen and it was a red with a hint of burgundy, the lip around the screen.



“to” must be 1st word of every single line (~10 mins)

10/29/24

To whoever they really are deep inside and as for whoever they are not,
the negative facade or whatever

To hell or whatever. Cheers!

To life or whatever

To love or whatever love really is, not what you thought but what it
really is. Cheers!

To what love really is

To who we all truly are not even a mouse but

To that mouse, cheers.

To hell all the negative, all that isn't us, that isn't our mouse friend
we love

To hell - cheers!

To life

To love - cheers!

To us - us meant the mouse too, the earth too, the universes too,
cheers!

To life

To love

To us.

After “Lightning Rods” by Davi Gray (~3 mins)

11/26/24

(inspired by a deer who lived close to me ♡)

Amongst the trees stand the beasts
(yes, I said beasts as we all might
as well admit we all are whether
we be dog, human, fish, bird, bird, flower or mouse)
together in the rain

anything phrases (~5 mins)

11/26/24

Mind the gap
shaking like a leaf
slow, children
actually
je ne sais pas
wake up and smell the coffee
a symphony of farts
c'est la vie
soul escaping thru the hole that is gaping
checkmate
twin flame
boring isn't bad
timing is everything
the lemon test
adjourned
comedy is for the morning

brutal (fiction)

12/1/24

No one knows where I am. This is a basement in the middle of no where. The ceiling and floors are just like smooth concrete. The walls are unfinished. All of it is dark grey. There is a small hole for a window with bars. It is bright outside. I'm probably going to be suspended from the ceiling. Then, I'll hang to death so I probably won't be suspended from the ceiling. I will definitely be chopped up and/or skinned. You are going to be upset when you lose a limb. It is going to hurt and then probably burn. Breathe into it.

What if they take out your eyeballs or your tongue?

Is that better than a gag. Convince them you will make no noise. No loud noise. They probably are not going to believe that but we are maybe far enough away from everyone.

How can you kill yourself right now? You can't, You can't. Can you steal that right now? You cannot. You would be punished if you are not 100% successful. Make them think it is bad but also that you will always comply WAIT MAYBE NOT ALWAYS BECAUSE THEN THEY'LL TEST THAT - THEY WOULD - LOOK AT WHAT THEY BROUGHT... AND DID... THEY WOULD DO everything sick. Say goodbye now, you will not get the chance. ACTUALLY maybe leave it so you have something else to do. Leave it.

spiritual war piece

12/2/24

God did NOT create death

Not everyone believes they should spiritually fight

They are NOT sure about white light

Since they might end death, war, disease, hunger, poverty, abuse, mistreating animals - anything negative.

Maybe they should try. Maybe it is negativity that makes them believe they should not.

We do not love everyone. We do not like everyone

IS NOT TRUE. The experience of our true love and like is thieved from us by negative energy particles that no matter what we always think we either get rid of or fight until we get rid of them.

With all our strength and all our being and all our talent, we fight.

It would be better together.

Who they really are wants to fight too and does

but it would be better if they fought with white light, brighter than the sun, vicious, thick, yet stronger than iron - like the molten center of the earth - all around you, all around everything, changing the negative atoms out of existence and protecting God's creation from negativity. For God, For everyone we love that we know we do. For everyone we love that we do not know that we do.

God did NOT create death.

(warriors by imagine dragons)

(fantaisie-impromptu by chopin)

(till I collapse by eminem)

IV. Patricia Dolan

Hi, my name is Patricia Dolan, I am 61 years old. I started writing a Book on my life, though I stopped because I started this writing class. Well, I Truly love the girls, they are so smart and love to write, which is wonderful. They inspire you and give you courage to love to write. Well, I am here to be a better writer. The girls have taught me and my classmates a lot. I have written all my life, but I never wanted to write now. When I met the girls, they made it easy and fun, and the girls will be successful and they will make me successful. Now I will continue to write, thanks to the girls from the college. They are the Best!

I am writing for family and friends. It's important when you write about personal things in your life. Then you can have feedback of what they think to help get over if you're not sure about your writing. So just be smart and also when people tell you it's good, you feel free to write to everyone, and this way writing is a lot of fun. When you write it is so wonderful to have a Brilliant audience. So that's what makes you feel good. Remember you are writing for the whole world. So you can be happy with writing.

For My Teachers

Writing is the most important thing you can do in life. It gives people knowledge and information that we all need to know. People write Books. They write newspapers that we need everyday so we can become very smart. Writing on how to fix your hair, nails, and dressing yourself. Where would we be without writing? Because without writing we would not be knowledgeable and we would not know much. Basically we would be dumb not knowing anything. Writing is amazing and I love it.

My Boyfriend Ronnie

I am going to marry my fiancé. He is handsome, beautiful, great body, funny, very entertaining. He owns his own car business, runs the whole thing, is in charge of 25 guys, and gets a percentage of each car they sell. He is smart and very intelligent. He loves to go on vacation, loves animals, loves his father. He loves to cook, and he is really good at it. He is so good at selling anything, he will sell you an ice cube. The reason why I love him so much is because when I was really sick with Lyme disease, no one knew what was wrong because I tested negative all the time. I finally got the right doctor: \$800 to walk in the door. He said 10 years, IV Rocephin for 10 years. I had to get a port in my heart to start, that hurt. After 3 days I was ok that the port was in and it did not hurt anymore. Well I met Ronnie when I was really sick. When I never thought that would happen, as sick as I was. But I fell in love and have been ever since. He is wonderful, about 15 years went by and we were at the casino and he asked me to marry him and has not stopped asking me to marry him on the phone everywhere. When I get out of prison, I will marry him.

Ronnie

I have to tell you that I miss you. I had a dream, and I have never dreamed of you. Well, I hope it comes true so I can see you again. Well, I don't know where you live, somewhere in New York. I don't know your telephone number, so who knows if you even want to talk. But that life, we will see when I get out. Hopefully your dad is okay, and your cat. I miss them both. Hopefully we can at least go to dinner and talk things over. It would be nice to see you again.

Prison Life with Sgt. O'Connor

I was extremely depressed because Ronnie asked me to marry him at the Casino, then when I went home every day on the phone. At least 25 days in a row. Then I went to court and landed here in jail. Well I wrote him once a week, gave him my counselor's phone number, the address to the jail, even the email address. So far nothing, never heard from him. I cried every day in my cell. I was devastated. Then a drop-dead gorgeous, handsome man, Sergeant O'Connor, said, "Patricia, I left 15 dollars on your books. From now on, \$45 a week on your Books." That made me so happy. The great thing about it was he said, "Do nothing." The title of the job was Laundry girl. So he flirted with me and I flirted back. Then he brought me to E Block. Said, "I am sorry Patricia, I can't date you, I will lose my job. I am a Sergeant and I get paid very well." There were tears in his eyes so I believed him. There was nothing I could do but just deal with it, even though I was sad. Well, now he has not been in for 15 days. Because a girl spit in his mouth and eyes. Who knows when he will be back. I wish I wasn't so attractive to Sergeant O'Connor. Because he is so Special and treats me like gold, and I am not his girlfriend. That's insane. But I do adore him. I really wish I didn't, but that's life.

Different Love Themes

When I love people life is great
When Life is fun and successful
When do you want to find your son
When you find your son you will be happy
When you take your son out to dinner with your grandchild out to a movie
you will be happy

When life gets hard and you have no money get a good job and everything
will be good

When you decide to take your Grandchildren riding on a horse they will
get excited
When you find the dog because he got lost in the woods your mother will
be happy

When you have to get your hair dyed and colored and cut find the right
hairstylist

When you get out of jail you will open a Lyme Disease Center for the
world

When you get out of jail you will buy a new car and get a job delivering
food, Walmart, DoorDash

When you get out of jail you will take your whole family on vacation

Horses in Snow

It is really snowing, white about four feet high. We have to shovel our way into the Barn and around it, a lot of work. When you are in the Barn, the horses are restless because there is nowhere for them to go. They are waiting to be fed. They are whinnying hay, grain, and water. Now they are a lot happier. Though it is extremely cold, we must clean all the stalls too because there is so much snow, and it is still snowing. Another foot came on top, now five feet of snow. The barn is now clean. The stalls are all clean. The aisle is swept, the horses are fed and watered. Boy, am I happy. Well, on the news, it's a blizzard. Well, I guess we are stuck there for the night because the roads are really, really bad.

Snow

The cold was so frigid you had to be dressed extremely warm. The snow was so Beautiful everything was wonderful. We walked out in the snow and opened our mouths. Had the snow, we were eating it. Also all of my friends made snow angels and brought a sleigh and went down the five mile hill and laughed and laughed so hard, it was great. But it was so cold and so much kept coming down, it was 6 feet of snow. It was really hard playing in it 'cause we fell down a lot. It was hard having a snowball fight because there was so much snow, you could not find the person in the snow, they would hide from you. Snow was great, my friends loved it too. Though when it was over, they went to the fireplace to get warm and change their clothes because they were soaking wet. When all that was done we were warm again. But we had a great time.

Dreamed Black Corvette

I dreamed that my Brother bought me a Black Corvette, then he said, Let's drive and celebrate the new car. So we drove real fast up the highway and said, Let's go to the nex Bar, and we got so drunk, both of us, that we went across the street where there was a motel. We got a room, we slept for 3 hours, then we heard disco on the other side of the street, and we were dancing, we had so much fun. We went Back to the motel after 5 hours, and we passed out and woke up at 11:00 AM. We drove real slow home and went back to bed. We had fun but we were exhausted.

Dream Wedding

I want to get married real Bad. I will tell you how I want it.

On a Beach, crystal Blue water, Horses for me and the Groom, and also my Bridesmaid and the men. That sounds Beautiful, that is the only way I am getting married. Pretty pictures.

The wedding will be beautiful. We will have so much fun. Our Honeymoon will be Hawaii. Perfect, that's how I want it. Because this man I marry will Be the man of my dreams, my soulmate, and I will spend the rest of my life with him. He has to be handsome, fun, intelligent, and love my son with his whole heart.

My Childhood and Where I Lived with My Family

When I was little, I moved in with my grandmother in the Bronx. We lived in the Basement. My Aunt Aunn, Uncle Ted, and Annie, Jerry, Kenneth, and Jeanie lived upstairs; also my grandmother, my father's mother. Then a year later we moved to Texas, Dallas, where my father got a great job. We lived in a Beautiful Big house. We went to the Country Club. I won 1st place in the dinner table race in the pool. The Country Club was huge and Beautiful. Then 2 years later, the company closed down, and we moved Back to Grandmother's house. Then a year later my father found a job in North Plainfield, New Jersey; we lived in a Beautiful house, swimming pool in the Backyard. We had really nice neighbors. We lived there for 3 years. Then we left, my father got a better job in N.Y.C. We moved upstate in Lake Mohegan: 2 acres of land, a long driveway, it was Beautiful. I started Elementary school somewhere, then in 5th grade went to Catholic school. I wore a uniform, it was very strict. The nuns made you write well. They made you very smart. The nuns were strict but you learned very well. I was afraid of everything and though I was very ugly and though I was not good enough and shy, though I was 12 years old, my mother and father bought me a horse and I started riding. It helped me really really well. Riding horses gave me confidence. I was completely shy around boys. When my horse died because my Mom and Dad did not know to get a veterinarian to check him out, I was extremely depressed. The man at the barn who was mean said I killed the horse; I fainted because I was so upset. I never got over that, it was such Trauma in my life. But the owner of the barn, Mr. Saview, said if I clean the stall, 50 wheelbarrows of crap and piss, I could ride a horse. Then the first time I went on him, he Bucked and reared, tried to get me off him. The reason why he was like this was Because he was sadly beaten. The cop beat the horse to death. The horse hated men. A man could never go near that horse. 6 months later, I went to the Horse show, Trooper's Territory. I won 1st place all the Time, and also Championship for the whole show. My confidence was great, I was strong and full of success. As I became a teenager, I was strong, confident, and happy. Due to Trooper's Territory.

My Horse Trooper Territory

The Best Time of my life was growing up with my horse Trooper Territory. Chestnut Quarter Horse. Beautiful. I love that horse, I spent every day with him when I was 12 to 25 years old. I went to many horse shows. It costs a lot of money. Though my parents always took care of that. I used to get 1st place. I was great at riding horses. Every show, the judge loved my horse and me. I won championships for the whole show. I was very popular because I was so good and so was my horse. He gave me Confidence, Courage, and Success. Happy and great success in what I do. This shaped my whole view of myself, the horse made me so successful. The confidence was through the ceiling. Courage was great. I could do anything. I never knew that I could become so successful. Even my parents were excited for me, they told everyone. My Dad came up to the barn and rode Trooper's Territory. He Bragged to everyone that his daughter rode great and had so much Confidence. He brought me the ribbons and the Trophies all the time. He was so proud to be a father to his little girl.



Illustration was gifted to Patricia Dolan by Yolanda Lower

Children learn what they live

If children live with criticism
They learn to condemn

If children live with hostility
They learn to fight

If children live with ridicule
They learn to be shy

If children live with shame
They learn to feel guilty

If children live with encouragement
They learn confidence

If children live with tolerance
They learn to be patient

If children live with praise
They learn to appreciate

If children live with acceptance
They learn to love

If children live with approval
They learn to love themselves

If children live with acceptance and friendship
They learn to find love in the world

Married Reno, Michael's Father

I was married. The reason why I got married is because I was pregnant. My parents paid for the whole wedding, it was at a restaurant at Annsville Circle. The wedding was Beautiful. My mother paid for my diamond ring. My husband was cheap and just didn't care about really pretty rings. Though he was cheap with everything. We went to Catalina Island in California because through our wedding we got money, and that's how we paid for our Honeymoon. It was great. Then we moved into our in-laws' apartment upstairs, Reno paid no money. He was ruthless. He only had one true friend. He really didn't want me to have guests come over and visit. Though my mother was always there. She knew how cheap he was, so she bought me clothes Because I grew very large when I had my son. Things were ok. Reno treated me pretty well. Well, when I had the baby, he wouldn't let me go anywhere with the Baby. I was a prisoner. Then he would get mad because Michael was a very colicky Baby, always crying at night, which would piss him off. Finally, my Uncle Jim, the priest, came and Baptized Michael. I finally went out, that was a Blessing. Then as time went on, my husband would yell and hit me. So I got into a fight and went to live with my mom and was great with him. So I finally was happy again.

Well, right before Christmas, I went to work. My mom and Dad went to work. I hired a Babysitter. Well, my husband stole the Baby from the Babysitter. Then I bought a gift certificate from the restaurant I worked at, went to get the Baby Back. Then when I went there, my Husband and Father-in-law beat the hell out of me. Thank god for my mother-in-law, she called the Police. I remember I could not breathe, they were holding the tie I wore to work. The officer said, If you don't let her go, I will shoot you, with his gun out. Well thank god for my mother-in-law, she saved my life. My mom took the baby Home. I went to the hospital and stayed for a week with Broken ribs. Black and Blue all over. Well, when I got out, they were arrested, spent a year in jail, both of them. I got divorced, I was furious with my now-ex-husband. The Best thing in the whole wide World was my son. I love him so much and so do my parents.

Soft Ball Pitcher

When I was 15 years old, I went to play on a Softball league. I did have a great time. I was really good at it. I became a pitcher, I loved it. All the attention was on me, my name was constantly being called out. Strike them out Dolan. I felt great, I was the center of attention, I felt like a million Bucks. Then I learned the windmill pitching real fast, and I was real good at it. They wanted me all the time. One day, I was sick. The phone never stopped ringing. We are losing, where are you? Well, we came in first place because I was such a good pitcher I would strike a lot of people out. That was a real fun game.

Water Skiing

Then I went with my cousin Danny on his speedboat, that was a lot of fun. He brought us to City Island, where he lives. The water was salt water, it was choppy. Then my cousin taught me how to water ski. My Brother and two sisters were with us. I was happy when I got up on the skis. I thought I would never do it. Then my Brother got up and my two sisters got up. We had such a great day together.

Roller Skating

Well, I had a girlfriend, Grace, and her Step Father owned, in Mahopac, a Roller Rink. Well, every weekend we roller skated, speed skated, I had lots of friends and met a lot of guys, it was real fun. We didn't have to pay any money Because my best friend Grace's Step Father owned it. We had great Times. We speed skated. We danced on skates to disco music. We learned so much and made plenty of friends. We ate like Kings, everything was free, we could not beat that. My sister Mary Ellen was Best friends with Suzanne, Grace's sister, so my sister and I had a great time and everything was free, you can't beat that.

Untitled 1

Believe in yourself and all that you are. Know that there is something inside you that is greater than any obstacle. Embrace your unique journey, for it is in the challenges that we grow and become stronger. And always remember, the power to create a better tomorrow lies within the choices you make Today.

Untitled 2

You are allowed to do what is Best for you. You are allowed to protect your peace. You are allowed to set boundaries. You are allowed to protect yourself by closing the door on people who are toxic for your mental and emotional well-being. You are allowed to choose YOU! Wanting to be treated with respect, with kindness, and with basic human decency does not mean that you are hard to love. It is your right to want to be treated in a humane way. It is your right to express yourself and voice your concerns. Your voice was not meant to be silenced... it was meant to be heard.

You have every right to stand up for yourself. Do not ever forget that you have a right to take your power back by saying... enough is enough.

Untitled 3

Today I choose to be sincere, honest, open-minded. I trust that being true to myself strengthens my connections with others. I speak my truth , being with kindness, knowing that honesty brings clarity and peace. I am worthy of trust as I live with integrity and an open heart.

made this up in a Writing class in Core

Won't you celebrate my life it is Successful
Won't you celebrate my cat because he is scared of everything
Won't you celebrate that I bought a horse and he is fast as a tiger
Won't you celebrate my generosity with love which comes from kindness
Won't you celebrate my smile because I smile all the time it comes from love
which is the most Beautiful thing in the world.
Won't you celebrate playfulness because in life you must be filled with
happiness and Beautiful things like Beautiful people like yourself.
Won't you celebrate creativity because in this world, which is great, is
creativity and know you made all this up yourself because being exotic will
help you be Beautiful
Won't you celebrate my optimism because always thinking positive in yourself
and making sure you're optimistic will show you which way you go in life and
always think positive because life is great when you are successful.
Won't you celebrate life with Beautiful people that will think positive and
go forward with the Best way in the world. Remember you are Beautiful and you
will do great
Won't you celebrate your intelligence with the world and know you are smart,
Happy, Beautiful, and your life is wonderful, successful, and Sweet Dreams

IV. Roxxanne

Roxxanne is a December Capricorn and a writer from New York. She loves traveling and rap. Hip-hop saved her life.

Name [Part I]

My name is Roxxanne. I was given the name Roxxanne by my father who was going to name me that whether I was a boy or girl because he had an older sister who passed away as a toddler whose name was Roxxanne (I'm not sure of the spelling). I like my name because it's spelled different. Also, the urban dictionary said my name means "warrior princess," which is very true to my life because I am both a warrior and a princess.

Name [Part II]

My name is not "b***h" or "dusthead"
My name rings bells-
My name is precious, a family heirloom
Warrior princess.

Maybe I Do [Part I]

Can he see the nervousness in my eyes? I've never done this before, never in a million years thought I'd be wearing this white dress standing on the altar. Every girl dreams of this day, not me—I've lived a life of a bachelorette, joyous, wild and free. Will the vows come out of my mouth, or will I freeze like a deer in the headlights?

Oh my god, look at him standing there staring at me, like I'm the only person in this room. Must he look so good? Tall, dark, and handsome. I just fell in love all over again.

Can everyone in this room tell that I'm weak in the knees and I can hardly breathe? Jagged Edge's "Let's Get Married" replaying in my head. I can't believe this day has come. My "big day." I can't believe in a few minutes I'll be someone's Mrs.

It's crazy how your life can change in the blink of an eye. How your quality of life improves when you decide to change old habits. When you look in the mirror and you know exactly who you are and what you're worth. I guess this is what they mean when they say "a life beyond your wildest imagination."

Maybe I Do [Part II]

"It's 7pm Friday, it's 95°, I ain't got no n****, ain't no n**** got me."

"Shut your stupid a** up."

"Shut me up. Like I said! It's 7pm, it's 95°..."

"What the **** I just told you?"

"*sucks teeth* fine you suck the fun out of everything."

"Fun? That's fun? Do that s*** with your friends. We supposed to be getting ready for this rehearsal dinner, and you here talking about some 95° bull****."

"*rolls eyes* how do I look in this?"

"Like my future wife."

"Aww, baby, I can't wait - I never thought I'd be experiencing this. It's like a dream that was buried, with all the trauma, trials, and tribulations coming true."

"You're my dream come true. Everything I been looking for, the Bonnie to my Clyde."

"*blushing* you ready babe? Let's go get 'em..."

City of Bright Lights and Bright Stars

I'm in the city of bright lights and bright stars though you can barely see the stars. There's thousands of tourists scurrying around Times Square. I'm just strolling through enjoying the warm summer breeze on my way to the bar with the big fat pig outside—Rudy's, that has the cheapest beers and drinks in NYC, they even have free hot-dogs, 100% beef.

There are so many people from all over the world, I wonder why everyone wants to come to NYC when they come to America. I guess there's no place like it in the world—where there's something to do 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. But the majority of the people are so rude. I wonder why they don't go to Queen City Charlotte, NC where the people are much nicer and the weather is a lot better and the food is much tastier. But no, here I am in the city that never sleeps. The taste of frozen rum punch and bad decisions on my tongue, I can smell the shish kabobs in the hot summer air. I stop at a table and see the lady drawing caricatures, and the I ♥ NY t-shirts. Ouch, someone stepped on my shoes, now I'm upset because I just got these Gucci sandals. Now I'm wishing I was in QC again because the MF-er didn't even say excuse me.

Now I arrive at Rudy's, cigarette in my hand, as I say hello to some of the regulars outside, also enjoying a Newport or Marlboro. All I see now is a cloud of air as I enter and see that the bar is packed, now all I smell is booze and hotdogs, listening to some old-school music, all these drunk people around me and I feel like I'm at home after all. This is where I frequent about 3x a week.

November 12, 2024

I hate writing. I remember growing up and I loved to read and write. Now it's like I draw blanks, and my hand starts to hurt, and my mind drifts. But then I get into it and I can't stop. I remember in high school I wrote a 20 page play and I secretly wished that my BFF at the time would send it to a writing competition or somewhere, to at least acknowledge it. Maybe that's what the root of my newfound hatred for writing stems from. I always worried about my penmanship, and now it's so sloppy. I prefer to write in pens, my handwriting looks so much prettier. My mom thinks I should write a book about my life. I think it's kind of cool because there will always be a part left of me even after I go, I just don't know where to start.

IV. *About Right-to-Write*

About Right-to-Write

In 1995, Sarah Lawrence College faculty Regina Arnold (sociology) and Myra Goldberg (writing) initiated weekly writing workshops at the Westchester County Department of Correction to provide incarcerated women an outlet for self-expression. The six-week class enrolled 10 SLC students working with 25 incarcerated writers.

Over the past decades, our programs with incarcerated women, mothers, and young men have resulted in 25 anthologies of poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and songs.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which disproportionately affected incarcerated populations in the U.S., Right-to-Write workshops went on a hiatus.

The Fall 2024 cycle marks the program's return, and the Spring 2025 cycle will mark its 30-year anniversary.

The Fall 2024 men's session of Right-to-Write was facilitated by graduate student coordinator Dana and graduate students Sam and Desi, and undergraduate students Keyang, Vivian and Theodore.

The Fall 2024 women's session of Right-to-Write was facilitated by graduate student coordinator Natalie and undergraduate students Tina, Vega, Arianna, and Demi.

We thank the writers for trusting us with their words.

