



'Untitled' by Sheryl Yeager

PEOPLES OAKLAND 2010

*A collection of poems, short stories,
essays and art created by members of
Peoples Oakland*

'Untitled' by Sheryl

Greetings from Sandy Phillips

We are proud to present the 2010 Collection of poems, essays, short stories and art by Peoples Oakland Members. This work portrays sensitive understanding of the connections between people and to other times and places. The work reflects everyday realities people must cope with and overcome, flights of the mind, fear, and suffering. The work also celebrates courage, faith and hope...and that Love...

When passed along without reserve

My hope for all is sure

That love returned has been given

'cause Love's the only cure

We hope you will enjoy this collection and join us in celebrating the beauty and hope it brings.



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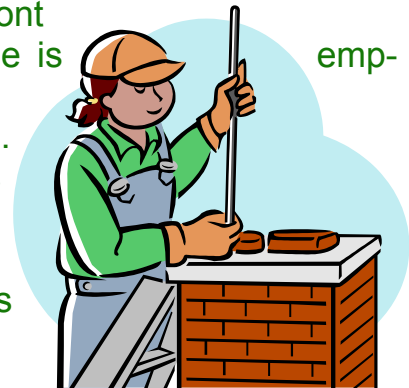
Sidney The Sweep

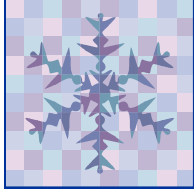
By Jean Slesinger

I am a chimney sweep. I start my day in black clothing. The reason I wear black clothing is so that the soot I clean in the chimneys will not show. It is a hard job because first I have to get a real tall ladder out of my truck and lean it against the first house I am supposed to work on. I come to the house very early in the morning and try not to disturb the people living in the houses. I carry a basket on one arm with my cleaning supplies. I lean the ladder against the house and climb the ladder so that I can balance on the chimney ledge. I poke my brush up and down the chimney. Earlier I had put a cloth around the fireplace to catch the falling soot. I am now ready to descend the ladder and move on.

The next house is dark red brick and grubby looking. The people are still asleep so I climb up to their chimney and have a much harder time. The chimney is thick with terrible black soot. I scrub it first with a brush and then oh my gosh I am coughing and sneezing from the fumes. I can barely breathe but I continue to work and after about an hour I finally have that horrible chimney clean. Exhausted I climb back down the ladder and go on to the next house. To my relief this next house is oh so very beautiful with flower boxes in the windows and pink shutters. There are children in the house. I can hear them playing with a flute and a violin. I wonder if they see me. I put my ladder up to the side of the house and enjoy cleaning the chimney. The music makes it pleasant this time. Well almost time for my morning break. I put the ladder and basket near the truck and sit in the truck eating some pasta salad and drinking iced tea. I lean my head back against the seat and take a short nap.

After my break I continue my work. I only have two more houses to do today. The first one is plain. It has a cream colored front door and four windows with no curtains. The house is empty. The chimney is clean. I know that the fireplace has not been going because the house is for sale. The last house I have to work on is attractive. It has a white stucco steeple and wrought iron on the door. The chimney is clean within a half hour and finally I descend to the truck and drive away-another day's work done!





The Fury of Winter

By Anonymous



I sat down by a warm fireplace
And remembered a story that I have often been told.
They say that my great-grandfather was full of grace
He was tall and handsome and very bold
And he was willing to face "The Fury of Winter"
To be reunited with the woman he loved.

A ferocious arctic wind came down from the north
It toppled trees and blew away anything that got in its way.
Flocks of birds, had already flown south
And six feet of snow, had fallen before the end of the day.

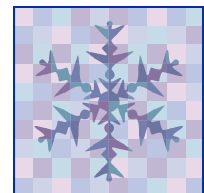
For a week, the snow kept falling with no end in sight
As if nature was angry with man for not living right.
Blowing snow, made visibility zero and the roads were
Treacherous, especially at night.

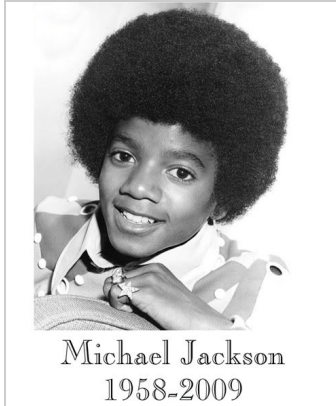
But my great-grandfather was willing to be a hero
He put on his snow-shoes and his thick winter coat
And got food and provisions from his ruined fishing boat.
Then, he began the one-hundred mile journey through the forbidden winter land.
Even though a snow blizzard was blowing and it was thirty degrees below zero.

Mile after mile, he trudged through the knee-deep snow
Whether or not he would see her again, he did not know.
He walked through the bitter cold until he began to tire
And at nighttime, he slept by a glowing fire.

Finally, on the fourth day, he saw her cabin in sight
His hands and feet were frozen and he could barely see
But he ran to the cabin and was filled with delight.
She opened the door and gave him a warm embrace
Before he fell on the floor and died at her feet.

I placed another log on the dying embers of my fireplace
And remembered the ultimate sacrifice that he made for love.
My great-grandfather, was willing to face "The Fury of Winter"
To be reunited with the woman he loved.





He Lived Like a King By Morgan Kitchens

**He looked like a prince and he lived like a king
And millions of people, loved to hear him sing.
Happiness and joy are what he would bring
And love and peace, were his main things.**


**He said that, "I'll be there" to make you strong
Whenever you have problems or love goes wrong.
He told us to "beat it" to avoid a fight
And to look at "the man in the mirror"
And try to treat people right.**

**When he danced to "The thriller" on Halloween night,
It was awesome, it was wonderful and it filled us with fright.
We were shocked and we were stunned by the marvelous sight
Of ghouls and zombies that were gone by first light.**

**He sang about a lady named "Billy Jean"
And told us about the things that her life
could mean.
He had fame and fortune like we have never
seen
And entertained many people, including the
queen.**

**But the one thing about him that we remem-
ber most is that
He looked like a prince and lived like a king.
Now, he is gone and we miss him so much
Because he was a great entertainer who had
a special touch.**

**This poem, is in honor
Of Michael Jackson.**



***"In a world filled
with hate, we must
still dare to hope. In
a world filled with
anger, we must still
dare to comfort. In a
world filled with
despair, we must
still dare to dream.
And in a world filled
with distrust, we
must still dare to
believe." - Michael
Jackson***

Dreaming in the Dark By David Cook

I'm in my room
In the dark
I see flashes
I see an image of a face
It stares at me
But it has no answer
But it could be my imagination
But it looks at me
And I wonder why
It sets a chill through me
It seems like its trying to communicate with me
But the image is a bad thing
It is trying to control me with its power
But when I turn around it vanished
And then I lay down
And then another one appeared again
But this is a good spirit
So I'm in a trance from the image that took me to another time
Where there are warlocks and demons
But he good spirit
Me and the spirit are trying to conquer the demons
And I'm stuck trying to get back to my room
And I looked through the hourglass
and saw an image of me that I had never
seen before
And I was terrified
That I won't see my future
And the image that I saw was reality
And it could have been an illusion of my thoughts
I woke up and saw kingdom that I was captured by this image of a demon
But he had a long tail and big fangs
And a big long voice
But I could not understand
But his army or soldiers knew his language
And I was puzzling about
But took me through this cave
And had me in chains
But I wished and wished and wished

Untitled by Violet

Well I used to be on welfare
But me from the rolls they did tear
Hoping to get some money to live on,
The look on the caseworker's face told me the money was gone
"Why can't you get a job?" she said
And I informed her that the job market is dead
Maybe she didn't believe it but it is in fact true
A person can not live off of the I.O.U.



Untitled By Mike Enright

Thoughts wandering into the future
Hoping love will be fulfilled
I need the ones who need me
My love for them unwilling
To cause a smile or warm a heart
Satisfies my selfish need
To give what helps encourage them
Is appeasement of my greed
When passed along without reserve
My hope for all is sure
That love returned has first been given
'cause love's the only cure

Dreaming in the Dark by David Cook (cont'd from pg 7)

And then I got my courage that I can fight the demons
And if I would sacrifice to get back to reality
And the next thing I know after all that time
I am back to square one
Back in my bedroom in the dark
And my dreams that I had of the image
I will never know why, or where or who
It came from or what caused it
It could have been my thoughts or an illusion
But they say there is a star at night
But the star is so bright
All day night

Can't Be Tamed By Anonymous

I lived in the deepest part of a beautiful rain forest
and I am wild, I am free and do whatever I please.
I am the last member of a long dead species
and I am a predator that most should fear.
Lions and tigers, stay out of my way
because I am wild, I am savage and I can't be tamed.

My inborn instincts, have often been blamed
for making it possible for me to live this way, day to day.
But my behavior is strange, is what I often hear
because I am wild, I am savage and I can't be tamed.

The intruders, came and took me away
and put me in a cage for people to see.
Inside of me, a deep anger burned
and I would teach them something that few have learned:
I am wild, I am savage and I can't be tamed.

The scientist studied me and gave me a name
and they taught me their language and said that I should change.
But I long for the lands that were my range
and I know that this is so very true:
They can whip me and they can beat me but I will still be the same.
That is because I am wild, I am savage and I can't be tamed.

This title was inspired by Miley Cyrus



Untitled By Nikita Crumb

HOW CAN YOU LOVE SOMEONE AND THEY DON'T LOVE YOU BACK
HOW CAN LOOK OUT FOR SOMEONE DON'T HAVE YOU BACK
HOW CAN YOU RUN BACK TO SOMEONE THAT MADE YOU CRY
HOW CAN YOU LOOK UP TO SOMEONE THE NOT YOUR SIZES
HOW CAN YOU GET WISDOM FROM SOMEONE THAT NOT WISE
HOW IS YOUR EYES OPEN AND YOU STILL CAN'T SEE

HOW IS HEART OPEN AND YOUR STILL CANT BLEAD
HOW IS YOUR HAND ALWAYS OUT AND YOUR NOT GIVE BACK
HOW WHEN SOMEONE DOING GOOD YOU THROW THEN OFF TRACK
HOW IS IT HARD TO TELL SOMEONE THEY ARE DOING GOOD WHEN
YOU DOING BAD
HOW COME WHEN GOOD THING COME YOU WANT THE BAD
HOWCOME WHEN YOU GOT THE WORLD IN YOUR HAND YOU WANT
SAND
HOW COME WHEN A WOMAN MAKE MORE THEN YOU THINK YOUR
NOT A MAN

Untitled By Violet

Watching everyone on a weekend night
in South Side
They were all along for the ride
Running about from bar to bar
It was definite that most of them could
not ride their car
I'm having so much fun, they all loudly
say
While seeming to try to convince themselves of that,
Far past the end of the day
Across the blocks in circles they go about
And laugh and roar and belch and shout
Why, they say, I'm having a great time
As they wander around with beer or margarita and lime



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Friendship by Anonymous

**I have two friends;
That are very nice
But are strange to me
But they inspire me
With their thoughts and unspoken
words
And their funny remarks;
Sometimes they can be a nuisance
Or they could be strange
And unpredictable
In all the ways
They can be stubborn and arrogant
And interest and stereotype
But all friends stick together
And when one friend leaves
Then another one replaces...**



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**....Some friends are true and honest
And some ain't honest
But sometimes it's hard to find a true
friend
That you can communicate with
Spent time with
And look up to
And they say that friendship always
lasts a long time
Depends on who they are and how they
feel
Because it is nice to have a true friend
Because it takes time to look at a person
Before you have a friendship
There are people you can trust
Who you can communicate with and not
communicate with
Why do we need friends?
To help you through the hard times and
through the bad times
But it is nice to have a friend
Someone you can talk to or look up to**



From The Author:

In 1936 there was the premiere of the movie, "Gone with The Wind". It is a classic movie about life in the south before and during the turbulent days of The Civil War. It was 71 years after The Civil War and a small group of ex-confederate soldiers went to see the premier of the movie. They were in their eighties and nineties and were the proud remnant of the once feared Confederate Army.

The following poem is about what the Confederate Flag meant to a 94-year-old ex-confederate soldier who saw the premiere of "Gone with the Wind".

Rebel Heart by Anonymous

**I am very old and gray and about to die
but I fought for the south and that is no lie.
It is tattered and torn but I hold it to my chest
and think back to the days when I fought with the best.**

**It was the pride of the South
It was the scourge of the North
and most people called it the "Rebel Heart."**

**Strong and free like a morning breeze
it waved over the land of Robert E. Lee
but the Yankees burned Atlanta and took it away
and put it in a museum for people to see.**

**I sobbed and cried on the fateful day
when I dropped it at Shiloh when I fell on my knee
but I picked it up and led a charge
one that made the Yankees flee.**

**Rebel Heart, strong and true
i will always remember you
Nothing will ever tear us apart
i will always love the Rebel Heart.**

Reminiscences Evolved

By Tom Lejeune

The woods are lovely and dark, within and beyond,
Through the woody youth, over and around—
So many faces, memories so dear,
How can we forget them tho year follow year,
Many so kind and tender;
How may we their memory render?
A tribute, small tho' it may be—
Photos of some we can view;
Joys of their presence invoke?
Of the time they were with us to rise,
And so partake, remembering...sharing...
At times to question where,
Are they now? Through they are gone,
Still they in our hearts and thoughts maybe—
As we, ourselves, more clearly see,
Their often eager anticipation of awaiting you and me.
And so, this, the tribute, from you and us, is revealed thus
Then the wood is not so menacing, so dreary,
For tears shed, for the world-weary...
An apt lesson to be learned, as well,
That when we are able,
To welcome their beauty at our table
And with their company take pleasure—
The moment, with them, to treasure...

*Photograph taken
by Dan Melaney*

Untitled by Al Y.

I would like to write a brief personal interpretation on two quotes I read in the book “Divine Sparks” by Karen Seetra.

*The first quote is the last quote in the section on “Humanity”: “
The main thing in life is not to be afraid to be human.” –Pablo Casals*

*The second quote is the first quote in the section on “Humility”: “
The height of the spirit can only be climbed by passing through the portals of humility. You can only acquire right knowledge when you have learned to esteem it”
– Rudolf Steiner*

Do not be afraid to accept yourself as you think you are, good and bad. Every single one of us is a member of the human race, with our own talents and flaws.

Humility has been sometimes defined as being right sized, not humiliation.

A strong person, like a strong building, must begin with a strong foundation and grow from there.

Let us grow together in hope, progress, faith and true love.



Acknowledgements

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