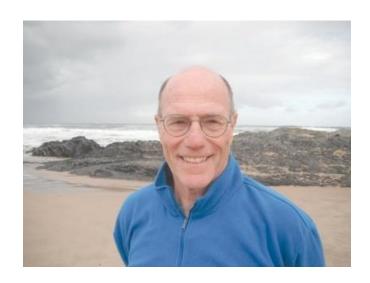
# Not So Serious:

# A mini-collection of poems from my time of incarceration



James Kilgore, 2013

#### Anyone Who Says a Prison Is a Hotel

Anyone who says a prison is a hotel

Has never stripped

Done liftyournutsackspreadyourcheeksandcough

Before going to kiss his mother in the visiting room.

Anyone who says a prison is a hotel

Has never developed an intimate relationship

With all those who have scratched their presence

On a cement ceiling

Fatal '98

Crips forever

Woods rule

Puro Mejicano

Anyone who says a prison is a hotel

Has never listened to a shank sharpen to a fine edge

In the cell above

Wondering if it's for you

Anyone who says a prison is a hotel

Has never scooped goulash

Off his tray with his i.d. card

Because he left his spork in the house

Anyone who says a prison is a hotel

Only knows the kind of dump truck

That carries garbage

Not the ones that discard human lives

Anyone who says a prison is a hotel
Doesn't understand
How much ten, twenty or thirty years is
Out of a person's life.

Anyone who says a prison is a hotel Doesn't know what it means When she stops writing And refuses your phone calls.

Anyone who says a prison is a hotel

Doesn't know what it means to hurry up

And wait and wait and wait and wait

Then be told you're too late.

Anyone who says a prison is a hotel
Has never had to stay ready
So they don't have to get ready
Has never has to sleep with their boots on.

Anyone who says a prison is a hotel

Doesn't want to solve the problem

But just lock it away

And pretend we'll all live happily ever after.

Anyone who says a prison is a hotel Doesn't understand a thing No entiende nada

Anyone who says a prison is a hotel Can go to hell.

# **Birthday Celebration**

Lockdown birthday

The cells holds a treat

One specialty teabag

English Breakfast

The instructions say

"steep 1-2 minutes"

I give it three

I've got the time

The plastic cup hits my lips

The celebration begins

It's been a great year

Do I sing Happy Birthday to myself?

How do I blow out the candles?

## **Not So Serious**

Young Crip

Told me he'd never had

A serious argument

With his mother

Just the time

He dragged her out of a crack house

Drove her home

Then handed her his heat

"Just shoot me," he told her

"Because what you're doing is killing me anyway."

At least she didn't pull the trigger.

That would have been a serious argument.

# A Haircut

The barber

Shaves the hair away

So the swazi tattoo

At the back of the man's head can shine.

White pride profiled.

This hot house of hate

Heated up another degree.

#### For Nikiwe

1984

A time of meat and bread

A bus to town for 16 cents

Nikiwe sat in the middle of the class

She sparkled

As she sharpened her tiny pencil with half an old razor blade

And solved her simultaneous linear equations

X was equal to three, y was four

No problem.

Today she can't find x

There is no y

Pencils are no longer in the equation

The rich have eaten Zimbabwe

And left Nikiwe

Only a razor to swallow

## Stuck on Lockdown

9/19/09

Locked down

I'm constipated

My own private hell

Locked down

Nothing but stinkin' gas

In my cell

Locked down

No fibre

No Metamucil

Locked down

And blocked down

It just ain't no thrill

Locked down

Let me out

I'm tired of this trap

Locked down

Open up, please

Then maybe I'll crap

# **Election 2008: The Morning After**

As he fastens the shackles

On a black diabetic

So he can walk him

Two hundred yards to the nurse's office

For his insulin shot

The guard, a veteran of fifteen years

Asks no one in particular

What it will be like to have a President

Who refuses to wear

An American flag lapel pin.

## **High Speed Chase**

This mind of mine

Once gave me a torsion-air ride

Now I bounce along the road

Lost

Shock absorbers worn

Hard changing gears

Can't quite recall if I'm in first

Or second.

No idea how to use that GPS.

Too much information perhaps

Life on one too many continents

Then thousands of days

In concrete houses

A diet of under-cooked carrots

And spider web tattoos

Finally I check the rear view mirror

Red lights flashing

Sirens

This can't be happening to me

The highway patrol of age

Has got the wrong man.

If only I could remember where I put my license and registration.