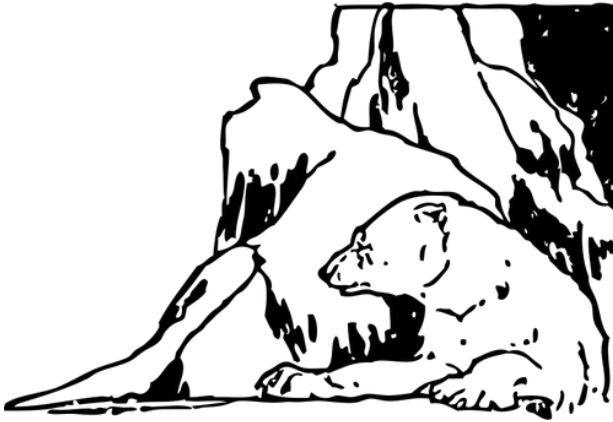


Just Chillin'



Poems by Jesse McDaniel

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Holidaze

Life, as we know it, flies by
Much like Santa's sleigh.
Winter is coming; snow is
Falling, as we are calling
Friends, family, and others.
Given the choice, we will
Rejoice. We will find a voice.
We must remember to keep
Each other warm during this
Weather. It is the only way
That it will get better. We'll
Dance and sing holiday songs
To spread needed love and joy.
Days pass and smiles last as
The holidays come fast. Yet,
The date is set, and here we
Are. Some hop in a car
And others stay in place.
Some dress up as Santa Clause
And others light the Menorah.
There will be Christmas parties,
Kwanzaa celebrations, and eight
Days of Hannukah. Plus, many
Other holiday celebrations will
Occur without any hesitation.
No matter the occasion, rise up
And love each other this Winter.
It's not too late to participate
And to remove our splinters.
Enjoy the holidays and smile;
Who knows? The holiday cheer
Might stay with us all year.

It's Cold Outside

Damn, it's cold.

Icy as **hell**.

Well, *Icy* as
the North Pole.

Brrr. It's cold

outside. I feel
my bones ache
with each step.

My nose turns
red. My head
will freeze

as it hits
a chilly breeze.

Shivers erupt

as I *shake*

the hot chocolate
inside the
foam cup

I'm holding.

Damn, it's cold
outside. A good
time to stay

inside. I'll stay
near a fire-
place with

a lit-up face.

It's where I
need to be.

It's warmth
I desire.

Bones

My bones have grown strong. Although not shown, these bones hold me together. They make me feel alive and well. Me: my bones can't be rehomed. Bones can break, shatter, and weaken as life does its job. Bones come into play every day when we say, "I have a bone to pick with you" or "You are bad to the bone" or "Break a leg!" Later, my bones will be brittle, and it will be hard to see. Until then, I will roam for as long that I am strong.

The Discovery

For many years, people have been searching for treasure somewhere under the sea. Many have tried to dive to the bottom and died with gold shining in both eyes. The treasure has made men mad and has turned good men bad. The treasure remains untouched. No man or woman has found this underwater town housing treasure causing false pleasure. Not until many years later, when there was a sailor who traveled as he pleased and watched over the seas. Now and again, he casts a pole in hopes to catch enough food to eat. One day, he cast a pole, and he felt a tug. He pulled up the line, and he knew he found the lost treasure he only heard about. Without making a sound, the sailor traveled into the mist with the treasure he just found. The discovery was never known as the sailor never made it home.

Ruins

Many years ago, there were cities, statues, cathedrals, pyramids, and buildings made of bamboo, sand, clay, plaster, cobblestone, blood, sweat, and tears. Lives were lost at the cost of these creations. Not one worker knew the magnitude nor the attitude that followed their construction. Even after their destruction, they stood the test of time. Time has passed, yet history lasts. The Great Pyramid of Giza, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the Statue of Zeus, the Colossus of Rhodes, the Lighthouse of Alexandria, the Temple of Artemis, and the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus tell us a story: a tragic story of life and death and how they finally met. Now, what we have has been ruined to no one's fault. What is left is a gift from those before us. We must appreciate old ruins before they all turn to dust.

In My Eyes

In my eyes, I have seen
shapes, colors, hues
of light. To my surprise,
I have realized life
is a movie played from
a projector in the sky.
In my eyes, I have seen
highs - lows. Anything
goes when no one knows
the difference between
the weed and the rose
or the heat and the cold.
Like a bank, my brain
stores large amounts
of memories that can
bounce or go blank
from time to time.
In my eyes, life unfolds
and ignites a light
that burns through
the night. In my eyes,
I see you as you should
be seen: a special fire
that will always rise.

2nd Thoughts

Off with his head - wait. Forget what I said. I did not mean to be mean. I'd be out of my mind to take out someone else's. I can't seem to get outside of my head. *Wait. Did I take my meds?* I forgot what I said... Who can I trust when everyone I know turns to dust. Time to shake off the rust. With time rushed, I make amends with the friends inside my head even though some of them want me dead. At times, I see colors of green turn red. Is this what Kanye feels like when he doesn't act right? Good thing I don't know what I don't know. Yet, I do know that it will be alright once I enter in battle and ignite the light revealing a new life.

Raise the Bar

Try to face challenges
that bring your best
self out. Walk away
from the path that was
once your past. Reach
for the stars you seek.
Raise the bar and see
life from the highest
valley. Be better than
you were yesterday.
Don't run in place.
Find strength to go
against the grain
despite the pain.
Feel peace at last.
Enjoy what you have
before it becomes
a part of your past.
It's not too late. Raise
the bar if you can
and find a place you
would want to land.

Memories Made

It's better to remember
old memories than to
make new enemies.
Memories made play
a big role in creating
words worth saying.
In this life, we must
look back at the past
before realizing life
moves all too fast.
Nothing is forever
except for the feelings
you left me. Memories
made are memories
saved. My brain
doesn't mind taking
time to remember
what others don't.
Memories made are
set in stone placed
outside this dome
I get to call home.

Stay / Away

Gone with the wind; we fly away today.
We knew we would not stay. It is hard to
say which way we are going or how fast
the wind is blowing. With no signs showing,
curiosity starts growing. The ways that we face
the days can dictate the rate at which we go.
Before we know it, things, times, people,
will be gone. Before long, we will learn
life's unwavering song. As time flies, the sun
will rise just like the tide. There is no need to hide
when we seek the time to understand both
day and night. Gone, but never forgotten.
Here I am to feel fresh - never rotten.
Anyhow, I feel as if the wind blew me
out of my shoes. Now, I stay gone. I left to go
on a right path. Now, I have gone and found
a piece of peace: a life on the bright side.

Over / Under

Many don't understand how to get over some things. Over time, most dig underneath to feel something deeper. We overvalue; few truly understand the overarching message of needing re-dos: do-overs. Those under the weather are under the impression that it doesn't get better. Some are over it, and that is an understatement. Some feel the need to overpower underachievers. Yet, those who run hot will overheat. Under the sun, life can become overwhelming. Sleep under the stars and protect your dream. When it's all over, our eyes close as the sun lowers.

Hide and Seek

In life, we hide the things
we don't want others to see.
At the start, the end seemed
far. In the end, we couldn't
tell the two apart. In life,
we seek, search, and want
things and people
out of reach. Life can be
a game of hide and seek.
Some disappear as quickly
as others appear. Some stay
still and are scared to move.
Some dance despite the mood.
In the end, we will find
all that has been hidden.
In the meantime, find time
to unwind as you release
all the things on your mind.

Hurt

Many hurt, but they keep moving. They keep going. Monsters lurk without many knowing. Battles are fought in silence. Wars are won without violence. Hurt riddles the bones inside our bodies. The hurt stays close to remind all that even the strong fall. Hurt and pain: it's all the same. Rain or shine, be glad that another day came. With all due respect, we all hurt, in one way or another. Don't let the hurt cut into your joy. The hurt and pain may never go away; give yourself a break - protect the happiness the hurt wants to take.

Now or Never

Now or never. Not in a bit.
Not in a few seconds. Now
or never; it's not forever.
Don't let circumstance
make the choice for you.
Do it now before the load
becomes heavier. Now
or never - it gets better.
Something from nothing:
nowhere to somewhere.
Life is born out of death.
It is now or never. Now,
never give up and start
to live the dreams you
have at night. Light up
the room now and never
be afraid to sleep in
the bed that you made.

Unplugged

Back in the day, kids found a way
to play until the sun vanished.
Kids knew how to enjoy each other
in some of the worst weather.
Kids weren't static. They moved
about: looking for adventures.
Technology has evolved into a
monster that can't be conquered.
Not all can see it. Those plugged
in will never see it for what it is.
Trapped, torn, and born into
a life of phones, computers,
and smart cars that know
where we are - where we been:
life has never been the same.
Impossible to break free, try to
think of ways to rid yourself of
the hypnotic spell once cast.
If you are plugged in, find time
to get to the source and pull
out the cord. Unplug and see
your life just how you looked
at these words. Take a break
from screens stealing the time
that we never seem to find.

I've Been Thinking

Lately, I've been thinking
about pirate ships sinking.
I've been thinking of ways
to be spending my days.

Lately, I've been thinking
about those not blinking.
I've been thinking of you
and the stuff we used to do.

Lately, I've been thinking
about my future and what
it holds. I've been thinking
of what I have done right
or wrong. I've been thinking
of ways to become better.

Lately, I've been thinking
of how things used to be.
I've been thinking about life
and how days became nights.

Now, I'm thinking that it will
be fine. I've been thinking
that I must take the time
to feel alright and to be kind.

No Vacancy

As the day moves, I seem to lose track of time. I seem to forget where my thoughts went. Still, I feel fulfilled even when milk is spilled. Thoughts, memories, and feelings take refuge inside my wide eyes. All I have seen, heard, and felt does not melt. What remains stays in frame. All that I am is made up of old times and slant rhymes. Still, there is no room to goof off. Now, as I move on, there is no love lost - no cross to bear. No fear: no vacancy: no way to tell when all will be well. Life is full of ups and downs and broken crowns. It's time for stars to align. Believe it to be true; it starts with you.

Makes Sense

The consensus is I must mention the five *senses*. Our *eyes* help us *see* different human beings. It can be a *sight* to behold when people fold. *Smells* expose our noses; we know what is rotten based on the *smell*. We can *tell* when people go bad, too. We can have a *taste* of the good life if we work day and night. We must *touch* the hearts of those who are *feeling* down. We must *feel* for all things under the sun and those under the gun. Most importantly, we have to *look* out and *see* life for what it is and is not. Think about the energy you put out into the world and ask yourself if you are truly being yourself. We must wake up and smell the roses on a constant basis. *Feel* the love - ask for help. Take the time to *see* yourself shine and remember to breathe; we cannot forget to breathe.

Frosted Windows

I try to look out the frosted
window. I tilt my head.
I try to see what's in front
of me. My hands are frozen
to the wheel. I cannot feel
my fingers or toes. I'm running
late on the darkest day.
I stay on the other side of these
frosted windows. I stay strong.
I shake myself awake. I take
my time. I wait out the flurry.
I look out the frosted window
and see no need to hurry.
My vision is blurry. I look
at the rear-view, I see
a younger me. I sit alone
as the snow passes by.
I must find a way home.
The worst thing I can do is try.

Where I Be

This is where I be.
This is where I'm free:
away from people
and near the sea.
I float away, I cut
all burning ropes.
This is where I be:
caught in-between
being alone
and feeling free.
Like the ocean
breeze, I create
a flow I know,
and I just go.
This is where I be.
This is where I feel
myself. I am me:
just where I need
to be - living
next to the trees.

Better Off

Your heavy, calicoed hands
stay balled up. Never open
to another's. Your lifeless
arms always stay crossed
looking like you just lost.
Your patience went astray,
yet the frustration stayed.
The time I've been away
has shown me a new life
consisting of better days.
In many ways, I'm better
off not finding the things
that forever remain lost.

Stay Strong

During these times, we must stay strong. Those who come along must adjust - knock off the rust. When the foundation is weak, humanity's future seems bleak. The stronger we are right now will, somehow, help us breathe in times of need. Small seeds need strong sources of water, sunlight, and soil. To grow up means to show up when things blow up. In this life, we must nurture the young and teach them right from wrong. Long story short: when life pushes, we have to push back and be strong before any surrender. Stay strong and live your life just how all days turn to night.