

POEMS ON CHANGING THE WORLD'S PRIORITIES

FROM WAR TO PEACE

ELIMINATE POVERTY TODAY

By Fraancis A. Cullari

My throat is dry, nothing to drink
My stomach grumbles, nothing to eat
I go to find water to wash my clothes
Hand scrub them clean inside big bowls
I look around and see others well fed
Designer clothes, jewelry and a bed
They pass me by they do not care
They close their eyes because of fear
I once lived a life without strife
I worked all day and had a wife
I lost it all when I lost my pay
My identity began to decay
I now reach out to others to get back on my feet
I do not want to live on the street
Only asking for a chance to prove my worth
This is a right upon my birth
Reach out to help someone today
Brothers and sisters end poverty without delay...

Poverty

By Laiba Khan, Sandy Hassanien,
Mohamad Shata, and Aadil Bhole

I used to sleep with a full stomach every night;

Now the cold blisters me due to my plight

I used to inhale the smell of soup broth but now its just the sewers steaming

I can feel the narcotics flooding my system
but I can't hear my thoughts over the ugly beats of the deafening
streets.



Hyderabad Oaks of My Backyard

By Frederick Marz

Wind moves through oak crests
bending limbs forward
like outstretched hands
of the starving children

Leaves pleading - reaching out
with each gust of wind
Skinny knurled fingers
pleading for nourishment
reaching for coins
Until wind ceases
or starvation completes it's course

Pleading leaves are silent
but for the rustling
Scrawny bodies
moan their pleadings
Until only whimpering
before the wind ends

Leaves fall
with season's end
leaving only skeletal displays
of the naked limbs
no longer moved to pleading
or reaching out

As cold wind moves through empty oak crests
limbs stiffen
like pointing fingers
of once starving children



Hero's Welcome

By Frederick Marz

He had plans

Plans of wife
and family

Plans of park visits
and days at the beach.

Of seeing Niagara Falls
the Grand Canyon

of going to Europe

and he wanted to go
to college

To become a teacher
because a teacher

had cared
had changed his life

When he was drafted

he considered his plans
to be only delayed
just postponed

He never saw the device

that tripped the mine
and separated him
from most of his
right leg

He was surprised

when later
the pain was greater
than at that moment
he nearly bled
to death

He never expected

to be discharged
with only
limited therapy
a cheap prosthesis
and a vial
of pain killers

Addiction was understandable

Not to
those with jobs
paying their taxes
"living responsibly"

He was an embarrassment
an inconvenience

He nauseated those
with sensibilities

because he
"stunk of urine and garbage"

He lived where

he fell
or in boxes

behind garbage dumpsters
and he ate

one meal a day
from St. Joseph's soup kitchen

Ham and cheese

on white bread

Bowl of soup

piece of fruit
milk and coffee

His former fiancée

of the pre-war days
married to

an insurance salesman
from Detroit

lived in his hometown

where he was found
to be the butt of
many a joke

The insurance salesman

always enjoyed reminding
his wife of
"who she could have had"

Things are better now

Fr. Michael found
him a job

Custodian at a nearby
city college

He can take classes
at no charge

and his books

- purchased at a discount

He has a room

with Fr. Michael's blessing
though not entirely legal
in the back room

of the soup kitchen

At night

He prays

Reads the bible

and writes poetry

He dreams of

a wife and family

Of visits to parks

and beaches

and of seeing the

Grand Canyon

Of loving others

and of helping the hurting

Of hugging someone that

reeks of urine

and smells of garbage

Because he had

someone who cared

someone who

changed his life

The Father's Dream

By Frederick Marz

White man:

How is your gin and your tonic water?

Englishman sir,

Is the ice crushed just right?

Look then toward Nairobi

Can you see that man digging –

than man with bleeding hands and arthritic
knees?

digging – digging – digging

With crude steel spike and worn wooden bowl
he is digging for his people
digging for a dream

White man:

Your cattle doing fine today

Englishman sir,

They will bring a good price

Look then toward Kisumu – on Victoria

Do you see that man digging-

That man with hands like leather

knobbed knees of inch thick callous?

He is digging for his children

Jamming spike into hardened earth

Taking one bowlful at a time

for bowl of maize; handful of potatoes

must feed the children

must dig so they can be in school

pry- and scrape- and dig

Colonist:

Can you see that man?

Look than toward Mombasa- toward the sea

That man with all the pain

Digging

Digging – scrapping – digging

He is digging for clean water

Water for his people – for his children

DIGGING - BLEEDING – SCRAPING

Bleeding for water

Digging deeper than fifty wells

Bleeding more than one hundred

White man, Englishman sir:

Can you see his people?

His children?

The blood?

That dream?



END POVERTY

By Fawaz Kahn

Some people have needs they can't pay for,
They can't buy anything at a store
They don't even have a floor or a door,
These people are poor

Poverty has to end
To these people a few dollars we can lend
Think of them as a friend

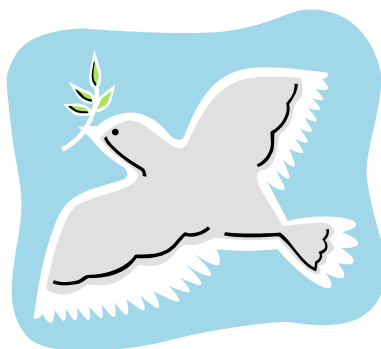
People are dying,
Crying,
They're suffering

We are enjoying
Not caring
We should be lending,
Not buying

People are in need
Do a good deed
Give them what they need
So they could succeed
God will pay you back guaranteed

Start today
Help whichever way
People could use that money that you pay
People who are close or faraway

Don't let them suffer,
Make them feel better.



split-ting words

By J. Ripton

let me split words
in-to-frag-ments,
stand sentences on head
balanced in space

b
o
v
e

a

b
l
a
c
k

h
o
l
e
.

like stat(e)astician-ad(d)men
spinnin' elect "Rons" in 'fuges
and

bankin' on the Street,
i've learned their pol-i-ti-code:
those super-chloroformed-logistics
Disney tried-and-true pig lipstick
used on the masses, let's say
i know how they engineer
elusive-ephemeral-electronic-e-mages
messAGED
mirAGED
mirrorRED memorieS
of Everyman and
w(h)o(a)!man!
forgive me
if i go ballistic
but i just can't resist it!
i'm off their su-por-i-fics
their ad-dic-tive
af-flic-tive
na-tion-a-list-ic

ha-lluc-in-a-gen-ic
tel-e-ge-ne-tic
fund-a-ment-a-lis-ms;

no longer injecting
acid into pinholes
into rods-and-cones
transmuted
into black-and-white ideas.

o(h!)bama
o(h!)sama
what a mad mama
of a world to win –
it's really Iran(ic)
when you don your
Afghan and stan(d)
up to your Chin-(
a) grin on your Faces
but ya' better watch your arses
'cause C-I-A(s)s become I-S-I(s)
when P-O-V joins E-R-T-Y
and war becomes holy
with incoming gods
screaming I-E-D(s)
and Toyota(d) Tal-ib-ans
mad-ras-sa(d) Tal-i-bans –
De-o-ban-di(d)
and
Wah-ha-bi(d) –
guard A-mer –i-can trucks
bound for Khan-da-har.

let me split words
let me parse truth
until no-thing's left
not Wall Street pro-phets
split-ting shares
nor Zi-o-nists making
Swiss cheese on West Banks
nor drones pol-li-nat-ing
pock-ets-full-a-pos-ies
ash-es
ash-es
we all fall down.

yes, let's split words –
screened words
pro-cessed words
un-til

ev-er-y
at-a-vis-tic
a-poc-a-lyp-tic
a-phas-i-a-a-noint-ed
nih-i-lis-tic
vir-US-in-fect-ed
son-amb-u-list
bib-li-o-cap-i-ta-list
ter-ror-ist
knows we know when
truth breaks free
peace rains down
and man-na falls
into hungry mouths
as Jer-u-re-gains-sa-lem
and his-story
is
her-story too!
and
words are split for good.



Eliminate Poverty Today, By Fraancis A. Cullari - Winner of an Honorable Mention at the Poetry Competition held in conjunction with the Elimination of Poverty Conference, June 24, 2012

Hero's Welcome, By Frederick Marz - First Prize winner at the Poetry Competition held in conjunction with the Elimination of Poverty Conference, June 24, 2012

The Father's Dream, By Frederick Marz - Winner of an Honorable Mention at the Poetry Competition held in conjunction with the Elimination of Poverty Conference, June 24, 2012