

5 Poems by John Sweeney

RED, WHITE 'N BLUE

The scars can be ugly when you put your heart into something
that only cares about controlling all the margins and funding
like being part of a country that makes monopolies from all the markets and money
leavin its own people starvin and hungry or left bombarded with monthlys
just imagine how i felt, no money for bread and drinking powdered milk
and losing my job on the same morning that both the towers fell
this government gots me hunchback, and I'm just tryna sound the bell
there's evil in both the power cells, but you only see the outer shell
i get nightmares looking at my trailer roof, watching the hours melt
alcohols my outlet, i can't sleep without over the counter help.
and its kinda hard bein simple and plain, when i got a fresh pencil n page
cause everything i scribble is strange, and it gots me a little afraid
imagine tryna use symbols n shapes, to write a story that resembles your pain
words that can tickle your brain, or spark a civil debate
in the pool of life it only takes a single ripple to change
it's like we're lost at sea, and I'm the only one tryna signal the plane
it's a critical stage...your trapt in the invisible maze
where questions are tools. the stone walls get chizzled away

PURPLE FEELINGS

i had a family once, then death had to kill a member
now all i feel is tears and anger, i can still remember
our mom was in the kitchin cookin pilgrim dinners
with my sister sick near the fire that i lit with timber
a warm orange glow that filled the air with embers
i had hot choclote in my cup and wore fitted slippers
slowly taking sips...i watched the cat lick his whiskers
the 25th of December, full of bliss and splendor
yet i recall no gifts, its suprising what kids remember
i only think about him, and how his limbs were severed
cause everyday i pass his crypt and i get the shivers
falling snow leaves the bodies crisp in winter
wet leaves filtered water and the tombstones glistened silver
but today i didn't care, i forgot about the risk and entered
still shaking from the cold and the crows that sit on pillars
i finally sat and listened to the wind while hearin whispers
they say if you cry hard enough you can feel their spirits
i thought about his face and how i kissed his fingers
when i walked over to his body bag and zipped the zipper
looking back i can see the moon light spin and shimmer
i always see his image cause the shadows reveal his figure
he's trapped between both worlds and the seal is hidden

BROWN PRIDE

everyone has it hard, that's the biggest part of brown pride
we got cars that bounce high, and our jobs get downsized
it's not the block but the park, that's the heart of southside.
the people who get tats with either a hawk or clown eyes
some of us talk to cops but then get dropped like cow pies
lets come together and hold our ground, does it sound nice?
yo, we finally made america our home and it's about time
but it's easy to think, how we've gained freedom and peace
your kids are at war, gang bangers put Lil' Demon to sleep
another summer on the pavement, our kingdom's the street
so there's a kick back tonight, now i gotta find people to bring
and if you got brown skin, then you always find a reason to drink
my mom is puttin cheese in the beans, chili to season the beef
tonight's about family, hot nights in Phoenix, the region of heat
most of us are broke as fuck, unemployed with no good luck
but we dress to impress and hope the girls will show us love
my babies on the way, so i sell the dubs instead of smokin buds
it was all about hoes and drugs, gettin dough tryna roll with thugs
now i just wanna hold and touch my child, i can't control the rush
if she grows up like me, would she trip if someone stole her lunch?
you can't change the weather, but life, we can make it better
dont underestimate the power a community can make together
and remember to always give back, We're here to stay forever.

THE ROSETTA STONE

Watch me come from a different angle.....
a script about rage, but like Incredible Hulk i flipped the tables
How i used to live was painful, but now i got a kid named April
i was a low life, now i'm on top of things like a christmas angel
boys in blue, i knew the sirens. but left the loot and violence
and now i keep words for thought, your mind is food for lions
it's like half you fools are dyin, over every jewel or diamond
while i'm sitting on my roof in silence looking for new horizons
like my life's major figures, i can't control my hate or temper
we got rappers makin bank, and bush has changed to Hitler
but through all the pain and blisters, all the rain and winters
i write every page 'n scripture so letters can paint the picture

DEAR APRIL

i had nothing to live for, no reason to breathe
sitting in my room hoping that the demons will leave
all i had was jesus and me
looking at the stars with a kleenex
venus was free
it's life in phoenix the region of heat
and somehow it's always the season of grief
because drinking and weed
was keeping my genius asleep
looking for freedom and peace, i found the beginning of strife
thoughts about endin my life through the end of knife
SO and write
and hope my story gets a good endin by the end of the night,
and if life's a cup of tea, then why's mine have more lemons then ice?
not to mention every sentence and line
is my heart giving a message of vengeance and cries
and i'm sorry to my daughter, because i might go to hell
for what i'm about to do to myself
not being selfish, but i have to be true to myself
evil can't kill evil, so i'mma have to do it myself
and prove to everyone else, that i've had enough tears
it's time to meet the man upstairs, and i know that everyone i love cares
especially april, who to me, resembles an angel
love your mom and forever be playful
move to denver, i can still picture the rainbows
and when you grow up remember be faithful
but don't settle for any man, and never miss any chance
there's no rush to marry, i know it's scary, and everything's moving very fast
slow down, take your time and let it pass,
ps. your mom sucks with wedding plans
find a good job and get a good education
the heavenly gates, i'll be on the edge gazing
to make sure your straight edge and got a straight head for graduation
so now that that's covered, we can get to the point
.....about why i slit my wrist at the joint
well, i was a victim of choice
it was fights over the dishes, christmas and toys,
i couldn't even sit and enjoy a glass a liquor
i guess i was just sick of the noise,
but it wasn't like flippin a coin
i just figured you'd be better off, if i was just a whisper, a voice
i heard hell is for heroes, so i enlisted and joined
at least now i don't have to picture you or your sister with boys

if only you knew the impact of what a kiss could destroy