

From my
Heart & Soul

Derrick Tizzard

From my
Heart & Soul
Derrick Tizzard

© 2001, The Rabbittown Learners Centre Inc.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, except for purposes of review, without the prior permission of the copyright holder.

The Rabbittown Learner's Centre wishes to thank The National Literacy Secretariat, Human Resources Development, Canada, for funding this project.

ISBN: 0-9694870-1-0.

*for Helen,
Amanda and Corey,
my parents Alice and Gordon Tizzard
and for Doris*

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Doris Hapgood, Administrator of the Rabbittown Learner Program, for making one of my dreams come true.

Also The [National Literacy Secretariat](#), Human Resources Development Canada who provided the financial support for the publication of this book From My Heart and Soul.

I am grateful to my wife Helen for her encouragement and support, always. Without her, this book would never have happened.

Thank you to Lori for inspiring me to write some of the poems included in this book and for her help in typing up these writings. Thank you as well to Betty, Greg, Marie and Anita who were also there as a source of encouragement and inspiration and who helped me to realize that I could achieve my goal.

Finally, thanks to Camille Fouillard for her insight in getting me to write the gems.

Table of Contents

Read me this book, Sir, please

The Essence of Beauty

Ten Dollar Bet

Cut Of Reality

In the Hands of the Four Seasons

1. Winter Snowflakes

2. Wish on A Falling Star

3. Life is Like a Rainbow

4. Autumn Sleeps

Corey's Best Buddy

Our Embrace

A Cold Sweat Rolled Over my Face and Body

Little Angel

My Mom's Visitor

A Child's Broken Heart

The Two Souls of Christmas

1. The Sad Little Boy No More

2. Christmas Joy

The Clover and The Mirror

The Spot Dance

Silent Cry

Read me this book, Sir, please

Illiteracy is a person who looks in the mirror in the morning and sees no face.
Shame sets in, denial takes over,
sends him into the down and out spin of depression.
He hangs his head, makes up excuses.
Imagine thousands and thousands every day of the year who look in a book to
see only thick black ink lines spaces words white pages that have no meaning
thousands with no purpose to their being.

A child confronts him: "Read me this book, Sir, please."
He is lost for words; he stumbles and mumbles.
He grasps the child's hand, leads her to the toy box.
He sits back in his chair, squeezes the book buckling the cover;
can't handle it no more, decides to take a step in the right direction.
He remembers the newscast of the night before about this place,
the Learners Place. Unsure, nervous, afraid of failing,
he walks in, butterflies in his stomach, speaks low, sees nothing around him,
like a small boy on his first day of school, takes the application form.
The name is okay, the street address is okay, and social security number,
But how to write the name of the city, the name of the province?
He is about to leave when he hears a whisper:
"Read me this book, Sir, please."

He doesn't waste his time, busy tutors buzz around like bees,
teach the sound and power of words.
He reads wonderful stories and poems.
Oh thee dictionary, a book with many marvelous words
to guide his Learning; Like desire,
he finds its meaning in the book,
something desired, to achieve his or her heart's desire.
To be a writer of words,
you must have the true knowledge of the Words.
People gaze in awe, find themselves
intertwined in the stories of fiction as one.
The wonder of the universe, words amaze,
guide us in the world to freedom from illiteracy.

The Essence of Beauty

I couldn't see the beauty until she stood before me.
For the first time, my eyes were opened.
She showed me how to see the beauty in this vast world of ours.
I see the beauty of the purple scent of the lilac tree's flowers.
I see the beauty of the apple tree in full blossom.
The morning sunrise peers over the edge of the earth, lifts the darkness.
White, pastel pink and fiery clouds in the distant sky of the evening's sunset.
The cry of a newborn baby coming into a family.
The baby grasping the mother's breast with its tiny hands,
his mouth seeking the nipple of life.

The real beauty in this world is the essence of a woman.
If the vast outside world was covered in total darkness,
the beauty of all women smiling throughout would light up our planet
like the bright powerful sun in the sky.
The beauty of a woman is the intelligent way she presents herself,
the aura around her.
Like the flawless sculpture of an artist, this is the essence of beauty.
All around us, all we have to do is open our eyes, look around
to see all the beauty of this world, a woman is the salt of the earth,
the artist who sculpts love into our lives.

Ten Dollar Bet

One night when I was twenty years old, my friend Glen and I were out in the car by my house drinking beer on a Saturday night. Instead of going anywhere, we decided to stay in my driveway. We had just bought two dozen beers at around seven o'clock. After a long while, we only had four beers left.

"I want some more to drink," I told Glen.

"I can go for that too," he said.

"Well, let's go in the house and I'll see if Dad's got some rum in the coffee table in the front room." Glen laughed.

"Let's go then." So we did. When we walked into the kitchen, Glen noticed there were three salmon in the sink.

"Derrick, do you like that kind of fish?" he asked me.

"Yes I do. What about you, Glen?"

"Yes, a lot, Derrick."

"Hey, Glen, I bet you ten dollars if you put your finger in the mouth of that salmon, it will bite you."

Glen looked unsure. "You must be nuts," he said.

"No, I'm not nuts. I'm just a little foolish. But if you put your finger in that fish's mouth, I'll guarantee you, Glen, it will still bite you and I will win the bet."

"No way, Derrick. It won't happen."

"I assure you, Glen. I'm positive. Or, oh, maybe not, if you're too scared to do it..."

"I'm not scared, Derrick. Just to prove it, I'll do it now and take your money."

"Go ahead, Glen."

So he put his finger into the salmon's mouth, just to keep me quiet. He looked at me as he was doing it and said, "I told you so, Derrick." He laughed. But

before he knew it, my fist came down on the salmon's head a few inches away from its mouth just as he was pulling his finger out. His finger ripped open. We laughed.

"You were right after all, Derrick," Glen said to me.

"Yes, Glen, I am and you owe me ten dollars."

"I know, but right now I need some tissue and a band-aid." Before I had a chance to get these for him, my father walked into the kitchen. He said, "What in the hell is all the commotion?"

"Dad, there's nothing going on," I told him.

"Well, why is Glen doing so much yelling, Derrick?"

"I bet him ten dollars if he put his finger in the salmon's mouth, it would bite him," I laughed as I explained it to him. "I guess I'm ten dollars richer." But the laughing came to a quick and abrupt stop.

"What in the name of God is wrong with you, Derrick?" he yelled at me. "You're really sick and immature for your age. You should know better than that. There's a room at the Waterford Hospital ⁽¹⁾ for people like you." When he had finished, he went to bed.

I went to get the bottle of rum. All I found was a bottle of vodka and a Canadian Club whiskey, so I took the whiskey. I dropped into the washroom to get a couple of band-aids and passed them over to Glen. We went out to my car. As soon as we got in the car, I said, "Glen this is all the booze my dad has left."

"That's good. Derrick, are you all right? Your father was quite mad at you."

"Yes, Glen, but that's only normal for him. Let's forget about it. Here's the whiskey, but there's no mix."

"It doesn't matter to me, Derrick. I guess it doesn't matter to you either."

"No, I'm going to chase it with the beer, Glen."

"Sounds good."

"How's your finger now?"

“It’s fine; it’s only stinging and throbbing.”

“Oh, Glen, I didn’t mean for it to happen.”

“Don’t worry, Buddy. If I hadn’t have been so foolish, it wouldn’t have happened.”

“But it did, Glen, and forget about the bet.”

“Derrick, a bet is a bet no matter what and I accept it. So when I get paid next week, you have to take the money.”

“Alright then.” The next day was Sunday and Glen went to the hospital. After dinner he came down to my house. He told me the doctor put three stitches in his finger. He also said he got a needle in the butt, because of the salmon bite. I laughed at that and Glen said, “You know, Derrick, that’s exactly what the doctor did when he stuck the needle in. He told me not to let any dead fish bite me anymore.”

I only laughed harder and ended up on the floor. After I was able to pull myself together and off the floor, I said, “Glen, I truly didn’t mean it to happen, you know.”

“Yes, Derrick, I know. It’s nothing to me, but it’s something to your father.”

“Yes, it’s understandable,” I said. “Where Dad works at the hospital, he sees all kinds of diseases.”

“Derrick, that may be true, but your father still shouldn’t have said those things. The way he reacted with you was way too much.”

“Well, that is so, but it’s only normal for him and that’s okay. I’m used to it now and to be truthful, Glen, I don’t care anymore.”

“I guess I owe you ten dollars. I’ll pay you Wednesday night when I gets paid.”

“Fine, Glen.”

On Wednesday night at around seven o’clock, he came down and paid me the ten dollars. “Let’s go for a ride, Derrick. Later we can get a bite to eat on me at Barney’s.”

“Sounds like a plan to me, Buddy,” I replied. While we were driving, I said, “By the way, Glen, I probably should’ve bet you a hundred dollars.”

“Yes, Derrick, you probably should’ve, but I ‘m glad you didn’t. You know why?”

“Yes, I do, Glen. Do you think I should’ve made a bigger bet?”

“I do.”

1 Psychiatric hospital in St. John’s.

Cut of Reality

Everything was closing in on him: the walls, the ceiling, the floors. Everything was squeezing him into a small molecule, tighter and tighter, he felt the air being squeezed out of his body. He was terrified and helpless. He didn't know where to turn or what to do. He was screaming for help, but no one could hear him. The words were coming from his mouth and there was no one coming to help him. He couldn't handle it anymore. He ran downstairs to change into his street clothes. Before he knew it, he was in his car. The engine was racing to go. Where? He didn't know. He was in the vast open space, but everything was still closing in on him. It was even harder to breathe. It felt like a vice around his chest, tightening and crushing his chest. He rolled down his windows and the summer air blew in and struck him in the face. It didn't make a difference. He soon felt it would be over. He began to cry for help once again. He cried and cried to no avail. No one came. The car shifted into drive. It just glided through town, headed for Portugal Cove. No lights or traffic held any meaning for the car. Before long he was sailing around Windsor Lake. In no time at all, he was driving up the lane to his parent's house. The car stopped, he opened the door, he got out, and headed straight towards the back door. He couldn't open it, so he went around to the front door, took out his keys and unlocked it. He walked in past his younger brother's room and his parent's room. He went straight to the kitchen cupboard drawer, pulled it out, reached in, and took out the shaving knife with the ivory handle. He turned around and walked straight to the other corner of the kitchen and sat between the stove and the window. He stared at the blade. The morning sun was shining on its very sharp edge. He thought to himself, "I have nothing to live for." He wanted it all to be over. He placed the sharp edge of the blade on his left wrist, he turned his head, looked at the archway, and screamed, "Mom, Mom, help me!" She never heard him. She didn't come. He didn't know why. The words must not have passed his lips. He pressed the knife on his wrist. It started to glide across his wrist. It broke the skin and jolted him back to reality. "Oh, God, what am I doing? Why am I doing this?" His wrist was bleeding slightly. He thought about his wife and daughter and began to cry, "Please, God, forgive me. I'm so sorry." He cried ever harder and wondered how he had got into his parent's house. Why did he come here to do this? He still had the knife in his hand. He got up and went to the sink. He washed it thoroughly and put it back in the drawer before his mother woke up. He went to the bathroom to get some tissue to stop the bleeding. When he came back, he sat down in the corner again.

His mother came out of her bedroom.

“Dale, what are you doing here? I thought you were working today,” she said.

“Yes, Mom, I was, but I left because I felt everything was closing in on me.”

“So that’s why you’re crying, Dale?”

“Yes.” She walked over and put her arms around him.

“Dale, I know you came here because you knew your mother would make you feel better and safe.” She held him a while longer and said, “Dale, I’m going to make us something for breakfast.

“Okay, Mom. Thanks. I love you.”

“I love you too, Son. By the time you goes home to Holly and Angelique, you’ll feel a lot better.” Before he left, he was feeling better. He never told his mother what he did that morning until several months later.

*In the Hands
of the
Four Seasons*

1. Winter Snowflakes

Dark clouds in the sky, so high above us,
Look up, head tilted back, on a cool
Winter's day. Soon appears through the
Clouds, a white substance like no other, slight
at first, floats down like a feather from a
White snowbird. Before long the sky is
like a cloud of cotton candy, fluffy as a
Powder puff.

Close down on earth, cover the roof
Tops, flow on the ground, big white
Snowflakes, millions and millions of them
fall down on us, around us. Each snowflake
is unique with its own
Pattern. Still with my head tilted slightly,
I twirl slowly like a spin top, try to catch the
huge snowflake on the tip of my tongue.
Catch one, two, what happened, they
dissolve like cotton candy.

Fairy dust falls slightly
Stops within the instance.
Dusk sets in, soon it is night, the lights
come on, shine on the fresh sheet of
fairy dust covering the ground, sparkling,
glittering like rhinestones. The wind begins
to blow the snow up into the air, twists and
turns. High, the fairy dust falls
down to the earth, as is,
once more, once more, once more.

2. Wish On A Falling Star

Hey, in the early hours one spring morning,
my wife and I stood in the front doorway of our house,
when she said, "Look, Honey, a falling star.
Make a wish; it will come true."

I closed my eyes for a brief second and wished on that star.
The sight of it amazed, as it fell down, down, down.
A silver streak just falling from the dark blue sky,
it vanished right into thin air.

I saw my first falling star with my soul mate.
We wished upon that star
for riches, fame and a better life, my wife and I.
They say your wish comes true because
God sends another angel down to earth
to guide a wayward soul back to heaven.
But my thoughts on this are that God sends angels
so women and men would have soul mates.
If you see a falling star, wish upon it.
You will receive, straight from heaven,
your soul mate as I did.

3. Life Is Like A Rainbow

After a summer shower, the rainbow appears,
radiates its pastel colors high above our heads in the sky.
In a short time, it starts to fade out of existence
like a human life that grows old.

Showers come again on a warm humid day,
to quench the thirst of the dry earth beneath our feet.
The shower ceases to exist. A new rainbow forms,
as spectacular as a newborn baby,
radiating its beautiful colors of life.

Life is like a rainbow; the rainbow has a beginning
and it has an end. Before the rainbow appears,
there must be a shower of rain.
Human life begins as a seed in a mother's womb.
It grows and grows, forms its shape surrounded by water.
When the water breaks, the new life is received into this world.
New life begins.

4. Autumn Sleeps

I hear my little one crying. I go to see her and ask,
Why are the tears rolling over your cute tiny cheeks
like a waterfall, my sweet little bundle of joy?
Oh, Daddy, look at our yard, at the trees.
Their leaves are changing colours and floating to the ground.
Why, Daddy, oh why are they dying?

I wipe the transparent tears from her big blue eyes.
That's okay, they're not dying, my little one.
It's just their time to sleep. All of God's creation must rest.
This is Autumn.

Her eyes sparkle with happiness.
We step out into the chilly brisk air.
I watch my child run through the blanket of leaves on the ground,
hear the rustling of the golden, red, yellow, and brown leaves around her tiny
ankles,
A warm loving glow touches my heart.

Corey's Best Buddy

for my son

It was the day before Christmas Eve, when Corey and Helen went to K-Mart.

“Mom, can I take Foxy with us? Please?” Corey asked.

“Okay, Corey, but remember what Dad said. You have to take care of him in the store because you might lose him,” his mother warned.

As they drove in the car, Helen overheard Corey talking to Foxy, like he had so many other times. “I love you, Foxy, very much. I love your brown fur coat, your big, brown eyes, your white chest, your white ears, and the white tip on your tail. But most of all, you are my favourite stuffed toy and my best buddy. Now, Foxy, stay close to me when we get to the store.”

“That’s right, Corey, don’t forget Foxy,” his mother warned him again. “I wouldn’t want you to lose him. Remember the time we were at Nanny’s and Poppy’s when the taxi came? We had to rush out through the door in a hurry and we forgot Foxy.”

“I was really sad that night when we got home without Foxy. I couldn’t go to sleep. Dad had to lay down with me until I fell asleep. The next morning he went over to where Poppy works. He got Foxy and brought him home to me, right?”

“Yes, Corey. Now I have to pick up the layaway we came here to get.”

“Can I go see the toys while you’re picking up the parcels?” Corey asked his mother.

“Yes, but just stay where I can see you.”

“Okay Mom, I will.” Corey went to the toy department. He wondered if he would see anything new there, but before he could look, a sales lady interrupted him.

“Where’s your mother?” she asked him.

“My mom’s picking up her parcels that she has on layaway. Foxy and I are looking at the toys,” Corey said to the lady. “My Foxy is my one and only favourite stuffed toy. He’s real and he protects me from all the bad things in the world.”

“Oh that’s nice. By the way, little boy, over on the other side of this shelf, there are some baby foxes.”

Corey went to see the baby foxes. He picked one up and laid down Foxy. He ran to his mother and said, “Look at what I have in my hand - a baby fox! Can I have it? Please, Mom?”

“No, Corey, not today. Bring him back, please.”

Corey returned the baby fox to the toy department and noticed that his own Foxy was gone. He said, “Where’s my Foxy to? Who took him on me? Did anybody see my Foxy?” No one replied. He ran to his mother.

“Someone took my Foxy away from me,” he told her.

“Wait a minute, Corey. I’ll go back to the toy department and we’ll check it out together.”

“All right, Mom. I hope we can find him or I’ll be really sad again.”

They walked over to the toy department and Foxy wasn’t there.

“I told you, Mom, didn’t I?”

“Yes, Corey, but it’s time to go home now.”

“No, Mom, no! I hear Foxy calling me. He’s crying for me.”

“Corey, we must go home.”

“My Foxy’s gone. Poor Foxy,” Corey moaned all the way home. Just as they got out of the taxi, Lisa met them by the door.

“How come my brother’s crying?”

“Because someone took my Foxy down at K-Mart.” Lisa hugged her brother and said, “That’s okay, Corey. When you tell Dad about Foxy, he’ll get him back before tomorrow because tomorrow’s Christmas Eve.”

Paul arrived home from work and Corey and Lisa ran to hug their father.

“Today, Mom and I were down to K-Mart to pick up the layawake and someone took my Foxy on me, Dad,” Corey said.

“Well, I don’t think he was taken on you. Is it possible that someone saw you with Foxy?” his father asked.

“Yes, Dad, there was a sales lady and she asked me where my mom was. Then she told me about the baby foxes on the other side of the shelf.”

“So you were in the toy department. Well, tomorrow, Corey, I’ll go to K-Mart and ask for the lady in the toy department. Don’t worry. When I talk to the lady, she might be able to tell me something about where Foxy might be. But it’s time to go to bed now, so try to get some sleep.”

A few seconds later, a small voice could be heard from the bedroom.

“Dad, I want you, please.”

“Corey, what’s wrong?”

“I can’t sleep, Dad.”

“I’ll tell you what. I’ll stay with you until you’re asleep.”

“I love you, Dad.”

“Me too, Son. Goodnight.” In a little while, Corey was sound asleep and his father tucked him in. The next morning, Corey jumped out of bed and ran to his parent’s room. He hopped on the bed and said in one breath, “Dad! Dad! Are you going to get Foxy for me now?”

“Not right away, Corey. I have to go to work first.”

“How long before you can get Foxy for me?”

“Not until after lunch.” Lisa piped in, “Come on, Dad, breakfast is ready and it’s good.”

“Yes, of course, I know your mother made it,” said Dad. “But I have to leave for work now. See you all later. Be good now. Santa Claus is coming tonight.”

Paul headed for K-Mart around eleven o'clock. When he arrived, he went to the information desk and asked the receptionist to page the woman in the toy department. When the lady answered her page, Paul asked, "Do you remember a little boy who was here yesterday with a stuffed fox?"

"Are you looking for Foxy?" the lady replied.

"Yes, my son laid him down when he picked up a baby fox to show his mother. She told him to bring it back, but when he did, his own Foxy was gone."

"When I saw Foxy, your son was gone. I picked Foxy up and looked around. Your son and wife were leaving in a taxi and I couldn't catch them."

The lady went and got Foxy and brought him back to Paul. "Here you are, Sir." Paul took the toy and said, "Thank you very much. You've just made my boy's Christmas very special. Merry Christmas." When Paul arrived home, Corey ran to the door.

"Daddy, do you have my Foxy?"

"Yes, here he is." With Foxy under one arm, Corey wrapped his arms around his father's neck. "Thank you, Dad, I love you very much for bringing my buddy home."

Corey ran off to his bedroom. "Foxy, I'm so happy to have you home."

Our Embrace

Your love consumes me like the air I breathe
your kisses warm my heart as the sun does the earth.
The rain falls, new flowers spring through the ground,
New passion and love comes forth with every tender touch of you.
My love is pure as the white rose, I place it in your soft hand.
The rose may fade, my eyes may wander,
My heart will always stay pure.
With every warm embrace, our hearts beat in unison,
the love in my heart will never crumble.

Our first kiss, warm, sweet, and tender sent me to heaven,
Still you hold me in your loving arms, my fear vanishes into the air,
tranquility fills every fiber of my being.
Oh, so long ago, our destiny was blessed in the eyes of God.
Some may say our love is a myth as we intertwine as one.
How could it be a myth when everything is divine
in this eternal love, serene,
because you are my wife, the light in my world.
You share my laughter, my sadness, my desires, my dreams
You are my friend, my soul-mate, my lover, my angel.
If I had only a brief moment in time,
there would be no hesitation,
That moment would be forever with you.

A Cold Sweat Rolled Over my Face and Body

It was Thursday night, 2:45 a.m., July 6, 2000, I was called to 146 Carblanc Place by Detective Sergeant Nick Nesbitt of the RNC ⁽²⁾ Homicide Department to do a psychological profile. He wanted me at the heinous crime scene to determine what kind of sick, twisted person could commit such an act.

When I arrived at the scene, 3:19 a.m., I got out of my car and walked into that home. The coroner had just finished talking to Detective Nesbitt about his preliminary findings. They were both very puzzled and disturbed. He passed me on his way out not even nodding a hello. Nick waved for me to come over.

“Hi, Clay, how are you doing? Nice to see you,” Detective Nesbitt said to me. “I don’t really know, Clay, but I can tell you this is the strangest and most abnormal case I have ever worked on in my entire twenty-two years on the police force.”

“Why do you say that, Nick?” I asked him.

“Well, Clay, I have to show you to explain it. We’ll start in the boy’s room and continue to the master bedroom.” We went through the doorway. What a sight I saw! The boy lay on the bed with his neck slit. He lay bare from the waist up with a clean cut along his chest and just above his navel. His heart had been laid on the centre of his chest in the correct position as if it was inside the body. We moved over to the bed and I looked at the incision and the heart. I saw there was no trace of blood from the wound. It looked like somebody or something had pushed their hand in through the flesh severing the vessels close to the heart and burning them to stop the blood flow. I shook my head in disbelief.

“This is not possible,” I said.

“You haven’t begun to grasp the weirdness of this crime, Dr. Woods. Come on, let’s go across the hall,” Detective Nesbitt said. The bodies of the two daughters in the other room were both in the same condition except for one thing. Their hearts were gone. Now I was as puzzled as Detective Nesbitt and amazed at the skill of the perpetrator of such an awful crime. We then went to the last victim’s room. The mother was lying there like her son.

“How could a man cut the necks of four of his family members without getting any blood sprayed on himself or all over the pillows?” Detective Nesbitt asked me.

“I don’t know, Nick. There should be some kind of evidence.”

“But, Clay, there is no weapon to be found anywhere either.”

“He must’ve got rid of it before you arrived, Nick.”

“No, he was the one who called the station.” I raised my eyebrows, stunned.

“The husband called?” I asked.

“That’s what I said, isn’t it?”

“Yes, I know, Nick.”

”Do you see now why we’re puzzled? And not only that. The coroner told me that the weapon that was used to cut their throats had two entry points on their necks. What kind of knife would be made like that?”

“I haven’t got a clue,” I replied. Detective Nesbitt took my right hand and put it on his left shoulder. He told me to squeeze my thumb and trigger finger.

“Make sure that you dig your nails in and pull the hand out like a clamp with razor-edged tips,” he said. I followed his instructions.

“That’s the way the instrument was used on the four victims,” Detective Nesbitt said. I wrote notes to complete my background profile of the possible suspect. We had everything tied up at the scene.

“Let’s get out of here, Clay,” Detective Nesbitt said.

“I’m already out.”

“Are you going to the station? I’ll follow behind you, Clay.”

“Fine.”

We left the house together at 5:22 a.m., got in our cars, and drove away. I was on my way to the lock-up. I wondered if Detective Nesbitt and the other police officers were finding it as odd as I, that it had been so cold in the house

considering it was the middle of July. It had been cold enough to see a slight vapor from the breath of all of us who were there.

5:41 a.m., I found myself standing outside the lock-up door on the east end of Water Street with my finger on the doorbell. In no time, the police officer let me in. As we were walking down the hall to the cell where the suspect was being held, I didn't know what kind of man he was or what state of mind I would find him in. When I reached the cell, I found a very quiet man holding his head in his two hands, shaking it back and forth. The guard unlocked the door. I went in and sat down on the bench in front of him. He didn't move. He didn't even look up. I introduced myself.

"I'm Doctor Clay Woods, a psychiatrist with the RNC." He removed his hands and lifted his head. He had no expression on his face and his eyes were dark and cold.

"My name is Adam Stone," he said in a voice that showed no emotion.

Before I could get any background information from him, he asked me in a low voice, "Do the police have any idea who murdered my family?"

"No, they haven't as of yet." His shoulders began to shake like he had cold shivers going through his body. I felt the same cold airy sensation that I experienced back at the Stone's home. This man before me had to realize he was the main suspect in the murders, but he seemed to think that he was there for his own protection and to get help for shock from having lost his loved ones.

"Mr. Stone, you were the person who called 911?" I asked him.

"Yes, that's right, why?"

"Well, where were you when this happened?"

"I was asleep and when I woke up, they were dead."

"Don't you think that is strange, Sir?"

"Yes, it is, but in the past several weeks, I've been waking up quite abruptly."

"You said you were asleep, Mr. Stone?"

“That’s what I said, isn’t it?” he replied in an annoyed voice. For a brief moment, his eyes looked abnormal. They seemed to change colours. I sensed this eerie feeling intensify. I decided to let him go on with his story.

“Please, go on, Mr. Stone. Tell me how this is affecting you.”

“About three weeks ago, I really cut down on the painkillers I have been taking for pain in my cheek due to nerve damage.”

“Mr. Stone, are you addicted to prescription drugs?”

“Yes, Dr. Woods, I am, and to be more specific, to codeine.”

“That could cause anyone to wake up abruptly, Mr. Stone.”

“But I haven’t been quite asleep many of these nights, when I have sensed smoke above my face. Then I would wake in a frightened state.”

“It’s only normal to hallucinate when you’re coming off this stuff.”

“You think that’s normal? What about this?” He sprang to his feet. Smoke spewed from his mouth and nostrils. In a shrieking voice, he roared, “I’ll see you in hell!” The smoke consumed him.

* * *

I felt this figure of smoke enter my body from the soles of my feet. “No, no, get away, get out of me! You will not control me!” I screamed. I sat straight up in bed. A cold sweat rolled over my face and body.

Little Angel

Just look at Allison, an angel, as pure and delicate
as the petals on a white rose. Before Allison was born,
she was wrapped in the soft, velvety wings of an angel.
When you feel sad or down, the smile from little Allison
will shine bright into your heart, sending a warm light of joy and love,
Oh Allison, sweet Allison, little angel of God.

The wind may blow, the cradle will rock
out of the cradle innocence will tumble
into the strong arms and delicate hands of your
loving parents who will protect and guide
their little miracle throughout your life.

This poem was inspired from a picture I saw of Allison. She had just been diagnosed with Hurlers Syndrome, a very rare and serious genetic disease.

My Mom's Visitor

The first time I heard my Mom's story, I was eleven years old. It was a cold and windy Saturday night about eight o'clock, when our mother started to tell my two sisters and I. The rain was coming down very heavily, beating off the roof. We were all gathered around the oil range. Mom faced us, standing between her bedroom and the bathroom.

"It was 1948. I was a young girl, eighteen years old. I worked in St. John's as a live-in housekeeper for the Steinberg family on King's Bridge Road. Every two weeks I would get one day off and I went home to Portugal Cove. I had been working there for a year. One Saturday afternoon I was baking cookies. The four children I was babysitting were running around grabbing the hot cookies off the rack on the counter. I told them to stop and be good or I would tell their parents. They didn't stop and I got mad and tapped one of them on the hands.

Later that evening I was going upstairs to collect a mug that I had left the night before. I opened the door to the stairwell, turned on the light, and went upstairs. When I reached the top platform and walked down the small hall, I saw a man standing in front of my bedroom. He was tall and had black wavy hair. He looked pale and was dressed in a navy blue suit with a white shirt and a black bow tie. He was only there a few seconds when he glided to the door across the hall and vanished. I turned around to go back downstairs. I was really frightened and felt the strength draining out of my body. I couldn't run where I was so weak. I feared he would chase after me. My feet were like lead. I could only take it step by step. I couldn't wait to get downstairs."

While we listened to mom so intensely, I felt a cold shiver run up my spine. At the same time, we all heard a loud crack outdoors. A big tree broke among the others, limbing ⁽³⁾ the trees as it fell to the ground. We jumped and Mom looked whiter than usual, but she just went on with her story without missing a beat.

"I got to the second floor and Mister was in his bedroom. I just walked past him because I didn't ever talk to him that much. I went to the kitchen on the first floor and told his wife what had just happened. She went up and told her husband. He came out and locked the door to the attic so that man wouldn't get away. They both came back down to the kitchen together and he called the police.

A big, blocky police officer and a tall, thin officer arrived and the owner let them in. I told them about the man and what he looked like. The officers argued about who would go first, so the owner said he would lead the way. They went up and the two officers searched all over the third floor.

One officer said to me, "Maybe that man came from behind you and snuck out of the front door."

"No, Officer. He didn't come after me," I told him again.

"Well, whoever he was, he's gone," the tall police officer said.

The officers left and we all went upstairs to sleep that night. The following Monday, a charwoman ⁽⁴⁾ came to the house to do her work. I told that woman about the man I saw. After I had described him, the charwomen told me that man was the children's grandfather who had died a little over a year ago."

My mother didn't go back to sleep in her attic bedroom for a couple of days. The woman of the house asked her if she got a priest in to bless her room and the stairway, would she sleep there again? Mom agreed because she knew it wasn't fair to the boy whose room she was sleeping in.

By the time my mother was twenty-one years old, she said her hair was completely gray. During the time mom told us her story, I was quite intrigued. I thought about it a lot over the years and still to this day when my mother tells me this story, it brings cold shivers and goose bumps to my body.

Do you think if you ever saw a ghost, it would turn your hair gray? My mother's story is true and it hasn't changed one word to this day. Now in the year 2000, my mom is seventy years old.

3 a Newfoundland word, to limb, meaning: to cut off the branches of a tree

4 cleaning woman hired to do the heavy housecleaning

A Child's Broken Heart

There's a pet named Dominick. If you saw him, you would love him to pieces. He is kind and gentle, clever and bright like a little monkey. His owner taught him how to stick out his tongue. When you say something he doesn't like, unawares to you, he'll stick out his tiny tongue at you.

It all began on October 2, 1995, six days before our daughter's seventeenth birthday. Amanda's mother and I took a short trip up to Scott Place, Upper Gullies, to Shirley Kelly's home. Shirley is a breeder of Yorkshire Terriers. Shirley was expecting us and she took us down to the kennels. When we walked in, Shirley said, "He is over there in the open cage." We walked over to the cage. Helen rubbed him down and went back to pay Shirley. The puppy was jumping up and down like he knew he was leaving.

I bent down to look at him. I was amazed to see what a gorgeous little puppy he had become. His hair was black with a cast of blue. His moustache and beard flowed gold down his chest between his legs. His pads were also golden like socks pulled over his paws. His dark eyes were alert and kind. Five weeks earlier I had not thought he was a Yorkie; I thought he was a guinea pig. But now we were taking him home. He looked like a powder puff.

"Derrick, pick him up," Helen said, so I did and we left. On the way home he peed on me. Helen laughed and said, "That's alright as long as it's not on me." We arrived a half an hour before Amanda got home from school.

Amanda didn't have any idea what her mother and I had for her birthday gift, although it was something that she had wanted for many years. While we waited, I went downstairs and got the shoebox that her grandmother had fancied up with gold wrapping paper and a tiny red bow on the corner. After everything was done, Amanda walked in.

"Come out in the front room, Amanda. We want you," Helen called out.

"What do you want?"

"Well, Amanda, we got to give you your gift early because it's here now. There is no way to hide it. It's too big, so we have to blindfold you. Derrick, you go get the gift." When I came back with the dog, I laid it on her lap. Her mother removed the blindfold, Amanda looked down, took off the lid, and saw the puppy. She cried for a nice while.

“Oh God, it’s so sweet. I love him!” she said. After she stopped crying, she just sat there looking totally amazed that this puppy was hers.

She decided to call the dog Dominick. The following three weeks were all sleepless nights. At first, he whined and balled like a newborn baby. Amanda had laid out a small box with her baby Pooh bear blanket. She tried to feed him to calm him down, but nothing worked. One morning Amanda said, “Mom, send him back to where he came from. I don’t want him.” But things got better, because finally in the middle of one night, she couldn’t take it anymore. She reached down into the box and took the little silky bundle and laid him on the bed. Before long Dominick found his favourite spot to curl up — by her ear with his head on her shoulder.

Before long the two had formed a bond that was unbreakable. Amanda started calling him, Mr. Poopy Head. When she did, he would go crazy. He loved it. Everyone loved him too. He brought such joy and fun to our hearts. He showed Amanda his love by licking her face and giving her kisses. She would lay on the floor and Dominick would jump down, pull her hair, and make her say, “Ouch!” She’d blow in his face and he’d lick her nose. She’d lay back and he would steal her scrunchy and act like a clown. He made her giggle. If anybody said anything or called him a name that he didn’t like, he would absolutely ignore you until you said, “I’m sorry Dom.” Then he would come and jump around you and rub up against you like crazy to show that he forgave you.

Five years later in August, Amanda was married. Soon after, she decided to get Dominick a haircut. She couldn’t get an appointment at Dominick’s regular groomer, so she took him to another groomer. Later that day Amanda’s new husband, Chad, went to pick up Dominick. The woman who had just groomed Dom brought him out and started to comb him. Chad noticed the dog was very limp and motionless. He was concerned and asked the woman if he could take Dom outdoors so he could get some air. She lay Dom on the floor and said, “No, he’s all right here.”

Chad became angry. He bent down and picked Dominick up and walked out. He then went to pick up Amanda at her work.

“When we go home, don’t get upset when you see Dominick on the bed,” he told her. He parked the truck and they went straight to the bedroom. Dominick was just laying there motionless on the bed. Amanda spoke to him, but Dom didn’t move. He didn’t even open his eyes.

Chad had already called the vet. Amanda called a second time. The vet told her to bring him down right away. Chad and Amanda were at the Avalon Animal Hospital on Logy Bay Road in no time. Dominick spent a little over fourteen hours in the hospital. Helen called the doctor a few hours later and he informed her that Dominick was suffering from heat exhaustion. He had developed blood blisters all over his chest and down his front paws. How high a temperature must the groomer have had the heating room up to cause so much damage? How long did she leave Dominick in there?

The vet told Helen it would be better to take Dom home to his own environment. He said that all the love and attention Dom would get from his owner might make all the difference in the world to him. He said Dom was still not out of the woods yet. He didn't know if Dom would make it. He said all they could do was hope.

The first night Dominick was home, Amanda called over to the house. She said to her mother, "Do you think Dad would come over and look at Dominick?"

"You know I will," I said when Helen asked me.

"Derrick, she's some upset and worried about Dominick."

I left and walked over to Amanda's apartment. I opened the door and Amanda smiled as I sat down on the chesterfield next to Dominick.

"Dad, do you think he knows you?" Amanda asked me. I spoke to him and called him "Wild Thing." The dog's eyes opened and he looked at me, but he was motionless.

"Amanda, he knows me, but he's very weak. It's going to take awhile for him to build up his strength again." But I thought to myself that if the dog wasn't better by the next day, he would be gone.

The blood blisters became infected. The vet prescribed penicillin and an antibiotic cream to try to cut down on the infection. His weight dropped down to three pounds, six ounces. But sure enough, Dom came around like the strong little fighter he was. Over the next three weeks he built up a lot of his strength, considering the stress his little four-pound, two-ounce body had been under.

But although he fought his way back from almost dying, at four o'clock on September fourth, Dominick died of a heart attack on his way down to the hospital again. Amanda had been married for one month. Later that night Amanda called, "Dad, my baby is gone, my Poopy Head is gone."

"I know, Doll, and my Wild Thing is gone too," I said to her. "You know, when you take your pet to a different groomer, the most you would expect from it is a bad hair cut, not for your dog to die three weeks later."

Dominick was gone a month and four days on the eighth of October, the day of Amanda's twenty-second birthday. All she could do was wish the day was over. Amanda's heart was broken from the loss of her loving pet.

*Now he's gone from this world.
The girl who owned him is very sad and broken-hearted.
Don't be sad my little girl.
Your Poopy-head is flying with the angels in heaven, watching over you.
Remember this:
he loved you and you loved him.
Don't be sad and keep him in your heart.
It will heal you.
Tears may flow down your cheeks
when you're sad and miserable over the loss of your loving Dominick.
But time will heal all things. The ache will be gone.
Joyful memories will remain of your sweet Mr. Poopy-head.*

The Two Souls of Christmas

1. The Sad Little Boy No More

When I was a little boy, my mama and daddy wouldn't take me to have my picture taken with Santa Claus. That, you see, made me a very sad little boy. Now that I'm a man, I still want my picture taken with Santa, dressed in red and white and black with long white hair and a long white beard. It seems I have to take matters into my own hands.

This Christmas I'm going to the Village Mall to have my picture taken with Santa Claus, no matter what. It's true that now I'm a man, but in my heart there's still a sad little boy. Some say Christmas is for little children, but that's okay. I'm just a big old child at heart. So, look out Santa! Here I come.

I'm at Santa's Village now. I'm in the lineup with all the other kids. People might look at me kind of strange, but that's okay. I don't care. I'm finally going to have my picture taken with jolly old Santa Claus. Here I am, on my way up to sit on his lap, feeling pretty good. I'm here sitting on his lap and the elf is ready to snap the shot. She says, "Smile now," and I smile. Just as the elf takes the picture of Santa and me, I hear the cracking of Santa Claus's knees.

Now it's done. Santa's legs are broken. I feel bad, but that sad little boy in my heart is sad no more.

2. Christmas Joy

Lights flicker throughout the city.
Surround us with red, green, blue, yellow and pink,
reflect color on the faces of bubbly excited children.
Eyes glitter like a star on top of the evergreen tree.
Christmas is about to descend upon us once again
To bring its joy and love throughout this world.
To fill our hearts with tranquillity for our fellow man,
young and old alike.
Magic fills the air like no other time.
Opens the souls so we can hear
the sweet voices of the angels' songs.
Bells jingle, hearts tumble with joy
of the family's new little miracle. There is
hustling, bustling, rustling.
All the joy among us does not have to end.
Keep the window of the soul open.
See the twinkling in the child's eyes.
The smile across her cheeks delights.
Lock it in your heart,
You'll have Christmas joy forever.

The Clover and the Mirror

One summer day, the first year Helen and I were married, I was out in the front yard down at the end of the walkway just sitting on the grass. I looked down and noticed a clover leaf. I wasn't sure what it was, but I picked it up anyway, and it was most definitely a four-leaf clover.

I had never found one before. I went in the house to show everybody. I walked through the front room and when I arrived in the kitchen, Mom asked, "What did you find?"

"A four-leaf clover down at the end of the walkway next to the lilac tree, Mom."

"Were you looking for it?"

"No, I just glanced down and I thought I saw it, so I looked again and sure enough it was a four-leaf clover."

"Derrick, you know that means you'll have good luck now. Well, it's the way it's supposed to be."

"I know, Mom. We'll just have to wait and see what happens."

A few months later that winter, something did happen. Helen and I were living with my parents. This woman, Jan, was renting a room from my parents. One night in February, about eleven o'clock, Jan came home and started fighting. She was very agitated and ripped into a verbal attack on my mother.

"You think you're so perfect and your marriage too," she shouted.

"No, Jan, I don't think I am, but I do have a good marriage and I trust George."

"Well you won't Mrs. when I tell you the thing he and I did behind your back." She went on to say all kinds of things about my father. Mom got very upset.

I got mad too, so it got more out of hand. I wanted to get my hands around Jan's neck and ring it. I tried very hard to get her, but I couldn't because my wife and father wouldn't let me out of the room. I would have forced my way out, but that wasn't possible for me to do. My wife was pregnant and I knew that if I caused something to happen to the baby, I would never forgive myself.

I turned around toward the bed to go sit on it, but I didn't make it. I was still very, very mad. I passed by the dresser. In an instant, my fist struck the mirror. I hadn't given it a thought. I was in such a rage, I didn't care about the seven years of bad luck. The mirror split like ice on a pond. I got fragments in my knuckles and the blood ran down my fingers.

I calmed down. I had to go help my father contain Jan until the police came. It seemed like it took forever. When they finally arrived, I had her forearms pinned to her chest. She got me where it hurts with her knee. I grabbed her again and pinned her arms to the floor over her head.

"They look like an octopus," the police officer said to Dad. The two officers came over and told Jan that I was to let go of her and she was to get up without any trouble.

"You let her go, Derrick, please." But when I let her go, she didn't behave and I had to grab her wrists again. The police officers took her arms and put each of them behind her back. They handcuffed her and took her away.

When Jan came back home the next day, she came over to the table where I was sitting and said, "Derrick, I'm very sorry for the way I acted last night."

"It's good you're sorry, Jan, but that don't make everything alright, you know."

"Yes, I know, Derrick. By the way, I'll pay for the replacement of the mirror because it was my fault. That's the truth."

"What do you mean, Jan?"

"If I hadn't been so drunk, I wouldn't have upset your family so much and got you so mad, Derrick. I'm sorry again. Let me know the price of the mirror when you replace it in the frame."

"Okay, Jan." So that was the end of that. I had the mirror replaced in a couple of weeks and Jan paid me for it.

Later that spring, I started to win money, although I had broken the mirror. Do you think a broken mirror is bad luck? I don't anymore. Or did the four-leaf clover cancel out the bad luck? My wife even won some money on a Nevada ticket, but not the way I was winning. Every day I was winning on Nevada tickets and bingo cards. Between that spring and late that fall, I must have won well over three or four thousand dollars. For every ticket I bought, I won

no less than five dollars and up to fifty dollars each time. Sometimes I won three or four times a day.

Or maybe it wasn't any of the above. I don't believe in good luck or bad luck. Maybe it was just meant to be.

The Spot Dance

One late November evening in 1977, I ran into my best friend Glen at the gas station, just a few minutes from my home.

“Derrick, what are you up to?” he asked.

“I’m not up to anything yet, but I’m going to pick up my girlfriend right now. We’re planning to go to the Schooner Lounge.”

“Oh, that sounds good, Derrick. Do you think Helen would mind if me and the boys join ya?”

“No. See you there.”

Half an hour later I had picked up my girlfriend. As we were driving down to the lounge, I said, “Helen, by the way, Glen and my other two buddies are going to join us there, okay?”

“Sure that’s fine,” she said. We were just about through the door of the Schooner when Helen said, “Look, Derrick, there’s your friends now.”

I called out to Glen. He turned his head and spotted me. They waited for us.

“Helen, this is Gary and Tony, and you know Glen.”

“Hi, guys.”

“Hello, Helen.” The five of us walked into the club together and got our table. It was a live rock band playing that night. It was just lit enough to see where we were going. The club was almost filled to capacity of a hundred and fifty people. Many of them knew me. The fun began. The band came back at 10:15 from the first break of the night.

We were two dances into the second set when a spot dance was called. Helen and I went up for the spot dance. To our surprise when the music stopped, the light was shining on us and we just happened to win.

We walked to the stage and the drummer came to the front with a microphone in his hand. He asked Helen our names.

“My name is Helen,” she replied.

“What’s your boyfriend’s name?” the drummer then asked her.

“I don’t know. I only met him here tonight.” He looked at me and laughed. He knew we were a couple because he had seen us together on a number of occasions. I couldn’t say anything. I was stunned and speechless. We each got a bottle of wine and went back to our table.

“Your mouth dropped open,” Helen said, laughing. “Derrick, are you mad at me?”

“Yes, Helen, just a little.” Glen began teasing me, “Who are you? I don’t know you.”

“Knock it off, Glen,” I said to him. But he had no intention of dropping it.

“Gary, do you know this person?” he asked one of our buddies.

“No, Glen, I don’t. So, Buddy, what the hell are you doing sitting at our table? We don’t know you, so get lost,” Gary said.

“Give it up boys now,” I said. “Helen, do you see what you started here tonight?”

“Yes, Derrick, I’m sorry.”

“Ya, right.” The band took a second break and I went to the bar to get a beer. The drummer was standing at the corner of the bar.

“Have you recovered from the shock, Derrick?” he asked. I smiled as I replied, “Yes, Nipper.”

“That’s something for your future wife to do to you. But congratulations and good luck, Derrick,” he said as he shook my hand.

“Thanks, Nipper. I think I’m going to need it.” We laughed.

“Yes, I believe you’re right, Derrick, because your girlfriend seems to have a good sense of humour.”

“I would definitely agree with that.” I thought to myself what a lucky guy I was. The bartender asked me what I would like to drink.

“I’ll have a Blue Star, please,” I replied. I took out the money to pay for it, but Nipper told the bartender he would take care of it.

“Thanks for the beer, Nipper.”

“You’re welcome, Derrick. Is there any special song that your fiancée would like to hear?”

“Yes, Walk Through this World with Me.” Nipper smiled and said, “Consider it done.”

I went back to my table. Five minutes later they started the third set and Nipper announced, “Ladies and gentlemen, I’m going to play a special song for the winners of the spot dance, Helen and Derrick. They’re soon to be married.” He called us up and the floor filled up. While we were dancing to the song, I looked in her eyes and she looked into mine. The air of romance and love that made our hearts beat in unity filled the club with magic and made us float above the floor.

We had a good time that night. It’s a good thing I can take a joke like that because over the past twenty-two years, there has been a lot more of Helen’s wonderful humour that I have had to put up with. And this is not the end of it.

Silent Cry

It happened again today.
He called me stupid.
I wish I was dead.
I feel like I'm falling into a deep hole.
I'm losing my identity.
Who am I, what am I, why am I here?
I'm nobody. I'm falling down,
down, down in a hole of no return.
I wish I was dead.
Oh God, why am I so very stupid?
Here I am today walking the road.
I look down. I see butts on the ground.
I pick one up and I say,
Butt, you are worth more than I am.
I'm worthless, I'm stupid. Why am I here?
Oh God, I wish I was dead. You should never
have let me come to be
this worthless stupid human being.

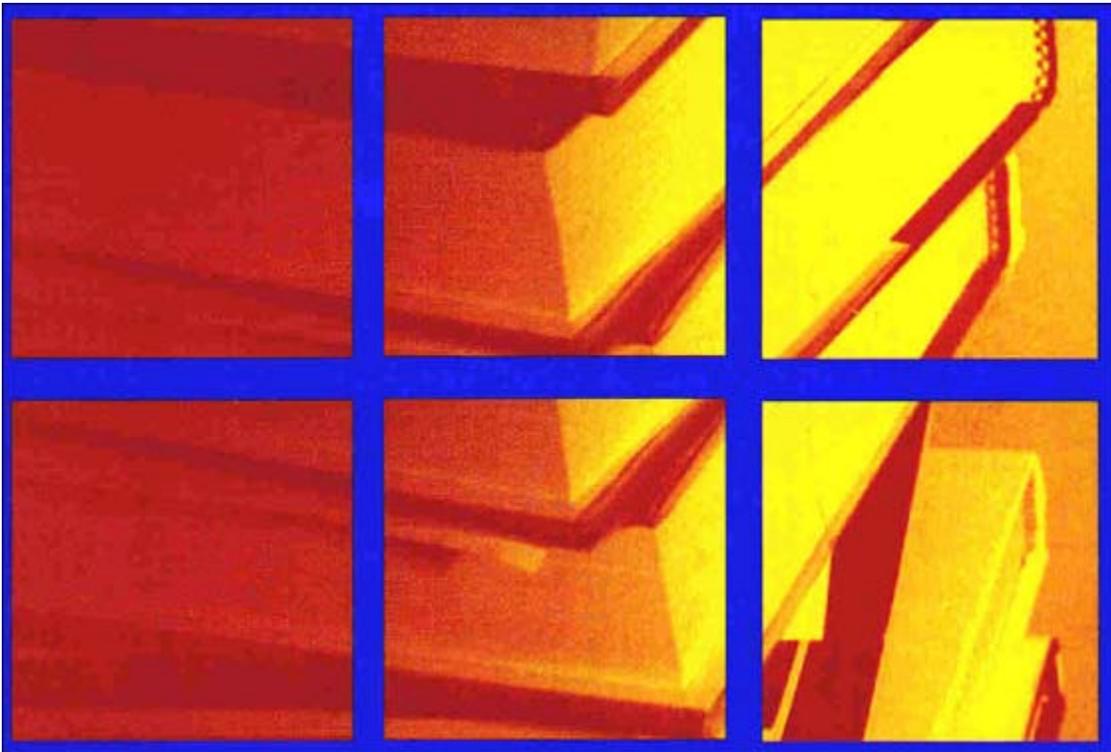
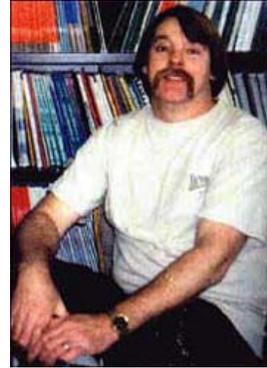
It happened again today.
I hear the cry. I can't stop crying,
and it's a little child, but he's nowhere to be seen.
I stop to listen very quietly.
Without movement frozen in time.
Where is it coming from?
I hear it all the time.
When I am sad, when I'm Lonely,
it's the child crying.
I look around and around everywhere.
There's no child anywhere to be seen.
Why oh why does this child disturb me so very much?
It's a cry for help, it's a cry of fear, it's a cry of despair.
Most of all, I hear the cry
of wanting the approval of his father.

It happened again today.
Why should I say anything?
It's like I don't exist.
Maybe I'm just the air in this room,
invisible without a voice.
They plain ignore me. I don't whisper,
sound comes from my voice in well-formed words.
I'm not mute, but it's the same over and over again.
Why should I expect any better from strangers?
When I speak to him, he doesn't hear me
He talks at me, not to me.
He is the one that caused me to be in this damn world.
Cut me, I bleed. Beat me, I hurt and cry.
I speak to be heard, so hear me
and don't shut my voice out anymore.
Hear my pain, the sadness in the heart of a child.

I never asked to come into this world.
But a negative and a positive connected,
Creation, the explosion of life.
Listen for the sound of the crushed spirit.
Silence is the whisper from his spirit:
Yes, no, I don't know, the spirit is too faint to grasp
It starts to come. I can't stop it.
I'm losing control. It fills my eyes, my vision blurs.
What is this trickling from the corner of my eyes?
Down the cheeks of a man, tears.
A sign of weakness, it shouldn't be.
I got it under control, thank God, I'm not a weakling.
Again I fought the valiant fight. I won once more.
There's such a heavy feeling in my heart.
It's no use, damn it! Just then, I hear a whisper,
"It's okay, my child."
I cry for all the children throughout the world.
The tears flow like never before, roll freely from my heart.

From my Heart & Soul

Derrick Tizzard loves writing. He says writing makes him feel happy and alive to be able to put his thoughts and feelings on paper. When his two children were small, he couldn't read them a story. He could only tell them one that he made up in his head. Since he has gone back to school and learned to read and write, his dream finally came true. He hopes you enjoy his stories. May they make you feel as good as he felt writing them for you.



Published by The Rabbittown Learner's Program Inc.
Cover Design by John Andrews

ISBN: 0-9694870-1-0