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STREET SHEET IS READER SUPPORTED, ADVERTISING FREE, AND AIMS TO LIFT UP THE VOICES OF THOSE LIVING IN POVERTY IN SAN FRANCISCO.





Martine

I was shocked, confused, bewildered, As I entered Heavens door, Not by the beauty of it all, Nor the lights or its décor.

But was the folks in heaven, Who made me sputter and gasp, The thieves, the liars, the sinners, The alcoholics and the trash.

There stood the kid from seventh grade, Who swiped my lunch money twice, Next to him was my old neighbor, Who never said anything nice.

Herb, who I always thought, Was rotting away in hell, Was sitting pretty on cloud nine, Looking incredibly well.

I nudged Jesus, "What's t the deal? I would love to hear your take, How'd all these sinners get up here? God must've made a mistake.

'And why's everyone so quiet, So sombre – give me a clue.' 'Hush, child, ' He said, ' they're all in shock, No one thought they'd be seeing you.'

#### JUDGE NOT

Remember, just going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than standing in your garage makes you a car.

Every saint has past... Every sinner has a future!

# EMBARCADERO WINTER'S TALE

**Birds** flying Bell is tolling Ghost of the Good ship Klamath Sits on the water Rolling. There are decorations **On Pine Street** Big enough to live in But the homeless Can't even find a Hole to piss in. Palm trees stand Guard saluting The flags that are Waving, But I'm in the Mood for looting Pier 27 stands There waiting For the exodus Of all those Escaping. The have-nots Stand around Fading, Waiting For someone who Can do something Worth Waiting For.

# WHAT CHRISTMAS MEANS TO ME

Christmas means different things to different people. Some are very religious, and all the expected emotions are in play. But many are like me. A church elder at a church in Reno used to call us CEOs, standing for Christmas and Easter only. I'm not really sure what the hell is happening in this universe, and I just want to enjoy the season.

If you have money, Christmas can be wonderful! I remember one Christmas when I was 7. My mom was working for Los Angeles and had moved us to Bellflower. It was great! We lived in a huge apartment complex with tons of kids. My school was just across the street, yet I still managed to be late several times. tallica and Megadeth, but she also loved Johnny Mathis. "Chances are, though you wear a silly grin" were the only words I remember.

We had a tradition where I would cook a turkey, she would make the dressing and potato salad, and the rest we would just wing it and make whatever we were in the mood for. And every year we would watch "It's A Wonderful Life.". Our favorite was the bar scene where Nick the bartender tells George, "Listen, mister, we serve hard drinks in here to men who want to get drunk fast, and we don't need no characters around to give the joint atmosphere!"

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**Detroit Richards** 

coalition. networkforgood. com

# COALITION ON Homelessness

The STREET SHEET is a project of the Coalition on Homelessness. The Coalition on Homelessness organizes poor and homeless people to create permanent solutions to poverty while protecting the civil and human rights of those forced to remain on the streets.

Our organizing is based on extensive peer outreach, and the information gathered directly drives the Coalition's work. We do not bring our agenda to poor and homeless people: they bring their agendas to us.

# STREET SHEET STAFF

The Street Sheet is a publication of the Coalition on Homelessness. Some stories are collectively written, and some stories have individual authors. But whoever sets fingers to keyboard, all stories are formed by the collective work of dozens of volunteers, and our outreach to hundreds of homeless people.

COVER ART CREDIT Hey there the name's Britt(she/ her) short for Brittany T Genius. I'm a 31 year old Black Lesbian Tattoo artist/Graphic designer from Brooklyn NY. I've Been living and creating in the Bay Area since about 2018. In my spare time I like to illustrate life in the form of comics and massive paintings. Check me out at www. BrittanyisGenius.com

Editor: Quiver Watts Assistant Editor: TJ Johnston Vendor Coordinator: Emmett House

Coalition on Homelessness

## VOLUNTEER WITH US!

PHOTOGRA-PHERS VIDEOGRAPHERS TRANSLATORS COMIC ARTISTS NEWSPAPER LAYOUT WEBSITE MAINTENANCE GRAPHIC DESIGNERS INTERNS WRITERS COPYEDITORS

### <u>DONATE</u> <u>Equipment!</u>

LAPTOPS

Our first Christmas there was perhaps the best of my life! My older sister and I had 20 presents each they covered the entire sofa! We had money that year, but most years we didn't.

Christmas can be a cold, bitter holiday when you're broke. My mom and I were both terribly abused growing up. Many in my family are cruel and abusive. We tried many years to spend the holidays with family, but my mom and I eventually just gave up and spent the holidays together, just the two of us.

So I spent the holidays with my mom. She was the perfect companion for Christmas! She was funny, sweet, and intelligent. She loved Van Halen, MeWe used to watch the entire movie. But over the years it became difficult for us to watch. George Bailey, the main character, is a very smart man who never got a fair chance at life. He has friends and family that love him, and that's really important, but so is the honest, pure ambition that made George Bailey what he was, and it was never fulfilled.

I can just imagine a 60-year-old George Bailey: His kids are all grown up, and he and his wife are tired. All of their friends are retiring, taking cruises, going to Hawaii, but they can't afford it. It's really a very sad movie pretending to be uplifting, so years ago we stopped watching it. We memorized when the bar scene started, and only watched that part.

continued on page 3..

staff also includes Jennifer Friedenbach, Jason Law, Carlos Wadkins, Miguel Carrera, Tracey Mixon, Laketha Pierce, Tyler Kyser, Ian James, Yessica Hernandez, Solange Cuba, Javier Bremond

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Waverly Walton

in the back of the bus a very fine young man with fine cornrows was asking me where he could go here in San Francisco

in Oakland all the shelters are full and here you play the lottery to get in he's destined for the street for sure

he has a bag of peanuts in their shells circus peanuts riding in the back of

the night bus in a lonely carousel

who is sung in their peanut shell?

in infinity of stories

will it be the nowhere tonight and knew no way to shelter here or in Oakland his bag of peanuts riding around

every story is a loneliness snug in its peanut shell

and me sitting here in my peanut gallery head writing this

of his face of his hand holding his bag of peanuts in their shells

in the bus rolling down to the end of the line where you used to sometimes sleep

where you hide and I seek you

Where are you?

boy with the bag of peanuts how are you?

> This is not a love poem

Thank you

## LAWRENCE Ferlinghetti DIED Virginia Barrett

Lawrence Ferlinghetti has died It's all over the internet It streams through social media feeds A great being has died But his work won't die His work is in our island minds it's in our useful musings In North Beach in his own bed he died There is no way to change it He died the death all life dies He died the death of a poet, of an artist, publisher, insurgent extraordinaire For a century his bright eyes saw what the sky sees what the ocean brings Blind in his last years He listened as humanity heaves under the weight of greed & need and left poems for us all Through the cycles in the wheel of the world There is only one Ferlinghetti The lover Death has enchanted him where once he drew her nakedness with live open strokes And stood among the flesh remains at Nagasaki a newborn poet-pacifist He has passed beyond the Golden Gate His painted vessel out of sight becoming pure light He has taken off his Lady Liberty mask he wears the infinite one the face of all expression Lawrence is on the big screen now playing in the Poetry Room He climbed the stairs a final time his office door an OPEN DOOR His voice is in the air it fills City Lights everywhere His breath is in the books between each line and word And we hear his new manifesto the sea weeps in it the birds sing in it dissidents no longer hide It is high tide and the seabirds cry The water has washed over him here by the bay in San Francisco Where a migrating whale comes early this year to weep in the sea

## Гне Соммите **[SAN FRANCISCO TO** HALF MOON BAY]

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JAN 1, 2023

SHREET

#### Virginia Barrett

Hawk in a dead tree overlooking a field where horses graze. Yesterday, a mattress

dumped on the sidewalk in front of my building; restless sleep with so much

rain. My neighbor upstairs leaves at four this morning—a guy who usually sleeps past

noon. The engine of his vintage van whirls under my window, waking me. My drive

begins near sunrise. An opposite commute they say but still, the creeping numbress

of it. What comes into view day after day we begin to hold dear—random milestones

of existence—a neon cafe sign blinking: OPEN. Like mala beads, I've come to count

on the hawk and horses. Sometimes I find no raptor, but a tiny sparrow for prayer.

In tribute to Lawrence Ferlinghetti (1919-2021), San Francisco's first poet laureate. This poem was inspired by Ferlinghetti's poem, "Allen

#### TO ALL OF MY SUPPORTERS

Ginsberg Dying.'

to sing in the sea A deep sonar song sonorous waves

Lawrence

sounding through us

they call

Lawrence

Much love Waverly

continued from page 2... The other tradition? My mom watched "A Christmas Carol." She kept trying to get me to watch it with her, but I never did. It just seemed boring, so I would blast metal, my favorite kind of music, with my headphones on.

My mom died last year at the age of 76. We both thought she would live to be 100. I never did get around to watching "A Christmas Carol" with her, and I really regret that.

I recently moved. It's a tiny studio, but in a nice neighborhood with good and kind people, the

kind of people that make this dreary world livable. My mom was like that—she would have loved this neighborhood!

So this Christmas is different for me. It's sad, it's lonely, and it's isolating.

I've never experienced romantic love. Every try has been a painful disaster. This time of year is really hard for that reason as well. I'm one of those hopeless romantics you hear so much about. My mom and I also had that in commonreally nice women who are constantly being hurt. When she reached her 50s she just gave up. I'm 53, and I sort of feel the same. I'm gonna give this roller coaster ride just a few more tries before I get off. And I think I'm feeling the same about Christmas. But I have a home now. I can't even imagine being homeless on Christmas in this city!

Many of us have given up on Christmas. Just another dream sold to the naive, like me. I think I'm gonna start a new tradition. Every Christmas I'm going to write an article about my thoughts on Christmas. Maybe one day that article won't be a sad one.

# WE RESIST

Wear black Fight back We resist Being surrounded by cars Wear black Fight back We resist Aggressors dressed the same Wear black Fight back We resist The sight of their guns Wear black Fight back We resist Harassment @ lst sight Wear black Fight back We resist Being punked into surrendering Wear black Fight back We resist The bark of their guns Wear black Fight back We resist Falling dead on concrete Wear black Fight back We resist Being driven to the morgue Wear black Fight back We resist Being planted in the boneyard Wear black Fight back We resist Watching families grieve Wear black Fight back We resist Watching many tears fall Wear black Fight back We resist Any more community deaths Wear black Fight back We resist Any more night rides on Blacks Wear black Fight back We resist Because it serves us to preserve us Wear black Fight back We resist Because our lives count, any amount Wear black Fight back We resist On a special day Wear black Fight back We resist Every October 22nd Wear black

#### Dee Allen

Fight back We resist Beyond this I day Wear black Fight back We resist The stereotypical criminal profile Wear black Fight back We resist

Brutality from the police—

W: 10.22.22

# MONITOR

Light shined on my path Radiating from one Black Dell© Laptop computer monitor. Curiosity took hold Of my fingers, Tapping the keyboard, Hand on mouse, Following the light's source.

Meeting I.D. And then

Passcode And then

White waiting room And then

The light I sought Manifested as 40 poets Inside squares On screen. My element, My people, My audience.



Only a coward Attacks people Only a coward Insecure in hims Loads an ammo To his person Only a Coward To be certain Lacking the last Disregards free To sacrifice the And spill the blo Of a community That thrives on

Only a Coward Immortalized in Another mass g Infamous for a p A Coward afraid of change

Only a coward Marks off the ci Hides behind a The press ask for Only a coward f Wont say yet If the crime was Only a Coward Denies the obvi To gaslight and The abuses they The news Hoping to spin a So they wont ne People LGBTQ

l adore This light I discovered. The light Adores me in return. With each Line I exhale, Stanza I spit, Into the monitor, Into the Zoom© room. Claps, snaps & emoticons.

W: 11.9.22

Disgus-ted with Myself for feelin By So Many Cov With itchy trigg Playing Call of E Like it was Call Splitting torsos, In plain sight Our backyards Soaked in the b Only a Coward Enlists terror Against those th

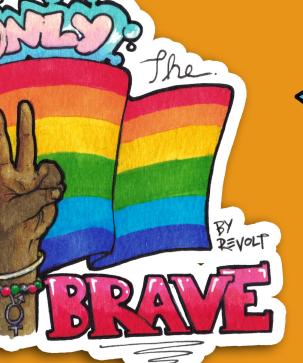
Only the Brave

Only the Brave

Stay their resolv Against a genoc

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**STREET** 



## POEMS BY REVOLT REVOLTRIGHTNOW-COM

for loving differently

elf belt and straps an assault rifle

straw of common sense dom and all it meant innocent ood

tolerance

another headline rave pointless crime of terror

time scene PR desk or a statement they'd make funded to protect

motivated by hate

ous perpetuate v oversee

a headline eed to support Designed to eradicate Them for being The only way they could ever be

Only the brave Kings and Drag Queens Explore beyond the perversions of binary Hetero-normative One Size Fits All Meet the Beavers reboot Cookie cut plastic Mean Girls Fuckbois Juicy butt Frat flake alpha male Hero; slut Secret; ashamed **Submissive** Lust, look like GQ magazine Or a Penthouse pinup gripped in the endless Monotony of a Patriarchy Christian rightwing theocracy But

Only the Brave Challenge the mold Without weapons to hold But fly Rainbows flags across gates that are gold Reminding all people Young, old That they. belong. here. Everyone has someones hand they can hold Diversity and celebrate With parades and glitter Dance and fashion Uniqueness In all its fantastic compassion

Only the brave Can leave a closet To begin a new life

Nothing gets me hornier fast then to see your fine ass wearing a mask black garters in lingerie socks that are knee-high don't get me aroused like an N95 :) Let's dip back to my pad to do things wild and obscene after you flashing the card that says you got the vaccine! Might be afraid to socialize; call me chicken or rooster but I'd love to meet your two breasts if they come with a booster! Safe sex ain't nothing less than condoms I keep in my wallet all it tells me is you care about safety a compassionate being to acknowledge other medical needs makes this cripple weak at the knees like I wasn't already checking my breath I'll freshen up with a mint after your negative test the free one from Biden I'd love to just slide in your DMs so you'll be scratching my back to give me scars in the nude instead of SARS-2 making boo boos and ouchies tie me up with a whip while I scream, "Anthony Fauci!" <3

The cases are down, but baby I'm up let's shelter in place with my hips to your waist pulsing with love Down about Covid? I'll read you erotic poems by Ovid sexting you up so good you won't care that ain't nothing open! PPE excites my pp and you're super fine gimme a sign but not if you out maskless catching Covid one nine I'ma pass on that for like a couple of weeks after that hmu and maybe we can get back to knocking the knees I get horny to see you avoiding Omicron make me come out the shower and drop my robe like I was Obi-Wan resurfacing later sometime around noon to do it again after your meeting on Zoom I'm naked most days now lifting weights in the back nothing gets me hotter than when you're wearing a mask!

g numb wards er fingers and thumbs Outy of the Reich limbs with artillery

and playgrounds lood of our friends

hat serve no threat to him

/e idal machine In unfamiliar and often hostile territory Recite and uplift A generation in step For the first time in thousands of years Humans beings learning how to accept

Only the brave Can spot A coward Who can't accept what is unique To tackle he who distributes death With mechanized ease Disarming a butcher So that others may still breathe

Only the Brave At Club Q November 20, 2022 In Colorado Springs

## JAN 1, 2023

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On my 53 birthday my soul is so dry, as I fight the temptation to forever close my eyes.

The choking frustration, the bitter cold of reality

The unmistakable fear of coming calamity.

What in the world must I have been, in a previous life that so did me in.

Well if this life is nothing but a punishment, then God please end it now, hang my head like an ornament

# SHE

She sits on a corner Of a frozen, Dirty street, Sign in hand,

"Homeless, Hungry, Please Help"

Surrounded by Piles of bags Meant to Keep the Monsters at bay

The monsters Who avoid Her eyes, Ignoring her plea.

Some spout Venom, Their faces Contorted, hateful

And others, Only she Can feel, And see.

# **SPEAK THE OCEAN**

Speak the ocean, He said to me, On a bright, And sunny Summer's day

He didn't recognize The woman that Accompanied him, And he didn't care.

There's no happiness Like lovers lost In a dream, their Ignorance, bliss.

I surrender to the Calmness of the Mediterranean sea As it takes me home.

# SHUFFLE SOMEBODY'S SON Jan Steckel

Lisa Willis

#### Andy Howard

Prisons are the Temples where Devils learn to Play Honing **Skills of Deviance** with Each waking Day

Every Time we turn the key We twist the knife of fate

Because every time we Cage Α man We Close Him in with Hate

If the man is strong enough to leave the cage filled with love Vs Hate

> there is a chance He will accomplish something great.

And that is How

His toes flowered out of the busted shoes, long curling nails, peeling skin, ripe and bursting into decay. He had fastened cardboard shields around his feet with strapping tape.

He lay on the sidewalk asleep among bags of his belongings. I stood over him, half my hamburger and a handful of fries in a cardboard box, but I didn't want to wake him.

My husband said he'd give him his own shoes, but I saw they wouldn't fit the swollen feet. I wanted to wash those feet, cut the nails, slide them into soft slippers.

I imagined sitting the man up against the chain link fence, feeding him something warm, building him a tiny house. Instead I walked away and wrote about it.

### **MY AMERI** for G. L. Morrison Jan Steckel

Because no one should have to choose between helping a friend and paying the rent.

A woman in a wheelchair shouldn't worry where her next meal's coming from. Not in my America.

Virtual rent parties are fine, but why should she have to throw one? What are my taxes going for, anyway?

Seven-year-old tried to sell his stuffed bear for food on the street. Seriously? In my America?

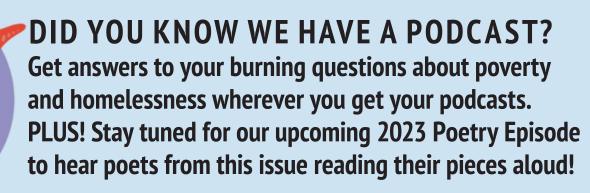


# Johanna Elattar

Society shuffles with fate

Policeman took the child out for lunch while his partner went to the house, found more kids who hadn't eaten for days.

Because no one should have to choose between their teddy bear and food. Not in my America.





SCAN ME

https://www.streetsheet.org/street-speak-podcast/

## Final Form (dedicated to mark major) By Cancer

My ultimate form is a piece of trash in the street (not everything is a groundscore) find me pick me up twist me into a new style stop crying like some rich girl and smoke this door.

Find me discarded in a puddle of water in it next to me is the chillest pigeon ive ever seen.

... groundscore!

El Joker

Anonymos

#5(contranym) Done the day?

He asked with a slight downward nod both hands palm down on the invisible table in front or him, he continued into the liquor store.

Tostilocos please.

her hands parted slid across some invisible floating panel above the counter and she slightly nodded her head downward.

uhh yes please ( i know so many words in spanish i hafta pull a finger outta my nose to count them all.)

4 more essentials: Pero Guerro Pinche Flaca

# WHAT I WANTED TO TELL YOU

I've been emotional Allowing the chemicals Inside and outside of me To manage me Pull my strings Make me dance Dance baby dance With fleeting thoughts Uncontrollable Unsustainable Untraceable To their point of origin I can see them Racing around Like rats in a maze Match my emotions Fueled by the toxicity They've lost their way And somehow The moment passes And my actions Speak louder Than the megaphone Of my heart And I'll never get to say What I wanted to tell you I can't seem to say What I wanted to tell you



# VULNERABILITY

My life growing up wasn't all peaches and cream, Aaone Enosa I was told to be silent about abuse done to me! How dare you shut me up when you know you are wrong, God gave me a mouth to speak on how you raised both me and my son. It's not Christian like to tell me stop when you are holding grudges, God gave me a gift to write my story so I'm sorry if I'm pushing your buttons. That's unfair for you but it's fair for me and God, Pleasing Him is my priority I don't need no side talk! You're worried about what other think and I'm worried about healing, Maybe you should consider opening up and stop bottling up your feelings. My children deserve to know the truth of their neglect, I was deep in my alcohol addiction that I painfully regret. The Lord is my witness I started drinking because of you, I have feelings and I have the right to stop this madness and expose the truth. God intervened in my life to be an inspiration to younger generations, My experience in the past can make a difference in people's lives and true motivation! God blessed me with the gift to write, I have to express what's on my mind. Writing is how I cope, Instead of isolating myself and mope. You suggest I find another hobby, What's wrong with writing it makes me happy! No one can take away what God bestowed on me as a gift and a talent! My purpose is glorifying the Lord of His goodness despite my menace! I feel victorious of how God delivered me, The road is tough but that's when faith comes in. The world needs my voice to encourage and empower, It starts with me first by carefully taking the road that's narrow! I am doing the footwork to live for Christ, It's hard but it's possible with God on my side! My apology Dad if I hurt your feelings, My feelings are valid I wish you know their meaning! I don't see nothing wrong with exposing you at all, You should be proud of me that I'm coming up strong!

CLOSED CHURCH DOORS as they make their way

into the church doors all dressed in their finery

ignoring the poor

don't they realize 'tis jesus they seek

can't you see him

'tis jesus you seek

and it is he

and he can be found

dying on their streets

it's him on your cold concrete streets

dying from hunger and neglect

dying outside your church doors?

in the poorest of the poor

the poorest of the poor

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JAN 1, 2023

Judy Joy Jones



JAN 1, 2023



CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS!

We are currently accepting submissions and pitches from Black writers, poets, comic artists, and creators for this annual issue of **Street Sheet. Accepted submissions** eligible for a stipend!

Submit in person, at StreetSheet.org or by email to qwatts@cohsf.org by January 20th to be included!

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# SAN FRANCISCO! SEE AN EEP? REPORT PS://FORMS.GLE/FSUGKK1TEUVK7FLW6

#### V. CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, Plaintiffs' motion for a preliminary injunction is granted as follows:

I. Defendants are preliminary enjoined from enforcing or threatening to enforce, or using California Penal Code section 148(a) to enforce or threaten to enforce, the following laws and ordinances to prohibit involuntarily homeless individuals from sitting, lying, or sleeping on public property:

California Penal Code section 647(e)

www.cohsf.org streetsheetsf@gmail.com Coalition On Homelessness San Francisco, CA 94102 280 Turk Street 415.346.3740

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



- California Penal Code section 370
- California Penal Code section 372
- San Francisco Police Code section 168
- San Francisco Police Code section 169

This preliminary injunction shall remain effective as long as there are more homeless individuals in San Francisco than there are shelter beds available.

Defendants are preliminarily enjoined from violating San Francisco's bag and tag II. policy as embodied in DPW Procedure No. 16-05-08 (REV 03).

IT IS SO ORDERED. Dated: December 23, 2022

