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Words Uncaged
(Short Story)

Enemy's Eyes (Revise)

Standing in the hot heat under the scorched sun and breathing in the dry desert air, a youngster and I were having a conversation. In our Blues with "CDCR PRISONER" in bright yellow letters down our right legs and across our backs, our conversation got a bit loud. But, not loud enough that we would catch the attention of the numerous living dead roaming the prison yard, with their blank stares. As I was making my point to the youngster with shaved head, tattoo on his neck representing his neighborhood and Murder 1 dark sunglasses, I caught, out of the corner of my eye, four correctional officers approaching us.

"Turn around and spread 'em," said a veteran officer with his worn down leather skin. We assumed the position. Taking his time, he slowly took out a pair of blue latex glove, large in size. As he pulled them on, he snickered to his younger colleagues, "First lesson, fellas, when you pat these scums down, always put on your glove. You don't know what you will catch from these dirty mother-f@#\$s." They gave a laugh. The officer began his pat down starting from my head, with his pat, squeeze, rub and cup. Over two decades of this and thousands of pat down, and yet, I still felt icky, dirty, somehow violated, especially when he cupped my genitals.

The demon within, the one I struggled everyday to put a leash on, howled, and I began to merge with it. Temper rose and rage violently erupted. The demon wanted me to unleash him, the violence, slowly getting its way. I searched for anything that could save me, to hold onto myself. And there, a word began to appear and then another. Words began to slip out of the depth of my mind. Words that I could hold on to, twisted, turned and placed in any sequence or arrangement I chose. These words were like my lifeline, because I was being consumed by the ever-growing demon, as the officer slowly disrespected and violated me with his intrusive pat down. If I allowed it, there was no more second chance, no more life and I will be just another walking dead roaming the yard aimlessly. So, for the life of me, I grabbed and turned those random words into a poem that expressed my humiliations, hurts and pains. My life saving poem went:

*When you look into my eyes,
What do you see?
Do you see evil lurking the night,
Waiting for a chance to steal and kill
All that is life.
Hiding behind Darkness and
Fleeing at first light.*

*When you look into my eyes,
What do you see?
Do you see a heart that's mold,
A demon, a murder in every fold,
Waiting for opportunities
To do Murder cold.*

*When you look into my eyes,
What do you see?
Something that disgusts you?
Fears you?
Hates you?
Yet, how can you be sure,
If you don't even know me?
And how can you know me,*

*If you don't even try?
For how can you try,
If you don't open your eyes.
I turned around, and we locked eyes.
So when you look into my eyes
What do you see?*

“Alright scumbags, back to your cages, you dog eating gooks” the old veteran laughed. Tossing aside his blue latex gloves.

*It's only when you cease to look at me
Through eyes of an enemy,
Is when you really see Me.*

“Yes, Sir.” I smiled.