

Sun. April 24, 1988
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Martinez Detention Facility
Module "F" RM 32
Martinez, CAL

Dear Angelia,

"Let Light, and Love, and Power..." The stream of Santana flowing through the bars of the Prince of the World, carrying away the treasured, hoarded refuse. As simple as rain. Blessed are the poor in spirit, the empty-handed.

(It's noisy in here. Everyone talking at once. Emptyjive, bangcrash, MTV. "Attention on the Facility, The Count is Clear repeating The Count is Clear")

"You in here again?" I ~~nod~~ nod my head and smile. "Whatchu doin'?" "Blocking munitions trucks" "Different strokes..." the reply ends in a nod and a smile... The ~~conv~~ conversation dissolves into the din from which it springs, no ending, no beginning.

Its like a house, a lighted house, my life. Look here. The foundation, unmoving since it was first laid down. Doors open and shut, windows raise and lower, lights come on and off, cupboards fill and empty, floors resound and sag, walls creak in the wind. Only the foundation remains unmoving in its embrace of the Mutter Earth. True the path is like a journey, with a beginning, a middle, and an end. But so also the way is like a house with a foundation and walls and a roof, all composed of the ONE; out of Timeless stuff; out of Timelessness Itself. And the light which pours from the windows is only the shadow of The Light.

I look up. A metal grate perforated with a pattern of oval holes covers two slit windows of grimy glass. I put my eye to the grate. BAIL BONDS 372-5355 greets me from a red awning. ("ALL THE ~~LADIES~~ LADIES IN ICEHO AND ROOMS THIRTY-FIVE THRU THIRTY-EIGHT. ITS TIME TO EAT")

I dream of a hologram, every particle carrying the same image: the illusion of differentiation. I awaken empty handed, Spirit in poor thee are blessed. Power and Love and Light Let in.

start again. ("Ladies on the bunks, come down on the A side")
How do I begin? Describe the music I heard? No, before that.
A warm corner on the rug, the window, cleverly positioned
(the sound of a key in the lock, I turn. My roommate has
already left, I go out to see. Chicken soup, peanut butter sandwiches,
Kool-aid, and an orange. No thanks. I return) by some
unknown builder to catch the winter light which spills
past the trees and onto the floor. Books all around. Books
and light and color and warmth and a large lap covered
with a floral dress. And thirty three years later I cry
for that lap I lost so long ago only to become; forever,
Angelia, my friend, of course I am in prison.

We are all in prison, born into prison, squeezed
into prison through a small opening between our
mother's legs. The walls, thick, high, woven
Maya, the maze through which we run. But
here, in the Martinez Detention Facility, I am among
those who know we are in prison - it's an
enormous relief to come here, honestly.

There are cracks in the wall.

If you get close enough you can see through
to the real world. But to get that close, you
have to first admit the walls exist,

Really.

"Those whom heaven helps we call the sons of heaven. They do not learn by learning.
They do not work it by working. They do not reason by using reason. To let
understanding stop at what cannot be understood is a high attainment.
Those who cannot do it will be destroyed on the lathe of heaven."

Love,

Chuang Tse XXIII

quoted by Ursula LeGuin in
"The Lathe of Heaven"