

SUBMISSION By:
RANDY A. WATTERSON
July 16, 2020

WHAT IS LEFT?

AFTER YOUR CRIMINAL CONVICTION AND THE STEEL DOORS
SLAM SHUT BEHIND YOU,

WHAT IS LEFT?

AFTER YEARS OF BEING LOCKED IN, LOCKED OUT AND THE LOCK UPS
IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT,

WHAT IS LEFT?

AFTER YEARS OF WEARING HAND CUFFS, WAIST CHAINS AND LEG IRONS
THAT BURN AND CHAP YOUR SKIN AS WELL AS YOUR DIGNITY,

WHAT IS LEFT?

AFTER WRITING THOUSANDS OF LETTERS POURING OUT YOUR HEART AND
SOUL WITH NO REPLY,

WHAT IS LEFT?

AFTER THE CONSTANT SQUELCH OF WALKIE TALKIES, THUNDERING
UNINTELLIGIBLE PRISON INTERCOM ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND THE PITIFUL
SCREAMS AND ANGUISH OF SUFFERING MEN,

WHAT IS LEFT?

AFTER THE LOSS OF YOUR FREEDOM, YOUR JOB, YOUR FRIENDS,
YOUR SIGNIFICANT OTHER, ~~AND YOUR PARENTS~~ AND YOUR PARENTS,

WHAT IS LEFT?

AFTER YOUR DIGNITY HAS BEEN WITHHELD AS PRIVILEGE AND
YOU FEEL YOUR MORALITY SLIPPING AWAY,

WHAT IS LEFT?

AFTER LIVING IN THE MEMORIES OF YOUR PAST DAY AFTER DAY,
MONTH AFTER MONTH, YEAR AFTER YEAR JUST TO ESCAPE THIS
FLUORESCENT CONCRETE HELL,

WHAT IS LEFT?

AFTER YEARS OF PENT UP FRUSTRATION, SOLITARY CONFINEMENT,
DISAPPOINTMENT AND SILENT TEARS THAT STAIN YOUR PILLOW IN
THE NIGHT,

WHAT IS LEFT?

AFTER BEING STABBED, ROBBED, EXTORTED, DEHUMANIZED, FRIGHTENED
AND VICTIMIZED BY THE PRISON GANGS,

WHAT IS LEFT?

AFTER THE GOON SQUADS IN MILITARY FATIGUES RAID YOUR CELL
DISRUPTING AND DESTROYING YOUR FAMILY PHOTO'S, SACRED WRITINGS
AND LEGAL DOCUMENTS,

WHAT IS LEFT?

AFTER YEARS OF BEING RIDICULED, BULLIED, LAUGHED AT, PEPPER
SPRAYED, BEATEN WITH BILLY STICKS, HOUSED IN DANGEROUS BULLPENS
AND THE BULLSHIT, AND BEING IGNORED,

WHAT IS LEFT?

AFTER YEARS OF BEING PUBLICLY SHAMED, AND STEREOTYPED AS
INCORRIGIBLE DANGEROUS VILLAINS BY PRISON OFFICIALS AND RICH
SELFISH POLITICIANS,

WHAT IS LEFT?

AFTER THE RAZOR WIRE, CONCRETE WALLS AND THE ENDLESS BARS BECOME
FOREVER TATOOED IN YOUR MIND AND ACROSS THE HUMAN HEART,

WHAT IS LEFT?

AFTER THE TEARS AND DISAPPOINTMENTS, AFTER THE LONELY PERPETUAL ISOLATION, AFTER THE CUT WRISTS AND HEAVY NOOSE,
WHAT IS LEFT?

AFTER YOUR COMMISSARY KISSES ARE GONE AND YOU RUN OUT OF SWEETS AND AFTER ALL OF THE HUSSLES HAVE BEEN HUSTLED,
WHAT IS LEFT?

LIKE AFTER YOU REALIZE THAT YOUR FAMILY, THE PUBLIC, THE JUDGE, AND EVEN GOD CANT OR WONT ANSWER YOUR PRAYERS, AFTER YOU KNOW THE SHRINK IS A PUSHER, AND THAT THE WORLD IS A COLD CALLOUS UNFORGIVING WHIP,
WHAT IS LEFT?

AFTER YOU LEARN THE COURTS, THE POLICE AND PROSECUTORS ALL WEAR THE DEADLY BADGE OF A BIGOT,
WHAT IS LEFT?

AFTER YOU KNOW THAT THOSE AROUND YOU WHO COMMITTED SUICIDE FINALLY FOUND PEACE, AFTER YOU REALIZE THAT SILENCE IS TALKING, AND BEYOND THE WALLS OF SOLITARY CONFINEMENT, OUTSIDE AND INSIDE ARE JUST AN ILLUSION,
WHAT IS LEFT?

I MEAN, LIKE WHERE IS THE SUN? WHERE ARE HER WARM ARMS AND WHERE ARE HER SOFT KISSES? THERES NOTHING BUT SADNESS, HOPELESSNESS AND CORONA VIRUS AROUND ME. I AM SEARCHING!
WHAT IS LEFT?

I MEAN, LIKE STARING WITH HUNGRY EYES AT FREEDOM BEHIND THE CRUEL LIMELITE OF REALITY, PATIENTLY AND SILENTLY,
WHAT IS LEFT?

I MEAN, LIKE WHEN YOU BECOME THE BROKEN WING OF A BUTTERFLY THAT CAN NO LONGER ENJOY THE WIND, WHEN THE COLORS OF A FLOWER MEAN NOTHING, ALL THAT IS LEFT IS A FOOT ON YOUR NECK AND THE SONG THAT YOU SING IS PART OF A SAD ECHO,
WHAT IS LEFT?

I MEAN LIKE, WHAT IS LOVE? I AM SURROUNDED BY NEVER ENDING HATE, VIOLENCE AND PAIN. IS MY MIND A MACHINE GUN? IS MY HEART A HACKSAW? CAN MY WORDS MAKE FREEDOM REAL? WHY DO I WRITE?
WHAT IS LEFT?

I AM AT THE BEGINNING OR THE END OF SOMETHING. I AM IN LOVE WITH LOSERS, ANGER, AND PSYCHOTIC LAUGHTER. I AM IN LOVE WITH ONLY FREEDOM AND THE REVOLUTION. LOVE IS MY SWORD AND TRUTH IS MY COMPASS.
WHAT IS LEFT?

FOR LOST IS MY MIND SILENT BY DAWN, LOVES AWAY STOLEN AND MY HURT IS LONG, SO ASK ME NO QUESTIONS, SING ME NO SONGS, FOLLOW ME NOWHERE UNLESS YOU CAN ANSWER MY POEM. SO,
WHAT IS LEFT?

by: RANDY A. WATTERSON
#0427985
527 Commerce Drive
ELIZABETH CITY, N.C. 27909