

GUANTANAMO

Poem

By [Gary Corseri](#)

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[Tom Paine's Corner](#) 8 July 2007

Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#)

Scratching their poems on styrofoam cups,
The orange jumpsuits pass them along,
Under the scorched-out Cuban sun, through bars,
Telling themselves—and reminding the world—
They are men, and this Inquisition
Also must pass, this auto da fe,
Flushed down history's manhole,
Must bring shame in the Later Years
When men and women re-tell the past—
La Conquista, the Crusades, the Slaughter
Of the Innocents—all the lost causes.

There in the cups, drops of Christ's blood
Appear out of nowhere, mingle with the tears
Of God, of Mohammed—the shepherd boys
Tending their flocks, dreaming under white-hot stars.
What distant fires illuminate their lives

On what worlds reaching beyond this hothouse?

Here is grief and love and hatred mixed
In bitter cups to be drunk at once
Tossing the head back carelessly; here is
The taste of this world—what we have become.
Does it go down easy, cause revulsion,
Trip-wire the memory? Does anything
Ever come to anything more than a dream
Of home, struggle, certainties of Truth,
A mother's, father's, lover's, friend's or child's embrace?

Gary Corseri has posted/published work at Cyrano'sJournalOnline, ThomasPaine'sCorner, DissidentVoice, CounterPunch, CommonDreams, The New York Times, Village Voice, The Digest and over 200 other venues worldwide. He can be reached at garycorseri@gmail.com.

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