

# In Front of God and Everybody

by Kennard, age 11

*A young boy faces facts when his  
mother willingly gives him up to  
state custody*



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*In front of God and Everybody* is the collected thoughts of a young man who has moved through a lot of emotional turmoil to find something more than anger and resentment . . . something greater, that can only grow from deeply planted faith. Kennard is collecting the information he needs to leave behind the destructive choices of past generations and “be somebody”.

“Kennard, you *already are* somebody . . . somebody whose optimism, inner beauty, faith and determination makes you somebody I am honored to know”.

Carol Priour  
Expressive Arts Director  
Hill Country Youth Ranch



## I SEE MYSELF

I see myself on a stage someday  
Thanking all the people for coming  
“To hear me sing today”.

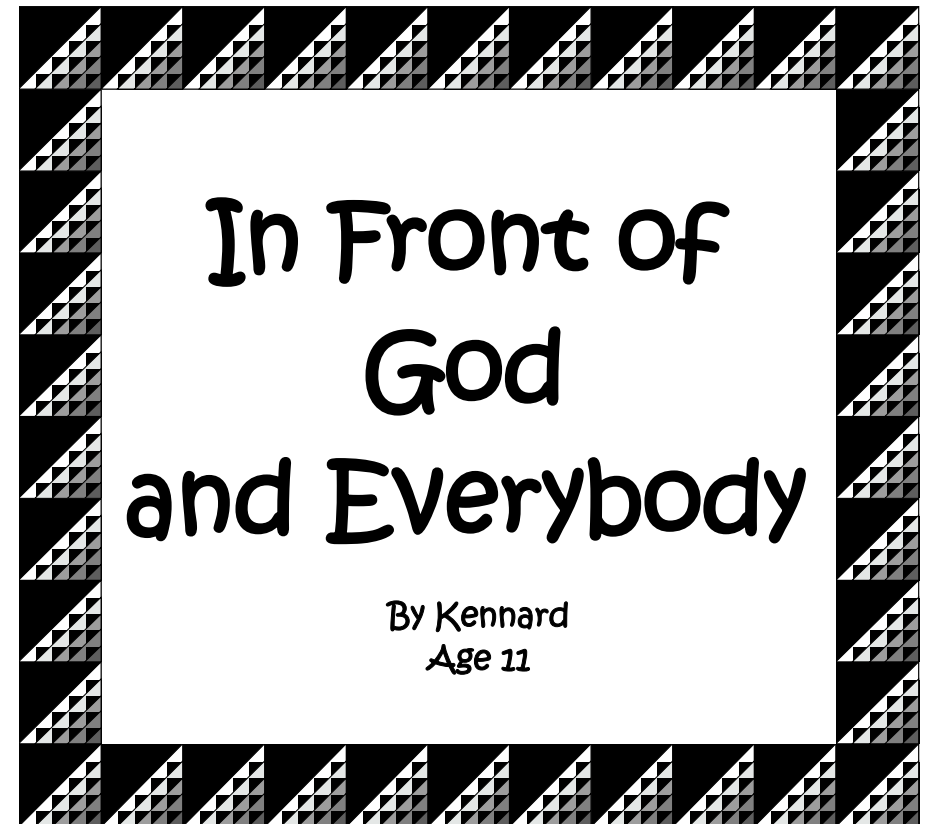
I feel it deep inside, so it must be  
What God who sees the future  
Has planned for me.

Mama sang to me when I was small  
But she lost her right to sing one day  
When she chose to go the wrong way.

I want to keep my voice  
So I'll be careful with my choice.

Someday I'll be somebody, you can bet  
I'll be singing every chance I get

I'll be singing  
In front of God and everybody.





When I sing  
I go to another world  
Where people are kind  
And love each other.  
When I go there  
I am somebody . . .  
I am a star.

## I AM A STAR

When I sing  
It takes me to another  
world  
Where there are  
No mothers in prison  
Or robberies  
Or ugly words  
Or streets with wars.



## IN FRONT OF GOD AND EVERYBODY

You told the court  
*Right in front of God and everybody*  
“I will not keep him, I can’t take care of him”.  
Just like that.  
You were gone.

MAMA!  
DON’T YOU KNOW  
THAT GOD HEARD THAT?  
DON’T YOU CARE?

I believe  
That children are a gift from God.  
God gave you *ten children*  
And you just pushed us all aside.  
Just like that.  
We were gone.

MAMA!  
DON’T YOU KNOW  
THAT GOD SAW THAT?  
DON’T YOU CARE?

## GOD SEES

God sees tomorrow.  
He sees everything  
We have ever done.  
He sees trees blowing.  
He sees the wind and the sun.  
And He sees all His people  
Every day.

. . . He sees all His people  
Sharing love  
Keeping love inside  
Giving love  
And taking love away.



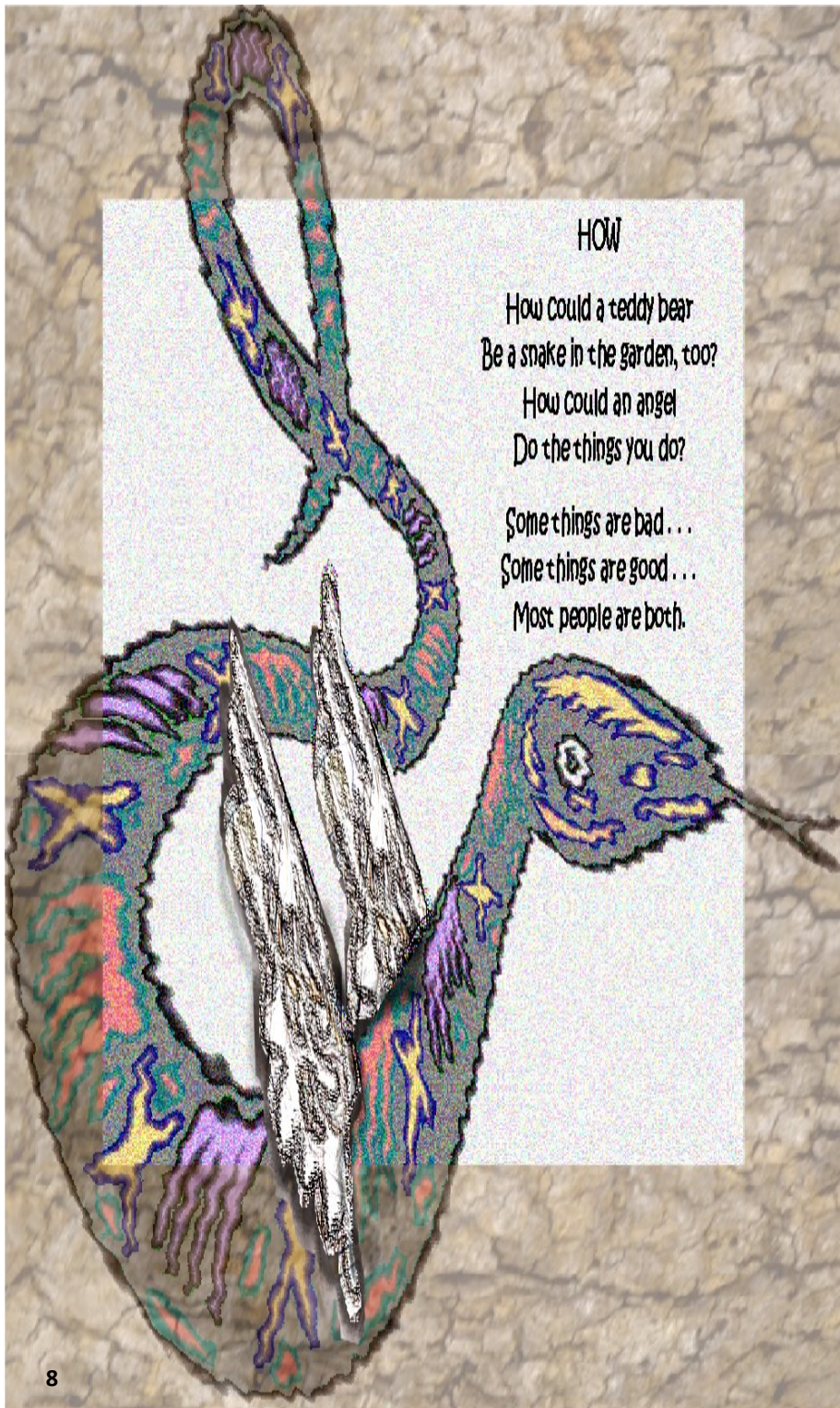
## LION IN A CAGE

You sit there alone in jail  
Like a lion in a cage  
Away from the jungle  
Where a lion wants to be.

Maybe this will be enough  
To make you see  
What losing you  
Felt like to me.







### HOW

How could a teddy bear  
Be a snake in the garden, too?

How could an angel  
Do the things you do?

Some things are bad . . .  
Some things are good . . .  
Most people are both.

## MAMA IN PRISON

I saw Mama there in prison  
Like a bird with cats all around-  
Cats who would pounce on her  
If she tried to fly or move at all.  
She was so big and me so small . . .  
Time . . . has moved slowly since then.

I wanted to tell her,  
But I didn't get the chance,  
That having my Mama in jail  
Is like losing your rhythm  
When you need *so bad* to dance.

"Mama, I'm thinking of you.  
You are a butterfly in a spider's web. . . .  
Sometimes I am, too".



SOMEDAY

How Could she  
Forget agout me  
So easily?

There's no place  
She can go  
Where no one will know; . . .  
God is everywhere  
He will always be there

Someday she will have to say  
WHY . . . Why she went away.  
Someday.

## THE CHOICE

Mama, I'm asking God  
To take you a message. . .

I'm asking God to tell you in my voice  
That I love you *no matter what*,  
When you win and when you lose.  
Of course, I know what you do  
with your own life  
is your choice . . .

But could you *please think* about  
Changing the things you choose?

## FOR GOD'S SAKE

I don't understand  
Why people fight  
And hurt each other  
And lie and steal.

God gave everyone a brain  
To use instead  
Of guns and fists and ugly words.  
If everyone just will.

FOR GOD'S SAKE  
We all need to think  
Before we lie and hurt and steal.  
Before we kill.