

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”.

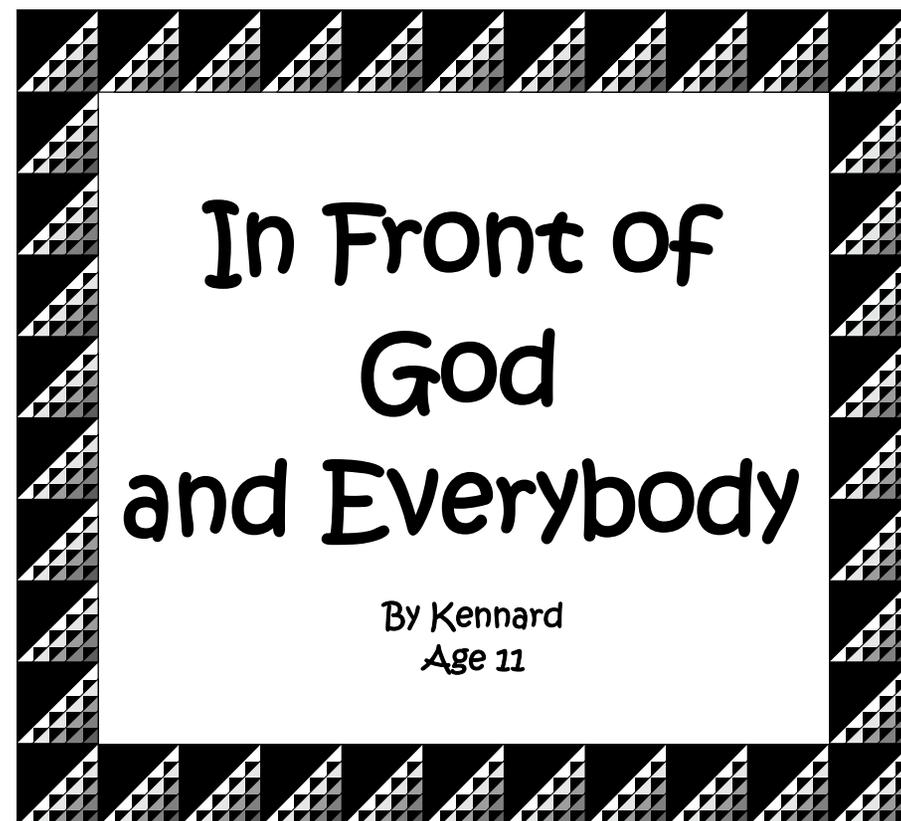
I feel it deep inside, so it must be
What God who sees the future
Has planned for me.

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.

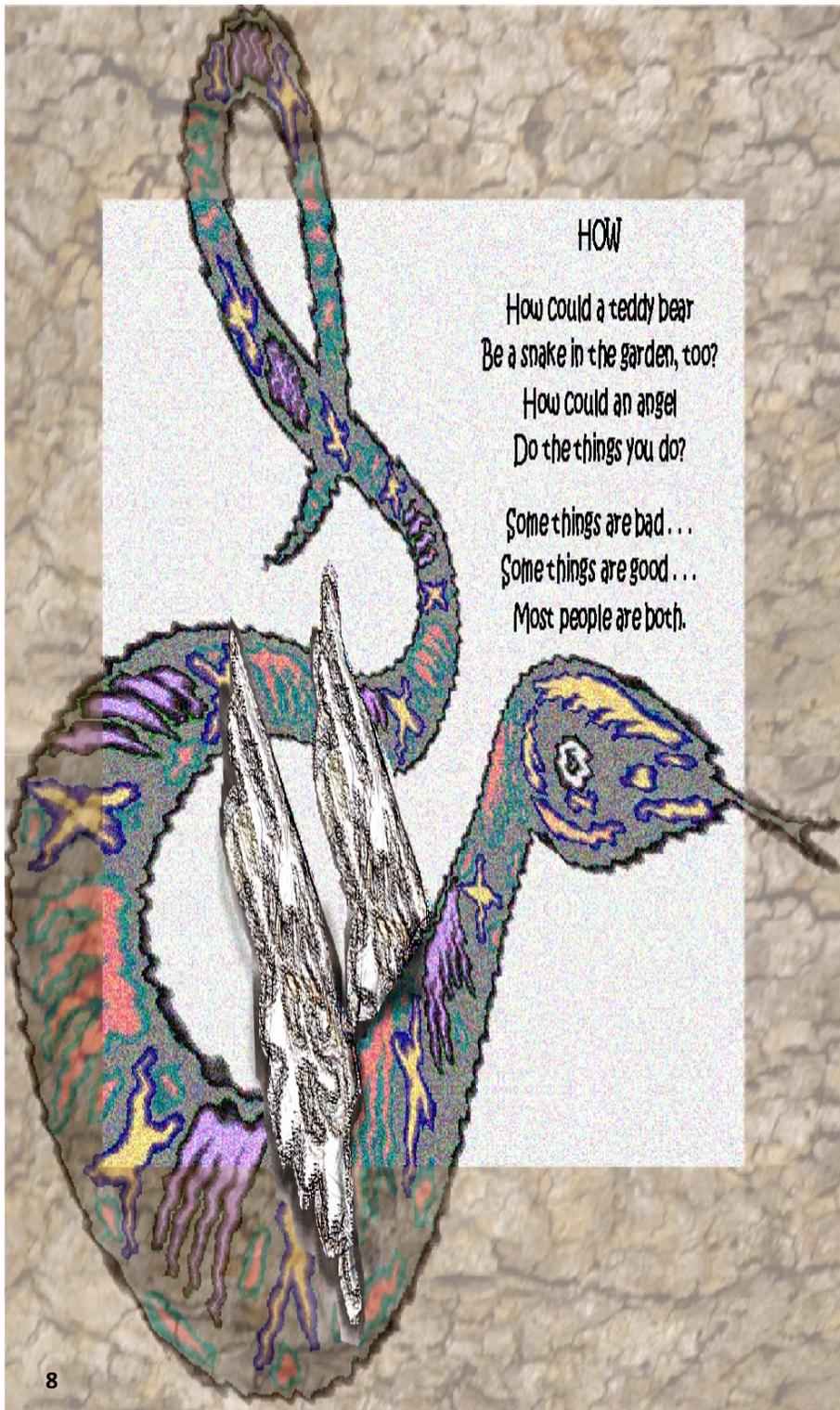


LION IN A CAGE

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.