

Poetry Series

Atsiylah Atty Garfinkel
- poems -

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Atsiylah Atty Garfinkel()

I was born, I lived hard, loved ones died, and I wrote and performed. I am a woman, a friend, a daughter, a sister, a mother, a poet, a lobbyist, a political junkie and a naturalist. I am me.

Baruch Atah Adonai.

A Holocaust

</>Imagine if you will, a people condemned to die.
Imagine oppressors, vile and beastly creatures.
Imagine innocent children asking simply 'Why? '

People hiding as soldiers search for each one.
They hide in homes and outdoors, even in waste.
'Children don't make a sound, here they come.'

The mothers are raped as children hide.
The fathers are beaten and shot in the street
The survivors watch as their hope slowly died.

The aggressors are one race and the victims another,
But aren't we all a part of the human race?
Doesn't that make us sisters and brothers?

They capture those they choose and kill the rest.
They convince themselves they are right.
That, when it's done it'll be for the best.

They started with stripping them of their rights
They thought no one'll care about the wretches.
They commit the horrors in broad day light.

Did you see the people too weak to even stand?
Did the world stop and cry out in rage?
Did we care what happened in another land?

You may say 'Hitler's dead, but I feel for those poor,
It was horrible what he did to the Jews.'
But I'm talking about today, with Sudan and Darfur.

Every Yom Ha'Shoah I say 'Never forget. Never again.'
The Holocaust affected my family.
But how can we live silently, during a holocaust?
Don't forget, today! It's happening again!
Where are the allied troops now? Who will rescue Darfur?

Atsiylah Atty Garfinkel

A New Chapter At University

That first day I walked in the door
I sat in the first class waiting to absorb.
To absorb knowledge that would be fed to me with a spoon,
But I was at the wrong place for that, I was in the wrong room.

'Welcome to Antioch University, this class is Educational Foundations.'

I was challenged and poked and asked to look inside.
When it is self reflection there is no where for you to hide.
Learn about Social Justice and Human Rights.
Learn about blood diamonds and wars where a child fights.

Who are the victims and who is at fault?

Challenge your mind and your preconceived notions.
Choose research you care about because here come the emotions.
Studies in writing and management, sociology and education too.
Write paper upon paper until your fingers are black and blue.

It is not what you've done but what you have learned.

Welcome to Antioch University Santa Barbara.
Study at a small Liberal Arts University in California.
Focus on bettering your self and your learning possibility.
My last chance at a better life. Antioch may well have saved me.

Atsiylah Atty Garfinkel

A Well Meaning Friend Was Here Today

A well meaning friend was here today,
'It's time to put your grief away
There are times when we are all sad,
but life's okay unless you make it bad.
Go work out and join a gym,
meet new guys and you'll get over him.'
But to my friend I could only say,
I'm sorry but it doesn't work that way.
Perhaps because she hears her clock,
she must move quickly with a tick- tock.
She did say a truth when she was here today.
Sometimes we all get blue in our own way.
How is it, someone who I can't make hear me
can at times say things just as clear as can be?
Our souls and our wounds take time to heal,
if I need more time does that make it unreal?
If in my despair I've given up on life,
how can one say for my ache that's not right?
Who else has walked these miles in my shoes?
Who else has lost so much to pay their dues?
Don't tell me grief is just an excuse for me,
until you've lived my life and know how to be.
I fought everyday for decades of this life,
if now I'm tired, don't I have the right?
There are priorities that aren't mine anymore,
and I'm sorry if I've become a chore.
This life isn't what I'd hoped for,
but this is it, nothing less or more.

Atsiylah Atty Garfinkel

Battle At A Picnic

At a picnic not long ago I saw a scene,
and as I've thought on what I saw
I've come to understand what it means.
Ants were marching across the sand,
our lunch had usurped something
what we sat on what was their land.
They marched onto a battle field of plaid
and one gave me a warning bite
They fought as though my size wasn't so bad
and truly gave us all a fright.
I admire those insects so small,
they fought well for their home
without fear and with great gall.
If war was like that picnic ground,
what a home we might have,
only for yours laying your life down.
They fought well, those little men
and I have no doubt in my mind
should the need arise they'd do it again.
Be careful where you sit down
make sure it is your own
Or keep your eyes on what's around
before the ants come marching home.

Atsiylah Atty Garfinkel

Broken Hearted Dreamers / Dream On My Friend

You can search up on the mountains,
you can search the sea or valleys low.
You can search way high up in the sky's
or on the path the north wind blows.
It doesn't matter if you look
a hundred years, short or long,
you never can relive the life
whispered in memory and song.
You can look until your life
and all your breath is gone.
You can yearn for a dream,
and for a love that's strong.
Remembering a lost life,
and how it used to be,
but broken hearted dreamers
our loves live only in memory.
But dream on my friends,
for in that dream, love has no end.
So laugh hard at life,
laugh at time and at the wind,
Folks may think us crazy,
but we know love my friends.
It wouldn't matter how long we cried
for what still lays in store.
I'll be a dreamer until I die,
And even then, maybe more.
I'll dream on my friends,
dreaming of a place
where love has no end...

Atsiylah Atty Garfinkel

Civilized - Spoken Word Poem

Civilized,
dignified,
wrapped up in historic lies.
How can a war be civil - when war is far from civilized?

brother killing brother
father versus mother
this is not civilized
there is no way to justify
the blood and pain as children cry.

War conventions
and your treaties
Only serve to prove us needing
of your attention
and intervention.

We fight these wars for others
the battles against lovers.
The acid rain falls down
and we poison the ground
yet lets fight for our neighbors lies
because man, we are civilized.

Is there no other way
no other price we can pay?
Must our youth die
for the sake of being civilized?

What makes us think we are civilized?

The way we rape our land
with eco sticker in hand?
The way we teach the youth
and deprive them of the truth?
The way we accept all we meet
as we throw them out on the street?
The might of our fearless gun
as kids kill each other for fun?

Brother father sister mother
I beg you stop us before we make another
person civilized.
Listening to lies,
Ignoring the widdows cries.
Lusting for victory's prize.
Cutting familial ties.
So we can pretend to be civilized.

Never dancing to the drum
never teaching our own young.
Eating food that kills
bouncing checks to pay bills.
We will cut off our hair
and wear the clothes they tell us to wear.

We will deny our past
and learn all to fast
how to tell lies
as we become
civilized.

The elders cry
as the old ways die.
We don't know why
we would want to be
civilized.

Atsiylah Atty Garfinkel

Do Ya Think? (Lyric)

Do you think when you're walking on my heart?
Did you think we'd be better off apart?
Do you think that our love was meant to last?
Did you think we could overcome the past?

Do you think love is just a game we play?
Did you think when you threw it all away?
Do you think this is just a life for fools?
Did you think as you broke all the rules?

Do you think, did you ever think?

Do you know my heart was braking?
Did you care about the pain or aching?
Do you think I just can't see?
Did you ever really love me?

Do you know how that sounds?
Did the excuses just hit the ground?
Do you think I don't know it's true?
Did you say I'd be better with out you?

Do ya think? ! ? !

Atsiylah Atty Garfinkel

Good Night

I brush her hair off her forehead and kiss her goodnight.
'Sweet dreams for a sweet girl, don't let the bed bugs bite.'

I can't believe she's 11, they grow so fast.
If I blink twice I fear next year will be the past.

'I love you' floats up from her lips to my ears,
strange how those words can subdue fears.

They are only words, and it's only three.
Yet those words from a child set you free.

Did I worry that I wouldn't hear them said today?
It's strange how those words make it all okay.

'I love you more, now snuggle on down and in.'
With a clear heart I sleep ready to begin again.

A song of love hums softly in my mind,
and a more peaceful feeling you won't find.

Atsiylah Atty Garfinkel

Heartless Time

Time passes by without concern for me.
Each tick rings a tock as it passes free.
Spring rains pass and summer's gone,
Fall and winter just keep moving on.
Flowers bud and bloom and die
It does no good to ask them why.
Babies are born, grow and move on
And father time sings the same song.
We write our names and our history
we say 'This is for the sake of posterity'.
If the truth be told we all know why,
Someone will know we lived when we die.
Time has no worry, we can't hold on to it.
Nothing we can do will change it a bit.
Stand before a gale or a hurricane,
yell and scream, it'll all end the same.
Time and fact has no heart, so don't cry.
We can only do what we can, and then say goodbye.

Atsiylah Atty Garfinkel

I Need A New Heart

I need heart surgery, I think perhaps I must.
That's what you do when you've a broke part.
You go to the doctor to have it fixed or made new.
I'll have them cut open my chest and give me a heart.

If I budget I can pay off the surgery in a few years.
Then I will have love, compassion and all I used to.
After all this one is no good just sitting there broken.
And people keep saying to hurry up and get over you.

So I'll get a new heart, that's a grand idea.
After awhile it won't hurt so much, just a scar.
I'll be happy again, I'll laugh and smile again.
Perhaps I'll be at peace, just like they say you are.

Atsiylah Atty Garfinkel

Message To The Children/I'LI Send You Kisses

I'll send you kisses every night,
You will see them in the nights sky.
A kiss is a dot of my love,
painted in the night sky above.
So when you look up and see each star,
you'll know my kisses aren't very far.
Remember who you are and where you're from
and if you've been blessed
you must share some.
Be kind and honest
in word and deed,
and then every day
you'll plant love's seeds.
And every night
when your day is through
look up and see the love
I'm sending to you.
See the shooting stars
on special nights,
they will be me saying
it's going to be alright.
I will send you kisses every night
and to the world you must be a light.

Atsiylah Atty Garfinkel

Midnight In The Park

Real life may not be a whirlwind romance.
Real life may not be running off to a hidden cabin.
Real life may not be a Cinderella fairy tail.

For me real life may not be for very long at all.
For me a kiss in the moonlight is truly magical.
I can live an entire lifetime of romance in one evening.

For a few brief hours I can be content in real life.
For a few brief hours, real life is holding hands
at midnight walking in a park.

Then we part ways again, but we had midnight in the park.

Atsiylah Atty Garfinkel

Mononym Discription

Whispering,
Running,
Searching,

Fear
Anger
Grief

Living
Loving
Mourning

Survival
Growth
Disbelief

Burrying
Praying
Crying

Learning
Letting
Go

Raging
Living
Dying

Reap
Plant
Sow

Choices are everywhere, I must choose how to be.
Life keeps going on, why would it stop for me?

Atsiylah Atty Garfinkel

Rat Race

</>Up at 5 and start those chores.
Living a life that isn't yours?

Grab a shower and a bite.
Did you even sleep last night?

Fight for parking & punch a clock.
Why must you be the steady rock?

Work through lunch for overtime.
Is killing yourself an actual crime?

Smile for the boss and back to the job
All this guy who calls you Steve or Bob?

Rush hour traffic and home by 7 pm.
Take home work so you can do it again?

Working to keep up with the client and case.
Why are we running in this rat race?

Atsiylah Atty Garfinkel

She's Only 15

'For my birthday I want an iphone,
and an MP3 player, and to learn to drive.'
I should just be glad she's home.
This 15 year old crap is harder than I thought.

They want to be adults, and they need to be,
but they still have childrens minds;
and she screams to be set free, from me.
How do I keep her safe, if she thinks I'm the enemy.

What do I do to make her understand?
How do I teach from my errors if she won't listen to me?
I scream with in my mind, and smile with my lips.
She thinks she knows what she wants life to be.
Forget the laws of logic, human nature and physics,
forget that silly little thing called reality.

I roll through the day,
and pretend it's okay.
I clean up the mess,
and swallow the stress.
I pretend it's alright
untill it's the night.

She gives us all hugs, before they're all off to bed.
In an hour I peek in and see the dreams from her mind.
She's a doctor, she's a lawyer, she's everything she said.
She's a teacher, she's the president, she's an actress too.

I see why she creates so much stress for our family,
She is just beginning to realize the potential inside.
She begins to understand the possibility of who she could be,
My Einstein, my DiVinci, my Churchill, my Lao Tzu.

With such potential comes turmoil, that is clear to see.
But how do I contain the storm raging with in her mind?
How do I prevent devastation when she wants to be free?
This world isn't safe for her, not when she is only 15.

Atsiylah Atty Garfinkel

The Wildfire

The fire crept its way down the hillside.
We stood and watched in horror.
It lapped and danced towards our valley.
Towards the sun the smoke did soar.

We stood on the opposite hillside,
We cried out in painful disbelief.
There went our orchard, and store house.
We prayed for rain to give us relief.

The fire roared and crackled,
It laughed like it was alive.
It grew and it danced along,
Leaving devastation as it did thrive.

We heard the cattle lowing,
And I ran down to the barn.
I opened up all the stall doors
And livestock did run from harm.

The horses ran in confusion,
The cattle ran past the grouse,
The cats and birds got to safety
before the fire reached the house.

All who were old enough ran for shovels,
The young ran for hoses and pail,
We flung dirt and water on that fire
We fought and we dared not fail.

Should our house be consumed,
And should our memories be lost,
Then freely across to our neighbors
That wild fire could unchecked accost.

The children were sent on horseback
To warn all those they could,
And we remained to hold the line
As if evil was challenging good.

We dug and flung with all we had
Until we thought we could fight no more,
Then came our reinforcements,
fresh strength from the farm next-door.

They fought while we rested
And then we fought as one.
And as that wildfire died its death
A new story had begun.

For in our efforts so joined,
And to our mutual benefit,
A new friendship had been formed
And I'm quite pleased with it.

The neighbors were new you see,
They were city born and bred,
But they took to a farming life,
Now with us they've sweat and bled.

We doubled the size of our orchard,
And the neighbors now have a cow,
That dumb heifer took to their little girl,
And she to it, I don't ask how.

They took our advice this spring,
And planted some stone fruit trees,
They have hens in a coop, and grouse,
And they caught a swarm of bees.

My boy is sweet on their girl
And my brother, on their aunt,
They've become part of our community,
In an area that doesn't transplant.

So in a way it was a blessing,
the day the fire came through.
If it hadn't been for our fighting,
we may not be friends so true.

Atsiylah Atty Garfinkel

Trying To Find The Good

My grandmother always said we need to find the good in folks.
Some folks make it easier than others, but it is our job to seek.
She lived in a simpler time when kids learned right from wrong.
She lived in a time safe from predators and pedifile freaks.

But I try to remember her smile and to be more like her.
I'm actively looking for the good even amongst the currs.
I want to make it a simpler time where kids know good from bad.
If I try maybe my world can be a little more like hers.

So When I see you today I will smile and wave.
I will hold the door open for the person behind me.
I will surrender the right of way as I drive in town today.
No matter who you are, I'll be the good I want to see.

I don't have to be lovely or perfect in all I do.
But I am making an effort. Tell me, how about you?

Atsiylah Atty Garfinkel

Vida Is Life

I was thrown off a horse awhile ago.
I was badly hurt and nearly died.
I grieved for the wounds I received.
For a very long time I didn't ride.

I was given a mare called Vida
This mare wasn't broken yet.
I had to get up out of myself.
Vida is life, & as good as it gets.

Atsiylah Atty Garfinkel

When I Die And Am Gathered Unto My People

When I die and am gathered unto my people,
if I can I'll look down from time to time.
I'll see how you are doing in this life,
but I know you'll be just fine.

When I die and I see father Abraham,
I'll be sure to ask him why.
Why did his faith waiver to take Hagar?
I'll ask after Issac when I die.

When I die and am gathered unto my people,
I'll stop in on Moses just for you,
I'll inquire about that Egyptian, and the wandering,
and if the water in the red sea was really blue.

When I die and am gathered unto my people,
and among HaShem's angels I stand,
I will seek out my husband dearest,
and together we will watch our land.

When I die and am gathered unto my people,
there are so many things I will wish to do,
but before I even think to begin eternity,
I promise to send my love and faith to you.

When I die and am gathered unto my people,
I pray you will be far behind,
but regardless of the distance,
you will always be in my heart and mind.

When I die and am gathered unto my people.

Atsiylah Atty Garfinkel

When You Feel Hurt

My dearest darling,
When you feel hurt talk to me.
When you think you're alone,
please come and see me.
When life has done you wrong,
when your heart is torn in two,
when truth becomes lies
when you don't know what to do.
My dearest darling,
talk to me.
I will be here for you.

Atsiylah Atty Garfinkel

Women Of The World

We find ourselves limited by the roles we must play.
By the petty, the short sighted and the things that they say.

We were meant to be free to follow our hearts.
Just as you do, we wish to play different parts.

We want to dance and we want to sing,
but more than that we want to be free.

Free to follow where the wandering wind blows,
leading us to our own fates that only the wind knows.

We don't want to steal your path, or take what belongs to you,
We only want the right to live as freely as you do.

I will make mistakes, but no more than anyone will.
But my choices must be mine. I'll write with destiny's quill.

By trying to shelter and protect me, you wrong me each day.
I know that is not what's in your heart, but heed these words I pray.

We are not children in need of your protection and your fear.
We are strong and vibrant women, all we need is for you to hear.

We are able to take what is ours and crush you underfoot now,
but we would rather have you beside us enjoying our unfolding tao.

We come in all colors, shapes and sizes, and we have many names.
We're your mothers, wives, daughters, sisters & we come with out shame.

We are Asian, Anglo, African, Latin and Aboriginal too.
We are coming with or without your blessing, so what will you do?

Please walk beside us in unity, we are the women of the world,
Or get out of our way as our combined beauty and power is now unfurled.

Atsiylah Atty Garfinkel

Wondering Of The Road Not Taken

</>Do you ever wonder about that 'road not taken'?
Where would you be if your path was the other?
If you had gone on that trip to Europe that year,
if you had gone with the band would you be another?
Or is our fate already chosen, are we here to stay?
Can we cut fates cords by our choices each day?

If I'd taken that road trip, or stayed in school,
if I'd married someone else, if I'd obeyed the rules.
Who are we to say this wasn't part of the plan,
I believe my life and fate is in God's hand.

I don't know what it is He wants from me,
but if I wait, I bet I'll get where I'm supposed to be.
Do you ever wonder about the 'road not taken'?
Is this life really ours for the making?

Atsiylah Atty Garfinkel