

# Three Poems: 'Albuquerque Summer's Day', '#3', '#5'

**Jason Yurcic**, poet, activist, human being

## **Albuquerque Summer's Day**

For an angry man like myself  
The miracle is not to walk on water  
It is to be here  
In spite of the pain they have administered with their ploys  
I love being poor  
Love that everything I own I have made with my own hands  
Love that there are holes in my socks  
Because my children have ten pairs of socks  
And they will never know my pain  
Never be laughed at for being uneducated  
Never know what it feels like to live without their father  
They will never know my pain  
And I love that  
Love that after I tore the ass out of my work pants  
That my 9-year-old daughter can teach me to use her sewing machine  
Her slender hands working the hem line  
And I can use the pants for another 5 years  
Here I sit in the heat  
The heat of an Albuquerque summer day  
Heroin spoon over candle flame heat  
The heat of an Albuquerque summer day  
And the clouds know my name  
The Harvester ants know my name  
And the clerks at Hollister or the Gap  
Have never seen my face  
And I am proud to have nothing in the eyes of others  
Proud that I love dirt under my nails  
Here I sit in the heat of an Albuquerque summer day  
Glass pipe, lip and finger blister heat  
And I give myself to the clouds  
The leaves  
The blue sky  
Brown mountain  
Give myself away for nothing at all  
In a world where we are taught  
Nothing is free  
I sit here in the heat of an Albuquerque summer day and  
I am free

## #3

I give my mind away sometimes when I'm at work  
Give it away to an opaque corridor  
Inside me  
Cussing  
    Spitting  
Damning my fate  
Stuck here  
In the land of the uneducated  
Bent back, muscle torn, lip jockey  
Talkin' shit about the uppities that pass by the front gate  
In their gas guzzling SUVs and Mini-Coopers while my old truck  
    with a quarter million miles sits rusted by the fence

I stare at the front gate  
Every second's break I get  
From the nightmarish horror show of hard labor I'm in  
Like it was a blanket under a tree in a clearing by Rio Grande River  
When 'Shorty' pulls in  
Driving his son's red convertible Mustang  
New boots, belt, jeans  
Smiling  
He has the most beautiful knowledge in his words  
The kind of knowledge you can't get from a book  
you can't pay for with a college tuition  
Can only get from a lifetime of hard labor  
It's payment is blood, sweat, torn ligaments, and pain  
His bulging forearms  
Calloused hands  
Sun-beaten skin  
Show me how I'll look 10, 15 years from now  
If I don't get out of this work  
But I also see  
These brilliant brown eyes  
Sparkling with contentment and acceptance  
He knows his life is to work like this  
He has worked like I do for nearly 30 years  
Without a complaint  
Worked hard to have a good life  
A small piece of land on the outskirts of town  
200 chickens  
Two horses  
And a dog  
'I haven't worked in three days,' he says while looking into his palms.  
    'My hands are getting too pretty.'

My mind moves over from the gloom  
While I speak with him  
His voice is low, humble  
Like a spring river of mountain snow that has worked its way down



While he speaks  
Through a giant smile  
A black push broom mustache  
I try my best to listen to him  
Since I am him and know  
The rest of society has pushed us so far out  
That no one truly listens anymore

And I thank the Creator for helping me listen

Seeing his leather-like face  
his battered hands  
I give praise to his heart  
When he lays right on the ground and kicks back  
toying with pebbles and sticks  
While telling horror stories of jobs gone wrong  
Under the guidance of college grads with clean hands  
People who were afraid to get dirty  
But didn't mind telling him to

Seeing how every concrete finisher  
Black finger-nailed construction worker is as angry as I am  
Angry at the world  
And the fact it has turned them/me away  
Made us feel dirty and uneducated  
Until we believed it  
And lost the right to be who we are  
But I know for sure Blanco doesn't care for MBAs or PhDs  
He loves his horses  
His ranch

Most of us are  
In the general sense  
Uneducated  
Most don't read books  
Most read sale signs on liquor store marquees and cooler fronts  
But we know how to read a man's eyes  
Can tell by the direction a horse turns in the wind if the rain is coming

This poem is written for them  
My hard working, hard-hearted brothers  
We built the streets  
These buildings  
These towns  
Because of us children have a place to learn  
Playgrounds at parks  
Because of us dirty, uneducated men  
Fools and losers  
Unshaven faced  
Scowling men

With soiled clothing  
Or however the mainstream wishes to categorize and judge us  
Most, including myself  
Will never see our true beauty  
Because of the way we are looked at in supermarkets and retail stores

Before Blanco leaves  
He blows into the breathalyzer ignition of his truck  
Spins his tires in the street  
And yells like on a warpath atop one of his horses  
I give praise to his reckless abandon  
his bullheaded defiance of society.

### Author Bio

**Jason L. Yurcic**, a pain based poet, has published 4 books of his work. His first release *Voice of My Heart* (Sherman Asher Publishing), was awarded runner-up in the 2007 NM Book Awards. *Poems by Jason L. Yurcic* (Verna Press), *Word Son* (EMAYA Publishing), and *Odes to Anger* (West End Press) also runner-up NM Book Awards 2009. His first play, *Little Ghost*, won a national competition and was produced by Nicholas Sabato and the Santa Fe Performing Arts in '09.

Jason L. Yurcic was functionally illiterate until the age of 25 years old when he sat down to try and compose a suicide letter to his family. As he tried to express his feelings, he found he did not contain the skills needed so that his mother would understand his decision. It was then, he picked up a book, fought his way through dyslexia and learned a few words to tell of his pain. He never finished the letter, the words he read started to change his image of himself, his feeling of worthlessness. Five years later he published his first book.

Jason Yurcic's poems are usually not written – instead they often float in the air around his children or glisten in the sunlight. A transitional poet, Yurcic's work fuels poems in adverse conditions. Those which make it to paper are a shaving compared to that which passes through his mind.