

Alan Paul

I wrote this poem during the Hay Festival 2000 as my entry to a poetry competition on the subject of freedom organized by Amnesty International. The first parts of the poem are the thoughts of a prisoner in captivity followed by hopes of release and the freedoms which will follow.

FREEDOM

Freedom to know the facts and the truth
Freedom to speak my thoughts without fear
Freedom to hold any faith or none
Freedom from fear of knocks at my door
Freedom to move without shackles and bonds
Freedom from beatings and screams in the night
Freedom from prison, torture and death

Freedom to see the light and bright colours
Freedom to smell the scent of fresh air
Freedom to see wild flowers in the grass
Freedom to hear the music I love
Freedom to smile and laugh again
Freedom to hug the ones that I love
Freedom to have a place I call home

Freedom to choose my partner in life
Freedom to love in the way that I feel
Freedom to read the books that I choose
Freedom to wear the clothes that I wish
Freedom to go for the job that I'd like
Freedom to earn a fair wage for my work
Freedom to travel and understand others

Freedom from ritual harm to my body
Freedom from drugs and things that enslave
Freedom to taste clear water from wells
Freedom from poverty, hunger and pain
Freedom to live my life to the full
Freedom to soar in mind and spirit
Freedom to savour the good things on earth