

Voices From The Ghetto
Sample Pack

By

Gaiven Clairmont

Kindle Edition

Cover Illustration

By

Dmitri Brereton

Please read and enjoy these 7 poems

From this sample version

Of Voices From The Ghetto

Copyright ©2014 by **Gaiven Klavon Clairmont**

All rights reserved. This book or any portion thereof may not be reproduced or used in any manner whatsoever without the express written permission of the author or publisher except for the use of brief quotations in critical articles or reviews.

This book is a work of fiction. The names, characters, places, and incidents are products of the writer's imagination or have been used fictitiously and are not to be construed as real. Any resemblance to persons, living or dead, actual events, locales or organizations is entirely coincidental.

Kindle Edition, License Notes

This e-book is licensed for your personal enjoyment only. This e-book may not be re-sold or given away to other people. If you would like to share this book with another person, please purchase an additional copy for each person. If you're reading this book and did not purchase it, or it was not purchased for your use only, then please return to Amazon.com and purchase your own copy. Thank you for respecting the hard work of this author.

Introduction

Unlike my last book *The 7 lamps Of Inspiration* I'll try to make this introduction very brief. This book was written mainly in response to the escalation or in the very least the amount of media coverage being shown on the killing of young black males on the streets of the USA either by police officers or white males.

This is a major problem because when you take a life, you take away their potential to change their life around. I mean jail can be a place where someone can meditate on their mistakes and try and correct them. However when you take a life you take away the chance to change, to make amends. Not everyone grows up in loving homes and as such not everyone has that upbringing where they can automatically become productive members of society.

Now I said that to say this, this book is meant to do very simple things. One to inspire people who live in the "ghetto" or any type of impoverished urban communities. It is meant to show these people that you can conquer your environment, that everyone and I mean everyone has the capacity to achieve greatness.

The second thing this book is meant to accomplish is to combat stigmatization, discrimination and racism by telling the stories of the people of the ghetto. You see we see the news and we think we know all there is to know about people who live in these areas, but there is so much below the surface.

Statistics don't tell the whole story, and that is what this book is meant to do. It is meant to give voices to the people of ghetto, hear their stories, their pain, their strife and why they are human beings just like you and me and they are not anything less than that. They are not meant to be quarantined, isolated from the rest of society. These people should be loved and cared for and this book is meant to aid in that effort.

So echoing the pages of great books like *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, Nelson Mandela's *The Long Road To Freedom* and Maya Angelou's *I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings*, *Voices From The Ghetto* is meant to be a book read by generations and generations and I personally know the essence of this book will outlive me in the end.

Most people protest injustice in a variety of ways. Rosa Parks sat on a bus. Nelson Mandela went to jail for a quarter century, Mahatma Gandhi embarked on the Great Salt march. Martin Luther King Jr. gave a the I Have A Dream Speech. I've decided to protest in injustices I see in the 21st century by writing a book.

The critically acclaimed Nigerian author Chimamanda Adichie said "The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story, the *only* story" So thank you for purchasing this book and reading the stories you don't usually read and giving a voice to those who feel they have none.

Happy Reading

Yours Truly

Gaiven Chasing Immortality Clairmont

Acknowledgements

There are so many people who I have to thank for helping me to bring this project to fruition. First of all God, for giving me the courage and the spark to attempt to bring more light into this world. I thank my mother who always instilled in me the concept that my gift for writing is in fact a gift from God, and as much as possible I should use it to bring honour and glory to his name.

I'd love to thank everyone who has supported me on my journey of being a writer so far. It is you who gave my courage the faith it needs to keep on writing more. This book is the first in a long list of inspiring literature to come from me.

I'd also like to thank Chimamanda Adichie for providing some inspiration for writing this book. Your Ted Talk on "The Danger Of The Single Story" is one of the most thought provoking and inspiring videos I've ever watched. Also I'd like to thank people like Majora Carter whose work in trying to "green the ghetto" also served as inspiration for some of the poems as well as the book on a whole. I hope to sometime in the near future be able to meet both these ladies just so I can talk to them.

I'd like to thank the very beautiful Lupita Nyong'o for inspiring artists around the world with these immortal words "No matter where you are from, your dreams are valid".

I'd love to thank my cousin and protégé Dmitri Kyle Brereton for all his warm words of encouragement and also again in assisting me with the book cover and being someone who I can bounce ideas off of on a wide range of issues.

I'd like to mention a few persons by name who have assisted me in some way or the other in spreading the word about me and my writing. They are in no special order and please I beg of you if I forgot your name, don't hold it against me ok. They are Nikki Cohen, Pretty Ann Scorpion, Chastity Jackson, Janique Cheesman, Ashanna Arthur, Nigel Sambrano, Michael Matthews, Maria Vasquez, Dana Mottley, Carol, Rachel Harris, Tangela King, Holly Kristina Collins, Nicole Santa Cruz, Nisha Harris, Sharkia Johnson, Silvio Murillo, Chrystal Washington, Brittany King, Aurelia Marcano, Dimoaya Peters, Krystle Phillips, Desta Parris, Cadine Sandy-Baynes, Angela Williams, Shunda Jones, Tameika Mungo, Jennifer Weiffenbach, Gabrielle Streck, Janelle Rochelle, Keysha Hall, Kiera Northington, Shawne Jackson, Tammy and Lisa Holden- Christiansen, Jane Panella, Andrea McKenzie, Author Tamyara Brown, Author Vanna B, Shemika Johnson, Crystal Austin, Brenda Davis, Anila Maharaj, Saheeda Nazir, Pubaly Deb, Angelique Mc Nair, Lisa Bryant, Sheila Campbell, Laura Litchford, Keisha Bullock, Tiffany Jarrett, Karlea Shaw-Carpenter, Dell Vinson, Tina Nance, Kathryn Griffin, Carla Towns, Papaya, Nicety, Treasure Blue, Ola Noreiga and everyone else I may have forgotten I love you all and thanks again for your invaluable support.

I'd like to thank the book groups on facebook that helped support my book and my writing like Black Faithful Brothers and Sisters, Diamond Eyes Book Club, Urban Ink Book Club, My Urban Book Club, New Beginnings Book Club, Real Readers and Authors and some more that I just can't name right now.

Also I'd like to thank the members of these groups is particular who encouraged me in putting this book out even when I had my own doubts and for their wonderful members who take time to read

my inspirational posts in their group, and who offer me love and support. These are #TeamBankrollSquad, Princesses Can Read Too and last but not least Tajanna's Fan Page Group.

I'd like to thank the authors as well who were kind enough to encourage me to post in said groups like David Weaver, the beautiful Author Quiana and last but not least the lovely and ever talented Tajanna Sutton.

Thanks also to my dad Peter Clairmont and also my Uncle Micheal (who is like my second father) for all their love and support and also my two younger sisters Aria and Alia who make me want to be a role model for them to follow.

And last but not least thank you for purchasing this e-book, reading it, enjoying it and sharing your joy for it with your friends and family and may it bless you with insight into the issues plaguing urban communities and encourage you to help them in any small way that you can.

To read more inspiration works by me

Check out my book

The 7 Lamps Of Inspiration

And

Feel free to contact me on

Facebook- <https://www.facebook.com/gclairmont>

Or my fan page-

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Gaiven-Chasing-Greatness-Clairmont/182148701811729>

Twitter- <https://twitter.com/Clemz24>

Email- gaiven10_@hotmail.com

**This Book is dedicated to the memory
Of the late great poet and civil rights leader**

Maya Angelou

And

Also to

Trayvon Martin

Jordan Davis

Oscar Grant III

Mike Brown

And other young black males

Who have been killed Unjustly

Because they were judged by the

Colour of their skin

Rather

Than the colour

Of their character.

*"Obsession over materialism killed the evolution of
the black mind."*

Danger Of the Single Story

Who truly controls the fate of our race?

Do we even have a choice sometimes?

Who are the true gate keepers of our destiny?

The media

The media moguls

Are any of them Black

Hispanic

Or reflect the growing diaspora

Of the land of the free

And the home of the brave?

The answer is no

And those who have the power

Within the minorities

Use it to enslave our people even more

The black celebrities

What do they celebrate?

The glamour

Or

The struggle

Sacrifice

Dedication

Determination

True greatness

Do we even know

That in the absence of adversity

There can be nothing like greatness

We don't

Because all we see

Are cars

Jewellery

Gadgets

Houses

But who owns the car companies?

Who owns the diamond mines?

Who owns the technology conglomerates?

Not us

But yet we advertise it for them

They pay us and we preach the words

But not the true message

The message of what you have to do

To get like them

What it entails

But back to the gatekeepers

The media

They say the danger of the single story

Is when that story is used to define a person

We therefore judge before we know

But who are the storytellers

And more importantly what stories do they tell

We see black we think

Criminal

Prostitute

Hoe

Hustler

Drug dealer

We see white we think

Green lawns

College graduates

Inventors

Doctors

Lawyers

Businessmen

But why

Because if every other story about a black person is negative

People will automatically assume our people are negative

The scourge of society

But if we highlight more stories

About people coming out from the ghetto

And integrating the professional life

If we hear more about positive black people

Maybe

Even we might stop fearing members of our own race

Much less other people

Do you think it was just George Zimmerman who killed?

Trayvon Martin

No

It was the gate keepers

Those who determine who and what makes the evening news

Thus a black teen is seen as a criminal

And when you are a single story

You are killed before you even live

When people associate one thing with you

They will kill the evil, they think you are

Before they find out if you had any good in you

So how can we change the narrative?

We can by highlighting the positive among us

Highlight the Harvard graduate from the urban housings of Chicago

Highlight the ball player who invests his money to be a true business mogul

Highlight the strong women who are trying to make the ghettoes a better place

Highlight Merjora Carter and her dream of greening the ghetto

We have lost too many princes and princesses

It breaks my heart seeing this

It breaks my heart seeing how low we have gone

Is this what Rosa Parks sat for?
Is this what Malcolm X fought for?
Is this what MLK died for?
Is this what Maya Angelou wrote for?
Is this what Barack Obama ran for?
Make yourself more than a man
Or a woman
Make yourself an idea
Don't just chase your destiny
Become a destination
For others to follow
And if you can't change the narrative of the gate keepers
Then aspire to be a gatekeeper
And change the narrative for the generations to come
Let us not have anymore
Trayvon Martins
Jordan Davis's
Oscar Grants

Isn't it ironic that the same media
Who were outraged at Martin's killing
May have been the very ones who helped pull the trigger.

Traffic

The heads of the five families

In the Godfather once said

“Keep the traffic in the coloured people

Let them lose their souls over it”

When will my people realise

That this wasn't just words in a movie

But the reality of this world

Why is it the white man is afraid of the black man?

When the black man kills his own one by one

Whereas the white man kills in multitude

Who are the real mass murderers?

Who are the ones we should really fear huh?

Columbine?

Colorado?

But yet a teenager gets gunned down

For being black in a hoodie

As someone who wants out of this ghetto

I wonder if I'll make it out

Or if I'll fall as a stray shot

Not wanting to decorate the body of the deserved anymore

Hits me and fatally snuffs out my life

Or if when I make it out

Will I have to eternally pay for the sins

Of having my address in the projects

Or can I lie my way about it

And make people think I am from

The land of green meadows

Lawn mowers

And picket fences

But I still want out

But do I want to be the only one

Of course not

But what can I offer my peers

Years of studying

Years of accumulating debt while studying

Years paying off this debt after you have studied

Years of waiting for a job

Or a connection

Because it isn't what you know

But who you know

How do I convince my peers to put down the gun

And pick up a book

When the news shows

The supposed righteous path

Is just as bad

Maybe even worse than

The desperation in the ghetto

Why is it worse?

Because in the ghetto they have an excuse

To kill

To rape

To steal

To abandon their ethics

There is no reward for being righteous in hell

But it must be a grave sin

To pollute the morals of heaven

With the fruits of hell.

Growing Up In The Ghetto

How do you dream and make goals?

When there's nothing to dream about

When your dreams are so polluted by your environment

That it can't even cautiously conjure up a happily ever after

When the reality of your surroundings

Burden your body and make you a prisoner to your own emotions

That your mind cannot even open to new and exciting possibilities

The chemicals in your brain

Are stalled from reacting to the harshness of your life

While your body opens up to new positions

That you don't even fully comprehend

For instance

When the most divine of caresses and sensations

Your body has been privy to

Is followed months after by a pain so un-bearable

That it must be because you are bearing life

Oh yes a life when every time, easy money is to be made

You find yourself worse off than you were

When you were poorer

As a matter of fact

Your new state is so messed up

That the money you have now made

Can't buy you out of the myriad of problems

That has sprung from the root of all evil

It's a life where people tell you

That the life you always wanted

Can be gotten by reading and reciting these books
But I ask how does a book feed you?
When the cupboards are a chilling vacuum
An eerie echo escaping from the life you can't escape from
And why is the necessity of life
Called the root of all evil
Even if you love it
It still doesn't mean its evil
It just means you'll do anything to acquire it
I wonder if it's the "anything" that's the evil part

But the evil thing
Is when you do want to make yourself better
When you filter out the drugs
Sex and alcohol
And hear a rap song for the message it preaches
A black man's struggle to make it to something out of nothing

But you're still burdened with commitments to drug-dealers
Commitments to teenage mothers
Commitments to young children and way-ward fathers

How does one find the time?
To chart a course of hope in the niche of such a life

How does one sleep at night in serenity?
To even formulate a blueprint of a better life in their sub-conscious
When their enemies are lurking the streets
To snuff out their life without a conscience

Really we're not at war with one another in the ghetto
We're at war with our environment in the ghetto
The slayings are really murders in martyrdom
Not murders made in mayhem

Knowledge alone in our heads aren't going to help us move forward

We need to pervade a new perspective into our mentality by re-winding the clock back-wards.

Being A Black Girl

Yes I am guilty

But

I am guilty of a far worse crime

Than selling my body

I am guilty of being a black woman

I've been guilty of that all my life

And that trial was judged

Sentenced passed

Before I was even born

My skin maybe a shade slightly lighter than charcoal

But I am as black as can be

I'm not yellow

I'm not a red bone

I am black

Do I curse my mother for letting a man a shade darker than her?

Climb on top of her

Just when the stars aligned for her

To give birth to me

No

I curse the first teachers in this world

Who passed down the doctrine

That white was pure

Innocent

Love

Beautiful

And that black was

Evil

Tainted

Ugly

Hateful

You have eternally inscribed into our minds
Something that not even evolution can re-write
Because when people see me
They don't see me with colour blind eyes
They see me
They see my colour
I am not peanut butter brown
I am not supposed to be sweet to the taste
I am bitter
Bitter chocolate
And who likes bitter chocolate?
Who wants to taste bitter chocolate?
With their tongues
Down their throats
No one
So no one wanted to praise me in school
My mistakes were worse than others
Because I was bitter chocolate
And it seemed fitter
When I played with my peers
I was never chosen for games
Because somewhere
Deep down when my peers
Learnt about good and evil
They saw me as evil
They saw me as something to scorn
My own parents couldn't love me enough
To make up for the way the world hated me
So why love something
That doesn't love you back
So I stole
Fought
Was feared
Prostituted

Because that was what was expected of me right?

To be evil

To be tainted

To be deceitful

To be the opposite of love

If white is innocence

I therefore know I am guilty

So I stand before you today

Not as a woman who was given chances in life

And wasted it away

But a woman whose capacity for love

Was taken away by life

And replaced with hate

Because it was the natural order of things

After all I am the bitter chocolate

And no one really wants to taste the goodness

Inside of me.

Emancipation (Part 1)

I grew up without hope
Without love
Without the encouragement
Of the ones who brought me into this world

Am I not human?
That I require love
Compassion
Self esteem

But what did I get?
Cruelty
In the form of a mother
A mother who regretted my very existence
In the form of a father
A man who didn't care if his seeds bore fruit

A woman has an innate desire to be loved
To be held
To be protected
To feel protected
But no one
No one was there to hold me
To tell me this was but a storm
That if I kept moving
Kept hope alive
I would've moved past the clouds
And be illuminated
Enlightened
Radiated
By the sun

By his love
For the sun doesn't discriminate
With its rays
The sun doesn't give more than is needing
The sun just shines
And what we do with its rays
Determines our destiny

But instead I was meant to feel
There was no sun
There was no warmth
There was no hope
But I needed the sun
I needed to feel love
To feel warmth
To feel as if there was something better than...
Better than this nightmare
Which was my life

I wanted the fields
Filled with green
With promise
With love

So I turned
Not to man to get my love
But to man to get my escape
To escape the chains
The chains that have bound me here
So I snorted
I smoked
And in that smoke
In that haze
In that high

I was free
Free from the chains of bondage
Free to see the sun
To feel his rays
To feel his light
I was at peace
I danced
I laughed
Even when dancing wasn't required
Even when there was no joke
For my ears to hear

But the freedom was momentarily
It was fleeting
Like the life
Of a fruit fly
And like the fruit fly leaves
I
The fruit
The seed that had so much promise
Was left rotten
I couldn't feed society
With my potential
With my intellect
For I didn't have permanent enlightenment
The radiance of the sun
Only briefly grazed my skin

Soon
I was back in the clouds
Back to feeling the rain
The rain blotted out my path
I didn't know where to go
The storm seemed even worse than before

I was stuck
I couldn't move
Because I had no vision
No sight

So I gained sight
I gained vision
The only white
The only light
That can cast out darkness
So I sought the white light
And I could see again
I could move again
I could smile
Laugh
Dance
But artificial white light
Can never replace natural light
My body broke down bit by bit
My body felt strange hands
But I didn't care
It was all part of the experience I craved
The love of feeling in paradise
The feeling that my nightmare
Was only a nightmare
And that this
Was the reality

But as my body broke
And my mind broke
I couldn't chastise
The difference between
The reality
And

The fantasy

And every time the light went out
The darkness was worse than before
But I was addicted to the light
I'd do anything to feel it
To taste it
To be consumed by it
I sold my body
I sold my belongings
Because I knew it was worth it
I knew the light would save me in the end
Decades went by
And then I realised I was enslaved by it
By the light
By the promise that it would guide me out of hell
Once and for all
And deliver me to Heaven
But how does one
Seek freedom from freedom?
How does one break free of the chains it cannot see?
To emancipate yourself from slavery is one thing
But how do you emancipate yourself from freedom?

White Magic Light

Am I a man?

Or am I a beast?

Or am I man

Fashioned in the image of God's divine nature

Only to be turned, mocked and treated like a beast

A beast who is there to work, eat and sleep

A beast who no one wants to see being merry and multiplying

Unless if the offspring can work and be contented with his lot

But in the ghetto a beast is a beast

It doesn't matter if you are a gangster or not

We are beasts of the jungle

And the rights protected by humans

Don't extend to us

From being racially profiled

To having the police penetrate our houses without warrants

To having police officers gun us down un-provoked

They say without knowledge the people will perish

Our people have perished

First they starved us

They starved us of opportunities

For legal work

To make a contribution to society

Because they said our skin

Our skin were that of slaves

Not common folk

Our skin was the reminder

That we were once beasts of burden

And the shackles may have been removed

But the title still remains

We are still to be treated

Like the untouchables in India
Too dark to be considered a member of the human race
So we couldn't get jobs
We starved
We were desperate
And in our moment of desperation
White magic light came
Just like how the white man enslaved us
Then liberated us
So the white magic light came to us
To appease us and stop us from wondering around in the darkness

But true light
True illumination
Is inspiring
True light can help yours eyes possess
Sight beyond sight
The mere fact
That we couldn't see past the jobs
The "opportunities"
Nor the fact that it came to us
When we were desperate

This meant this white magic light
Wasn't the true light
Just like Jesus Christ warned us about false prophets
But we were needed
Because we were a means to an end
Our brutality
Our lack of harmony and unison
Made us the perfect mules
To transport the white magic light
They knew the frustrations
That had built up through the blood of generations

And generations of slaves
Needed a release

So why not make them competitors
But competitors among themselves
Let them unleash their beastly nature
Their brutality
On their children and their children's children
And then the cycle was complete
We became not just criminals
But career criminals
Soon we couldn't get rid of the white magic light
The Light was all we saw
Was all we needed
The Light turned our communities into hell
And then we needed the Light even more
So as to make the Hell we lived in
Seem like the Heaven we wanted

We became slaves again
But this time not to a man
But an idea
An idea that our very nature
Is more beast than man
And as such
We will always fall short
Of true sight
Of true inspiration
Because even when the lucky ones get out
They do nothing to help those still trapped
Under the rays of the White Magic Light.

A Tribute To Maya Angelou (The Immortal Pen)

Not all pens are created equal
Some pens are pens for hire
Some write for entertainment
Some write what is popular
But your pen
Your pen was a gladiator
Because your pen was used to define a generation
The ink you spilled was
One part
The tears you spilled
And the other part
The blood which you bled
For being a Black Woman in the 20th Century

But the blood from the scars
Which you used as adjectives
To ascend out of the minds of men
Into the hearts of women
The horrors you faced
The fears you had because your skin
Was a bitter chocolate
Which could only be sweetened
By subservience
By surrender
By suffering

But they saw your glow
And cowered under its radiance
But you never cowered
When there was nothing but darkness
You didn't hide your scars
Because you valued

Virtue

Over vanity

You valued the power of an idea

Over the illusion of beauty

You embodied your imperfections

You immortalised them with your words

You let the world see them

Because you knew the power

Of words

You knew the power of your pen

You knew the effect of

A single story

A single story can change the world

Like an idea whose time has come

They saw that and tried to stop your pen

They knew when nightmares to some

Became a reality to all

The conscience of man opened

And a bit of his humanity

Is let back into his soul

You spelled your life with your pen

The struggle of your pen

Was the struggle of you

The triumph of your pen

Was the triumph of not just you

But everyone who was like you

Everyone who is like you

Everyone,

Who your pen has inspired

To be like you

Few ideas can do that

Few pens have ever done that

Even fewer pens will ever do that
To change the world with words
Is not what is expected of anyone
Who shares your complexion

So thank you Maya
For being the pen that wrote a part of history
Even when they wished your pen either ran out of ink
Or they had the power to deny you any more paper
Because if a Black Woman living during
The 1960's and 70's can transcend minds
Inspire greatness
Achieve immortality
What then would be the potential
Of the most scorned
The most discriminated against
The most degraded among us
During the 21st Century
One word
Limitless.

