

# Survive & Thrive: A Journal for Medical Humanities and Narrative as Medicine

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Volume 9  
Issue 4 *Voices of the Incarcerated*

Article 16

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October 2024

## Things aren't what they seem to be

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### Recommended Citation

Monsour Owolabi and Scheckel, Susan (2024) "Things aren't what they seem to be," *Survive & Thrive: A Journal for Medical Humanities and Narrative as Medicine*: Vol. 9: Iss. 4, Article 16.

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Monsour Owolabi, “Things aren’t what they seem to be”

All things are not what they seem to be.  
For instance, what do you see when you look at me?  
A “Black” male, mind steeped in criminality?

But all things are not what they seem to be.  
For instance,  
What does my mama see when she looks at me?  
Her man-child, now fully grown; decades have passed,  
I still ain’t home.  
Lost in the cycle of poverty and prison,  
Somewhere I went wrong, but she asks where did she?

Still, things are not what they seem to be.  
For instance,  
What do the illegitimate authorities see when they look at me?  
Inferiority, something less than them,  
A commodity—for explosive exploitative industries to profit from,  
A colonial-subject—one to be examined, misused, and disposed  
Of by bars or the gun;

Yet still, many cannot see things as they are  
And not what they seem to be.  
We still ain’t free; look clearly and you’ll see  
Forced dependency.  
I charge the imperialists with “criminal conspiracy.”

Every ghetto, every block  
Is really a neo-colony “owned” by crooks, enforced by cops.  
For instance,  
We’ve been misled by school books,  
“Legally” re-enslaved through “law” books,  
But we’re the crooks?

They make us think we’re living high off the hog,  
Their narcotics get our minds in the fog,  
We kill each other over scraps and crumbs,  
But we bow down when the pigs come.  
We own not one home,  
Yet we live and die for these hoods, sections and zones.

Monsour Owolabi, “Things aren’t what they seem to be”

Things are not what they seem to be.

For instance,

The mind steeped in criminality is really the colonized  
Mentality.

Foreign from material realities,

Or not what they seem to be.

There’s a war going on outside,

A war against you and me,

A war demanded by historical necessity,

A war between opposite interests and officer realities,

A war that began with the enslavement of our African ancestry,

A war that demands us all to stand up and fight with new weapons,

Consciousness in hand,

A war that demands us to free the land.