



**WHAT IS LEFT?**

After the bars and the gates and the degradation  
 What is left?  
 After the lock-ins and the lock-outs and the lock ups  
 What is left?  
 I mean, after the chains that get entangled in the grey of one's  
 matter  
 After the bars that get stuck in the hearts of men and women  
 What is left?  
 After the tears and disappointments  
 After the lonely isolation  
 After the cut wrist and the heavy noose  
 What is left?  
 I mean, after the commissary kisses  
 and the get-your-shit-off blues  
 After the hustler has been hustled  
 What is left?  
 After the murderburgers and the goon squads and the tear gas

What is left?  
 I mean, after you know that God can't be trusted  
 After you know that the shrink is a pusher  
 That the word is a whip, and the badge is a bullet  
 What is left?  
 After you know that the dead are still walking  
 After you realize that the silence is talking  
 That outside and inside are just an illusion  
 What is left?  
 I mean, like where is the sun?  
 Where are her arms and where are her kisses?  
 There are lip prints on my pillow  
 I am searching  
 What is left?  
 I mean, like nothing is standstill and nothing is abstract  
 The wing of a butterfly can't take flight  
 The foot on my back is part of a body  
 The song that I sing is part of an echo  
 What is left?  
 I mean like, love is specific  
 Is my mind a machine gun?  
 Is my heart a hack saw?  
 Can I make freedom real. Yeah  
 What is left?  
 I am at the top and bottom of a lower-archy  
 I am in love with losers and laughter  
 I am in love with freedom and children  
 Love is my sword and truth is my compass  
 What is left?

Assata Shakur, July 1977

*A Black revolutionary woman currently serving a life sentence in New Jersey.*

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