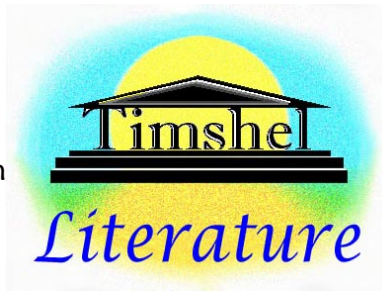


Justin Katz

*Timshel Literature*

jkatz@timshelarts.com



www.timshelarts.com

P.O. Box 751

Portsmouth, RI 02871

401-835-7156

**Safe at Home, September 11, 2001**

By Justin Katz

Who am I amidst the explosions of this world change?  
And what weight my aspirations?  
Even just to ask it seems a sin of selfishness.  
Who am I to be alive?

Were my voice echoing through cities' empty corridors,  
Still my words would not revive a single life.  
Were my strength enough to strike and seek revenge,  
Still my arms would lack the force to toss the tombs aside.  
My hands would simply slip and bleed.  
And evil does not tremble when I shout,  
Nor the wayward turn when I reproach.  
And I am powerless.  
I cannot return our yesterday,  
And little can I do to help today.

What now, we, the useless?  
No more this petty griping among nobodies,  
No more this mealy-mouthedness,  
No more this dissembling,  
No solipsist spins,  
No demagoguery,  
No usurious truths,  
Which are borne to beat each other into bankrupt resignation.

No parades along another's faults.  
No more of what distracts from life  
And crumbles the object of our days.  
No more.  
For who are we to not live in this way?  
Who among us has the right  
— the *right* —  
To foster such confusion?

Who am I, then, among us?  
Who am I — the least — to not live?  
And in living to be that lost friend.  
In living to be the brother, father, husband, son who has not disappeared,  
In meager compensation for he who has.

Who am I to not live and reach out to others in their lives?  
Who am I to not write, to not speak, to not teach?  
Perhaps to save those who are not yet dead,  
And help those who are not yet in danger,  
Though it brings me not a stray reward.  
Who am I to not learn and listen?  
Perhaps to save and help myself.

Who am I to not aspire?  
Who am I amidst the dust of this reborn world?  
No more these selfish questions.  
Who am I if I refuse to be America?