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“No Neutral Ground”

- Little Rock Reed

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“Ain't no real convicts left,”
they snivel
in feigned reminiscence
of a time
when they were real ones.

Respect.
A word without substance, that.
It cannot extend
to others from those
who lack it for themselves
much less bounce back again.

Inmate.
Nasty word, that.
Denoting diseased
psychopath receiving treatment.
But it escapes even
those so classified
as they feign reminiscence
of a time when they weren't.

Correctional facility
Another antiseptic lie.
This is a prison.
We are prisoners.
We are oppressed,
dehumanized,
repressed out of existence.
A word without substance, that.

Resist.
If we don't,
we perpetuate
the grinding forces
that crush the spirit
of those who do.
Thus
we become the oppressors,
the dehumanizing agents of repression.

There is no neutral ground.