

The Prisoner

Gil Scott-Heron

Here I am after so many years
Hounded by hatred and trapped by fear
I'm in a box, I've got no place to go
If I follow my mind, I know I'll slaughter my own

Help me, I'm the prisoner won't you hear my plea?
I need somebody, yeah, to listen to me
I beg you, brothers and sisters
I'm counting on you, yeah

Black babies in the womb are shackled and bound
Chained by the caveman who keeps beauty down
Smacked on the ass when they're squalling and wet
Heir to a spineless man who never forgets

Never forgets that he's a prisoner, can't you hear my plea?
'Cause I need somebody, Lord knows, to listen to me
I'm a stranger to my son
Who wonders why his daddy runs, yeah

On my way to work in the morning
When I don't give a damn
Can't nobody, can't nobody
Can't nobody, can't nobody see just who in hell I am?

Hemmed in by a suit, yes, all choked up in a tie
Ain't no wonder some times near morning I hear my woman cry
She knows her man is a prisoner, won't you hear my plea?
Yeah, 'cause I need somebody to listen to me

My woman, she don't say but she hates
To see her man chained this way, yeah
Help me, I'm the prisoner
Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, I'm the prisoner