

## DAVID JAMES

### *The Child*

i'm afraid of the dark  
unsure

memories burn  
like acid

the stench of failure  
stifles

hold me tighter  
tonight

## LES COTTRELL

### *December 21, 1978*

It was my birthday,  
no one came except winter,  
but a Southern friend  
in cell 23  
sang with me.  
*Happy Birthday to me*  
*Happy Birthday to you*  
No cake, no ice cream,  
no gift, kiss or wish:  
I aged fifty at 25.