

INVICTUS

William Ernest Henley - 1849-1903

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.

My friends at Bread & Water Prisoners, Inc., reminded me of the power of this classic poem. We here in the prison system must never allow the Evil Jailer to strip us of our dignity, to disavow us from our oath to be the "Captain of my soul." We are NOT afraid of their daily Evil. Bloody we will not yield. Broken we will not cower.

My heart bleeds from the cage,
but it still beats aloud.
My hand trembles with age,
but it still grips the quill.

They have no power over me,
I am resolute and steadfast.
Their Evil makes its play,
and I repell them at every turn!

by Timothy J. Muise