

## THA' HOOD

As I walk down the corner,  
"Hey lil' mama, waz yo name?  
Lemme holla at ya a minute.  
You lookin' for some game?"

As I lay in bed there's knocks  
at my door.  
It's the neighborhood babies.  
They ask for some bread as  
their tummies roar.

I get off the bus  
and turn on Springdale.  
There's a woman passed out:  
She's bloody and pale.

As the phone rings I press  
"Talk" and say Hello:  
"Ey baby I'm locked up.  
Come bail me out."  
But I don't got the money,  
So he screams and shouts.

I go to the store to buy  
Some diapers and milk:  
"That will be \$13.60."  
But I only have \$13.59.  
The owner kicks me out of his store  
And my baby screams and cries.

What more can I get  
in this cold hard place?

I wake up to gunshots and  
hold my breath hoping it  
wasn't someone I know,  
going face to face.

I'm tired of the needles

on our back porch.

Always hustling to pay the bills.  
I'm tired of having to sell these damn  
pills.

I'm tired of smoke filling  
my lungs.  
I'm tired of sleeping on top  
of guns.

This isn't where I was meant  
to be.  
The projects wasn't made  
for us --  
Why can't you see?

There's so much more  
places where we don't have  
to hide . . .  
But then again, the grass  
is always greener on the other  
side.

– *Tempest S.*