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Escaping the Prism... Fade to Black: Poetry and Essays

Jalil Muntaqim

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Jalil Muntaqim is a former member of the Black Panther Party and the Black Liberation Army. For over forty years, Jalil has been a political prisoner, and one of the New York Three (NY3), in retaliation for his political activism.

Escaping the Prism … Fade to Black is a collection of Jalil s poetry and essays, written from behind the bars of Attica prison. Combining the personal and the political, these texts afford readers with a rare opportunity to get to know a man who has spent most of his life over forty years behind bars for his involvement in the Black Liberation Movement of the 1960s and early 1970s.

Jalil s poetry deals with a range of themes spirituality, history, and the struggle for justice; depression, humor, and sexual desire; the pain and loneliness of imprisonment, the ongoing racist oppression of New Afrikan people in the United States, and the need to find meaning in one s life. At the same time, his political essays show him to be as eager as ever to intervene in and grapple with the events of today, always with an eye to concretely improving the lives of the oppressed.

Escaping the Prism … Fade to Black also includes an extensive examination of the U.S. government s war against the Black Liberation Army in general, and Jalil and the New York Three in particular, by renowned scholar-activist Ward Churchill. In this highly detailed essay, "The Other Kind: On the Integrity, Consistency, and Humanity of Jalil Abdul Muntaqim," Churchill traces this story from the FBI s murderous COINTELPRO repression of the Black Panther Party, through the NEWKILL operation which led to the NY3 s incarceration, to the more recent Phoenix Taskforce which orchestrated the re-prosecution of Jalil and other veteran Black activists, in the case of the San Francisco 8. With illustrations by revolutionary prisoner-artists Zolo Agona Azania and Kevin Rashid Johnson, as well as various outside artist-activists.

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