

## 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