UNTITLED
by Richard McIlravy-Ackert

They shuffled.
As if on cue, every occupant moved their weight from foot to foot as the steel doors yawned to admit the newcomer. The interloper. The intruder.
Prior to his arrival, each had felt safely surrounded, protected by the imagined invisibility that fell on them once they were inside the doors. Who they were, or what they did was of no consequence in here. In here was safe, secure, a world apart from life. In here, all was ordered and predictable and everyone knew what was expected of him or her. That is, they did... until he came in.

Everyone sensed at once that he was not like them, and not like any of the others they had encountered that day. He seemed so unashamed, so bold. They could tell immediately he wouldn’t conform. He was different, and he seemed pleased with the discomfort his mere presence shrouded them with. His blue eyes twinkled and darted around to each occupant, searching for a connection, a single responsive twitch of an eye. A smile. A nod. Anything to indicate, however tautly, that someone understood, someone was willing to engage his mind and play his game.

Thoughts raced and memories were taxed as they tried to imagine the last time anyone had dared to break the rules. The intruder could tell what they were thinking. He knew of the probing questions each of them silently posed to each other and to him: “Why? Why are you doing this? Don’t you know how un-comfortable this makes us feel? We want to shout at you, make you conform, make you as invisible as we are!”

As each one averted his gaze, they simply sunk back into the anonymity of the crowd. No one would or could meet his glance. Everyone looked up, waiting for an end to this ordeal, waiting for the stranger to depart. They shuffled.

After what seemed like an eternity, they sensed their prayers might be answered. The steel doors once again opened, admitting hope, fresh air, a chance to end this mind-game he wanted to play with them. They held their collective breath, and pushed forward in anticipation that someone would come to replace the stranger. Someone who understood the rules and who would abide by them and who would make them comfortable all over again. Surely, if someone else came, the stranger would depart. It could happen, it must happen or they might all go mad!

But no one came and the doors closed again, the stranger still standing there facing them. He seemed as though he wanted to speak, to reach out to them in some odd, twisted way. He seemed as though he wanted to touch them with his words, his thoughts, his soul. Once again, they shuffled.

And he stood there, still smiling, eyes searching. Yearning for someone to talk to before I got off the elevator.

BROTHERLY LOVE
by John Koenig

Too far to go
Love is the only thing we got
Life is a thing you never know
At times I need a good blow
With you it’s not
Too far to go
Down the street we go
People look at us like we’re snot
Life is a thing you never know

Father says it’s wrong, that I do know
Back to home, I know it’s not
Too far to go
Mothers weeping at home
At the beds big cum spot
Life is a thing you never know
We are brothers I do know
Known ya since you were a tot
Too far to go
Life is a thing you never know.