

# Solitary Watch

## Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://solitarywatch.org/2016/10/21/voices-from-solitary-sad-flutes/>

## Public Facing Advocacy Writing

close

Search

close

close

by [Voices from Solitary](#) | October 21, 2016

*Francis Bauer Harris has been on Death Row at Greene State Correctional Institution for 19 years. He was convicted of first degree murder in 1997, though he continues to maintain his innocence. On Death Row, Harris spends 23 to 24 hours a day in solitary confinement. According to a friend with whom he corresponds, he feels like at times he is experiencing the onset of symptoms of solitary confinement and has observed it in others. The only way he and others can cope is to try to keep his mind busy with his own legal work and to find solace in art and poetry. The following poem, written in July 2016, is entitled Heartbreak in Solitary, aka Sad Flutes. Harris can receive mail at Francis Bauer Harris DL0556 PA, SCI Greene Death Row, 175 Progress Drive, Waynesburg, PA 15370. Jean Casella*

There is this hole I guess  
it is where my heart used to be  
it is so annoying  
I mean I lay on my bed to watch t.v.  
and if I set the remote down it falls in there  
or my glasses they always fall in there if I set them down  
all kinds of food crumbs end up in there if I eat too  
but the thing that really gets on my nerves is late at night  
when it is very quiet and all the noise is gone  
there is a breeze that blows thru the cell  
and it goes in there and makes this sound  
its hard to describe  
its a low wailing like someone crying  
the sound of hope dying a slow painful death  
its like the sound a dream makes when it is dying  
slowly and in much pain  
it sounds like a sad flute as it is blown through  
but I think I know how to shut it up  
I have all this sadness and pain  
just pouring out of me right now  
I can ball it up and stuff it in there

and you know if you let sadness and pain stew for a time  
it will turn to anger and resentment  
and that can really fill up that hole  
yeah Ill put it all in there  
no more sad flute

The Voices from Solitary series publishes dispatches from people surviving the lived experience of solitary confinement.

Accurate information and authentic storytelling can serve as powerful antidotes to ignorance and injustice. We have helped generate public awareness, mainstream media attention, and informed policymaking on what was once an invisible domestic human rights crisis.

Only with your support can we continue this groundbreaking work, shining light into the darkest corners of the U.S. criminal punishment system.

by [Voices from Solitary](#)

September 30, 2022

by [Voices from Solitary](#)

September 19, 2022

by [Voices from Solitary](#)

September 6, 2022

Solitary Watch encourages comments and welcomes a range of ideas, opinions, debates, and respectful disagreement. We do not allow name-calling, bullying, cursing, or personal attacks of any kind. Any embedded links should be to information relevant to the conversation. Comments that violate these guidelines will be removed, and repeat offenders will be blocked. Thank you for your cooperation.

Powerful stuff

P.O. Box 11374  
Washington, DC 20008

[info@solitarywatch.org](mailto:info@solitarywatch.org)

Solitary Watch

Copyright 2022, Solitary Watch

Read about [rights and permissions](#).



**Solitary Watch News**