

*Kiel M. Gregory*

**THIS POEM**

This poem is for all the ones who have  
no one:

support networks made solely from  
the fabric of soul

for all the ones who sold their favorite writing desk  
to make their car payment  
or sold access to bits of their bodies  
for dinner or a bit of entertainment to distract them  
from their cyclical, impoverished existence

for all the ones who toiled under stress at jobs  
they were over-qualified for because of saturated markets

for all the ones who grew up with  
peeled, boiled, steamed,  
roasted, fried, and mashed potatoes

for all the ones who ate alone,  
cried alone,  
and slept alone on shitty mattresses dragged  
from one apartment to the next,  
quarter they could ultimately not afford anyway

for all the ones who sought books because  
words are cheaper than action on back-lit screens

for all the ones who had to struggle against their demons  
and try their best to ignore the nay-saying voices that said

they'd never make it,  
they'd never be good enough,  
they'd never, ever, find love  
or happiness,  
or hope:

this poem is for people  
like us.