

throw that brick: an ode to civil rights icon H. Calvin Austin III*

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published February 13, 2025 “Something For The
Pain”- set to be released June 2025

he walked barefoot down the street
and raised his hands to the sky,
like reciting a morning prayer.
the cruelty of man cannot keep him down.

he extended his long arms
to cover the city in a loving embrace.
he used the beating of his heart
as a metronome for his people as they walked,
because our chants and praises are always on time.

there was no fear in his heart,
punishment by white America never threatened him.
george d'arfois, beware, there's a new sheriff in town,
and he's bringing in the heat.

with the Power of God, unlawful chains
melted off his wrists like sugar in
water, and he led the helpless and spry
to a greater destination.

it's been a long time since he marched, and
rest has finally entered his bones.
but with the gifts of God

and the power he left with the Black community,
change will come,
people will rise, and our children's
children will be free.

H. Calvin Austin III was a civil rights icon from Shreveport, Louisiana. He was assaulted and jailed after a peaceful march from Booker T Washington High School to Little Union Baptist Church in protest of the horrific beating of Rev. Harry Blake. He was unlawfully jailed for 45 days and mistreated during his stay. He passed away February 3, 2025. If you haven't heard of him, please research into his legacy. He is part of the lifeline that connects black history to Shreveport.