



A voice for women's mental health

Newsletter



Winter 2010



In this issue:

A special Christmas edition featuring your poetry, artwork and stories



Who am I

I know my way around glades, my red fur
Will show through the plants and trees
My snout will pick up the invisible presence
Of the beautiful birds and bees

I creep along the road side,
Along where children play,
Ignorance of me keeps them from fear,
As I keep out of their way

I come to a chicken farm,
All my snout smells is food,
Out comes the farmer though,
And away I am shooed...

I creep along the roadside,
The night has come to fall,
I creep to the chicken farm,
And eat one and all.

The farmer comes in the morning,
With expectation in his boot,
It is nearing Sunday,
It's time for his weekly shoot

But hence for the farmer,
There is not a chicken in sight,
I have eaten all his coop,
And am off, satisfied for
The next daily plight.

**Fay
London**



When I walk along the beach

When I walk along the beach
For those few moments I feel free
I am all alone
But at least I am me

I love my children
With all my heart and soul
But to win them back
And be part of my life again
Is my aim and future goal

I miss my dead nan's love
And hope in heaven it's shining above
And hold her memory close to my heart
Like a glove

I wish my life didn't get so bad
As living this way makes me feel so sad
My children are part of me
And all of us together as one, can be free
From all the pain

Which makes my heart bleed like rain
My life will never be the same again
Until we are all back together
And we can be happy again this time forever.

**Melanie
Havant**

An honest ear

If you ever want to talk,
Just come and look for me,
We'll chat while we drink coffee or walk.

Because friends are really hard to find,
You know some just pretend to care,
You know the kind.

So remember that I'm here to lend an honest
And understanding ear,
So ignore those who say bad things.

They're only being like that because they
Can't live on their own.

Jayne HMP Peterborough



Being sent to hospital

Being sent to hospital
Is always possible

Screaming and shouting
No one is about.

Hard at work and no play.
And I don't want to stay.

Medicine's at all different times
And I like lemon and lime

Screaming at me is hard.
The fences are barred.

Not smiling or understanding
Not knowing where I belong.

Donna Kneesworth House

Wait for me

I've fashioned, from this box of steel, a nest
And, coiled tight, I consider your request.
I contemplate you witnessing my shame
Within this place that reeks of fear and blame;
And though your needs are no doubt vital too
I am the one who has to see this through
Until I leave, my humbled head held high
To live with you under a clear new sky.

So just for now, stay away, my love,
For though we fit together hand in glove
My sense of self will not support somehow
The look of horror knitted in your brow;
Instead, we'll pause this moment of our life
Until I can feel proud to be your wife.

Victoria HMP East Sutton Park

Lotti

Lotti, my favourite cow
Reminded me of a ghost somehow

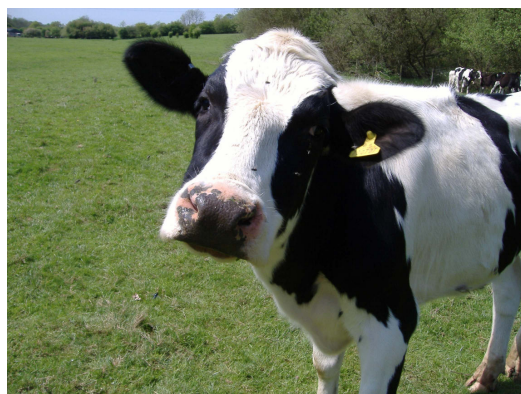
Nothing to do with her head, back, feet or thighs
More the white of her coat against the winter nights

In the driving Yorkshire snow
I felt, she started to glow

She seemed luminous in the dark
In my eyes, she shone like spark

Sadly, she died one summer's night
In my arms, her coat didn't look any longer
Bright...

Isla Llanarth Court



Christmas 2010



One wish

Make one wish
And it will come true.
That wish that you wished for?
I'll be home soon.

I think about you every night
Sometimes it's hard to sleep.
You are so special to me
My delight, the one to keep.

I know you know I care
I know you know how much
And I also miss you
And your touch.

Tender and loving like we've never had before.
I'll get that all back when I walk through that door.

Leighsa
HMP East Sutton Park

I'd like to light a candle

I'd like to light a candle for my friends and family,
If I believe in god, I'd also fall praying on my
knee...
Sadly I lost my faith,
In god and most of the human race...
Though my heart is still open...
If he wants
To find
Me!

Isla
Llanarth Court



Christmas tree

Christmas promises to arrive each year
When father time brings December
And the message is worldwide
For all to love one another
Jesus born in a stable
And visited by kings and shepherds alike
The star shone in Bethlehem
And now stars shine in most homes
On the top of trees
The children smile at presents
The adults smile at the wondrous
Words of god
How mercy and compassion stays on earth
And how at Christmas time
Soldiers put down arms and shake hands
Peace, a gift of love
For all to share
Before, now and after our delicious
Christmas food
Give praise for the simple blessings
And live in love, peace and joy
And then you have changed the world
And made mother earth a better place.

Valerie
Imagine Women's Project



A Special Day!

Christmas is such a special day
Where families gather and celebrate
But it won't be the same,
As I will be away.

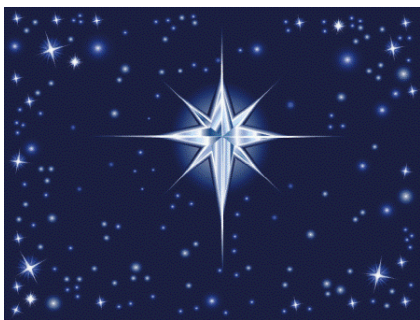
It is such a sad, sad day
I just sit and cry and cry
All I can do is watch the snow
Falling down from the sky!

But I am the only one to blame
For the stupid things I do
And there will be lot more years
That I will celebrate on my own, without you.

I can't even phone you
On this, such as special day,
But you know I'm thinking of you all
In my own special way!

So Happy Christmas to those I love
And if you go outside and look up as you do
Find the biggest, brightest star
And that is the one that says "I love you"!

Toni
HMP Bronzefield



The Future New Year

Maybe one day
You'll be free
And all your dreams
Will come true
So tears of joy for me and you
You may tell tales how you praised
And changed your ways
And I hope your future you have happy days

Deborah
Chesterton Unit, Hollins Park

My Mum

My mum is the light in my life
The moon in my heart.

You brighten me up every day
In everything you do and say

It means so much to me
To hear and think of how much I mean to you

Listening to Westlife makes me think of you
It makes me smile just like we used too

I liked Halifax where we use to live but
Now you have moved, I'm going to live with you

and show you both gratitude.

SW
Alpha Hospital, Sheffield



Christmas Poem

Lights on the tree
So, that every one can see
It's Christmas season
That's the reason

Santa has been around
There's a gift to be found
We celebrate this way
As it is Jesus day

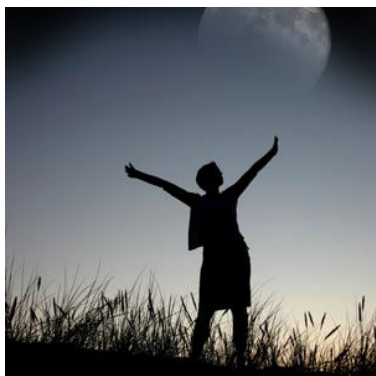
Merry Christmas

Annarita
London

So Confused

For 20 years here and there
Nobody listened to my cries of despair
Personality disorder was my tag
My hope non existent, my esteem did sag
Institutes became my home
One after another I did roam
My passion was music I loved a tune
Laying on my bed in my bedroom
I sang and danced my way through life
Buried in music, hiding my strife
Until the night beckoned when I would cry
Making plans for my funeral as I wanted to die
Watching others leave to pastures new
Community life I hardly knew
Sometimes I was smiling, I was doing well
Other times I lived in pure hell.
One day in my latest abode
I had renewed life I'd cracked the code
I got a shock as I was rediagnosed
Bi polar was I all along, I supposed
Now I have hope, I'm easier to treat
My head almost sorted but not yet sweet
I'm working hard to get out of here
Possibly only taking one year
I'm happier now I'm on medication
Now when I sleep I dream **celebration.**

Tracey Arbury Court



Bail or Jail

Justice I pray
True justice of peace
Favour me oh God
You know I'm innocent

The claim I broke the law
But did the law break me?
The answer is in a sentence
The court sentence.

I plead not guilty
I proclaim my innocence
I try to speak
But my tongue is tied.

Bail me please
Oh, you man of Law
Am out of words
Confused and shocked
Barrister, I did not do it.

Bail has conditions
How could I fulfil this
Being so poor and needy
The conditions of the Bail
Is the direction to jail.

What a betrayal
So unlucky in love
I am grateful to God
It could have been worse.
Jesus loves me.
He has not killed me
He shall strengthen me.

Justice I cry.
Justice of peace.
There would be no peace.
Unless for justice.

Anon.



Annarita, our Newsletter Development Officer, has published her second book under the name Starlite, called 'Life is a Sword, Keep Fighting'. It is a collection of funny poems by several writers, and is available from Amazon online bookshop for a price of £10.

Meeting Crispin Blunt MP, Ministry of Justice

Dear cons, ex cons, and those in the justice system,

I recently had the benefits of meeting MP Crispin Blunt, the new Minister of Justice. I was representing Women Ahead primarily, but did manage to bring Wish to MP Blunt's attention ... all good all good.

I was able to bring awareness of a situation which arises for nearly every prisoner upon release, that being the gap between the discharge grant and income, which for me, four months of borrowing money where I could in order to survive. It is disgusting how they expect released prisoners to survive on **nothing** for countless months.

As a solution to this crisis I suggested that upon release, prisoners should receive a weekly giro, through the post, until their benefits were re-instated, or indeed, their income from a job started being paid.

MP Crispin Blunt, Minister of Justice took this very seriously, accordingly putting it in his diary of notes for his discussions. He also pointed out that by closing the financial waiting gap it would potentially stop 70% of reoffending occurring within that desperate waiting time.

I hope as I am sure you all are, that this is taken to a level where the problem will be solved, in the near future.

Meanwhile ...

It is important for prisoners to go down to Resettlement and **sort out their paperwork** for

benefits at least **two months prior to release**, no matter how boring and inconvenient it may seem at the time. It should be compulsory in an offender's journey through their sentence.

NB:- It is better to go 60p or a working session short of canteen for one week than to try and survive on nothing for countless months waiting for benefits.

If you have been released from prison recently and find yourself with no money, please **hang on**, Wish among other agencies can help and support you through financial difficulties ...

Yours Fayfully,

Fay Dunne



Crispin Blunt is Conservative MP for Reigate in Surrey.

He is Parliamentary Under Secretary of State in the Ministry of Justice, and he has responsibility for prisons and probation, youth justice, criminal law and sentencing policy and criminal justice.

Would you like to contribute to this newsletter?

We welcome all contributions to this newsletter, including poems, artwork, puzzles, or articles about your experiences of the system or an issue that affects you. We pay £5 for each piece that gets published.

Please send any contributions to:

✉ **Wish, Freepost RSCY-BBTB-ZYHU, 77 East Road, London, NI 6AH**

@ **newsletter@womenatwish.org.uk**

Remember to include your full name and postal address so that we can send you a cheque if your piece is published. Only your first name and the name of the town or unit you live in will be printed unless you ask otherwise.

What do you think of this newsletter?

What do you think of how it looks?

What's in it?

What was your favourite bit of this issue?

Is there anything that wasn't in this issue that you'd like to see in a future issue?

We'd love to hear your opinions on the newsletter.

There are many ways you can get your feedback to us:

✉ **Wish, Freepost RSCY-BBTB-ZYHU, 77 East Road, London, NI 6AH**

@ **newsletter@womenatwish.org.uk**

☎ **020 7017 2828**

💬 **Or tell a member of Wish staff at your unit**

WISH

A voice for women's mental health

Newsletter



Spring 2011



Why Gender Matters campaign

Your poetry, stories and artwork

And lots more ...!

