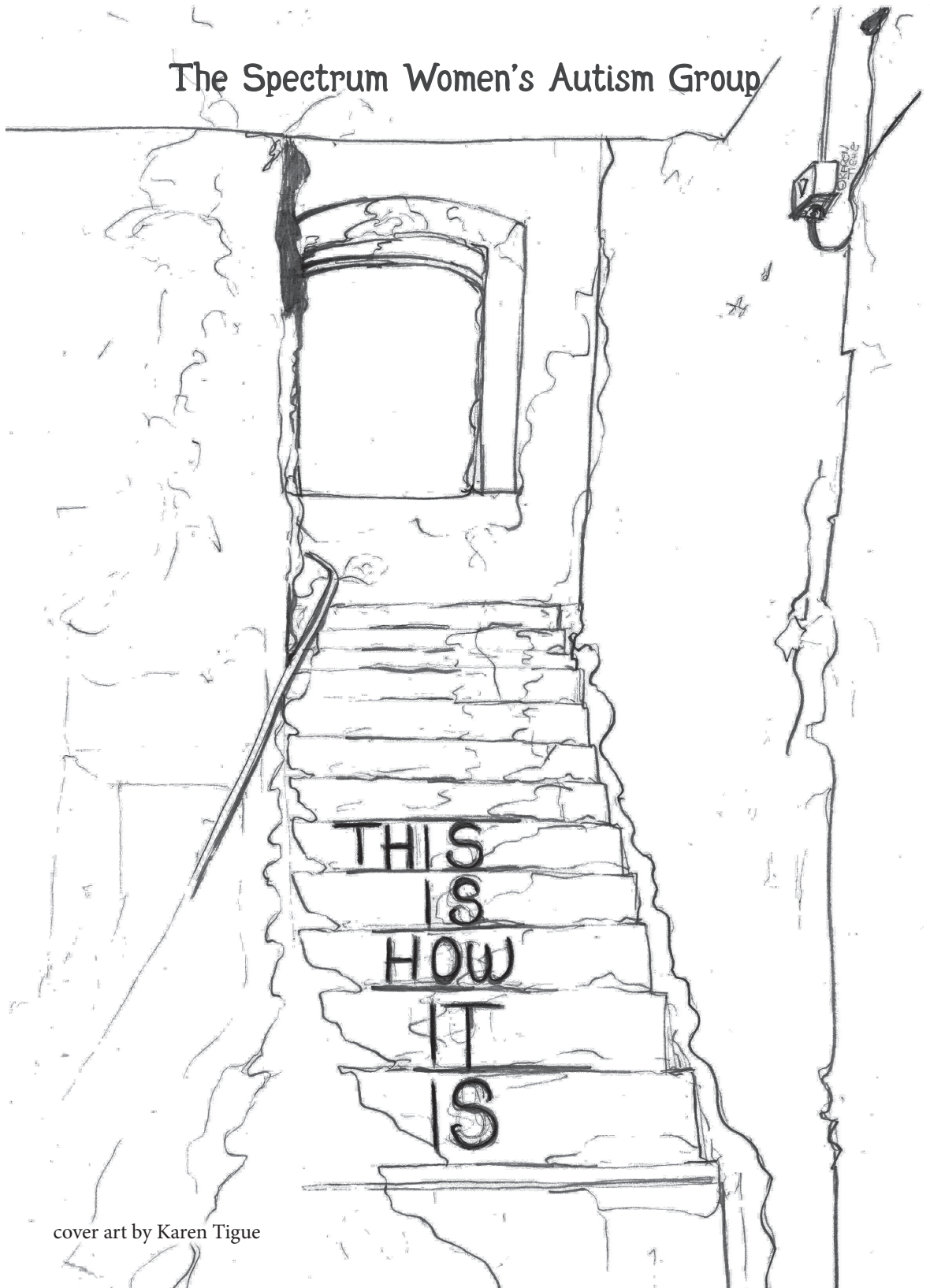


The Spectrum Women's Autism Group



cover art by Karen Tighe



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Spectrum Centre
14 Northlands Row
Dungannon
BT71 6AP
Tel: 028 87729810

Community Arts Partnership
3-5 Commercial Court, Belfast,
County Antrim BT1 2NB
tel:028 9092 3493

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As part of Community Arts Partnership, Literature and Verbal Arts outreach programme I was asked to facilitate poetry workshops for the Spectrum Women's Autism Group, the first women's support group for autism in Ireland.

Initially, like most people with autism, the women had difficulty communicating with others. The workshops, however, provided them with an artistic platform to express themselves, and aspects of the challenges of their daily lives, through poetic language.

This was extremely significant as they felt for the first time that they had a 'voice' that others could identify with. In particular, they hope that their voice, via their poems, will reach out to others who are currently struggling with everyday life with autism. Their poems have the capacity to both change and challenge perceptions within the wider community, while educating and promoting a deeper understanding of autism.

Their collection of poems will take you on a journey of everyday life and the complications associated with autism. Some of the poems are humorous, some are harrowing, but all have been written from the heart with a searing honesty. They give a glimpse of life rarely seen by others, to challenge your perceptions. Enjoy.

Martelle Mc Partland

Foreword

Spectrum Women's Autism group (SWAG) is a group run by and for women on the autism spectrum. We were the first group for autistic women in Ireland. The main aim of the group is to provide peer support for women on the spectrum. This condition can lead to us being socially isolated, but we aim to break this through meeting people who understand what we are going through on a level that most people can never hope to understand. This is the first time that we have opened up and written about our experiences of this condition. This was facilitated by the support of Martelle McPartland, funded by the Community Arts Partnership, who has given us a voice, which many of us lacked before. We had never written poetry before.

We would like to thank the Spectrum Diagnostic and Therapy Centre, Dungannon, for the use of the room and in particular we would thank to thank Jo Douglas, Consultant Psychologist, for her support in setting up and providing ongoing support to the group.

Debbie Bond
SWAG Chair

Poetry

Would my brain stop writing poems
I really need to sleep
They come to me at four am
And when I'm driving down the street
A line in a song
A word someone says
It triggers off
A stream of thought
That ends up in a poem
I used to think
I couldn't write
But I can't seem to stop
It seems like a tap
Has been turned on that
I can't turn off

by Debbie Bond

Star

Am I from this planet?
Or another?
I'm not like others,

But I'm made from the same
The material of stars.

by Debbie Bond

Mutism

Asked a question.
Search for an answer,
But the phrase book
Has none.
I need one quick
Or they'll think
I'm stupid.
If you want help
You should talk.
The words jumble
In my head
Pressing my skull.
I try to speak,
To shout, to scream,
But no sound comes out
Just a metallic taste.
I want to run,
Or the ground to
Swallow me whole,
But instead I remain
Frozen in fear.

by Debbie Bond

Friends

You want to make friends,
So join a club, a society
Or take a class
So I did this,

And now I have
GCSE psychology,
Can do Tiffany glass,
Make patchwork quilts
And cushions.

I know how to do
Salsa dancing,
Kick boxing
And yoga.

And much, much more,
But at the end,
I had no more friends,
And instead all I felt was
Alone in a crowd,

by Debbie Bond

Normal

At home I'm normal
Outside I'm not.
They've tried to teach
Me the rules
To manage in the world,
But they don't always work.

I'm not into make-up
Hairstyles or boys.
I want to read books
And play with toys.
I want to use tools
Instead of curling tongs.
I'm not like the other girls.

Most people don't want
To discuss string theory
Or space.
They want to talk about things
Like sports and soaps.
Things of no interest to me.

So I get lost in conversations,
Feel on the periphery of the world,
Out on the edge looking in.

by Debbie Bond

Sugar and Spice

I'm such a girlie girl
Sugar and spice and all things nice
That's what I'm made off
But I can be such a Tomboy
I like trains more than any boy I know

But I going to be a ballerina
And 'jetee' 'weeeee' straight into
The arms of my handsome prince
I love my wee doll Pipin
I'm practising to be a mummy someday,
I'm so sweet and gentle

I like to play skipping, hop scotch,
Rounders and netball.
I adore flowery dresses,
My hair in pig tails,
Patent shoes,
My legs in silky white tights
Just to complete the cute look.

But sometimes
I get so confused
And frightened
And I cry.
For they tell me

I'm a boy!

by Adrienne Elson

Seasonal Affective Disorder

Sad

I was born in the dark part of the year,
When I'm unsure how to survive,
I long for the returning sun.

by LGC

Words

They want me write in my own words
But my words are not my own
They are snippets and phrases
Stolen from others, TV, books and songs.
Added to my phrase book
Like a foreigner in my own country.
Stored for when they're needed
If they really want my own
Shall I do like Doctor Seuss
And create them.

by Debbie Bond

Stanlow Oil Refinery

Railway sidings 1996

A wild mint plant grows
As nature's victory against
Mankind's work.

The multi-coloured rainbow
Chemical stream runs by.

Steam pipes whoosh and hiss
As synthetic clouds rise.

Stones abound around the mints roots
Acrid, air stinging the eyes.

Shunting railway tankers
Ring and rumble, rest in sidings.

Lorries roar by
Splashing through filthy puddles.

A thick haze hangs in the air.
A sense of danger, everything so serious.
Everything could go bang at any minute.

But still the little mint plant
Grows like a battlefield poppy.
Natures answer to it all.

by Adrienne Elson

Do I Fit?

I don't fit in

I can't join the
Farmer's Union
As I'm a vegan.

I can't join the
Scripture Union
As I'm the wrong religion.

I can't join the
Sports teams
As I can't play the games.

I can't join the
Artists
As I can't paint.

I can't join the
Popular girls
As I don't bitch and drink.

I can't join the
Geeks and nerds
As I'm the wrong gender.

I fit in with
Those who don't.

by Debbie Bond

Boyfriend

You're twenty five,
You've not had a boyfriend?
Are you a lesbian?
Or have you been abused?
You're safe.
You can tell us the truth.

I tried to tell the truth
But they did not believe.
I'm not a lesbian.
I haven't been abused.

Instead I don't know
How to know
If a boy fancies me,
Or if I fancy him
What to do.

No one taught me
The rules of this engagement.
So how was I to know
What to do

by Debbie Bond

Connections

I draw lines to
Connect dots
That aren't meant
To be connected.

I see, hear
And experience
Things that pass
Others by.

Most people are
Too consumed in
Social etiquette to
Notice things around.

I read and learn,
Absorb new information.
I take theories
And I question them.

I pull it all apart,
Challenge what is believed,
In order to try
To make sense of my world

by Debbie Bond

Tunguska

$4\pi r^2$,
It's in the air,
It's not a bird.
Tunguska in Russia

Was it an alien?
Was it an asteroid?
Was it Tesla flexing
His manic rage?

Where is the crater?
One tree in the
Middle left standing
1000 km of flattened trees.

If a tree falls and no one sees
Did it fall?
Not this one.
Bright as a second Sun

3 seconds to run.

by Jonathan Donnelly

Empathy

I feel everything
I experience everyone's emotions
I can't watch sad programmes without crying
The suffering on the news is too much,
I am crushed by their emotions
But I often can't express it.
I can't translate the sensations in my body,
To a word that you will understand.
My facial expression may not match
What is going on inside.
If I see you distressed and don't react,
It's not because I'm cold but
Because I don't know what to do,
And even if I do I may not be able to,
As your emotions overwhelm me,
Or it requires physical contact
Which I'm unable to manage.
This leads people to believe
That I lack empathy
When instead I have too much.

by Debbie Bond

Failed Attempt Age 14

Waking up crusty mouthed, Sick
splattered body,
Broken head pounding, Hands
shaking,
Sweat dripping,
Twisting and turning in a bed,

In a room with a note should Not be
the worst shame ever. But it can be,
For I wrote that note
Never intending to see
The start of the next day.

But I saw that day
Because I failed,
I couldn't find a way.

To live amongst
The noise and chatter,
Voice's judgements,
False perceptions of myself

by LGC

Footsteps down a damp tunnel follow me in the dark to sleep.

Is Death a Rush?

Is death a rush?
Endorphins,
An overload of dopamine?
Illusion of calm
Fades into acceptance
The high too high to resist
A bungee cord with doctors pulling
Light fades in and out
The voice of distance shouts
A living dead quantum state.

Anon

Detaching

Life hurt too much
I wanted to die.
I tried but I failed
So I tried again,
And again.

I wanted to escape
The pain that crushed
My whole body
And fogged my brain.

It stole my happiness,
My love for all things.
I tried to cry
But no tears came out.

My emotions trapped,
Unable to express them
Or find the words
To communicate
The feelings,
That gnawed at my body
Eating me from inside

by Debbie Bond

Locked Down

Locked psychiatric unit

Hell had double locked doors.
A ten foot high fence,
 with barb wire at the top

Hell had banging doors.
People screaming, shouting
 and kicking all night long.

Hell had no food.
Gave no comfort, love
 or safety.

Hell was terrifying.
Gave no sleep, for the
 fear of attack.

Hell left me broken.
Left me scared of people,
 even those trying to help.

Hell left me traumatised.
Left me scared of the world
 and wanting to be dead.

Hell should have helped;
Instead made things worse,
 much worse than before.

Hell's memories were buried, but
Memories have come back
 to haunt me still.

It was a place I never
 should have been.

by Debbie Bond

Melt

Things in my head
Makes me wish I were dead
I don't want to see
I don't want to be me
I'm awake half the night
And nothing is right

I don't want to complain
Because (they'll) say I'm insane
If my troubles I say
They will put me away
And my children will hate me
So just medicate me
And tell me too mindfully
Meditate cognitive cogitate yeah.
We'll mindfully meditate this.

Anon

In dreams the mind goes for solace and punishment, sleepless
nights of reflection lest we find the mirror.

The deceit. The hurt at holding in the truth, from a child hands
a crushed flower in the dirt, forced the hand around the nettle.

In the Wrong Body

In shadows lurk hooded figures
Like young grim reapers
Throats clear
Instilling once again that fear

In public bars tobacco cracked laughs
Punctuate the air with embarrassed sniffs and laughter

Lonely villages
Mean fevered streets
A cocktail
Of happiness, truth, guilt and shame

In the family home, the mask, the lie
In the workplace, the act, the play
To make it through the day

The looks, the jealousy, at those you wish you were
But can never be

by Adrienne Elson

Psychiatric Hospital

The noises hurt my head
The TV, people shouting, alarms
That continued all night long.
Too many smells
Of food, cleaning products,
Other's perfume and deodorants.
My head felt like it was going to explode.
The bright lights burnt my eyes,
I wanted to hide from them,
Or turn them off,
But I couldn't.
They are on all night long
Disturbing my sleep.
The nurses didn't understand
The doctors didn't get me
I couldn't communicate.
The people coming and going constantly
Never stopping
Never giving peace
The constant change
The constant moves
I needed a settled space
A place on my own,
Where I could recuperate
Away from people,
To just be alone.

by Debbie Bond

You're Fine

You go to large meetings.
You wear nice clothes.
You've lost weight.
You look well.

But all they see

Is the mask,
The costume,
The act,
The script.

They don't see

Me being sick in the night,
Not sleeping for fear,
Pacing the floor,
The uncontrollable shaking.
Unable to eat
Or think
Or do anything at all.
The battle each morning
To get out of bed.
The constant fight with
The voice in my head.

They don't see

The scars covered up,
The wounds buried deep,
That drive the battle on.

by Debbie Bond

Trapped

I'm trapped
In these four walls,
Too scared to leave
For no reason at all,
But I can't cope
With being stuck inside.
The conflicting panic
Of being closed in,
But also of being outside,
Leaves me drowning in fear.

by Debbie Bond

Movement

I need to walk,
To run,
To move.

I need the
Repetitive action
To feel calm.

I can't sit still
All day or else
I'll be climbing
The walls.

by Debbie Bond

Anxiety

Anxiety an old failure friend,
A shadow, my shadow,
No matter if sunny and bright
Or the depths of
The darkest night.

Never far away,
Always ready to spring into flight,
It helps sometimes
But it can conquer the best
Of my dreams in their fledgling state,

Unbidden, unwelcome,
It creeps into my room at night,
Steals under the covers holding tight,
It whispers everything is wrong
And nothing will ever be right.

To say I wake and worry at 3 am alone and
Estranged from myself would be an oversight.
A daily battle, could this ever end,
Of heart pumping breathlessness,
Brain racing, thinking thoughts with dizzying speed.

Here I am at my most vulnerable,
Sometimes in silence, other times,
The thoughts form into words,
Slip from my mouth uncensored,
Unedited naked to your judgements.

But truth is in those razor sharp moments.
Well the shameful truth is I have no control,
Only knowledge that I'm responsible
For what I say, no matter what.

by LGC

Meltdown

The little things
Everyday things cause
The pressure to rise
The computer not working
The phone joining in
Burning food
Or finding it off.
Two TVs with the same
Programme on,
Echoing and
Trying to push
The information into
My head twice,
But all I get
Is a jumbled noise.
The pen doesn't work,
And I can't find another.
The cats meowing
And fighting.
I can't get the
Theories into my head.
Nothing significant,
Just little things,
The pressure just builds,
And builds, and builds.
Until it explodes.
The trigger being
Nothing big,
But the final straw
That pushed it over.
Exploding not at the cause
But just whoever is near.

by Debbie Bond

Sleep

Dear brain,
Could you please stop.
It's two am.
I don't care if
Penguins have knees.

I can't find the
Optimum number
Of frogs for
An equation with
No integer solution.

I don't need to
Find the meaning
Of life, the universe
And Everything
Everyone knows
The answer's 42.

I don't need to go over
Everything that I did
Today, last week,
Last month,
Last year,
In my life.

What I really need
Is to sleep.

by Debbie Bond

Breaking the News

There came a time, a day, a place,
When I had to sit him down
To tell him the worst news
He had ever heard,
I've ever said.

In the moment of hearing
He crumpled and fell
Like the final curtain,
Scrunched into a ball,
Then rigid and straight,
Falling, flaying through emotions
He had never felt before.

He echoed back my news,
Your other mums dead my love.
Such a simple sentence,
Yet complicated
Beyond all reason.

He echoed it back to me,
10 times per minute,
Recording and listening
To the playback,
Over and over for days,
Awaiting the funeral,
Trying to absorb the meaning.

I wonder if I'm enough,
To see my own child
Through these very moments,
Never mind the years of
All that was to come.

by LGC

The Longest Walk

To the end of the street 68 metres,
X amount of strides,
X amount of half strides.

As custom would have,
It's all that's needed,
To honour our dead.

Clear day autumn, still, warm,
Smart suit, polished shoes,
Mourners come to the door,
Tight smiles, strangeness in their eyes.

Coffin as heavy as the box was hard.
Cold body, stiff and still.
Leading the way, chain gang walk.
No slave sang a song of hope for freedom,
For there was none left within
The bearers shackled by
Grief, custom and convention.

by LGC

Homophobic Obituaries

Wife?

Wife doesn't designate legality or intimacy
But tells of the relationship from one to the other.

Widower?

Widower tells of what is and what's lost, an event,
But misses out what's happened, the whys,
Who's left, but not who's gone.

Orphan?

Orphan is a half-truth but half is not enough,
To understand the human story
Behind obituaries in newspapers.

Son?

Son is a relationship, a relationship of heart,
He wasn't named, he was forgotten,
A slip of the mind quite on purpose.
I know, I've seen this many times before.

by LGC

You

I hid you
I covered you up
I had no words
To explain you.

When I got the words
And I felt you
Taking control.
I told others of you
And they said
I should have
Said earlier
But how could I
Without the words
To explain you.

Now you have
Damaged my body
Infected my brain
Become my way
Of coping
When nothing else works

I want rid of you
But I don't know how
As you constantly
Remind me of your presence.

Anon

Autism

You're not autistic
You can't be

You're female
You're too intelligent
You make eye contact
You hug your mum
You can talk
You have empathy
You're too sociable
You have friends
You can drive
You seem so normal

by Debbie Bond

Careful What Ya Tell Girls

Butt of the rifle
Snug to my shoulder
Gender roles
Designed to keep me in chains
Cracks the air
'Girls can't shoot guns'
Had I ever heard that before?

I glance at my dad
Who smiles and nods at me
Smiles at the soldier in the booth
But it was a strange smile
One not meant.

I break
Load
Close
Nestle
Breathe deeply
Breathe held
The familiar calm and steady descends

I rest
Aim
Fire
A line
In sight
A bead
I fire.

Break remove
Load close
Breath held
Fire.

One more familiar run at routine
Like most routines auto calm

When he hands me my three bullseye targets,
Dad's challenge 'good for a girl?'
'No, it's good for anyone'
Apology accepted

by LGC

Shot Gun Miss

I'm quiet waiting my turn
Broken gun over my arm.

Waiting, waiting, waiting
A misplaced all-consuming bang
Before the clang and clatter
And silence
Stillness
No one talks
Crows now departed

In that silence,
In that stillness
I beg my eyes to look at my feet
I was never her aim,
But had she missed?

by LGC

Glasgow Tenement

Children laughing running feet
Mixed with clanging pans of food.
The coldness of damp
Screams and shouts of neighbours woes.
Pay day rank whiskey smells of conflict
From three floors up
The panic of electric meters
And scrabbles for change,
And should I be excited or afraid
Or just keep running in circles.

by LGC

Mondays

Potatoes and mince.
Remnants of grey Mondays
A day that bled the colours away
A day of murder

Each crunch of sinew,
Flashes a picture of the animal that was
I retch again,
Vanishing images in my head.

I pick through the gristle, sinew or rotting muscle,
It's gonna be another long, long night

by LGC

Rattlesnake Bite – My Nearly Lost Fight

I could almost pretend
He was biting into an apple
If it wasn't for the ooze of red
Pouring from his mouth
Dripping, staining
The front of his shirt.

Ringed terror filled
Screams of chaos

He tried to pull away
But teeth still looked shut
Like a lion tearing
From an animal flank.

People looked on,
Perhaps they weren't seeing,

I couldn't pull her off him
My hand on his shoulder
Then round his chest
The strangest hug I ever gave.

When he went
To bite again

I was afraid,
Before I punched
I was afraid
I wouldn't stop.

Locked in violence
Locked in action
An ancient dance
My head sings
Ancient songs.

He took me into
A praying mantis grasp
Attack, counter, defence
Happened, lightning fast.

I felt the warmth
Of the night
The stars in the sky
The buzz of a neon club light
A reflection of a puddle
The gathering crowd
My hammering heart
Blood rush
In my ears
Like a sea shell sound.

I felt the strength
In my legs
The fade in my arms
His hands round
The back of my head
Creak of my leather jacket
Convinces me
He's getting closer.

Gaping mouth
Blood soaked chin
Did he just snarl?

Half a head taller
Stronger than I
My head his aim
I fear his rattlesnake bite strikes
Her fear was for them
She had AIDS
It was public now

Would I die?
How long had it been?
Was the virus still live?

My mind calculated
Times and angles
Of cause and effect
Action and reaction
But caring little
For consequences.

I found a solution
In the soft skin,
His Adam's apple
Just one palm heeled blow
Would stop this

Save my life
But end his
In the split second
Between thought
And reaction
Lay all my future.

Could I take a life?
To save my own
Combined force
Of thought and action
Like chemical fusion
Or nuclear reaction.

Single focus purpose
Was becoming

I was so serious and sober

It felt like all my life
Was down to the next second
The next action

What really frightened me
Was that I knew
When push came to shove
As often as it did

I really can
I always could
I never wanted to know
When all else fails
I really would.

by LGC

Potatoes

Fresh from the ground.
Covered in mud.
Washing them,
Struggling to get clean.

Mud going everywhere.
Running down my sleeve,
Covering the sink,
It's spreading.

The sink is brown,
The vegetable brush too.
The brown muddy water
Flows as a stream.

Not going down the drain,
But running down
The worktop, the cupboard,
And flooding the floor.

Standing in the puddle.
The water freezing
Hands and now feet.
As the battle is lost.

But the battle continues
As need to get clean
Dinner can't contain mud
Which is all there is.

The mud has gone everywhere,
Over me, the sink
The whole kitchen.
I

can't
get
clean!

by Debbie Bond

Addiction and Those That Live in Recovery

I watch the living hug, embracing each other like survivors of a hard won battle, if they are lucky a daily reprieve is the best case scenario. To life or a destructive force within that often turns out to be greater than them. That choice is always on the cards, in the balance of a day lived. After 5, 20 or 25 years a slip can turn to a fall and with God or luck or divine intervention they might make step one again, but only might. What if today was the last day they ever lived clean for the rest of their lives no matter how short that would be, when may that day lurk around? What obstacle, what success or failure they just can't navigate anymore? Yes, I said success or failure because we often don't recognise or count our successes as being the tipping point to death, not until experience tells us so. A mind focused on destruction, their own destruction and destroy they do or they must. Repeating the same mistake, expecting different results is short, succinct, logical and true. I get to witness how it plays out in people lives in complicated, convoluted, concentrated.

Today my friend ran their car into a wall at 70 miles an hour; yesterday he was at work, went home to his wife and kids and bounced his toddler on his knee. But today he woke with no desire to find the end of the day, he didn't want to return to the living hell of using, the shame in using but after two decades he still wanted his pain to end. Did you really think it ended when the drugs and drink were put down? That they were the problems, are you really surprised it's just the start of the pain and the problems and the trying to figure it out. Know your enemy! At least he went out clean, but he went out, at least he went out clean but out nevertheless. Some chose the shame but get taken out anyway.

At their funerals I normally sit defeated, alone not wanting to leave the 4% but hostage to my own fears anyway. The why and what ifs are often demonic and unsalvageable in what else could they have done. But funerals are not all about me they're really about grieving families and children lost in their eyes and coded eulogies saying, but not saying addict! Forced play stupid smiles they don't understand why and often there is no single why to be given. We only ever get 24 hours reprieve if we are lucky and 96% are not that lucky. Now you work out how many 100,000 that is per year as I work out how many funerals that is this year for me.

by LGC

Acne

Tree tea put on spots
To try to clear
The teenage acne
No treatments seem to work
Some even seem to make it worse
Some caused rashes or burnt skin
The desperate hunt for a solution
To remove the embarrassing spots
That plagued my face
And affected my confidence
Why did I have them so much

by Debbie Bond

Suffocating

Air freshener
Strong perfume
Deodorant
Fabric softener
Polish
Paint
Fish
Flowers
Coffee brewing
Cooking
Bread baking.

Too many smells
Too strong,
I need to escape

by Debbie Bond

Long Drives

Crowded car,
Stuck in traffic,
Getting crushed,
Too warm,
Felling sick.
But gran
Had the solution
The mint imperials
From her bag.
The mint to
Settle stomachs sick
The old remedies
Always worked
She thought
But the remedy
Was not found

by Debbie Bond

Gran

You were always there
On the phone,
To call round to your house.
It was a safe place,
A refuge from the world.
You always cared
Looked after me when sick
Wrapped in a blanket
You stroked my head
But now you are gone.
We are saying goodbye.
But I don't want to
Not yet

by Debbie Bond

Best Friend

You were my best friend.
You helped with my study.
You were there for me.
You understood me
In a way that no one did.
You helped me a lot
To get through tough times.
I could talk to you
When I had no voice
You didn't need words
You just knew.
I gave you your medication.
I hugged you till the end.
You fought to keep going.
But in the end
Your body gave up
Now you are gone
In a box in the ground.
I miss you so much
And I always will.
I grieved for you so much.
Some people said too much
Because to them
You were just a cat.

by Debbie Bond

Dyson

Straight though the blue
Ahead 1 A.U.
Heat upon heat.
Furnace of creation
Sucks in mass
Blow out dust
In star we trust
Is mankind's future
A licence to Dyson?
Or radio stretched long,
When all is done.

Anon

Living with Autism

Living seems an intricate dance
Of intertwined bodies and intertwined minds.
Smiles and glances, gesture and gazes.
But watching and learning is never enough
When a frown or a raised eye brow
Changes the whole situation and you're lost
For new appropriate steps,
As you clumsily plod on anyway,
When it's obviously a whole new song
Everyone has adjusted to, but you.
You may not realise for a day, a week,
A month, dare I tell you years.
But memory returns a situation and
Then you realise what was impossible to see,
What everyone clearly saw at the time,
And it shouldn't matter that it's from a long time ago
But somehow today it does.
Red faced, heart pounding, anguish
That slowly silences over time.
No wonder so many of us sit this one out.
But you, at least you could chose, just for a day,
To do our dance at least for a while.
That dance would change the world,
For a few or the many,
The hidden and the seen.

by LGC

Beach Baby 1

Beach buggy
Toddling in sand.
Beach baby
Holding my hand.
Tiny footprints
Counting sandy piggy toes.
Salty lips and finger tips.
Safe beside me.
How fast life goes.

by Karen Tighe

2

His soft baby skin.
So delicate to touch
Mine is so rough
I'm sand - shoving this buggy.
Tough.
I took on too much.

by Karen Tighe

Walking in Glenariff

Packed lunches,
Sandwich mushy,
Tastes funny.

Too salty,
Texture wrong,
Should be firm.

Gone warm,
Not how it should be.

by Debbie Bond

Nature Pool

Seaweed stench and
Dead prawns piling.
Sea Point Place,
Where we paddled
Poison pollution empties
The harbour of life
Old Molly Malone's mussels
And cockles
No longer Alive.
Alive. Oh.

by Karen Tighe

Sense

Bangor Rock Lady Pink
and sweet
On my salty lips
Sticky toffee
Apple fingers
Cotton candy
On a stick
And vinegar vapours On
salted steaming chips.

by Karen Tighe

Tribe

I felt alone in this world, That
I was the only one Who
experienced life this way. I
searched for an answer, Went
up many blind allies. But life
led me to the answer. Through
this I have found Others like
me.
I have found my tribe.

by Debbie Bond

Tired

Having walked far
Up hills and down
To reach the end.

by Debbie Bond



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