

Alone, Forgotten, Lonely, Out Of Sight Out Of Mind

By Mark Thomas

(Dedicated to all homeless and street people throughout the world)

Alone, forgotten, lonely, out of sight out of mind
Neglected by our society, rejected by mankind
The mentally ill, the homeless, the vulnerable, human beings are everywhere
Dozens dying daily; drugs, drink, disease, deprivation, despair.

Languishing in the hostels, bedsits, dumps in need of repair
In places of oblivion where no one seems to care
Exploited by corrupt, unscrupulous landlords who look on with disdain
Their only real concern is of how much they can gain.

For others not so "lucky" who are looking for a bed
They'll turn to any place of comfort to rest their weary head
Alleys, stairwells, doorways, basements, any place will do
So long as there is shelter for one night, maybe two.

Another day is dawning, another day of doom
Where to move on next from the cold, the rain, the gloom?
Wandering about aimlessly, searching for a clue
To find a place of refuge for the many, not the few.

"No room" in such places, "Full up", closed doors all around
It's back to that place of misery the previous night they found
Danger, cold, wet, abject squalor beckons yet again
For the thousands in our society; vulnerable, teenagers, young women, young men.

But just how many make it to see yet another day?
Some will not awaken, found dead, frozen where they lay
Another lost, forgotten statistic which no one cares to keep
Figures of huge numbers, enough to make you weep.

And what about the others that those dead friends leave behind?
If you look in the right places, this is what you'll find:
Sickness, destitution, chronic ill health are matters of fact
Deterioration of bodies, lost souls, minds about to crack.

Misery, dejection, deep depression is the norm
However strong the individual, whatever shape or form
Existing mental illness; minor, moderate, severe
Will clearly be exacerbated by torment, uncertainty, fear.
Confused, weak, weary, frightened, very much alone
Another day of hopelessness, another day unknown
Too tired to go on any more with illness, apathy, despair
It's time to say "Goodbye cruel world, no one really cares".

One more death, a suicide, caused by complacency, neglect
Isn't it time to treat our fellow man with a little more respect?
Help, care, understanding would certainly be a start
Act now to prevent more deaths Those-With-Power, compassion, heart.

Let's start to radically rethink, review our "Community Care"
We must stop leaving our vulnerable unassessed, unmonitored, unaware
Two years have now slipped by since the start of this disastrous Act
It's time to change this "system", which is failing, that's a fact.

So come on health staff, social workers, politicians across the divide
Get your acts together to stop this rising tide
Of needless deaths, human suffering, tragedies that put you all to shame
"A national disgrace, disaster, scandal" who will take the blame?

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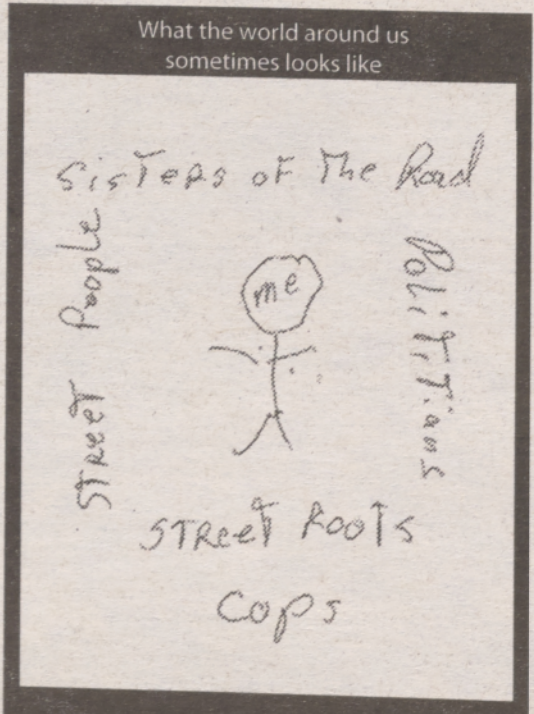
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What the world around us
sometimes looks like



We asked our community at Sisters Of The Road to draw what family means. Each family map tells a story we all can relate to. Sometimes all family can do is keep the doors open and welcome one another for a home-cooked meal. And in this way, Sisters is family for so many folks..