

CARERS NETWORK CREATIVE WRITING GROUP

For over a year now, the Creative Writing Group have been dialling in on a Thursday morning for an hour of writing, discussion, and laughter. The work that the carers produce each week never fails to surprise, and move me. Whoever is at the session - whether it's someone joining for the first time or one of the 'old timers' who've been coming since the very beginning - they're consistently generous with themselves and with their writing, and it's a delight to work with them each week. Thank you to every carer who has attended the sessions this year. Here's a snippet of what's they've produced - I hope you enjoy!

- Timna (Group Leader)

WINTER IS...

A Collaborative Poem

ANDREA

Winter is my name
To freeze is my game.
The opportunity to run
So far from the sun.
The wealthy, they love me,
With snowballs, sledging and ski
I bring a sparkle to their eye,
Rosy cheeks and pumpkin pie
But those who are "less endowed"
I bury my ice tentacles, keep them cowed
Maybe some of you will give a damn
If you don't then, I winter, will damn!

EUNICE

Winter is a time of cold
Born and bred in Africa
A place of sunshine and warmth
I came into this place in winter
Unbelievably cold and dreary
I often wonder why the world
Chose to celebrate the birth of Christ
During the coldest part of the year
Leaves off the trees, snow on ground
Heavy coat, gloves, boots and hats
Yet people fill the streets and shops
It is winter yet a time of celebration
It is Christmas time! Music in the air.

OUAFA

Winter is the month for me
The harvest of the year has been made ready
When the lovely cooking has started, and the baking.
The family is gathering for the food, the celebration, the sharing in the moment.
How I long for those beautiful young winter times!
Many of us will be welcoming it with harvest, food, hot treats
And others may dread it and can not wait for it to finish and for the next season to come.
Winter is celebrated in many parts of the world,
Different traditions, different people with one thing in common; the yummy hot festive food.
Dig in dig out for hot favourites: Pumpkin soup, couscous, stew (Tanjija)
The common ground is graded as an uplifting warm food for the body and soul.
This winter is different to that winter and it is what we all make of it.
Some of us long for it to come as prepared and some may dread it
Feeling the blues, we can not wait for it to go.

CATHERINE

Winter is a coming in. Loudly sing " Oh No"
Put shorts and sun tan cream away and wring your hands with woe
Slush and sleet and rain and hail , and slipp'ry icy streets
Frozen fingers, nose and toes and soggy clammy feet.
But, hey, its not all negative - there also are some treats.
There's Christmas when the foggy gloom is strewn with coloured lights,
You get to eat some lovely food at Christmas party nights
There's brandy butter, and mince pies and don't forget the toffee
There's chocolate coins and gingerbread and Baileys in your coffee
And then the New Year comes along, and maybe winter snow
And sledging down from Primrose Hill , pretend you're in Moscow.
When snow falls in the London parks , there's such a transformation ,
Like icing on a Christmas cake , "Oh yes!" my exclamation.

TALYA

Winter is a time
to huddle and be warm,
to care for who we are with,
and protect them from harm.
As carers, we are never alone,
and as writers we are together in our group on the phone,
providing each other with crackles and bright sparks,
that keep alight the creative fire in our hearts.
We have the strength then to go on,
because with just a little sideways glance,
we can always see that gentle, orange light
that's glowing there in the fireplace of our hearts.

A Tender Poem

Talya Davies

It all stems from this tending,
My vine grows unbending,
The tendrils it's sending
Make the stem so straight and strong
It's because I've been looking after it for so long
That it tends not to go wrong.

Now swirling and curling, the leaves are unfurling,
my spirals of wellness are splendidly hurling
their message of hope,
like Rapunzel's long rope
with explosions of seeds
breaking open at ends
of the tendrils and stems
and I tenderly send
all these fireworks to mend
any heart that is yearning
on this whole world that's turning
May all be well, may you all be happy
May the world without end
All and every last friend,
all be happy and well.

The Tunnel

Andrea Gordon

I walk up to the black, dank hole that looks to swallow me whole
and never spit me out. Its a shortcut to my home, my sanctuary, my
peace.

The other way is the main road, it is well lit, but half a mile
longer...and there may be a crazy psychopathic driver in any of the
cars, or a lorry or even bus drivers can be psychos. I read about it,
so it must be true.

No, it's late, quarter to one, I want to get back. I have
mouths to feed, my puppy for one. He's six months old, a black lab,
he's so cute and will be great protection when older, but not now,
not when I need it.

My ex gave me him when we had been dating six months
and decided - he decided - to move in with me. We had split briefly
before the big move. There was something not quite right about him.
I don't know, I never could put my finger on it so to speak... So no
hand jobs required - LOL.

But we ended up parting ways in the end, he found
someone else, someone younger, him saying I will give you a ring
sometime... I said "keep your solitaire, I'd rather have a dog."

So, out of guilt, he bought me Samson, my puppy, my baby
who is at the other end of this tunnel of inky blackness.

"Come on, let's go," I chide myself.

I gather my heavy burden and propel myself at rocket to
speed through the archway, into the night, into the dark, fetid air,
and stumble, free falling over a large object on the hazard strewn
floor.

"Sh*t"! I say to myself. I left him here, I thought I'd left him
further into the tunnel..

That was remiss of me. Anyone could have come along and
found my ex, with his face carved out by me.

You see, No one ever leaves me...

I've got a List!

Catherine Slater

I've got a list of people who we could do without
They cause more trouble than they're worth
There clearly is no doubt.

The bureaucrats in Whitehall and the ones in City Hall,
Who lack imagination yet who have the cheek and gall
To cut back all the funding then complain when standards fall.

I've got them on the list
They never would be missed!

The people who design those endless forms that we
Must use to claim the benefits from the bureaucracy
And are written in such jargon that they're Greek to you and me
The IEP, the DS8 the NI53.

I've got them on the list
They never would be missed!

The local politicians and the ones in Parliament
Who set up sub-committees to produce a document
They ignore all adverse comments and will not represent
The views and the statistics that oppose their argument.

I've got them on the list
They never would be missed!

The doctor who has not been trained in counselling techniques
Who shows insensitivity who's thoughtless when he speaks
And breaks the news so badly you're upset for weeks and weeks.

I've got them on the list
They never would be missed!

Educational psychologists and experts of that kind
Are fond of making judgements on the workings of the mind
But half of it is guesswork-I think I'm more inclined
To think they tend to speculate, leave common sense behind.

I've got them on the list
They never would be missed!

Then there's the social worker who has come straight out of
college,
Who thinks because she's read the books she's got the skill and
knowledge
To criticise your attitudes and fault the way you cope
When up to now you've managed well, she makes you feel a dope.

I've got them on the list
They never would be missed!

The L.E.A.s and Sencos who've got targets, forms and SATs,
And monitoring objectives and literacy stats,
but who think the bulk of children are rude disruptive brats.

I've got them on the list
They never would be missed!