



I Am Beautiful

A Newsletter For Women Survivors in Prison

Spring Issue

May 2011

"Life is a journey and a spiritual unfolding is its purpose."

Cowgirl Up

by Andrews

*He came to me like a dream one day
And absolutely took my breath away.
We held each others' hands,
Got married with our golden bands.
I started to sing,
When he gave me the ring.*

*After I heard the wedding bell,
It seemed like everything went to hell.
He wanted me to take his name,
I guess that was part of his head game.
I was always called his flower,
I see now that's how he got all the power.
He could put a sparkle in my eye,
Then turn around and make me cry.*

*All I wanted to do was bake,
And he would beg me to forgive him for our sake.
He said it was only us,
Then he would start to cuss.
I wasn't allowed to have family or friends,
Or he said it would be the end.
I quickly learned how to brace,
So I wouldn't get hit in the face.*

*He was my lover,
So I learned how to cover.
He would show me his fist,
Then want a kiss.
There were so many years,
I will never forget my tears.*

*He had so much control,
It will forever live in my soul.
I will never forget the look,
When I think about all he took.
In my heart I really cared,
Then again, I was so scared.*

*I felt so much shame,
He always had someone else to blame.
He would hold me so tight,
Then tell me I'm sorry and it's all right.
Each time was supposed to be a new start,
Instead he kept breaking my heart.
I can still hear my screams,*

*And are awakened by the dreams.
How could he make me and everybody believe?
Then again, why didn't I just leave?
He started out accusing,
Then it slowly went to abusing.*

*I often prayed Above,
And gave him the best of my love.
Will my nightmares ever cease,
So I can one day live in peace?
Why did I live through all that sorrow,
Yet always worry what was going to happen tomorrow?*

*He had me so trained,
That I'm still living in pain.
I am truly broken,
I will never forget the words he has spoken.
It's hard to live in silence,
When I can still see the violence.
I was completely battered,
My life has been totally shattered.*

*He was always so rough,
'Til I finally had enough.
I got so tired of the fight,
I began to see the light.
I couldn't stop hearing his voice,
That's why I made a horrible choice.
We were together so long,
It still hurts to hear our song.*

*Will I ever get over this broken feeling,
And one day start healing?
I believed my marriage would last forever,
It was such a mistake that we stayed together.
I'm starting to have hope,
While learning how to cope.*

*He beat me 'till I saw stars,
Because of that I am living behind bars.
I'm turning the page and forgetting his rage
While I'm sitting in this cage.*

*I made the ultimate decision,
And now have to "Cowgirl Up"
And be a survivor,
Not a victim in prison.*





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Dear Friends

Three wounds of abuse are feelings of *shame, worthlessness and isolation*. Because of the nature of the abuse they become part of all our relationships. Broken trust becomes a wedge between ourselves and others. The *internal conflicts* caused by abuse work havoc on our relationships with others. Abuse "whispers in our ear" we are wrong, bad or unworthy of relating with others, but we do not have to believe it or live by it. The supportive and positive words of others can help heal the shame, worthlessness or other negative feelings that blind or cripple how we relate with others. One survivor wrote in the "I Am Beautiful" book we published and distributed to prison libraries this past year, "For the first time in years I can breathe. It's over! I'm safe, saved from myself, and this man. I've been incarcerated going on four years. I have six more to go, and I'm alive! More than physically I'm alive mind, body and spirit. Sometimes inside these prison walls can be exactly what you need to find who you really are." (Shelley)

Be well, be beautiful! The Publishers

Thank you to Jessica for sharing these thoughts:

"Our self-esteem is based on what God thinks of us, not what others think of us."

"True beauty is within the heart; true beauty never fades."



Art contributed by an Inmate

Positivity will give you elasticity.

"So no matter how long or hard the journey to paradise is. You can stretch it out. You can persevere. Don't look back, no matter how ugly your past was. Bury the past, for it is gone. Focus on the present. Be proactive with your new positive attitude and look forward to your future.

Knowing that the good Lord has a way better plan for you than you could ever even come up with. God loves you and wants you to be as glamorous as He knows you can be. Beauty comes from the heart so don't worry about the outside." J.E.M.

