

...as the most...
...signature very well. In a terrible role model.
were there any bullies?
In my school there were about ten people who were! Bullies
Being an all-boys school it was a giant easy target of ridicule
and anyone who stood out was a target. I was an obvious one
as I am now. In hindsight I understand why kids bully they
were sad themselves and insecure about who they were or
on someone who was a bit weird and different felt like
work it out. I wish someone had told me this at the time
I could have probably drawn a lot less attention
not trying to be funny and having weird hair
by it's important to be who you are not
anyone. If I did then there may have been
...very book!
...were any embarrassing moments
...kidding me?

the
gaddum
centre



THE LOWRY
ART & ENTERTAINMENT

THERE'S MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE



CREATIVE WRITING
AND PHOTOGRAPHY
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April to September 2017. Gaddum's Salford Young Carers Service, in partnership with The Lowry Theatre, set up a group of five remarkable young people who met fortnightly at The Lowry in Salford Quays.

During each session the group wrote down their feelings, memories and thoughts of their journey as a young carer in the form of creative writing as well as photography.



Learning new creative skills the work they produced is showcased here and reflects experiences of their past and present feelings of being a young carer in Salford. Being a young carer can be an isolating, stressful yet rewarding experience that can bring families together and allow the young person to develop new skills.

Exploring the main themes of:

Bullying
Being Judged
Hard Working
Just like others



**THERE'S
MORE THAN
MEETS
THE
EYE**

You will see that every young carer is different...

Over the last 7 years, working in partnership with the Lowry, we have seen young carers develop in ways that would have been impossible without this partnership. We have seen them fight isolation and stigma to the point that they brim with confidence and are able to stand up proudly as a carer making others aware, and able to understand, the issues they face.

This is the 6th project we have jointly completed. Again, I feel it reaches the highest of standards. A massive thank you to The Lowry, members of Gaddum's Salford Young Carers Team, but mostly to the young people who have shared their lives with an almost painful level of honesty.

Paul Moran
Manager, Gaddum's Salford Young Carers Service.

Dear Bully...

Dear Bully,

Am I not good enough?
Why is it that I'm not good enough?
You tell me I'm not good enough, but you never tell me why.
I don't understand.

Is it because of my mum or is it just I'm not good enough?
Is it because I'm ugly?
Weird?
Gross?
Stupid?
Fat?
Because I could fix all that?
Would you like me then?
Would you smile at me instead of scowl?
Would you glance at me instead of glaring?
Would you talk to me instead of down to me?
Or would nothing change? Would you scold me just the same?
Would you still glare?
Would you continue to talk down to me?

Will it change anything?

Sincerely,

~~Your insignificant~~

~~Your lesser than~~

~~The dirt on your shoe~~

~~Your punching bag~~

~~Your doormat~~

Your victim



MY AGE

I am young but I feel old,
I'm mature, more than other people my age.
Thirteen but I feel sixteen.
Mixed emotions each day,
Yet no-one understands.
Isn't this how someone older is meant to be!?

I feel as if I've not had a childhood,
Happy but now I'm not.
A dancer but no longer,
Free but now I'm trapped.

I feel like I'm an animal trapped,
Willing to be free,
Banging on a window,
Watching people be happy.
I wish I felt young!

I'm young but I feel old,
I'm mature more than other people my age.
Thirteen but I feel sixteen.
Mixed emotions each day,
Yet no-one understands.
Isn't this how someone older is meant to be?

I'M DIFFERENT

Judged by the way I look,
Judged by the way I act,
Judged for being me...

Walking down the street,
People whisper,
People laugh,
Pointed at.
All because my dad is leaning on me.

Carrying all the shopping,
Dad just watching.
People look,
People whisper,
All because me and mum are carrying the shopping.

I'm different,
Judged by the way I look,
Judged by the way I act,
Judged for being me...

You can be you, I can be me.





Everything, just everything

One.

It's just everything. A young carer is somebody who mostly looks after their parents or cares for a brother or sister. I don't think people understand what we go through. Maybe they do, but choose not to acknowledge us. Or they just don't care. Or maybe I'm reading too much into things. I don't think people realise that they judge other people. But do you know how we know? Your eyes.

People say our eyes are the windows to our soul. Maybe they are, maybe they are not. To me it's just some deep stuff.

Two.

I think our eyes deceive people. We can put on a fake smile and say everything is fine. You may believe it, you may not. Honestly, I don't think it matters. In the end it's you, yourself and yourself.

Three.

I just want to be free. Free from the constant 'Are you okay's?' Even though our answer will mostly be 'I'm fine', 'It doesn't matter' or 'I'm just tired.' I think society has abused the words 'I'm fine.' It has become something negative. So that when you're not feeling okay, your immediate response is 'I'm fine.' When you're actually just fine, people question it. Maybe they don't understand and think I'm going on about stuff that makes no sense.

Four.

I just want to be free from the pitying looks you get when you pass by, or when you tell people that you look after your family. Sometimes everything just gets to you. You get tired of looking after someone, tired of caring. Tired of pitiful looks. You just want to go to a place of calmness.

Five.

Sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me. I think whoever thought of that saying was out of it, as words DO hurt. To me what is worse, is silence. Things will get easier, at least that's what they say anyway.

Six.

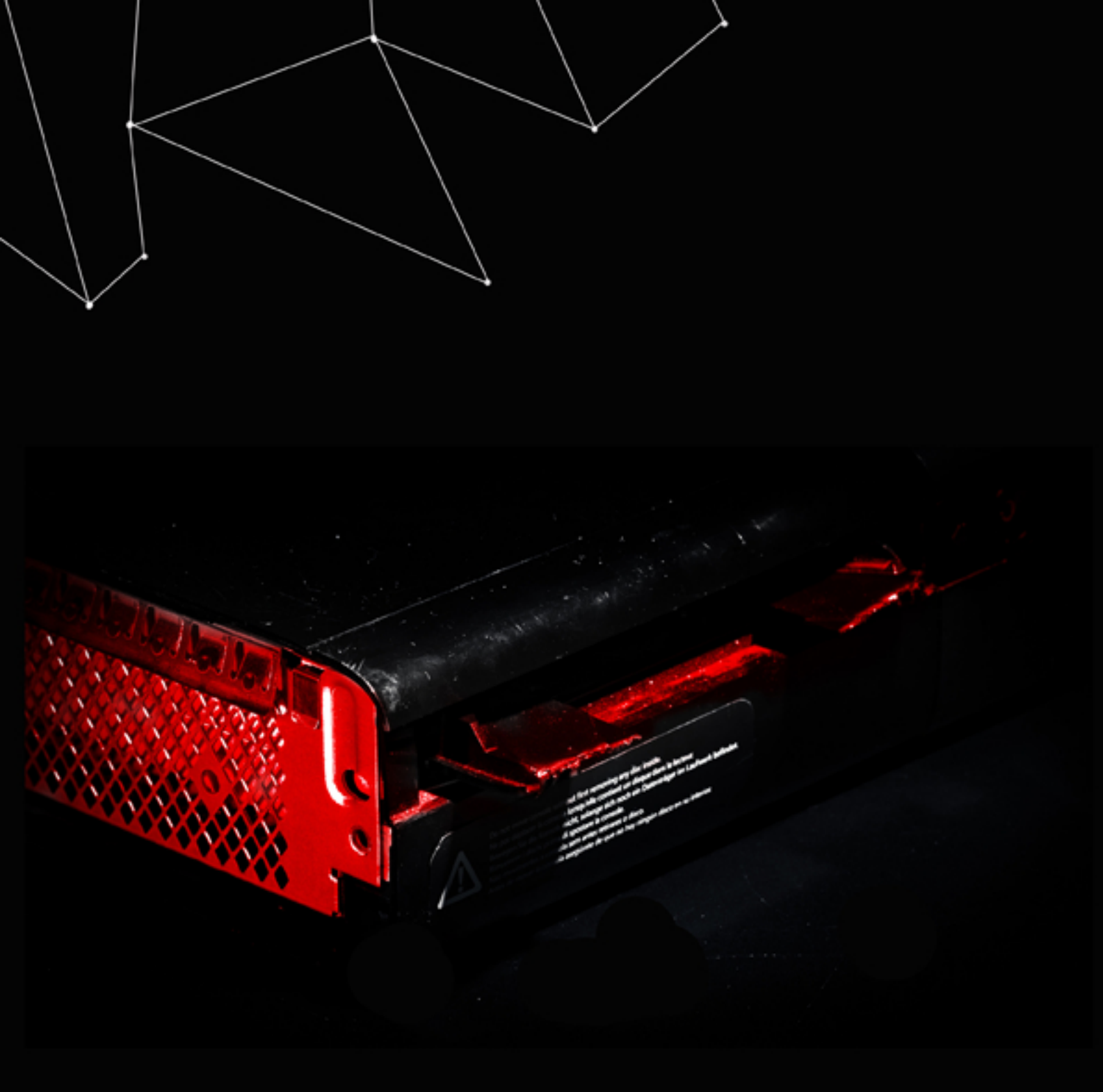
I hate how the sea is just 'there.' Passing by, yet stagnant. At the same time, I love it. The serenity it gives calms me down. I hate how the sea is free from pitying looks from irrelevant bystanders. The constant reminder that you have stuff going on. When there is a storm, why does it still end up looking so beautiful?

Seven.

If I really think about it, I wouldn't change being a young carer. Deep down I love taking care of my mum. You learn new things every day that you may have been oblivious to before.

Anyways, it's always the little things in life that create happiness. What is important to me is to stay strong for myself and my family. In the end they are the ones who are there for you.

Family.



MY XBOX

I was getting bullied. Badly bullied.
So one day I went upstairs and beat up my XBOX.

I broke it.

I want him to feel my pain because he doesnt know what he has made me do to something I loved.

Hard Working

Chapter One

Tick, tock! Tick, tock! I look at the clock counting down the seconds as the time passed. RINNGGG! As soon as the bell rings I jump out of my seat and run out of school. I pant as I reach the pharmacy, collecting my mum and dad's medicine and rush back to my house. Who knows what awaits in the house for me.

3rd May 2013

It's happening again. Why does it have to be me? These girls have no reason to hurt me. Is it because I'm younger than them? Because I'm a carer? Because my dad lives in a mental health hospital? This whole situation has made me feel angry, sad and makes me feel like I'm alone in this horrible world. The worst thing is they make fun of my family. I can't go to anyone. I can't tell anyone about my bullying.

5 Years Later

Looking back now, when the girls bullied me, I realised that it had some light to it. Because of everything I went through I met amazing people. People who made me forget my past. Thank you everyone.

Bye for now, I have to go home now. My friends are here...

snowflakes

Different.

Snowflakes are different - so am I.

Snowflakes are beautiful - so am I.

Snowflakes dissolve when touched ever so slightly - so do I.

They don't call me names or leave me out, but they do look at me with pity or confusion...

Sometimes even disgust. They don't tell me to go away. I just know it's on their mind.

They don't laugh at me, but they think it's hilarious.

They don't call me a weirdo, but they whisper it.

They don't say I'm not invited, but they don't want me there.

You know, it's when they say nothing that hurts the most.

DEAR HAPPY

It's been so long since I've seen you. I miss you.

Everyone saw how I glowed when I had you.
When I laughed like the world was brand new and I smiled like a Cheshire cat.
Hummed to myself, like I was on the West End.
Talked like I had something to say.
Walked like I had somewhere to go.

You used to be a part of me,
Now you're just a haze.
A blur,
A forgotten memory.

I miss you.

I want to glow again,
I want to laugh like this is brand new again.
I want to smile like a Cheshire cat again.
I want to hum like I'm on the West End again.

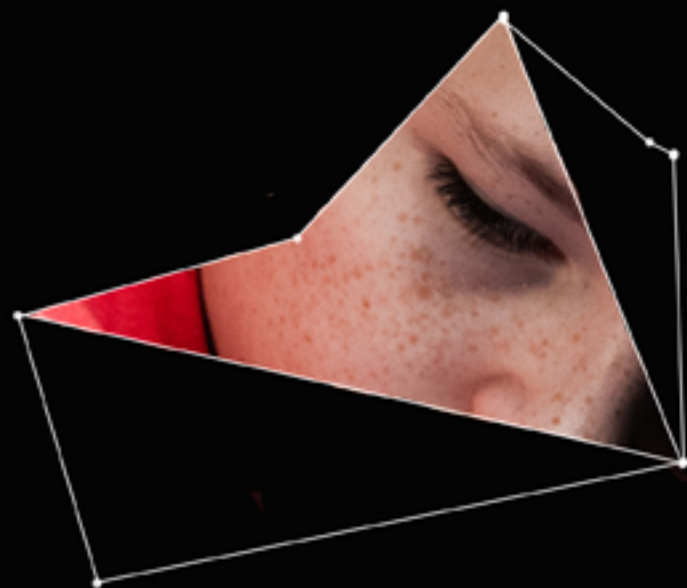
I want you to be a part of me.
I want you to be clear as day in my mind.

I miss you.

Will you come back to me?

Sincerely,

A former friend.



looking down...

Everybody's looking down,
Making me feel singled out.
Why? Why can't they stop staring?
Why can't they leave me alone?
I'm just a girl, trying to live a normal life.

Is it because I'm not like you?
Because I don't have the life you do?
Well not everyone can survive this life of mine.

You don't know me.
You don't know my story.
Don't judge me.

EVERY DAY

Every day I wake up with sweat around my neck, knowing that I'm a young carer... I hate it. Sometimes because I don't get time on my own, I get tired of doing the same stuff every day.

I like it because I get to meet new people in groups and I feel like I'm doing something good for my brothers, I am learning new skills every day.

I go to school every day and nobody understands. Nobody knows what I have to put up with at home and at school. Most of all, the teachers don't understand what we have to do. It's hard, we know, but they don't.

It helps me build my confidence meeting new young people who understand my problems. Now people can hear my voice, I don't have to hide in the shadows anymore. Now I hope that people understand young carers lives better.

SCRAPBOOK



Thorns scratch my head,
Tread through that warhead.
I hope to continue...
I wake up screaming.

Tortured in the night.
Please!
Help me God!
Show me some sunlight.

I tried to do my best.
Constantly running away from Hell.
When I close my eyes I see the un-escaping present burning bright.
I ask myself,
Is there any sunlight?
But I know,
As long as I am here,
There will be none, if that.

I'm just a child.
Please!
I'm just a girl who needs her life.

treated differently

I am different because I am a young carer, because of what I wear, what I do and how I do it. The biggest thing though, is being left out. Going out and then someone turns around and says 'No, you're not coming out.'

Limited to what I can and can't do. Like, I'm not allowed to do something that somebody else can do.

Well, tell me... 'Who's perfect anyways? Not everyone is perfect.'

I can't go out because I am helping my mum make tea. Then I'm helping my brothers, it's like multitasking.



DEAR FREEDOM...

I wish I had you everyday. Being trapped in a cage wanting to get out is not what I want to do for the rest of my life. I dream to be free. I dream to run away. To the hillsides instead of being trapped.

I wish to be happy. Why can't you grant me my wish? What is it like to be happy? To be free?

I'm an animal in a zoo, not in the wild. They say it's to protect me, but what you're not protecting me from is the bullies. I bet you let the bullies be free! Am I not good enough to be free, to be happy?

Other young carers like me, want to be free. Fed up of being trapped everyday, I can relate to them. Willing to be happy, wanting freedom. Yes you, they want you. But you won't give it to them, you won't give it to me.

I'm annoyed that bullies get to be free. I wish I can swap lives with my bully, so they can feel what it's like to be trapped and I can feel free. For one day to be happy. So I can be free. But that won't happen. I'm still stuck in this stupid life that's trapping me.

Yours sincerely,

The person you're not willing to be happy,
To be free,
The person you trapped,
Me.



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PRESENTED
BY



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