

BISI AKINOLA-ARUTOGHOR

Mask

Domestic Abuse - Take off the mask



angelicapoems

Dear Mr. X

When you hit my mum, how did you feel?
Because, when I saw you doing that, it felt so surreal,
I wanted to stop you, but, I was too small,
I couldn't stop screaming, when you hit her head against the wall.

Didn't you think you were wrong, telling her she couldn't go out?
When she protested, you used to hit her and shout,
As a young child, I didn't know what to do,
More tears came in the morning, when her face was black and blue.

I was having nightmares and started to wet the bed,
I kept on thinking of all the hateful things that you said,
My mum is not stupid, useless, ugly or weak,
You made her so scared that she could hardly speak.

Now that you are in prison, I hope that you'll understand,
A man is not a man when he raises his hand,
I hope that you are getting the help you need for a changed life,
I can't believe you did that to your children and your wife.

From
Child X

sample page

Zero

“What happened to your eye Chris?”

“Oh you know, clumsy me, I walked into a door.”

“You should get it seen to, it's black and blue and looks really sore.”

“DON'T WEAR THOSE CLOTHES, DON'T ANSWER BACK, DON'T YOU DARE ANSWER YOUR PHONE!”

“Oh, please someone help me, I can't do this all alone.”

My family have all been ostracised and are waiting for me to walk away,

Hope I can do that with my own two feet and not in a body bag, someday.

sample page

Not my business

The neighbours moved in three weeks ago,
and don't make a noise,
I can tell they have a few kids, as the
garden is full of toys,
He leaves the house at 8 a.m. and doesn't
come back til late,
She takes the kids to school, they are tidy,
but she looks a state.

It's midnight and the music next door
is really, really, loud,
I hear a thud, bang and scream, then
nothing, not a sound,
I'm not sure what happened next door,
I want to check it out, but, I'm not sure.

sample page



Suit and Tie

My partner is on 200 grand a year,
Whenever he comes near me, I recoil in fear,
A good standing in the community, always a smile on his face,
If I so much as talk out of line, he'll put me in my place.

I tried telling my close friend, but she said it is probably stress,
She wasn't really listening, so, I had to agree and just said, 'Yes.'
His stress happens every day always at nine o'clock,
Wonder what sentence he'd give himself, if he were in the dock?

sample page



Mask

Stripped bare of my body and mind,
allowing me food is his way of being kind,
others don't understand, they say leave him, be free,
five years of abuse, I no longer know how to be me.

Wake up each morning, and ask – 'Why aren't I dead?'
the slightest thing sets him off and then he sees red,
the times I've dreamt of killing him with a carving knife,
knowing my luck, I'll end up in prison, so, the end of my life.

sample page