

## **Beauty and the Beast**

*Karen*

Not so long ago, in a dear green place called Glasgow there lived a young girl. Her eyes sparkled when she smiled and she was as bright as a button. Surgery was necessary to correct the feet deformities she was born with. The long periods of time she spent in hospital allowed the young girl to indulge in her favourite pastime of reading. She enjoyed tales of faraway places, of enchanted castles and had real visions of a handsome prince ready to whisk her away to the land of make believe.

As she grew up, she sounded and looked different from other people; this meant that she was cruelly shunned and outcast by children and adults alike from their naivety and ignorance. Naturally these differences made her feel angry and frustrated but with her thirst for knowledge, once again her books became her one and only true friend.

She also enjoyed writing poems which helped to navigate her innermost feelings. As an adult she immersed herself in lifelong learning. This brought along a new found confidence and as a result, she began to believe in her own self-worth.

### **HER AND I**

**When people look at me**

**They think they see**

**A person entirely different**

**From the “Real Me”**

**They see me walk  
They hear me talk  
And perceive me  
As something I’m not**

**They see helpless  
Meek and mild  
With the voice of a child  
Lame with no name**

**BUT I AM INDEED  
DIFFERENT FROM WHAT YOU SEE ...**

**I style my hair  
I dress with care  
To detract your eyes  
From the shoes I *have* to wear**

**I am strong,  
independent, proud  
And if you listen carefully  
You will hear my words loud**

**I am a mum, a daughter, a sister  
An aunt, a friend**

**Loved and appreciated  
On me they can depend**

**So, look beyond my disability  
And you will soon see  
There is so much more  
To me...**

She knew it was not what was visible that mattered. It was the appreciation of what she had already. The shared love of friends and family. She joined groups with like-minded people and when she felt the need to voice her opinions, she showed kindness and respect.

When she was confronted with naïve and ignorant people, she chose patience instead of fear.

With a quiet determination she leads a full life.

Thus, falling in love for the first time, she finally accepted all that she was, revealing her true self;

**“The Beauty and the Beast.”**

Alas, this is not a fairy tale. This is real life and how do I know this?

**I am that girl.**