

18 years old. She was later transferred to the Regional Psychiatric Centre. CSC staff also recommended that she be detained in prison until the expiration of her warrant of committal thereto.

When K's grandfather died, her request for a compassionate temporary absence pass to allow her to attend his funeral was denied. When a Winnipeg police officer exaggerated and misstated the reality of the risk posed by K, CSC and the Solicitor General refused to allow her to pay her respects to the man who had raised her and whom she had known more as a father than as a grandfather.

At the age of 19 years, K was released on statutory release. Although her grandmother requested that K be permitted to live with her, CSC chose instead to force her to go to a men's halfway house. K was the only woman in the house and she became the focal point of more than one resident's advances. Consequently, it was not surprising that she tried to use any means available to avoid being at the house. As a result, she was deemed to have breached the conditions of her parole and was twice put back into the Portage jail.

When K's two-year jail sentence expired, she was still not free to move on with her life. She is now subject to a sentence which we consider excessive. When her prison sentence expired, K commenced three years of probation, the conditions of which are more stringent than her parole conditions. In addition to a 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. curfew, she has to complete 400 hours of community service work. These conditions preclude her being able to continue the work she was doing in the evenings while on parole—which means she cannot afford to support herself—nor is she able to continue in her educational endeavours. After spending time at her mother's beyond her curfew, as well as because of difficulties she is experiencing in trying to complete her community service work hours, K has also now been charged with breaches of her probation order.

As K has so articulately challenged us and the members of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights, where does she go for help and support now? K was in the care of the child welfare authorities at the time of her arrest. The State were therefore her "parents." Five years later, however, at the age of 21 years, K is "released to freedom" without resources or familial support. She feels beaten down by the system. K learned to slash and self-medicate as a means of coping with life in prison. It is all she has left when she is overcome by the bleak reality of her life—no family, no money, and no job. But, when she finds she cannot cope and fails to adhere to all of her conditions of probation, quick action is taken to charge and jail her. Where is the justice in this? And, who should be held responsible?

Kim Pate is currently the executive director of the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies (CAEFS). She is also the President of the National Associations Active in Criminal

Justice—a coalition of 18 national criminal justice groups.

Kim Pate is currently the executive director of the Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies (CAEFS). She is also the President of the National Associations Active in Criminal Justice—a coalition of 18 national criminal justice groups.

KATHRYN B. HOYME

Once

Ever since I was a little girl
I was taught to hide
Not from the Boogie Man
Or things that go bump in the night,
But from myself

Lying on my cushioned plateau
I cringed at the touch of a toe
Quickly, I'd whip it away
Always dreading the outcome

Make me love you and I'll touch you
But only if it likes my gaze as well
Sometimes coming, always going
Just watch out for me

Wanting to move on
Can only help you for so long
Then the reality of disguise
Comes over to play

Should I bow, or spit on you face?
Controlled I bend
Alone I stand
Between the spaces of once and forever

Kathryn B. Hoyme is a 19-year-old poet whose work has been published in numerous magazines, web sites, and books. Recently, her work was included in the collection, In Our Own Words: Generation X Poetry, edited by Marlow Weaver.