

the ONE for those who are Carers

by Guru Mani H

*“It’s getting harder and harder
and I just can’t see it changing
anytime soon”*

I wake up tired
the kind of tired
that isn’t going to go away
even if I were to get a good night’s sleep
[which I don’t]
I go through the day on autopilot
the same old routines
that I’ve done a thousand times before
and of course the new things
that I could never
predict
or plan for
but which I have to respond to

*“Being a Carer
has replaced having a career
and sometimes I struggle with that”*

People who’ve got a job
as a Carer
think they understand me
but they don’t
They go to their work

but can then go home
to escape
and relax
I'm not for one minute
saying their work isn't
demanding
and exhausting
for I know all too well
that it is
but at the end of the day
it's a job
whereas mine is a lifestyle
24-7
No holiday
Always on call

*"I value the quiet moments
and cherish the simple things of life
They all help keep me sane"*

I didn't plan for this
[didn't expect it]
but gradually over time
I've stepped into this caring role
slowly at first
then quicker and more intensely
I absolutely don't regret it
[and wouldn't change it]
I love the one I'm caring for
but nothing trained me
or prepared me

for what to expect
I'm learning as I go along
often feeling
isolated
or misunderstood
[like I'm lazy for not having a 'real' job]

*"Quality time with other loved ones
has been sacrificed
and that hurts a lot"*

The one I care for needs me
[there's no question there]
and I know they lean
very heavily upon me
unable to survive or function without me

At times my
energy
and patience
is stretched to the absolute limit
[and beyond]
but being a 'Carer' is just that
it's caring
deeply
and unconditionally
[as far is humanly possible]
and it's my love that keeps me here...
Caring

*"I long for a day to myself
Sometimes just 10 minutes*

is all I ask for"

Since becoming a Carer in my own home
I've learned to be flexible
as I have to respond
to my loved one's
needs
and wants
in any given moment of time
I'm learning patience
[which has never come naturally]
and also when to keep silent and bite my tongue
as they are ill and can't always control
their words
and actions
I've learned that my
reliability
and stability
both have an effect
on my loved one's life
not just in the long-term future
[as is true in any relationship]
but in the here and now
each moment of every day

*"I don't give up
With every new sunrise
is the hope of a better day"*

The cry of my heart has been
"Who's caring for me?"

“Who’s meeting my needs?”

Speaking personally

I’ve found that these questions

have been answered in and with my god

so I genuinely feel

cared for in every way

and empowered for my daily life

[however weird all that may sound to you!]

I know that others in a similar role

have found care in

a good friendship

or a support group

The key is not how the question is answered

just

that it absolutely

must be

otherwise

this Carer

will end up needing a Carer themselves

“I’ve not made any marriage promises

so could walk out at any time

but the magnet of deep love keeps me here”

A few words from a wise person:

“You need to learn to care for yourself”

This has quite literally been the difference between

sink

or swim

It didn’t all happen

at once

or in a flash of revelation
but as the weeks have turned into months
and the months into years
I've added to my life
a whole safety-net
of ways to care for myself
body
and soul
As far as I can
I practise these things
value them
and protect them
because I know
that I know
that my ability to care for another
is directly related
to my ability to care for myself

*"I'm exhausted
Just totally fucking exhausted
All the time"*