

CAPTIONS:

CHRISTINE

Her life in the street and men

A photo story by Léa HAMOIGNON

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Photo 01 - Christine, a fifty-year-old woman, is a homeless since seven years.



Photo 02 - « Before, I lived in an apartment with my sons and their father. I worked in a restaurant... But then, there was alcohol... »



Photo 03 - Olivier, Christine and Ludo (standing)
« I am surrounded by lots of guys. I am the only woman. You've got to have character... That's why other women never stay. »



Photo 04 - Since a few years, Christine lives in an isolated hut situated in a wasteland on the outskirts of Paris.
« This is my home. I'm a homeless living in luxury because I have three rooms. I can find peace here! »



Photo 05 -
Christine : *« I eat when I have nothing else to do »*



Photo 06 -
Christine in her hut.
« On the 5th of March 2002, my ex left without warning. He took our two kids with him. I stayed in the apartment for more than a year, until the bailiff chased me».



Photo 07 -
Christine and Michel in his hut which is located close to her's.
« It is better to be together than to be alone. Michel is my mentor... It is because of him that I feel good here. I learn to grow up on my own.»



Photo 08 -
Christine and Ludo, in the hut.
« I met Ludo at the Restos du Coeur. I really fell in love with him... He lived with me for a year. The problem is that he is jealous and didn't get along with Michel...»



Photo 09 -
Christine and Olivier
« I can't live without drinking. I feel stronger this way. I can face the danger... Danger is everywhere, even in my mind... »



Photo 10 -
« What didn't feel painful before has now invaded me... I don't like happiness... Maybe that's the problem! »



Photo 11 -

Christine in her hut.

« Someone told me he could guess my age from my appearance. What I should do is to color my hair in white! »



Photo 12 -

Christine and Michel

« Christine and I are like an old couple, but we will never live together. We don't think the same way. »



Photo 13 -

At the beginning of each month, Ludo takes advantage of his welfare to rent a room in a small hotel. He regularly invites Christine.

« You don't now how much I love her... I really would enjoy it if she could definitely stay with me, even knowing that nothing would happen between the two of us, rather than taking the risk to have her doing stupid things.»



Photo 14 -

Christine and Olivier

Christine : *« When we drink to much, we can become violent, even against each other...»*

Olivier : *« I try not to be with Christine and Michel when I am drunk, because I hurt them. »*



Photo 15 -

« Yesterday's party got out of hand, like it always does... Now I have to go to "the Store" and meet with my vet... My whole body is hurting. »

A solidarity store located in Gagny (subsidized by the Abbé Pierre Foundation) offers poor people meals, bathrooms, medical care, and cultural and artistic activities. Christine, Michel, Ludo and Olivier regularly go there.



Photo 16 -
Christine meets the physician at the Solidarity store in Gagny.
« *I wish I had some dreadful disease, but illnesses ignore me.* »



Photo 17 -
« *My son's father asks me to take the HIV test. He knows I don't take care of my health. Last time, I had jaundice...* »
Christine lives in her ex's house for a few days every month and takes care of her children.



Photo 18 -
To drink beer Christine has to go outside the Solidarity store.



Photo 19 -
Christine is surrounded by Abdel (on the left), who lives there, and Etienne and Habibou (on the right), the store's leaders. They are involved in an activity that takes place every Wednesday afternoon: theatre.
Christine : « *I feel good when I am acting!* »



Photo 20 -
« *I really need a change. All this mess is due to that damned alcohol!* »