

SYNOPSIS :

**CHRISTINE**  
**Her life in the street and men**  
A photo story by **Léa HAMOIGNON**

Seine Saint Denis – France  
2007 - 2008

Christine is 50 years old. She is homeless since 2002. In France, eighteen percent out of the one hundred thousand homeless persons registered by the Abbé Pierre Foundation are women, according to the 2005 estimations of the INSEE (French National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies). Christine lives in a hut situated on an isolated wasteland on the outskirts of Paris.

The reasons which causes people to end up in the street is different whether you are a man or a woman, according to the results of a study produced by the Mission d'Information sur la Pauvreté et l'Exclusion Sociale (a Mission Commissioned by the French government to study poverty and social exclusion).

For men, the loss of everything is usually linked with the loss of their jobs, whereas for women the point of no return is related to the severing of the family connections. Seven years ago, Christine's companion left her, taking their two sons with him. He was blaming her, saying she was not a good mother and drinking too much. Once alone, she started drinking even more and reached the point of no return with the loss of her job and of her apartment.

The number of homeless women increased during the past few years, but they remain a minority when confronted with the number of men. Their condition exposes them to physical and sexual assaults. This is why Christine never stays alone. Since she lives in the streets, her day-to-day life is governed by the rhythm of the relationships she has with "her men".

Olivier, a 36-year-old man, was the first she met. She then got to know a 52-year-old man named Michel. Since then, she meets him every day, as poverty made them neighbors, each living in his own hut. When things get out of control, she gives a call to Ludo to help her. He works for the Restos du Coeur. Occasionally, she spends a few days in her ex's house, taking care of their children.