

JOURNEYS

Before





This is my sister Lynne and Greta in Autumn 2014. It is hard to believe from her warm, happy smile that only a few months earlier she was told she had 18 months to live. She approached each day as she always had - full on, full of fun, full of life. Two years later she died in the Hospice where she had worked as a nurse. She was the bravest person I have known and I miss her every day. Lynne loved her children more than anything. Her spirit shines brightly in Greta. She loved sunflowers.



After



Lynne died on December 13th 2016. She was so brave throughout the 2 1/2 years during which she had treatment but knew she would ultimately die. She never complained, she never cried, she still sung along with the radio in the morning, she made sure to spend money and have fun, she wanted her children to remember her like that.

I try to keep her around for Greta by talking about her almost every day. Luckily, she does remember her. Angus doesn't remember his mum and we found out recently that he has no photos in his new home of her. This would break Lynne's heart. In fact, the whole situation would.

These are my fabulous pals. They have been with me throughout my crazy life and loving me all the way. They have wrapped their arms around myself and Gemma over the past few years and "stepped up" to be her family. We have known each other so long I have no real memories of a life without them. I am so deeply lucky to have them in my life and would not manage without them. We are all quite different but together we are sisters!

Jane - the mum of the group. A listener, a private investigator of skincare, perfume, handbags and sunglasses. Kind of heart and generous of soul. Gives good cuddles and laughs like a toddler!

Luca - small but mighty of spirit. Likes to party in a passionate way, especially accompanied by prosecco. Can't resist a wee whisky at the end of the night. Loves a boogie, likes getting birted around, makes the best macaroni. A heart of a lion.

Joanna - keeps us social. Loves books but loves us more. A planner and a leader of traditions and get togethers. Michael Ball and Alfie Boe buddy! Pretends not to like a wee swear but secretly giggles. The first to say "I love you" at the end of a night with red wine.





My wee pal Deem on our winter walk with our pals. She is my constant support and knows me better than I know myself. She has always been there to listen and to love me and I trust her with my life. I am so glad I got moved up into 2E in second year and she made pals with me. Life is better with her and I am braver, kinder, calmer, happier because of her. Greta loves her too. I am so thankful to have been able to share in her life and that of her children and husband.



This is my wonderful pal Rosemary. I am so lucky to have worked beside her for over 25 years. She is the most vibrant, generous, real person. Nothing is too much trouble for her. If I needed help with anything, including rebuilding beds or driving me anywhere she'd say, "Not a problem!" She is unfailingly kind, she is full of enthusiasm, has boundless energy and a strong sense of right and wrong. She knows "It's not about the broccoli... and that." He needs to get his baws out his mummy's handbag!" and that things are "Magic!" She loves newtrams, Scotland, SNP, prosecco, Greta, getting things done, planning, her family, her pals and me. In the photo, she's tooting friendship from a wee flack I gave her.



Comfort





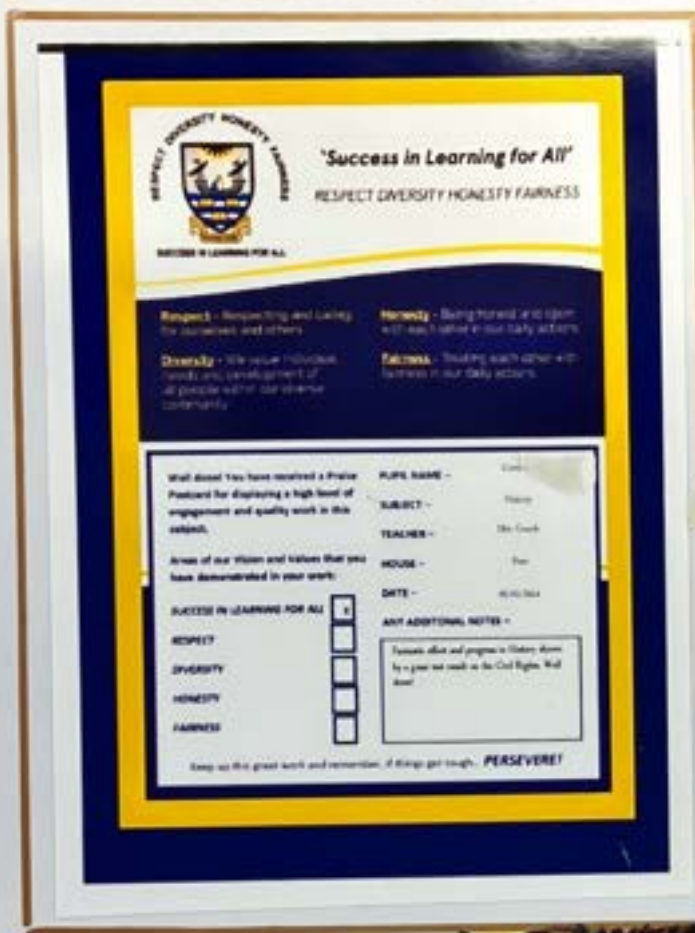


These have given me joy over the past 2 years and for my whole life, really. Singing makes me feel utterly content. I love to sing and the choir I've been in has been good for me. Even if I've felt tired and fed up, I've made myself go and I've always felt uplifted after. I've met some lovely people too.

As for the Hibs, what can I say. It's in my blood, my wee pal sits in Lynn's seat now. There have been highs and lows but that's just like life. We persevere.

My community, in its diversity. It will always be home, where my family, my ancestors walked and worked. It's lucky to live here. Its vibrancy and character shape me. And I love that I walk the streets with the spirits of those no longer here. I love that every day someone says "hello" to me!





Throughout S4 Greta got many Merit Awards. I loved to get them and really appreciated teachers taking the time to recognise her. She had a fabulous year at school and worked incredibly hard throughout. Her determination, enthusiasm and motivation has been inspiring. And that she has done all this whilst dealing with the grief of her mum's death and everything her dad, his friends and her family have done to her. I wish her mum was here to see her achievements. I wish her dad had loved her better to be proud of her, to know her now, to be interested in her, to not have hurt her so.



I hope that Greta always keeps her fun loving spirit close.  
I hope she has a laugh every day, from her belly!  
I hope she knows how funny, smart, brave, strong  
and determined she is, that she can achieve anything.  
I hope she knows I love her so deeply.  
I hope she knows she was loved by her mum and that  
she would be so proud of her  
I hope she surrounds herself with people who have  
big hearts and she is constantly nurtured.

A hand-drawn illustration on a spiral notebook page. A vibrant rainbow with multiple bands of color (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple) arches across the page from the bottom left towards the top right. In the top right corner, a sun with yellow rays is partially visible. The word "Tomorrow" is written in a large, bold, blue, stylized font across the middle of the rainbow. The notebook's spiral binding is visible on the left edge.

**Tomorrow**