HOPE

They said *Why do you only look for negative news?*

I said *I can’t find any positive news. I don’t know where to look.*

They said *It’s almost as if you don’t want hope!*

I said *I am SO hungry for hope*

*I would fight you all with my gnawn down knuckles*

*Trample you with my fractured feet*

*For one grain of a hope handout.*

So they threw me Rufus May!

And I was hungry, so I took Rufus May

How he survived early psychosis, trained as a psychiatrist. How he helps others.

I said *Rufus May is great. He’s famous, he’s a maverick.*

*Thing is... he’s just one grain of hope. I need many different grains to make me strong.*

They’d driven off. It was Rufus May or nothing.

So 5 years on... (It’s taken me a while).

*Hello CMHT! Here’s something for you to hand to the new arrivals in camp.*

*Famine relief. By the bucket.*

Jonny Benjamin

Stood on a bridge when diagnosed. Suicide solution.

Now he runs over bridges. Tells us it’s OK to have a mental illness.

Grants himself a permanent stay of execution. Today when

he relapses, he stands up again. Living his life.

Elyn Saks

Could explode a bomb with her mind.

Today she explodes myths.

Uses her lived experience and her law degree

to campaign against restraint, to stand up to stigma. Living her life.

DD

Walked out of 8 hospitalisations and into full time education.

 Awarded a degree. Next step, a masters. Living her life

SK

Early onset, the chaos of psychosis. Now a graphic designer.

Founded an online forum so we can suffer, soothe, survive

together. Manages his illness, and our website. Living his life.

RC

Over-medicated. Over-analysed.

Mathematician, published puzzler, prolific poet,

classical music lover. Living his life

TS

Misdiagnosed. Misunderstood. Missing his wife.

But he defied received wisdom and found true love. Living his life.

PA

On the ward he threw hot food in another’s face.

Today, shy smile, looks me in the eyes,

enquires about work. Living his life.

JM

Lost in the war zone for 9 years.

Overdosed on olanzapine, dozing on diazepam.

Today playing tennis, working abroad. Living her life.

Grains of hope. Seedlings of hope. Rows of hope.

Fields of hope. Golden, rolling fields.

Let no-one go without.