

# A Memo for Peace

*this poem is dedicated to the women at the Greenham Peace Camp and to all those who live their lives in the struggle for peace and freedom November 1982*

let us assume  
that the basic assumptions  
are wrong

the assumptions

that our leaders  
and politicians  
are right  
and we are wrong

that those in power  
know what's best  
for us  
that they have  
our interests  
at heart (what if  
we assume  
that they have  
no hearts?)

that They are Good  
and Grown Up and Wise  
and we are Bad  
Stupid Children  
needing to be  
put down  
put right  
and shown  
How To Behave

let us assume that  
that is not so  
and let us  
turn those assumptions  
on their heads  
til they rattle and groan  
and beg for mercy  
and for our  
forgiveness

and let us remind ourselves  
that we are many

who struggle  
who cry out  
who suffer in silence  
even those who burned  
to remind us  
who march on marches  
picket embassies  
campaign and demonstrate  
sign the petitions  
hand out leaflets  
write to newspapers  
lobby MPs

who often go unheard

who join hands  
who sing the songs  
who write the words  
who play the music  
who surround the barricades  
with clowns with children  
who weave coloured ribbons  
between the barbed wire  
who offer flowers  
to the guards  
who light the candles  
singing softly into night

who go to jail

we  
who believe  
in peace  
and uphold the dignity  
of human life  
the sanctity  
of our planet

who condemn  
the killings  
the rapes  
the missiles  
the poisons  
the violations  
the tortures  
the cover-ups  
the distortions  
the pornography  
the lies

the basic assumptions

we need to remind ourselves  
that we cannot all  
be wrong

we who live with  
conscience  
despite the discomforts

who raise our voices  
despite the silencings

who gather strength  
despite the pain

who challenge  
the basic assumptions

survive

beneath  
the warmongers'  
icecold indifference  
the politicians'  
stonefaced rhetoric  
the uniform armed alertness

we rattle  
and keen

cry out  
one voice

for peace.