**INCLUSION VS EXCUSION- A MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION**

*BY: Cathy Lynn Saunders*

Concerning the subject of persons with

Disabilities participating in the process, and as a sister

With a disability, I feel:

To include me is to empower me

To exclude me is to devour me, allowing evil

Thoughts of my violation to overpower me- like a

Broken winged dove, I cannot fly- refreshed only by the

Silent tears I cry.

Do not turn a deaf ear, but please do hear and believe the

Testimony I give. I will not die, but live- survive

Eventually thrive, and fly.

Allow me full inclusion, and be

Not disillusioned. I am a credible person

With physical limitations. Train me as

A rape victim advocate and I

Will be a force to be reckoned with.

Allow me in the courtroom with DNA evidence.

He did not have consent- and so the full intent of

His actions were not clearly understood by her.

Give me the knowledge of how to put him away-

And make today- his last day of freedom.

Do not turn a blinded eye to me.

Open your eyes, and clearly see, my abilities.

Just how needed, I would be, for the survivor

Who has a disability.

Liability or asset- which one

Shall I Be?

However another question arises.

Do I stand alone?

How many others will there be?

To stand up with me, to ensure the next

Generation is sexually violent free?

Do you hear my passionate plea?

Full inclusion is a hard fought for

Victory.

Victory is assured by the number of

People with disabilities trained to work side by side with me.

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