

S-work

magazine for
sex workers

€4.95

FROM CLIENTS I WANT
RESPECT

TIPS

from experienced
colleagues

**GOOD
INTENTIONS**

CAN I
GO BACK TO
SCHOOL

HOROSCOPE

A true story

misunderstanding

Have you been registered? Yes, tiresome isn't it? But otherwise they won't send me any more of their catalogues. I can also see it on-line, but it's much nicer to leaf through it. Eh? What do you mean? I'm not talking about a mail-order firm. Oh, I thought you were, but I still hate having to register everywhere. They get to know all about you – what you buy, where

you were at what time, and now they also want my details from my doctor. She does know I'm in prostitution; I told her, so she understands why I have myself checked now and again. But I can't bear it that all sorts of agencies can see them. Is that what you mean?

No, girl, much worse! They want us to have ourselves registered as prostitutes!

What? You're not serious! Am so!

But why?

They want to map us.

Ah, as a dating service? That's not so bad, is it? We might put up some nice photos: at least we'd get some more clients! I'm afraid you don't get it at all.....



A true story

sour joke

The other day, in the Amsterdam Red Light District, I stood talking to a window girl, who wanted to know more about De Rode Draad. She's a real beauty. And that figure! She could be a runway model.

"Can't you make those shop-windows piss off?"

"Why?"

"Well, at night, those bright lights from across the alley, shine straight into my room and ruin the effect of the black light. And yesterday, a guy stood talking to a shop-window dummy. I said: 'Sir, you'd better come to me, because that's a doll and she won't say anything back to you.' Whereupon he snarled at me:

"Shut up, bitch, that's exactly what I want."

"Fantastic," I laughed. "What a great joke."

She shook her gorgeous head and said: "It's no joke, I only wish it were."

Colophon

S-work is a magazine for sex workers

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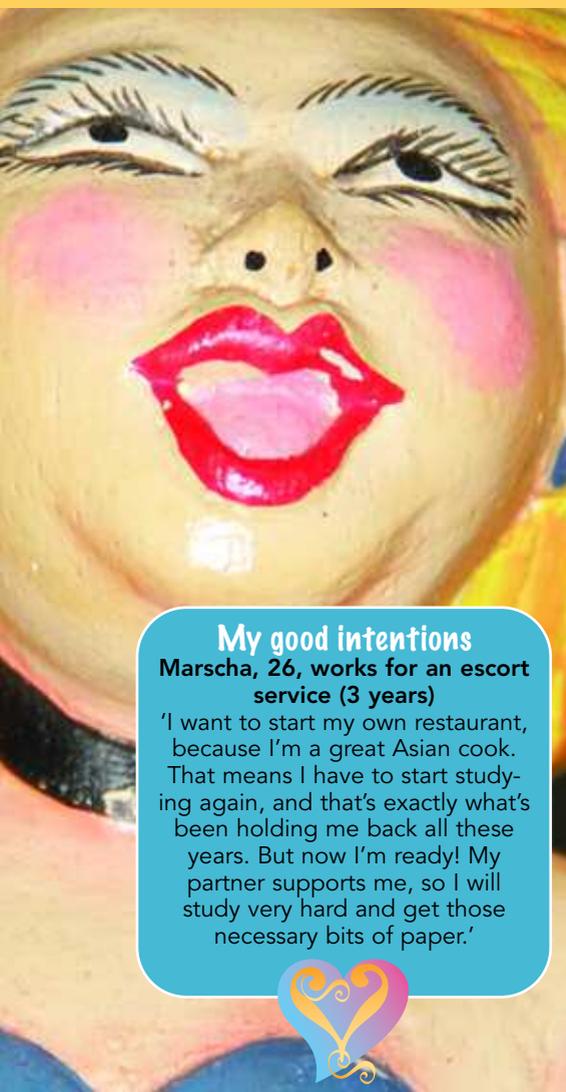
S-Work is a magazine for sex workers in the Netherlands. We are sex workers (and ex-sex workers) ourselves and we had lots of fun making this magazine.

In **S-Work** sex workers do all the talking. Real-life stories about work, about clients, and about their personal lives. Read the story of a Romanian woman who was forced into prostitution, but wanted to be a victim no longer. Another sex worker tells us how she quit prostitution, but still didn't feel happy, and a male sex worker talks about why he was afraid to get an HIV test. An outreach worker from De Rode Draad shows us her working week, in which she visits sex workers throughout the Netherlands to provide them with useful information.

Also, check out your horoscope – who knows what the stars have in store for you. And do you know what a condom is called in other languages? Are you working, or planning to work, via the Internet? Have a look at the do's and don'ts of Internet sex work. Forewarned is forearmed, after all!

Do you want to get out of the sex trade and need help? Please, check the list of addresses of organizations that offer exit programmes. Got a problem at work or in your personal life? There are several organizations you can turn to for help, see the address list. Of course, you can always call us for information or if you want to tell your story.

team de Rode Draad



My good intentions

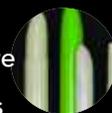
Marscha, 26, works for an escort service (3 years)

'I want to start my own restaurant, because I'm a great Asian cook. That means I have to start studying again, and that's exactly what's been holding me back all these years. But now I'm ready! My partner supports me, so I will study very hard and get those necessary bits of paper.'



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*Metje
Morphosis*



Willy van der Sloot

text and photos: Metje Blaak

Loads of colours will suit Willy's skin tone. Red is her best colour. She's not a clear winter colour or summer colour type – she's something in between. Especially, because blue and beige colours look great on her as well. Her make-up should be adjusted to her clothing.



I gave her red lipstick, grey eye shadow, and a light-tinted day cream, topped with some loose powder. Willy's hair is easy, as it's slightly wavy. A little blow-drying, some back combing and a bit of hairspray is all that it needs.





Willy owns two windows with attractive, romantically furnished rooms behind them. The beds are pink with little hearts on them and the sheets are also pink and everything is spotlessly clean. Women love to rent one of Willy's windows. Most of them are a little older and have been working there for years.

How are things at the Singel at the moment?

Not as I would like them to be.

How come?

They can't leave the girls alone.

Surely, many clients is a good thing?

That's not what I mean. Sometimes, they're interrupted up to three times a day by officials of the local government, the police, the GGD (Public Health Service), or tax people. The girls feel very vulnerable in their skimpy clothes when these people come in. They're not even given the chance to put something on. "No", they're told, "not necessary, we'll be gone in a second." In the meantime, the girls feel watched.

What do the tax people want from the women?

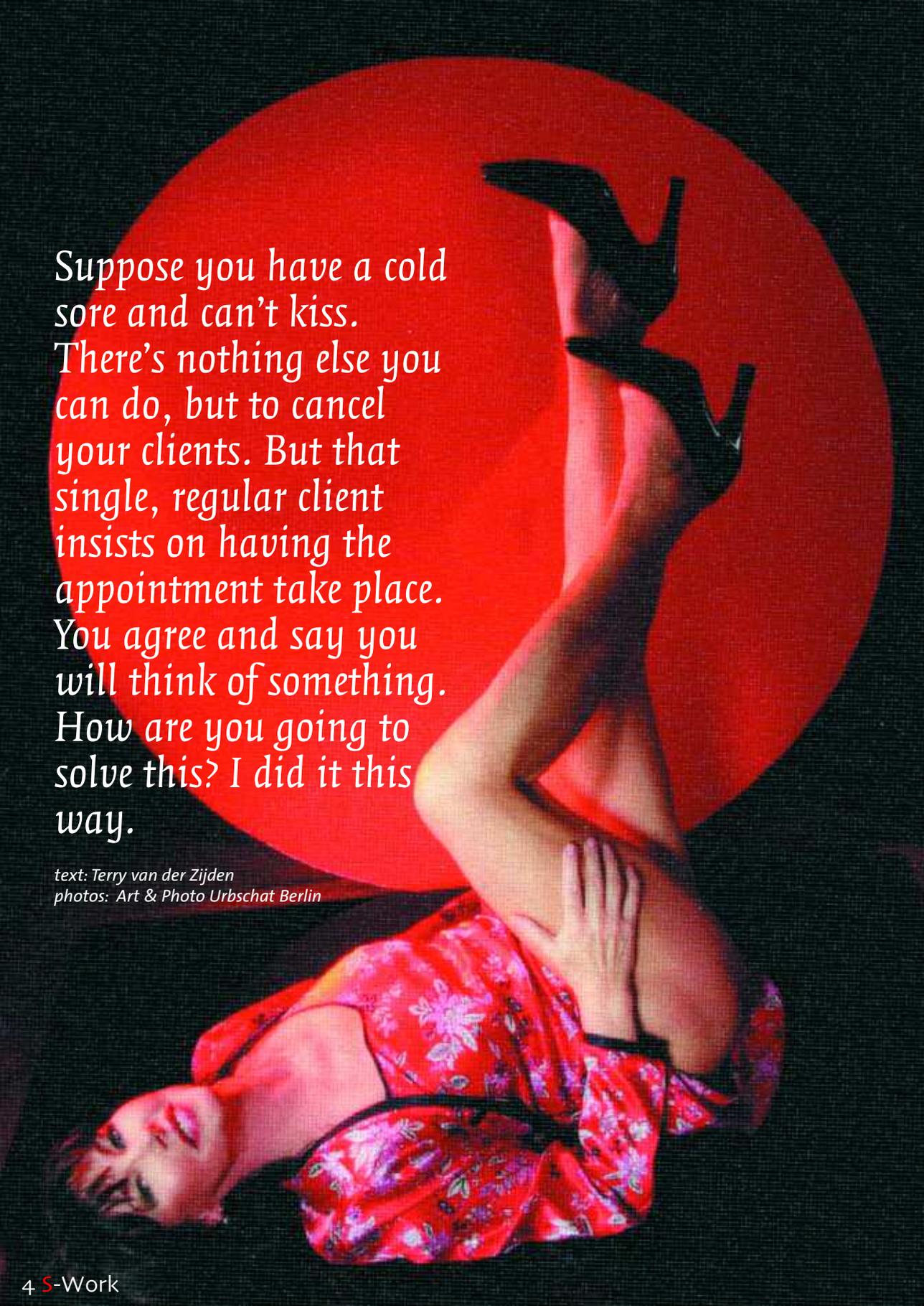
The tax people are the most insolent ones. They even want to look inside the girls' purses. I really wonder if they're allowed to do that.

And the local officials?

The local officials are appointed by the local government and they ask the silliest things. Such as, "Are you being forced to do this work? No? But I see your leg is bruised." The police and GGD are OK. Still, it's a nuisance if you're being disturbed at your workplace all the time.

How long will you keep doing this work?

Until I drop. I love my girls and we're having a great time. I can't let them go.



Suppose you have a cold sore and can't kiss. There's nothing else you can do, but to cancel your clients. But that single, regular client insists on having the appointment take place. You agree and say you will think of something. How are you going to solve this? I did it this way.

text: Terry van der Zijden

photos: Art & Photo Urbschat Berlin



Listen to me and touch me anywhere you want

Hi sweetie, glad you came... no, no, gently kiss me on the cheek or, even better, in my neck... yes there, that's better... you know what?... I'm going to undress... careful, no, don't... Wait, I have an idea, I'll read you an erotic story... something you have fantasized about before, but now my mouth (which can't kiss you), my voice, will bring you closer to that reality... Listen to me and touch me, touch me anywhere you want, where I will need it. I will lose myself in the story and in your reactions... I will be the story... I will have you listen and be a spectator, no, not an actor, not just yet... you'll only become an actor when I can no longer be the story...

I sit down on a bench without back or armrest. This way, I can be approached from all sides and I can be touched everywhere, except where I sit on and where my hands are holding the book. He is partially undressed, he is behind me. I can feel his warmth, not his body – neither his member, hand, arm nor skin are touching me. I start reading. After just a few sentences, I'm absorbed in the story and my voice starts to become sultry and a little peppery. I can both feel and hear myself. I'm beginning to get a little excited – due to the atmosphere of the story and, at the same time, due to the wonderful here and now, with him and me. Sometimes my voice is soft and teasing, as if to emphasize the playfulness of our meeting, sometimes it is mysteriously low, indicating that there are some unknown pleasures still to be expected.

I use my voice as an instrument, he uses my body. He touches me where I want him to, where I need him to, and where I can only bear it with agonizing difficulty. I want to get to the ultimate scene, but he distracts me from further reading in a delightful way. I keep trying to read... and continue with interspersed 'ah's' and 'oh's' that are entirely inappropriate for the particular passages... I leave him be... I passionately want him to go on... I start reading louder and faster and I chase my own desire ahead of me and run after it. He and his desire catch up with me. Then they both wait for me and I surrender... to everything...

From sex workers for sex workers

De Rode Draad is a expertise and information centre for sex work. You can come to us with all your questions about sex work or if you want to tell your story. Our team consists, for the most part, of (former) sex workers, and they know every trick of the prostitution trade – just like you.

We can translate sex workers' experiences, problems, complaints, or requests to the appropriate government bodies. On the other hand, we bring government information or information on laws and regulations to the sex workers. This does not always mean that we agree with those laws and regulations, but we can explain their consequences. De Rode Draad works together with various organizations that provide services for or offer information to sex workers. De Rode Draad believes it is very important that these organizations and government bodies hear what sex workers have to say.

If you have any questions about sex work, about your rights, about taxes, or about anything else that has to do with sex work, please contact us. If you have problems, such as housing or debts, we can refer you to the appropriate organizations. If you want to step out of the sex trade, we can help you contact the right persons or organizations. If you meet with forced labour, exploitation or human trafficking, please report it to us, anonymously if you wish.

De Rode Draad started as a sex workers rights group for (former) sex workers, more than 25 years ago. During all these years, De Rode Draad has gathered a lot of experience and expertise about sex work. That is why we are a welcome partner at meetings about improving the position of sex workers and about labour rights, such as working conditions and terms of employment.

De Rode Draad's main body of work, however, has always been finding and visiting sex workers throughout the Netherlands and on the Internet.

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or Facebook: Rode Draad

A true story

being sociable

I don't feel at ease at my current workplace. The hostess is always talking about making things nice and cosy, about lending a hand and 'oh girls never mind, one bad day doesn't make a bad week.' Everyone is sweet and nice to each other, together we fold towels as if its our ruling passion, and we take turns cooking. Actually, I think it's a waste of my time to do 'small household chores'. I rather read when there are no clients. The TV is always on, but that bothers me less than always having to be sociable. Since I have started to take along my mail, to answer it in quiet moments, they call me 'the professor'. That's the last thing I want! I wish I could work in a more businesslike place. Then it wouldn't be so hard to discuss things that aren't right.





My good intentions

**Anita, 25, works in a brothel
(6 months)**

'I want to make a lot of money as soon as possible, so I can move. At the moment, I live with my boyfriend and our little boy, who's almost one year old, in a very nasty neighbourhood. If my baby cries, the neighbours start banging against the wall. I want a place closer to work – that way I won't have any travelling expenses.'



My good intentions

**Tanja, 36, works in several clubs
(7 years)**

'Once a month, I'd like to do something fun with a couple of colleagues/friends. We always have such a great time together, but we don't see nearly enough of each other outside working hours. It would be a real shame if we don't do more with that friendship.'



My good intentions

**Karin, 37, works in a brothel
(12 years)**

'I want to spend more time with my family. I have a sweet partner and two kids, aged four and eight. The last couple of months, I've been working almost non-stop, and I hardly saw them during the week. But that's going to change, because they need me as much as I need them.'





A true story

choosing clients

I don't care whether a client is handsome or ugly, fat or thin, old or young. Also, I don't mind if there's something wrong with him or if he's a little weird. I trust on my intuition, my senses and my experience. If he doesn't smell that fresh – come on, take a shower! If he's ugly – exciting! Maybe he's a very good lover. Young – no problem, he'll probably come really fast. Old – it'll take a little longer, but he'll be extra sweet for me. If he's a little deaf – I'll kiss him in his ear. If he can't see that well – good! Then he won't notice if my makeup isn't that picture perfect. I'm on my guard with boosters, slanderers, and never-had-enough guys. I won't give them the benefit of the doubt if their eyes are not quite right. Boozers won't get in. Period! That way I won't get any unwelcome surprises. And I won't deprive myself of any money either.



A true story

conversation

One of my regulars, a man who has wide interests, is always very quiet when he arrives. He tends to go straight for the goal. It takes an enormous effort to get him to take a shower. Only after he has come, he opens up and we talk about all kinds of things. During one of his latest visits, things went a little differently. He's lying on his back, eyes closed, mouth half open, while I ride him like an Amazon in full gallop. Suddenly, he opens his eyes and with a steady voice he enquires with interest: "How about that registration?" I change my pace to a walk and we start an animated discussion about the new prostitution law which, if the politicians have their way, would make both clients and sex workers criminals. Then we continue our ride, as if there'd been no holdup, and we reach our final goal with great pleasure.



his blue eyes looked completely past me

I too have worked with disabled people and people with disabilities. At first, via a special agency, later through contacts of my own. One of my clients was Bert, a 35-year-old autistic man, who lived in an institution.

An institution worker who knew me, made the first contact. We were introduced and after an uncomfortable silence I tried to tell him why I had come. He barely reacted. I said goodbye to him and told him, "*Well Bert, maybe until next time – it's up to you.*"

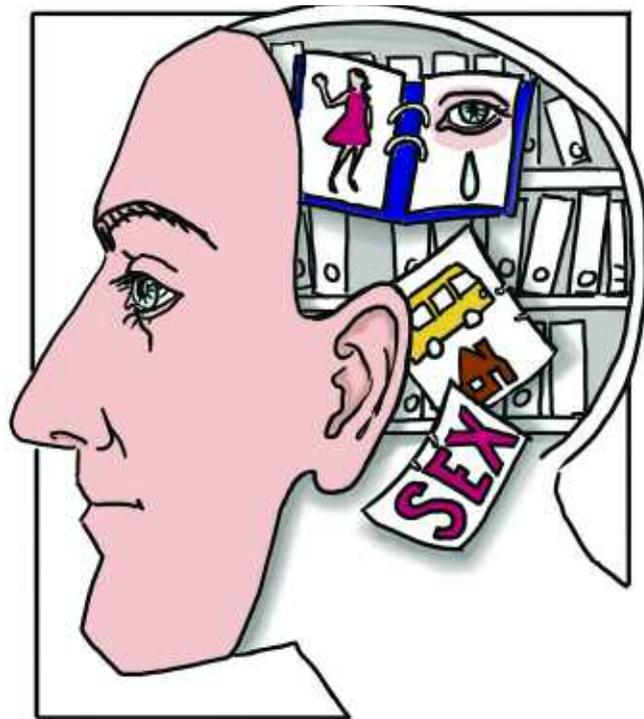
tekst: Terry van der Zijden illustratie: Petra Urban

single bed

A few days later, I sent him a cheery postcard. In response I got a neat note from the institution, saying that the price had been approved and a room had been reserved for my visit. An appointment was made. When I opened the door, he sat on the edge of a tightly made bed, in a room that radiated as much eroticism as a doctor's office. We struggled through it, but it wasn't a good start.

by bus

I phoned the institution worker and told her that I would like to see Bert at my place the next time. That was the first of many visits. The first time, Bert was delivered on my doorstep. Later, he came on his own by bus, something he had never done before. Slowly, we grew closer. He never spoke my name. If he wanted to say something to me, he began: "prostitute", and then something would follow like, "I am going to the bus stop". From the institution worker I learned that he referred to me as 'the prostitute'. After one year, it was 'my prostitute' and much later, 'my girlfriend'. Sometimes I think of him. His blue eyes that looked completely past me for the first year, that later began to see a little more, until at last they really saw me.



goodbye

After many years, I said goodbye to him, with pain in my heart. The city no longer allowed me to work at home and that's why I decided to quit working. He wouldn't understand that. So what did I tell him why we couldn't see each other anymore? I knew nothing better than that I was getting married.

Metje
Morphosis



Josje has been working behind a window since she was eighteen, although she has taken occasional breaks during relationships or different jobs. Josje is a very special woman. The first time I drove past her window, I thought it was a shop, because of the many whips, dildos and other accessories. Josje: "It says clearly on my window: 'This is not a shop.' But most people do not read it. Recently, an American woman came in to buy a dildo. I told her a customer had just had it up his ass. She left, totally upset."

Josje

text en photos: Metje Blaak

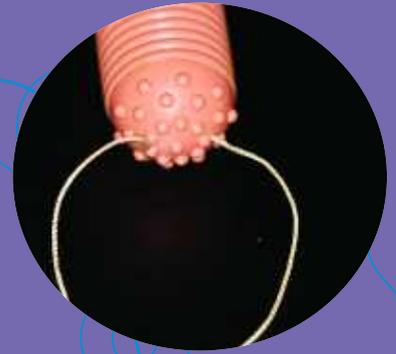
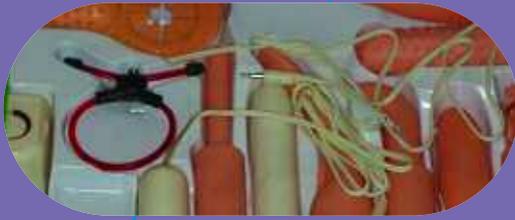


First, I blow-dried Josje's hair in a natural style, the way she likes it. Later, I combed it back with lots of wax and made it into a very bold hairstyle. This suits Josje very well, I think.

For her face I used a light foundation, with a satin powder on top.

I applied a purple eye shadow, fading from dark to light, on the brow bone. Under the eyebrows I put on some light purple and white. The lips look great with a glossy, light purple lipstick.





Can you earn a decent living?

I have no complaints.

Have there been many changes over the years?

The work is the same, but clients have become more disrespectful.

I refuse seven out of ten clients.

Why do you refuse them?

Door de manier waarop Because of the way they speak to me. I want respect. And once I have refused them, I won't change my mind, whatever they offer..

Can you afford that?

Yes, I have many regulars. I'm patient with them and I have fun with them – that's what's important.

What mark do you give your life?

Eight out of ten, but that hasn't always been so. Currently, I feel at ease with myself. I'm happy and I'm enjoying my work.

How long will you go on?

I don't know. I've got loads of plans. I'm a good cook, so maybe I'll start my own restaurant in France. But who knows, maybe I'm still a mistress when I'm fifty. In my profession it's possible to go on for a long time. I'm still learning every day, whereas I knew nothing when I started in this business. I have learned it all from a client and now I'm really good at it.

text: Humanitas PMW photos: Metje Blaak, photo exposition 'This Is My Workplace'

Getting out

Do you want to quit prostitution or do you need help? There are several organizations in the Netherlands who offer help. For example, PMW (Prostitutie Maatschappelijk Werk - Prostitution Social Work, a project of Humanitas) helps sex workers in the Rotterdam-Rijnmond area. Below you can read the stories of two women who entered PMW's exit programme.

Shanice (21 jaar)

In the beauty shop where I did my internship, it was rumoured that one of the beauticians worked in a sex club at nights. Everyone thought it a scandal, but I got curious and went there to apply for a job. After a short interview, I could start right away. Some men treated me degradingly, but most clients adored me. It sounds weird, but somehow I got addicted to the work. I didn't finish my beautician's training. I thought: 'Why work for only ten euros an hour, if I can get ten times that much at the club?' I regret that now. I really wasn't treated badly in prostitution, but all that pulling and plucking at my body... One day, I just couldn't take it anymore. But what should I do? My room was rented via the club and I had no diploma's.

That's when I found a PMW flyer in the flyer stand at the club. It also said something about quitting prostitution. I phoned them right away and after the intake I was assigned my own counsellor. PMW has excellent contacts with various agencies and authorities. For example, my counsellor immediately fixed supervised living arrangements for me. My new room wasn't a dream palace, but at least I had my own place. Of course, I also needed an income, and my counsellor asked me what kind of work I would like to do. I wanted to do all sorts of things, but I felt insecure. I didn't think I could do anything else. Together we listed all the skills I had acquired at the club: I had learned to handle all sorts of people, I have a customer-friendly attitude, and I have commercial talents. Actually, all of these skills fitted my former job in the beauty shop. The private training I used to do, was too expensive to continue, though, and my counsellor found a similar training at a ROC (regional training centre). I even got a student grant! At the moment, it's not easy financially, but I'm positive about my future.



Janneke (33 jaar)

Me and my parents were always fighting, so I left home right after secondary school. I had off and on jobs, but everything I earned, I spent right away. I couldn't pay my bills anymore and I ran up debts. Then I met Nico. We hit it off and soon we were living together. After six months I got pregnant. Our son, Timo, wasn't planned, but he was very welcome. Financially, Nico was in as bad a shape as I was, and now we even had a baby to look after. He suggested I start working as a prostitute. I didn't really want to, but in the end I was talked round to it. I called a brothel and I could start working almost immediately. The first client was terrible, but the ladies were very good company. And the next clients were pretty nice. I started paying off my debts and bought things for the baby. Nico wasn't as nice as he was in the beginning. He wanted me to work extra and began to put more and more pressure on me. The brothel was closed at the weekends, so he found a club where I could work on Saturdays. He even made an appointment for me and he was happy to drive me there. That was it! We got a hell of a row. After he'd hit me in the face, I took Timo and left. I spent some thirteen more years in

prostitution, although I'd wanted to quit after only a few. But the only diploma I've got is a lower secondary education one! Which boss would have me with only that? That's when a PMW outreach worker visited my brothel, and told me about an exit programme. I signed up right then and there, and I could come by after only a few weeks. First, my counsellor fixed a few practical things for me, such as a social security benefit and child benefit. At the same time, I was signed up for debt management assistance.

My social security benefit isn't much. We started to look for other work right away. It's not easy with that huge hole in my CV. After all, most employers won't think of prostitution as decent work experience. I could pose as a mother returning to work – that's the story

me and my counsellor have come up with. To boost my confidence at job interviews, I have joined group meetings at PMW. There I talk with other sex workers about finding a new job and we practice job interviews. My mind is chiefly set on the future, but I still discuss my prostitution experiences with my counsellor. I like that – it gives me an opportunity to give everything its place. She knows the prostitution world, which gives me enough back-up to talk openly about it.

For over twenty years, Prostitution Social Work (Prostitutie Maatschappelijk Werk (PMW), a Humanitas project in Rotterdam) has tried to get awareness for the interests of (ex-)prostitutes. We consider sex work a profession, and we try to help anyone who has a problem, but wants to remain working in prostitution. If you want to quit the sex trade, you can use PMW's exit programme. We can offer help in finding housing and work. We can fix a social security benefit for you, so you can bridge the period to a new job. Maybe you want to do a training or course first. That's another thing we can help you with. If you have debts, we can help you get in touch with debt management assistance. For more information, please phone 010 - 22 11 715 (from Mon-Fri between 13:00 and 17:00) or email us at pmw@stichtinghumanitas.nl.

See also: www.humanitaspmw.org.

You can find other useful addresses of organizations on pages 18 and 19

My good intentions

Roberta, 54, works on the street, occasionally behind the window (10 years)

'I want to be a singer. I love singing, and I've been wanting to sing together with some people for years, just for fun, and maybe even an occasional performance.

Tear-jerkers, sailor songs, musical hits, as long as we're having fun. I'll simply wear a wig, then I won't be afraid!





Male sex workers

De Rode Draad is also available for boys, men, and transgenders in prostitution. We can help you find information about terms of employment, working conditions, taxes, and your rights as a sex worker. It is possible to discuss your challenges and problems with a male staff member. De Rode Draad has also expertise on internet sex work.

De Rode Draad promotes the interests of sex workers and stands up for their rights. Moreover, specific matters concerning boys, men, and transgenders, can be put on the political agenda. The group Payboys & HIV is available for male sex workers who are HIV positive.

Want more information?

oebele@rodedraad.nl - 06-46282982 –
www.rodedraad.nl



Trade Union

trade union for sex workers m/f

Everyone who is, or has been, working in the sex industry, can become a member: man, woman, illegal or legal, on a pay role, freelancer, or entrepreneur. It does not matter whether you work temporarily, permanently, or occasionally, in a legal or illegal business. We will not ask you for your papers. Together, we will view your situation and look at possible improvements.

If you are no longer working, this is the place where you can share your experiences and use your expertise for a new generation of colleagues.

Interested?

Please, email your cell phone number to vakbondvakwerk@upcmail.nl, or call Metje Blaak at 06-53414960. The membership list is protected. No one has permission to see the membership list, except for Vakwerk's secretary and comptroller. Vakwerk membership costs are 40 euros a year. Account number 935.93.28, in the name of: Beroepsvereniging Vakwerk.

Do you want to get out of the sex trade, want to turn over a new leaf, and need help? Many organizations provide special exit programmes.

Groningen

Stichting Terwille
Project Perspectief+: exit
programme for sex workers in
Groningen
050-3130700
(Mon-Fri 10:00-12:00
and 19:00-22:00)
hulpverlening@terwille.nl
www.terwille.nl

Friesland

Fier Fryslân
Shelter and counselling for Friesian
victims of lover boys and for girls
who want to get out of
prostitution
0900-5675678
www.fierfryslan.nl

Overijssel

Carinova
For sex workers from the region of
Ommen, Dalfsen, Hardenberg,
Staphorst
0570-518700
www.carinova.nl
info@carinova.nl

De Kern (social services)
For sex workers from the region of
Zwolle, Kampen and
Zwartewaterland
038-4258888
www.stdekern.nl
(digital registration is possible)

Scharlaken Koord, Deventer and
environs (until 1 July 2011)
For (window) sex workers in
Deventer and the Eastern
Netherlands (Apeldoorn, Zutphen,
Raalte, Olst-Wijhe)
020-6226897 (You will be put into
contact with a social worker in
Deventer)
www.scharlakenkoord.nl
info@scharlakenkoord.nl

Zorggroep Oud & Nieuwe Land
For sex workers from the region of
Steenwijkerland
0521-539999
www.zorggroep-onl.nl
amwsteenwijkerland@zorggroep-
onl.nl

Gelderland

Meldpunt Bijzondere Zorg/GGD
(complaints office for health
matters/municipal and regional
health service)
Advocacy projects for prostitutes
and victims of human trafficking
and pimps. Registration, requests
for advice, and consultation can be
done anonymously
Groenewoudseweg 275
6524 TV Nijmegen
024-3297129
meldpunt@ggd-nijmegen.nl

Noord-Holland

P&G 292 (prostitution and health
centre) Amsterdam
020-5318600
(Mon-Fri 14:00-22:00)
info@pg292.nl
www.pg292.nl

Scharlaken Koord, Amsterdam
(until 1 July 2011)
'A new perspective. An exit pro-
gramme for women in
prostitution' in Amsterdam
020-6226897
info@scharlakenkoord.nl
www.scharlakenkoord.nl

Scharlaken Koord, Haarlem
(until 1 July 2011)
Exit programme for sex workers in
Haarlem
020-6226897 (You will be put into
contact with a social worker in
Haarlem)
info@scharlakenkoord.nl
www.scharlakenkoord.nl

Zuid-Holland

SHOP (help and shelter for prosti-
tutes), The Hague
'Career Switch': exit programme
including shelter and help for (ex-)
sex workers in the region of The
Hague
070-3614747 (Mon-Fri 13:00-19:00)
info@shop-den Haag.nl
www.shop-den Haag.nl

PMW Humanitas (prostitution
social services), Rotterdam
Exit programme for sex workers in
the region of Rotterdam-Rijnmond
010-2211715
pmw@stichtinghumanitas.nl
www.humanitaspmw.org

Utrecht

De Tussenvoorziening, Utrecht
Exit programme for sex workers
working in Utrecht, in
collaboration with Doorstroom
030-2340819
tv.doorstroom@tussenvoorzie-
ning.nl
www.tussenvoorziening.nl

Noord-Brabant

IMW (institute for social welfare),
Breda
Exit programme 'Together toward
Work' for sex workers in the region
of Breda
076-5305888
06-14783153 (Jolande Verwoerd)
jverwoerd@imwbreda.nl

Salvation Army Eindhoven
Exit programme 'Life Force', for sex
workers working in the
street-walking district in
Eindhoven
040-2393164

Other useful addresses

Stichting De Rode Draad
Information centre
for sex work
Kloveniersburgwal 47
1011 JX Amsterdam
020-6243366
info@rodedraad.nl
www.rodedraad.nl

Stichting De Haven, The Hague
Offers help to people in
prostitution, also a buddy
project for ex-prostitutes
070-4020804
maatschappelijkwerk@sol-
con.nl
maatjesproject@solcon.nl
www.stichtingdehaven.nl

MJD (social and legal services),
Groningen
Contact person for sex workers
and victims of human
trafficking
050-3126123
info@mjd.nl
www.mjd.nl

Stichting HAP, (open house for
prostitutes) Utrecht
Street-walking districts
Europalaan and Zandpad
030-2340819
medewerkerschap@tussenvoor-
ziening.nl

TransAct (information centre
youth prostitution), Utrecht
030-2326540
www.jeugdprostitutie.nu/

GGD contact person
Amsterdam
06-13275228 of 020-5555715

Stichting Soa/Aids (STD/AIDS)
Health and prostitution
STD information service:
0900-9109106
http://www.soaids.nl

Regionaal Soa-centrum
(STD Centre), The Hague
070-353 66 88
www.soacentrumdenhaag.nl

Comensha, Amersfoort
Reporting centre for human
trafficking and co-ordination
centre for shelter of human
trafficking victims
033-4481186
http://www.comensha.nl

SRTV (religious people against
women trade), Den Bosch
Prevention and help for human
trafficking victims
073-6154444
www.srtv.info

BlinN (bonded labour in the
Netherlands)
Collaboration project of
Humanitas and Oxfam Novib
For the advancement of
human trafficking victims
020 5231100
www.blinn.nl

De Regenboog Groep,
Amsterdam
Help and shelter for homeless
people and drug users
www.deregenboog.org

MDHG (interest group for drug
users), Amsterdam
020-6244775
www.mdhg.nl

My good intentions

Esther, 30, works behind a window (5 months) and before that in a club (2 years)

'I want to tell the window owner that he shouldn't come in with his cigarette in his hand. It took me a lot of effort to quit smoking, and that's why I don't like it. But I'm afraid he'll get angry and won't rent me the room anymore.'



My good intentions

Sacha, 28, works at home (3 years) and before that in a club (4 years)

'I'm going to pay more attention to myself, when I'm not working. Some nice make-up, gorgeous clothes, extensive beauty treatment at home or at a beauty farm. Often I don't feel like getting myself glammed up, but I feel so much better when I'm looking good.'



My good intentions

Natasja, 25, works in clubs and for an escort service (2 years)

'What I'm really, really going to do, is putting aside some money. I've never saved any money, I always immediately spend everything I earn and I regret that now. Keeping up an account book may be a good idea. I want to have some money left for a change, so I can buy a house in a few years' time.'



An outreach worker's week

My name is Amber. I'm an outreach worker at De Rode Draad. My colleague and I visit sex workers at their workplaces, all over the Netherlands – a couple of times a week, mostly at night. We both used to be sex workers too. For De Rode Draad, outreach work is the most direct – and often the only – way to contact sex workers. We give information about rules and regulations that apply to the workplace of the city the prostitutes work in. We inform them about possibilities to quit the sex trade, about laws, and about everything they encounter during their work.

During these visits we often get loads of questions. Questions about changing jobs, for example, or personal situations, organizations, agreements with window/room owners, and working conditions. Usually, we can answer them right away, but if not, we will get in touch again later. I have been doing this outreach work for three years and I'm still as enthusiastic about it as when I started. Read about my week, and maybe I'll see you later!



Monday

Today we'll visit a couple of clubs in a large city. At the first club, a young woman wants to know how she can get new living quarters as soon as possible. At the moment, she's living in a room above the club and that's not an ideal situation. We refer her to websites of housing corporations and explain how she can register. Her colleagues join us – they don't say anything, but they listen carefully. Then one of them asks how she should go about starting a new study. We have several suggestions and she writes everything down. The visits at the other club are equally satisfying – at first they're a little hesitant, but as soon as they realize we're not from an authority, and we have explained about what De Rode Draad does, things liven up and questions are being shot at us.



Tuesday

We visit the windows of a medium town. We are given a good reception by all women and transgenders who are at work. Some women complain about rising rents for their windows. Negotiations with window owners had come to nothing – if you don't want to pay the rent, someone else will take over your room in a flash. We promise we will talk about this with our colleagues at De Rode Draad: Sometimes it helps if we can get it to the attention of a policy maker of a particular city. We hand out presents and visiting cards and say friendly goodbyes.

Wednesday

No outreach work today, but a meeting with outreach workers of other organizations. We exchange experiences and learn a lot from each other. Also, I have to work up yesterday's report – my colleague will do the one from the day before.



Friday

We decide to visit two brothels where we've been before, so they already know us. The owners give us a warm welcome and the women are glad to see us. We're offered coffee and we all have a long chat about the sex trade, De Rode Draad, kids, the local council, and the new prostitution law. That latter subject has everyone's attention and complaints keep pouring in: It's as if they give you a stamp on your forehead, why don't clients need a registration, and what's the use when they've been registered at the Belastingdienst (Tax Administration) anyway? We tell them that we're doing our best to work something out. After a long, pleasant evening we are waved a warm goodbye..

Thursday

We set off to an area with many clubs, outside the Randstad. We're met with distrust everywhere: Who are you? Never heard of. What kind of work do you do? We hand out leaflets and talk as if our lives would depend upon being allowed to enter. Fortunately, we succeed at most clubs, so we get a chance to tell all kinds of things. However, no one asks any questions, probably because everything is new to them. At the last club we are refused entrance – they close the door even before we have finished our sentence. We push some leaflets through the letterbox and leave, back into the cold night. We intend to visit these clubs again soon, so they won't forget us.

*photos: Metje Blaak,
photo exposition '
This Is My Workplace'*

I didn't want to be a

illustration: Petra Urban



Irina, a 32-year-old Rumanian woman, was lured under a false promise to the Netherlands when she was twenty. Here, she fell into the hands of a human trafficker, who maltreated and threatened her and forced her into prostitution. After many

months, she finally managed to escape. She got help from an agency and during the following five years, she tried to settle down by learning the language, building up a social network, and doing volunteer work. But she found it impossible to leave this dark period behind her. She felt depressed and insecure, and she couldn't understand why she couldn't be happy. Then she realized that her environment still saw her as the victim of human trafficking. On a subconscious level, this influenced her self-image in a negative way. She decided to start working as a prostitute again, this time by her own free will. This story is about the change this decision has brought her, AND about other people's reactions.

What was it like after you had just escaped forced prostitution?

I entered a special programme for victims of human trafficking. I was helped with shelter, housing, and a residence permit. At first, I wasn't allowed to work, but I ended up with an

agency that did social volunteer work. I met some new Dutch people, and also women who had been trafficked and maltreated, just like me.

victim anymore

How did you feel?

I felt dirty and unhappy. I had lost all trust in men. I did have relationships, but I couldn't enjoy them. My sex life was ruined, and I had absolutely no self-confidence. I tried to regain myself, started doing things that I used to enjoy, such as going out, listening to music, shopping with girlfriends, but I couldn't have cared less. After three years, I realized I was still feeling depressed and unhappy, but I had no idea what I could do about it.

The decision to re-enter prostitution is not an obvious one. What made you do it?

Through my volunteer work I knew a few women who had entered the business voluntarily. They were very open about it and saw it as an ordinary job. I found it fascinating that these women went about it that way. I didn't exactly know why, but I just knew that I wanted to try whether that would work for me as well.

And did it work for you?

Yes! It was really weird, but from the very first client it felt like something completely new. In the club where I worked, I could determine my own time schedule and clients. Pretty soon I noticed that I began to see the people around me differently – men were no longer 'dirty' and I had a good time with my colleagues. My confidence started to grow, and I got to know myself in a new and better way. It was very therapeutic for me. I wouldn't advice women with similar experiences to do the same, though. But for me it worked out really well.

How did people around you react?

During the first year, I didn't tell anyone what kind of work I did, because I was afraid of how they would react. And rightly so! The reactions were very negative: Why on earth had I gone back into the sex business, after everything I

had been through? Not only because of the awful memories, but also because of my status – I was a victim of human trafficking and that's how people kept seeing me. That's why I couldn't get out of that mess. But people didn't see it that way. I had been 'rescued', and this was how I handled my rescue? They couldn't understand it.

What do you think about that?

I think the social workers found it difficult to accept that I didn't want to be a victim anymore. To me it felt like a relief that I had taken control of my own life and had chosen this profession, but for them this move was incomprehensible. Some even let me know that I was ungrateful, and that they felt deceived by me..

That must have been very difficult for you.

It was. I didn't want to seem ungrateful, but at the same time I wanted to take my own decisions and to organize my life as I wanted it. And that worked! I came back into the light, I no longer felt down and depressed, and I started to enjoy life again. After two years, I got out of the sex trade. Now, I do something completely different and I'm in a steady relationship. I'm still in contact with fellow-sufferers from way back, and it hurts me to see that most of them still haven't been able to settle down.

What would you want to do to help them?

I don't really know. I would like to say to them that they should stop feeling like a victim, that they have to be strong and that they have talents and that they have to use those talents to try and rebuild their lives, to find themselves again, and in that way can be happy again. I wish them all the best.

If you recognize yourself in this story, and want to talk to someone, call or email De Rode Draad: 020 6243366 / info@rodedraad.nl

photos: Metje Blaak, photo exposition
'This Is My Workplace'

condom in all languages

Germany

Kondom, Präservativ, Präser

England and the USA

condom, durex, French letter, rubber

France

preservative

Spain and Portugal

presevativa

Italy

guanto

Turkey

kaput

Russia

gandon

Sweden

preservativ, p-möjligheter

Finland

kortsu

Iceland

verjur

Friesland Province

owertrekker

Twente Province

rubber sökke



My good intentions

**Claudia, 21, works in a club
(6 months)**

'I want my self-esteem back. Each time I'm doing more with my clients than I actually want. I regret it each and every time, and still it happens again and again. An experienced colleague noticed it and told me the other day: 'The customer is always right, but you are even more right'. I have felt so much stronger since then.'



My good intentions

Mirthe, 42, works behind the window (14 years)

'I want to lose some weight. I used to be a size 38, but I have gained almost 10 kilos during the last year. As far as clients are concerned, it's no problem. But I'm more worried about my health. A health club isn't my sort of thing. I now take the stairs instead of the elevator.'





text: Tom Kroon, photo: Metje Blaak

Men will always be hunters

At least twice a week I go down the Amsterdam Red Light District. I've been doing that for eight years. Yes, I visit ladies behind the windows. It takes a fairly long train journey to get there. But that doesn't matter. Each and every time, I'm looking forward to my Amsterdam afternoon. Who will I visit today? One of my regular girls? Or will I go and find a new girl? The tension mounts. I do it with pleasure, I am not ashamed of it. I enjoy the intimacy, spontaneity and trust.

“Is it satisfactory, though, paying for sex?”, friends ask me sometimes. Yes it is. For me, anyway. I always stay a little longer, so we can talk. I'm single (after thirteen years of marriage) and I think this is an ideal way to meet interesting and independent women. I know more intelligent, confident, and true women in the Red Light District than in my immediate surroundings.

In those eight years, I have visited many girls and women. Some only once or twice. But others more than a hundred times. Because our conversations are really great – about all kinds of personal things. Or just because they're sweet girls. And we have great sex too.

But men will always be hunters. Occasionally, I want to go and see a girl I don't know yet. On such an occasion, I will skip my regular women. At first, I found that difficult. One time, I had seen a cute girl and I wanted to check whether she was working. But I didn't want her neighbour - whom I frequently visited - to see me. So, I sneaked through the alley, close to the wall, all the way from the other end. I sneaked a look around the corner to see if the curtains were open. That wasn't the case, so I went back and repeated my journey after fifteen minutes. I kept doing that, until she was finally there. What I didn't know was that the neighbour had seen my reflection the whole time in the window across the alley. She told me so the next week. She really had to laugh about it, she told me. Since then, I lay all my cards out on the table. And actually, no one minds. The ladies know that I visit other girls as well anyway. And they also know that I will always return to my favourites.



**AQUARIUS ~
21 January - 18 February**

Your urge for freedom gets in your way, dear Aquarius. Be honest with yourself! What do you prefer? Some freewheeling on your own, or an appointment with that fantastic lover? Stay away from colleagues who want to thwart your plans. Always dress super sexy and alluring and be friendly and cheerful – the clients (and the money!) will start pouring in.



ARIES ~ 21 March - 20 April



Has your romantic life become a routine? Dear Aries, that's something you can totally control yourself! If you wait until the other one makes a move, your mood and energy will definitely sink to a low level. How about a course in Erotic Massage? If you practise on your partner first, and then start using your new skills professionally, you can kill two birds with one stone.

text: Elizabeth
illustrations: Petra Urban

**PISCES ~
19 February - 20 March**

You're going to use your energy better in the near future, dear Pisces. You make choices in what's important for YOU, and that brings peace and clarity in your romantic life AND your business life. Give your colleagues a course on Creative Accountancy – this may bring in quite a bit. And don't forget to take a moon bath – it's beneficial for your inside as well as your outside.



TAURUS ~ 21 April - 21 May

Oh yes, Taurus, you're longing for a suburban life and it's beginning to show. Aren't your eyes drawn to wedding shops a little too often lately? If you haven't committed yourself to your partner just yet, it's surely going to



happen now. Try to reduce the amount of stress at work. You can't be angry forever because the rent of your room is getting higher and higher whereas you see fewer and fewer clients.



**GEMINI ~
22 May - 21 June**

Gemini, NOW is the moment to make that career switch. Let your creativity take its course – the stars see you in fashion, interior design, or creating your own lingerie collection. As far as your love life is concerned, you are dominant and taking charge – could you develop this in your work? Being a mistress is also a lucrative career move.

**CANCER ~
22 June - 23 July**



LEO ~ 24 July - 23 August

Leo, this is a very erotic period for you. Old lovers, new lovers – they all come by; and you enjoy yourself immensely. You're even going to try your luck on a dating site, where new admirers also line up for you. Remember to have something left to satisfy your clients as well! What remains is pleasure, so live it up!



You are the most sensitive of all zodiac signs, Cancer. Unfortunately, you don't follow that intuition often enough. Trust yourself that you are right, in private matters as well as in business. So use this with your steady clients as well as your new ones, and take care they share their most secret sexual desires with you. This will get you some cash.



VIRGO ~ 24 August - 23 September

The stars only see pink clouds and fireworks for you, dear Virgo. Love Rules! It's boring to stick to the same job. Something creative is just the thing for you. But it's not enough to buy an exciting new latex outfit or decorate your window with fresh red lights. Why don't you start working for yourself, so you can plan your own working days and hours?

LIBRA ~
24 September - 23 October



Don't always feel so responsible for each and everyone, dear Libra. People are much more independent than they want you to think, so let it go. And choose between all those different workplaces you used recently, won't you? Or else you're never going to build a regular clientele. Choose one or two fixed workplaces – that way you'll have more control of your income and your time.

SCORPIO ~
24 October - 22 November

Try to communicate with some more feeling and a little less sharpness, dear Scorpio. Many a lover/friend/colleague has gone ballistic because of your comments. Meanwhile, your money disappears as fast as it's coming in, and you're totally fed up with that. Budgeting is something you can learn, though, so skip a few working nights and invest in a financial plan.



SAGITTARIUS ~
23 November - 22 December



It's time for Big Love, Sagittarius. And you know who I'm talking about! Things are really improving, work-wise and money-wise. Also, keep looking out for networking opportunities: visit colleagues in other clubs or register with an escort service. Make sure you get on that map, and the next thing you'll see is that your piggy bank will grow fatter and fatter.

CAPRICORN ~
23 December - 20 January

You have isolated yourself again, Capricorn, and now there's hardly a social life left. Go and boost those old friendships: get on to the Internet, take up your pen, or pick up the phone. Do yourself a favour and just say 'no' to work that is too time-consuming and earns you very little money. For example, refuse that nagging client who always wants to chat on the phone for fifteen minutes before coming over.



Do's & dont's

van internet sekswerk



In general

- Often change your prepaid phone card.
- Regularly clear your Internet browser history.
- Remember that not only clients look around on these sites, but other people as well.



Photographs

- Ask a good photographer, who you trust, to take pictures of you. (You can always ask Metje Blaak.)
- Do not upload explicit nude pictures. It's fine to start with some beautiful erotic photographs. Your face can be faded with photo editing software.
- Boys, keep in mind, you want your clients to see what you've got: do it with underwear or even better with wet briefs.



Date

- Tell your partner or a friend where and when you are dating a client. Or put a note on your kitchen table with the address where you are going.
- Always let someone know where you are.

Chatting / Webcamming

- Put a dollar sign in your login name while you are chatting.
- Remember that when you do webcamming, anyone can record it and can use it against you later on. Do not show too much or too little on your webcam. For example, only show your torso, or go private straight away.
- On sites where customers can log in free of charge, you may encounter fakers. So, don't spend too much time chatting to clients – they might be fakers or peekers. You may ask your client to put his camera on as well. Be warned if he says it's not working. Try to get a telephone number as soon as possible and make an appointment. If a client is serious, he will not want to chat too long free of charge.
- Honesty is always the best policy in this trade. And it is safer.



Text

- Choose a clear login name and profile.
- Don't lie too much about your 'stats' (i.e. your age and your sizes).
- Write an appealing text to get clients interested.
- Always state clearly what you're willing to do and what you will not do, as this avoids unnecessary misunderstandings or endless chatting. Also, clearly state your prices, the maximum travelling distance and whether you charge travelling expenses. State clearly whether you can receive clients at home or want to meet them elsewhere.
- Never put your real name, especially not your last name, in your log on text or on your profile site(s). If you can find yourself on Google, MySpace or Facebook, other people can find you as well.



Finally

The Internet is just one way of selling your services. But remember that your data and pictures will essentially be on the World Wide Web forever. So, even if you started a new career ages ago, your pictures can still be found.





Lectures

De Rode Draad can be booked for lectures about the prostitution trade and about current prostitution policies. Moreover, lectures can be about a prostitute's, or an ex-prostitute's, life – this includes videos of interviews with colleagues, prostitute visitors, and window and room owners. People generally love hearing about sex work and sex workers' lives and during a lecture all their questions will be answered. You can choose a man or a woman as your lecturer.

For more information, times, and charges, please call or email

De Rode Draad: 020 6243366 – info@rodedraad.nl

Writing Course

Always wanted to write a story or a book? Or would you like to write interesting columns or put your own life to paper? Then sign up for De Rode Draad's Creative Writing course. During four or five afternoons, you are going to learn loads about your writing style and about form and sequence. Your talents will be addressed in depth. You will do the course together with a small group of colleagues. Writing is not easy, but you will find that you can do it, and that's a fantastic experience. For information and application, please phone or email:

020 6243366 – info@rodedraad.nl

Prostitution Monologues

As part of a drama project, several (ex-)prostitutes have written monologues about their lives and work in prostitution. Four of them developed their monologues under the direction

of famous Dutch actress Nelly Frijda, and performed them during a Rode Draad conference. This was a huge success, and more performances are planned. Would you like to book this performance? Or do you want to write and perform your own monologue? Phone or email us: 020 6243366 – info@rodedraad.nl

Photography Course

Our photography course is extremely popular! During two afternoons, you will learn all about handling a digital camera, about composition and light, and about how to make the most of your photographs, using photoshop software where necessary. You will have to bring along your own camera. The course is given by professional photographer Metje Blaak. In the case of sufficient interest, the number of workshop days will be extended. Participation is free of charge, and the course is only open for (ex-)prostitutes. Phone or email De Rode Draad: 020 6243366 – info@rodedraad.nl

Photo Exposition

Because of the success of the photography course and the enthusiasm of its participants, Metje Blaak decided to organize a photo exhibition. Ten prostitutes who took the course, have photographed their workplaces and more than fifty of these photos were exhibited in an Amsterdam gallery, until late 2010. Now, they are a travelling exhibition, titled "This Is My Workplace". The photographs are also for sale in a limited edition (printed on canvas). Would you like to have this exhibition at your company, club, or organization? Phone or email De Rode Draad: 020 6243366 – info@rodedraad.nl

A true story

sidewalk café

I'm sitting in a sidewalk café with my friend, Inge. She's having another one of her weird moods. She sips her wine and says: "Shall we?" And she points at a male passer-by. "How big is his prick?" I humour her, and say: "That one over there is something special. He's only got a little marshmallow."

Inge: "How do you know?"

"Because he walks with those hasty little steps like a dachshund and because of his aggressive little neck. And do you see him over there? That gentleman in the coat with the brown corduroy collar? He has a long, thin one with a little skin hat."

"How do you know?"

"Because his head has the shape of an egg."

Many more fine specimen passed by that day. At het end of the afternoon, I'm walking in the Spui and who do you think passes me by? That long one, with the skin hat. He hisses between his teeth: "Stinking whore". I'm furious, catch up with him, and say: "Shit bag". Then I see a shimmer in his eyes, both submissive and dominant. How stupid of me! I had just given away a free verbal SM session! Hopefully, Inge won't read this.



My good intentions

Shohna, 26, works in a club (2.5 years)

'I want to put aside some money for a holiday. My new boyfriend is going to take me on a month's trip to Aruba, where I'm originally from. He'll pay for the journey and we're going to stay with my sister, but it does mean a month without an income. We've now opened a separate savings account.'



My good intentions

Sonja, 19, started working in a club just 2 weeks ago

'I want to keep eating healthy. In this neighbourhood, the only things that are available are fast food and other stuff I don't particularly like. A waste of my money. I'm planning to make some sandwiches at home, and bring them along to work. What will my colleagues say about that?'

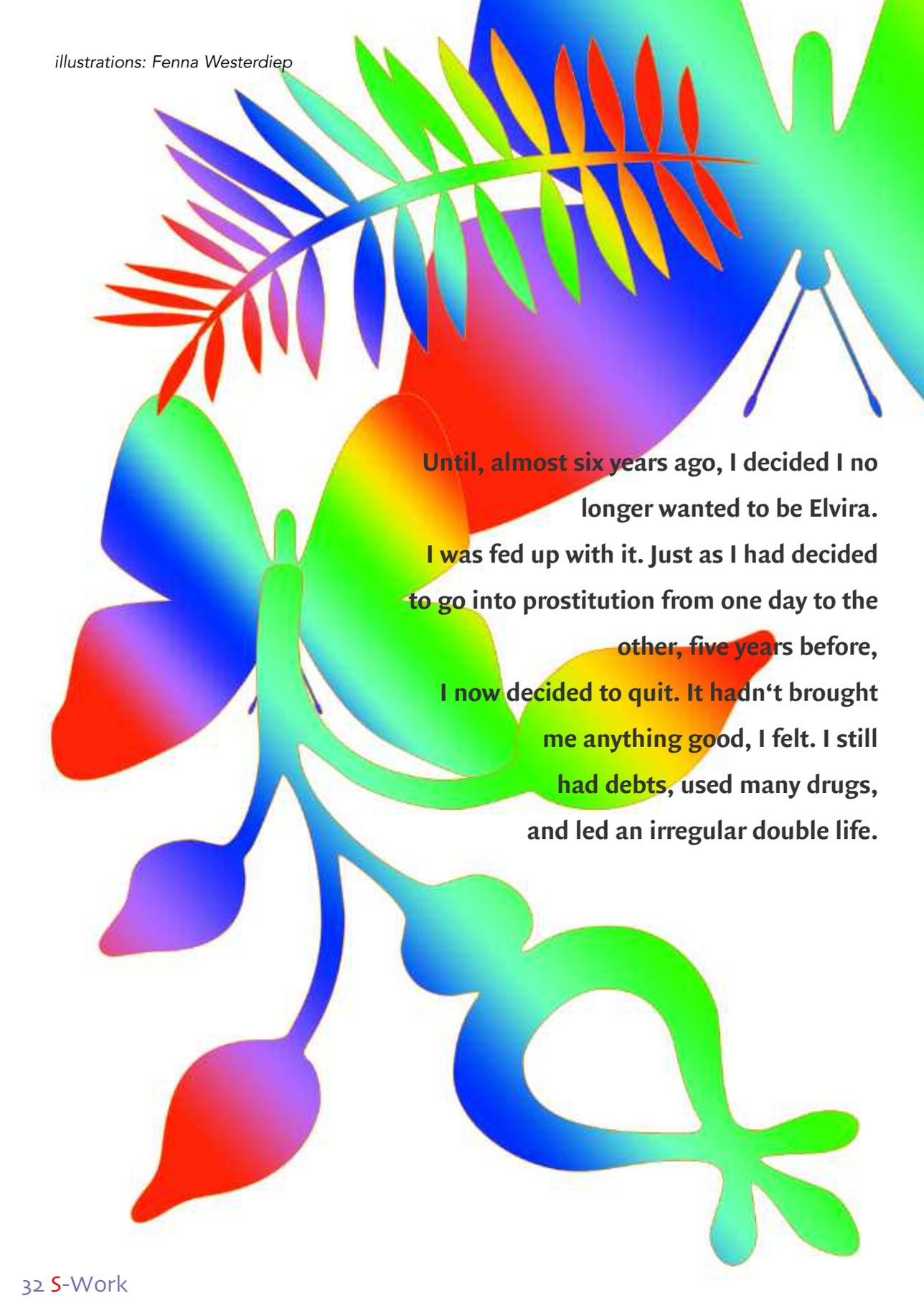


My good intentions

Leslie, 31, works in a club (2 years)

'I want to spend more time with my girlfriends. They have no idea that I took up this kind of work, and that's why I've been avoiding them a little. I won't tell them just yet, but I do want to see them more often. I miss them and there's plenty more we can talk about.'





Until, almost six years ago, I decided I no longer wanted to be Elvira. I was fed up with it. Just as I had decided to go into prostitution from one day to the other, five years before, I now decided to quit. It hadn't brought me anything good, I felt. I still had debts, used many drugs, and led an irregular double life.

My name was Elvira,

I applied for help at a social service for prostitutes, because going into prostitution turned out to be a lot easier than quitting and building a new life – partly due to the stigma the outside world puts on prostitutes. Next, I had to go a very long and difficult road. First, I had to get the basics, such as housing, health insurance, and a job (even though I only had a high school diploma). Next, I had to clear up the financial mess. And after I'd got all those practical matters straight, I had to start working on the emotional part, all the things I hadn't been aware of before.

I couldn't be proud of my new, self-built life, and I still didn't feel happy. How was that possible? After all, hadn't I quit prostitution? I had a nice job, a finished education, no debts, and new friends. Why wasn't I able to feel at ease in the life I was leading now? And why did I still feel insecure about myself? I decided to get psychotherapy.

That way, I discovered that it wasn't prostitution that had ruined my life. In fact, it had been my salvation. Nowhere else had I ever felt that much at home. People had noticed me, had considered me beautiful, and had accepted me the way I was. Now, back in regular society, I missed all those things and I didn't know how to shape my new life.

I learned that these feelings were linked to old pain. As a little girl, I had never been good enough, my own self had always been ignored and I hadn't been safe from abuse either. Everything I had missed at home, I had found in prostitution. I had been able to express myself and people had appreciated me. As soon as I had left that safe place, all those old feelings had resurfaced.

Now, I know that prostitution was a flight, so I could forget the other stuff. But what would have become of me if I hadn't taken this road? For five years, I had felt wanted, something I had never felt before. It's not prostitution that has ruined me, as so many people think, I had been broken long before that. Once I knew this, I could start working on my recovery as a mature woman and now I'm learning to embrace the life in which I used to feel lost. If you lose your way, you visit places where you would never have gone otherwise. So, whatever you choose, follow your own road. Don't mind the stigma's and don't let other people determine your happiness.



Jerry is one of the initiators of Payboys & HIV, a male sex workers infected with HIV rights group. He talks about his life, sex work, HIV, and the importance of the Payboys & HIV group.

I didn't dare to have myself tested

"When I entered prostitution, I was about fourteen or fifteen," Jerry says. "I'd run away from home and I went to JAC (Jongeren Advies Centrum – Young People's Advisory Centre) for help. They couldn't help me there, though, because I was too young. Next, I became a prostitute, because I had no other income." Jerry always worked freelance and he built up a steady clientele. When he turned eighteen, his family stepped in and he went living with his uncle in the Bijlmer for a while. He met other Surinam homosexuals and he got a boyfriend. When he was out of money, he sometimes returned to prostitution for shorter or longer periods. Jerry: "Prostitution has been my most difficult time, but in a sense it was also the most wonderful period. You see, I met this fantastic guy at that time. Unfortunately, we lost contact later on, but I'm still looking out for him."

isolated

Jerry has known he is HIV positive since 1996. "For years, I didn't dare to have myself tested, because many of my friends had died of AIDS. At a certain point, I simply had to, because I had candidal esophagitis. I told my family and close friends first. HIV has changed my life in many different ways. At first, my world got



smaller and I grew isolated – I lost people and activities. I've had to let go of quite a lot of things and now I limit myself to only those things that are good for my physical and mental health. Now, I appreciate everything much more and I try to enjoy each day."

more independent and confident

Jerry loves to be a source of inspiration and information for other people. "I now deal with the interests for homosexuals and HIV positives. It's necessary that HIV and AIDS become subjects of discussion in migrant communities as well as in gay communities. That's why I helped to start Positive Tribe. This is an HIV/AIDS platform for black and migrant homosexuals and transgenders. So far, Jerry's life doesn't get top marks: "I'd maybe give it eight or seven out of ten. Prostitution did make me a good judge of human character, though, and I've grown more independent and confident. At the moment, I'm very focussed on that independence – finding my place, my own home. Before I was diagnosed with HIV, I often heard HIV positives say: 'There's so many things I still need to do.' I don't need to. It's OK if I drop dead tomorrow, because I have lived!"

responsibility

"What I think about continue working when you're HIV positive? It's Payboys & HIV's current rule that you can continue working as long as you take your medication, have been STD negative for six months, and use condoms. But not every payboy knows whether he's HIV positive or not. And you're not obliged to tell your clients. But no matter what, you should never have unsafe sex – which is also the clients' responsibility. But there are always clients who ask for it, and whereas the one sex worker is utterly against it, the other will negotiate about it."

speak plainly

Jerry has joined the sex workers rights group Payboys & HIV: "Because it's necessary to pay attention to the position of payboys who are HIV positive, and because I'm glad there's a place where they speak plainly about these matters and where payboys can get help, information, and advice. At most normal agencies and organizations, staff members act

prudishly about sexuality and prostitution. At De Rode Draad it's discussed openly. We work together with Positive Tribe, so we can refer people to them and the other way around. Migrants don't talk about HIV and sex work. There a lot to do there as well."

meetings

Payboys & HIV consists of a group of male sex workers, who organize activities in order to make sex work and HIV a point of discussion, both in and outside prostitution. Jerry: "We want to give information about sex work and HIV. Our most important platform will be the Internet, because that's the place where most payboys bring in their clients. Moreover, we organize meetings where we get together and support each other. We want to show that it's possible to have a good – working – life, when you're HIV positive."

Payboys & HIV

male sex workers who are HIV positive
oebele@rodedraad.nl
020 6243366

Positive Tribe

black and migrant homosexuals and transgenders who are HIV positive
a personal conversation or appointment:
020 6263087
(Tue 11:00-15:00)
info@positivetribe.nl
www.positivetribe.nl
for the media and other interested parties: 06 15651396

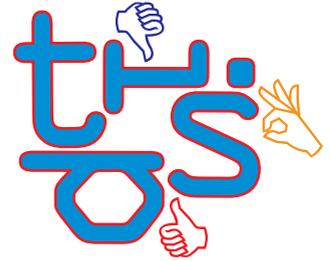
Poz & Proud

HIV positive homosexual men
(section of HIV Vereniging Nederland - HIV Association Netherlands)
info@pozandproud
www.pozandproud.nl
020 6892577
(Mon-Tue-Thu-Fri 14:00-22:00)

Secret Garden

homosexual/bisexual/lesbian/transgender Muslims
www.stichtingsecretgarden.nl

Tips from experienced colleagues



- watch your purse** From today, note all your costs, even the smallest ones, in a booklet that you have always with you.
- beautiful nails** Get your nail polish off as soon as it starts to peel.
- feel angry?** First count to ten. Still feel you need to do something with your anger? Then calmly say why you are angry. Don't make any threats. You may also write it down in your notebook. Tomorrow it may not be important anymore.
- tidy your room** Never leave the packaging of a used condom on the nightstand. Your next client won't like it. Of course, he knows that you've had other clients before him, but he doesn't want to be confronted by it. It causes irritation and it's not good for relations.
- never do** Never stand with your back to a client who you don't know yet. You never know what he will do
- note!** Never leave your keys, driving license, or passport lying about in your workroom.
- dildo** Do not put any large dildos in your room, unless you use them as a speciality and charge extra for them. If not, do not put them on display. Or else your clients may expect you to use them.
- right colour** Do not wear any red lingerie behind the window. In black light it becomes a dull brown. White and light blue colours, on the other hand, look great.
- perfume** Do not wear perfume – your client cannot go home with your smell. Use aftershave if you want to smell nice.
- hygiene** A used soap bar is a source of bacteria. So how can you give an erotic shower or bath massage that is still hygienically safe? Wash your hands with warm water and the used soap bar. Next, rinse your hands with clean water. Repeat this three times.
- sexy** If you walk in front of your (prospective) client, always remember that he will 'evaluate' you. Take care that your clothing, posture and movements increase his excitement. Try to do this with a certain nonchalance.