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I think of myself as a rather positive person. If it rains, well, so be it; I have plenty to do indoors. If it is wet and cold and not summer at all: Let's hope Switzerland is going to be summery when I get there, in July! If there are weeds in my garden: Isn't it nice to see how inventive nature is and how many ways there are to make sure the species survives?

The other day I had a phone call from a friend in Switzerland. She told me about her daughter's birthday. When Patricia celebrated her 32nd birthday the other day, she said to her mum: "Mum, isn't it amazing that I am 32 years old now - and I haven't been run over yet?" Patricia is afflicted with Usher syndrome, which means she was born deaf, and her retina is shrivelling up, which causes tunnel vision and eventually blindness. Patricia would reject the wording 'is afflicted'. She would say: "I'm not afflicted with anything, I simply live with it. And at present I can still see a little bit, and I make the most of it. I'll be blind one day, but that's in the future, and now is the present." Patricia visited me in New Zealand, with her partner Paul, a couple of years ago. Although it was October they went swimming with dolphins. No, she didn't see them, but she said it was a very special sensation feeling them so close to her body. We went for a long walk on the beach, and Patricia was thrilled with the paua shells she found. Paul might have had a hand in the numbers, as he moved the odd shell into her narrow angle of vision, but she found them.

Patricia has looked around and found a home for deaf-blind people she liked, and she will move there once she can't live on her own anymore, but in the meantime she enjoys her little flat, her work - and the fact that she hasn't been run over yet. How is that for positive thinking?

Tnd

Our revolution

*We alone can devalue gold by not caring
if it falls or rises in the marketplace.
Wherever there is gold
there is a chain, you know,
and if your chain is gold
so much the worse for you.*

*Feathers, shells and sea-shaped stones
are all as beautiful.*

*This could be our revolution:
To love what is plentiful
as much as what is scarce.*

Alice Walker

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