

Mobility Scooter available

A light metallic blue Corvus Rapide Mobility Scooter has been donated to the Group and is needing a new home.

This scooter would cost £2899.99 new, with VAT relief.

The picture is for illustration purposes only. It is not the actual scooter available, but it is the same model.

According to Care Co website, the details of the scooter are as follows:

It has to be plugged into an ordinary 3-pin plug to charge the battery.

When new, the dry-seal lead-acid 75Ah battery offers 30 miles of travel on a full charge.

Full suspension

Swivel captain's seat

Incremental speed adjustable LCD display panel

Maximum user weight 25stone 2lbs

The ability to climb gradients up to 10 degrees

Wing mirrors

Leather seat, padded armrests and headrest

Swivel post to aid transfers

Can be operated one-handed

Electro-mechanical brakes

Front LED daytime light

Size: 52" high, 55" long, 27" wide

Folded height 42"

13" wheels Ground clearance of 3.5"

Maximum speed 8mph

Total scooter weight 22 stone 9 pounds

Seat depth 20"

Seat height adjustable 26" to 28"

Seat width 20"

Turning radius 65"

Pneumatic tyres

A video of the Corvus Rapide is available on the Care Co website:

www.careco.uk <<http://www.careco.uk/>>

If you plan to drive it on the road you must register it with the DVLA by completing a V55 form.

Unfortunately we do not have storage space for this scooter, so unless it can be of use to one of you, it will have to be sold. Please contact Ian or Annie if you would like it. We understand it is in very good condition.



Dates for your diary

Please put the following dates in your diary:

Coffee mornings:	August 28	September 29	11am at Greenfields, Theedway
	October 30	November 11	
	December – Christmas Lunch instead. Details to be circulated later		
	January 29	February 26	
	March 26	April 30	

CHRISTINA APPLEGATE on life with multiple sclerosis: 'I won't lie and say any of this is a blessing'

When the Emmy-winning comedy star was diagnosed, her body started giving up on her. She writes about losing control, gaining weight – and refusing to be a 'good girl'

In 2021 I was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. MS attacks your nervous system and slows down your functions – your respiratory system, your organs, everything. The disease eats away at all the things we take for granted. Some of us with MS have a raft of pain; some don't. I have a lot of it. When I wake up, I often can't get my arm to move far enough to grab the cup of water by my bed or my phone from its charger. I have infusions every six months to slow the disease's progress, but those infusions kill all my B cells (a type of white blood cell that makes antibodies), making me prone to infection. My stomach frequently slows to a halt, leaving me to rush to the emergency room in agony. Most days, simply walking across the room feels like scaling a mountain.

One of the worst side-effects of the illness is the exhaustion. It feels as though I've been on a three-day sleepless bender – and that's how I feel after a good night's sleep. Hence all the time I spend on and in bed, snuggled up against my heating pad. On the back of that diagnosis and the symptoms I face, I no longer care what I say or how I come across or how it makes anyone feel. I don't have patience for bullshit any more, for things that are meaningless or merely "extra". And it's not just because I'm no longer working. Sure, there's no one breathing down my neck to represent their business or movie or TV show, things I've had to represent, usually willingly and passionately, for almost 50 years. It goes deeper. I've become an honesty missile. When your physical situation deteriorates, and your life shrinks to the size of a king-sized bed, suddenly all the things you thought were important shift, too. The truth clarifies, like a camera lens slowly focusing.

I used to be invincible. I loved running. I loved Peloton, I played tennis, and I really loved to dance. I want to pick up the guitar over by the wall, but my hands cramp. I used to love saying to Sadie, my amazing daughter, "Yes, of course I'll take you wherever you want to go in the car."



Photograph: John Shearer/Getty Images for ABA

Now, I often can't drive her anywhere. But I like to watch TV – the worse the better, usually reality shows such as *Real Housewives* – because with TV I get to escape. I don't have to think. I don't want narratives, art, investing in some antihero across seven brilliant seasons. I want rich women screaming at each other. I keep the TV on 24 hours a day because without it the quiet is so loud in my head, I can't bear it. Would I have wanted it this way, to have everything stripped away? Did I envision finally arriving at a place of raw honesty about my life, and that would be a good thing? Fuck, no. I want to work and dance and take Sadie everywhere, but being forced into this home-based life has stripped away my last vestiges of reserve. It has afforded me time and space to look back on my life and take stock of it for the first time.

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Alongside the need to confront the truth and enormity of all that I have lived through, a beautiful thing emerged: I have started to make a little sense of it, to understand what happened, see patterns, discover meaning, find the love and acceptance and healing in it, and start to forgive myself, to give my young self, especially, some slack for all the bad decisions and self-destructive behaviours.

In my closet there is a locked box of all my journals from the age of 13 to the time I stopped wanting to write. I had told my best friend and godmother of my child, Rachel, that when I die, she may open the box. I never thought it would be opened before I was gone.

Lucky you – the box is open. I've kept meticulous records, all too aware that those pages were the only place I could share the unfiltered truth. I recently showed my daughter the diary I wrote when I was 13, and she said, "You were fucked up." I mean, my mom was in an abusive relationship when I was little. I gave my first blowjob at 13. I was madly in love with Johnny Depp at 15. I was plagued by disordered eating and self-loathing from my teens on. It's all in there. All the way up to me having cancer. Just because life has sometimes been tough – and maybe at certain points it even felt



*With Anthony Anderson at the Emmys, 2024.
Photograph: Valérie Macon/AFP/Getty Images*

impossible – that doesn't mean we have to wallow in the darkness or be stymied by our histories. I'm here to tell you that, despite how dark it gets, there's a lot to gain from mining one's past for meaning.

Let's go back to the moment I found out about the MS. Just after we'd begun shooting the third season of *Dead to Me*, my doctor asked to talk to me on Zoom. I'd been having some numbness in my peripherals for a while, and I'd taken a raft of tests to try to get to the bottom of it. That day, I'd been asked by the director to stay at work to shoot one more scene, but I'd demurred – something I seldom ever did. I knew this call was going to be important. Maybe I already sensed how important, so rare was it for me to push back when someone wanted me to keep working.

It was a Monday at 7pm. My neurologist's face appeared as we connected. He looked forlorn.

"I'm sorry," he said.

Something clicked off in my head. All emotions short-circuited. I went numb, completely numb.

"I want to show you pictures of your brain."

To this day, his words reverberate in my head and my heart, my soul, stomach, solar plexus – everywhere.

"Here are the lesions," he said. "There are about 30."

By the end of making *Dead to Me*, I had to have three people help me down the stairs of my trailer to get to my wheelchair to even get to set. I was completely stripped of my independence, my autonomy.

I was dead set, though. "No, I'm finishing this." I danced through the pain and when I was done I collapsed. It was 2022, and I've been collapsing ever since.

On our last night of filming, Linda (Cardellini) and I shared an incredibly emotional scene. (Showrunner) Liz Feldman kept stopping us and saying, "Can you guys stop crying so much? It's not helping the scene."

We were sitting in bed together.

Linda says, "I've had the best time, Jen."

I misunderstand her and think she's talking about Mexico, where we are. "Me, too."

But she corrects me. "I mean, I've had the best time . . . with you."

"Me, too."

I don't think either of us was acting then.

On every take, when she spoke, my whole stomach lurched because I knew it was our last

moment together, and we'd been through so much.

I think this was the first time in my life that people saw I was good at what I do. And it was all being taken away.

I don't like not finishing things. That's another reason this illness has been so brutal. When I got sick, I realised quickly that my career was finished, and so prematurely. It's not just that having an illness makes work impossible; it's everything that goes into making movies and TV shows. I can't get up at 5.30am, can't sit in a car for long periods on the way to set, can't bear people touching my face. I just can't do it any more.

The last time I truly felt a part of Hollywood was at the 75th Emmy awards, when I was nominated for best supporting actress in a comedy series for my role in *Dead to Me*. I took Sadie as my date. I don't think I would have made it through without her by my side – mostly because she forced me to stay so she could see all her favourite people on stage.

I was terrified that night. It wasn't my first time in public with my disease, but it was my first time in a room full of my peers. I was so scared, and I was the first presenter of the whole show. My dress was heavy and I grabbed the arm of my pal Anthony Anderson to stabilise me. As I walked out, every single person in that room stood up.

It was something I'd always dreamed of, walking on to a stage and having people stand up and clap for me. But in that moment, I kept thinking: they're standing up because I'm sick. They're standing up because I'm sick and not because they appreciate all the work I've done. That's why I made a joke about how the ease with which they stood up was disabled-shaming. I wanted everyone to know that it was OK, they didn't have to feel sorry for me. Even in a room full of my peers giving me a standing ovation, I couldn't accept their approval. I started to cry. No one had ever stood up for me for my acting before, and here they all were.

But then, they stood up for the next person, and the next person, and the next. Up and down and up and down. Sadie and I couldn't keep it together. We were doubled over laughing. "I thought it was just for me!" I said, as we all stood up yet again. "Guys, come on. I thought I had a moment, you assholes!" Eventually, after the millionth standing ovation, we just sat in our seats, too tired to get up again, losing our shit giggling at the ridiculousness of it all.

I didn't end up winning the Emmy that night, but it was still a special evening. Regardless of my self-deprecating nature, I know deep down that it was all love and appreciation. In a room filled with some of the best, most talented people I've come across in my five decades-long career, I felt their warmth in my heart, even if I have to fight my inner critic to fully embrace it. It's a moment I will for ever be grateful for from my peers. One that plays over and over again in my mind.

For so much of my life, I've felt like the good underlies the bad, but something strange has happened to me, something I'm not used to. I won't lie any more, be the good girl, and say that any of this is a blessing, but there's some shred of self-understanding that continues to slowly emerge as I tell the story of these past 50 or so years. I want to talk to that little girl who always thought she had to be perfect.

All this has left me unable to be polite any more – it's boring and it takes too much energy. Being kind and loving and nurturing is beautiful, but to be polite is almost to lie. To be respectful is important, but there's something about that sweet politeness demanded of women that stinks of faking our true feelings.

I have done the Superwoman thing once before, after my double mastectomy. I thought I should tell everyone it was a blessing, when in reality, my body looked like Lorraine Massey, the once beautiful, then grotesque, ghost in room 237 at the Overlook hotel in *The Shining*. I was determined to never do that again. I was going to be honest this time. I hoped I'd never have to face the choice, but here we are. (Actually, I'm sadder about the mastectomies now when I look down at my body than I was immediately afterward.) With the cancer, it was taken out of my body, and I was able to move on. But MS is my constant companion. In fact, I will probably go away because of it. It scares me to death. I don't want to dance with this pain any more, and I don't want to be in the predicament I'm in. Everything about it sucks.

Sometimes when a person is in agony, it's best to leave them be. My best girlfriend recently went through a horrible tragedy in her life, and at a fundraising party, she turned to me and said, "If one more person looks at me and asks, 'How are you?' – ugh!" I knew how she felt. On *Dead to Me*, we kept the diagnosis to a small group at first, but eventually everyone knew something was wrong because I was showing

up to set in a wheelchair. Finally, I brought the crew together.

"I need you guys to understand that what you've been seeing is actually multiple sclerosis," I said. "And I need you to do me a favour. Please don't ask me how I am in the morning. You can say, 'Hey, bitch!'" A few chuckles rang through the crowd, and I flipped them off as a thank you. "Anything but, 'How are you?' Don't ask me. Because the answer's going to be the same every day: not good. That's how I am."

Across the months, I've become much better at answering the "How are you?" question. It's much easier to answer when you don't worry about what the other person wants to hear. The true answer is, I'm pissed off. Everything is an effort. Humour disarms the look of concern and pain my friends can't hide when they see me. I don't mind the jokes. Comedy has always been my armour; how else am I going to stop the tears? I don't want to sit here and cry all the time. I have too much to do with what I have left. I am a mother, after all.

Years ago, I was trying on some pants at Fred Segal, and they were size two, which is very small. I remember this because usually I was a size zero, and the costume people on *Married . . . With Children* would often have to take my clothes in. I was bone, bone, bone. When I looked in a mirror, I saw something no one else saw. I worked so hard on my body, but I was never satisfied. Then I shot *Just Visiting* in London in 2000.

When I got back from London, I got a lot of help for my dysmorphia, even though it would linger. One night, my friends were at my house and we ordered from Pace, the famous Italian restaurant in the Canyon. They serve a delicious salad called the *insalata vegetale*. Filled with zucchini, squash, green beans, tomato, garbanzo beans and olives, it also boasts tons of provolone and fresh mozzarella, as well as being dressed in a red wine vinaigrette. The cheese and the oils were not going in my body, no way, so I asked for no cheese and no dressing. One of my friends, overhearing my order, said, "No cheese? But that's the fun part!" Something changed that night. I got it with cheese, and since then I've never gotten it without. I eat the whole damn delicious thing. My relationship with food is so much better than it ever was, but it took a long time to improve. When the MS hit, the stability I'd fought so hard for went haywire. I had to take 15 hours of

steroid infusions, and immediately everything just went like a fucking blob. It's all documented on the last season of *Dead to Me* and at my Hollywood Walk of Fame star ceremony. By November 2022, when I was to receive my star, I didn't even look like "Christina Applegate" any more. All the medications and ravages of the disease had loaned me entirely the wrong kind of facelift.

The day I got my star was about the first time anyone had seen me since my diagnosis, and I felt humiliated. I thought I'd even have to go off the rack for the ceremony – and no one goes off the rack in this town – until Christian Siriano came to my rescue and made me something beautiful to wear.

The star they gave me is barely a stone's throw from Grauman's Chinese Theatre, right outside the Marshalls on Hollywood and North Orange. That location meant so much to me, to be so central and in the thick of it. I hated how I looked that day, how much this illness had taken from me, but this was my Oscar, after all. It was time to step out in public.

For a year or more, people saw only this weird version of me created by those steroid infusions. For all the joy of finally getting my star, it was still humiliating and horrible and devastating to be seen this way. Not just because I was bigger – that was one thing – but because the girl who had control all her life no longer had that control.

I want to throw up when I think of the pictures that are out there of me. I look sad and embarrassed. Because all I can think is: everyone is staring. Once people stared at my boobs. But now I knew they were staring not only because I was disabled; they were staring because I was fat, for ever an unacceptable fate for women in Hollywood. "Oh wow," I could imagine everyone saying. "Christina Applegate, of all people, is fat. Not to mention she's got a cane. Not to mention she's got a disease." When I walked out on stage to do Jimmy Kimmel's show three years after my diagnosis, I was touched when he said, "For people, it's a little bit shocking. You come out with a cane and people love you and are concerned about you." As I told him, this was my now, my normal.

Sometimes the weight bothered me more than the disease. I didn't look in the mirror for a year. Then I was put on a clear-liquid diet because of my stomach issues, and all of a sudden, everything just dropped off of me. Within seven

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months, all of it was gone, and I was down by 50 pounds or more. These days, my legs are tinier than they've ever been.

The illness has given me serious stomach issues. As I write this, there are tamales downstairs that are the best tamales you could ever have – I want to eat five of them right now, I'm so hungry – but I know if I do, I'll probably end up in the ER again, as I have so many times recently. So once again, the good is followed by the bad: I've managed to create a much healthier place when it comes to my relationship with food, only to get out of the shower and see legs that are scary-looking. I have no muscles – just sticks. It's dangerous to be walking around with zero muscles on my body: it means my bones aren't protected if I fall, and it scares me. But there's still that little voice in my head saying, "You're really skinny. You have the legs you always wanted. Good for you." This is the sickness. But she's not going to win.

For the longest time, Sadie didn't want to talk about my illness. Even these days, if it comes

up, she says, "It's fine." It's not fine. It has devastated her life. When she was younger, we had a little pre-bed routine: she'd eat, then we'd dance, then it was bath time, and then I'd read to her. We danced every single night. We called it Dance Party. We'd dance to I Know What Boys Like by the Waitresses or Back in the USSR by that guy I kissed that one time.

I've had fun in life, but I'm not sure it was ever happiness, not ever a zephyr that lasted. You can have fun and then everyone leaves, and you're left with yourself and your thoughts and your feelings of loneliness and failure in the world and that overriding fear: "Does anyone really love me? Or will I ever love someone? Will I ever love myself? And why doesn't anyone really know me?" All those questions you have when it's quiet. That's why I always have the TV on: to drown out the noise inside my head. And that's why I'm writing to you now, to tell you who I am, so that at least someone knows before it's too late.

■ This is an edited extract from *You With the Sad Eyes: A Memoir* by Christina Applegate, published by Headline on 3 March at £22.



With her star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, 2022.
Photograph: Emma McIntyre/Getty Images for Netflix

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