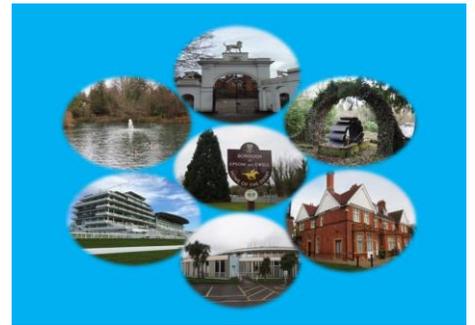

Members Words October 2020



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Maisie's Memory



Maisie looked down, um' she thought, I think I know you but I'm not quite sure. The face definitely looks familiar. She searched her thoughts for where she had seen this beautiful face before. Somewhere in the long distant past, she was sure there was something she desperately needed to remember. It was always the same these days, well maybe not always, some days were actually quite good. The streets looked the same as they did when she lived round here, but lots of things had changed. Old Jack wasn't sitting in his doorway smoking his pipe any more. Nelly opposite wasn't shouting across to her, 'Morning Maisie', always chirpy and bustling about, apron strings barely done up and a couple of rollers in the front of her hair,' keeps it out me eyes' she always said. She knew she didn't belong here anymore but she couldn't quite remember where she did belong. She remembered her daughter, well she was almost certain she did, she remembered her saying something about the houses weren't safe anymore and they were all going to move to somewhere really nice. She sort of

My reflections on Lockdown

As this virus continued
And began to take hold
To help stop the spread
We did as we were told

Pubs, shops and travelling
Group meetings and schools
Majority and more closed
As we followed the rules

Social media took over
As we all did our bit
Quizzes, Chats and Singing
Or trying to keep fit

We clapped for all carers
And of course NHS
On Thursdays to thank them
Should they have deserved any less!

As the results of this Lockdown
Have now helped lower the spread
Some restrictions have been lifted
We have more freedom instead

It will probably be a long time
Before this virus goes away
All we can do in the meantime
It take things day by day

When this virus is finally over
Our world will likely change
Things will be very different
And for a long time very strange!



Stay Safe everyone!

Jan Stevens

remembered that old Jack had come as well, but she couldn't quite recall what had happened to Nelly. She was pretty certain she'd seen her around since the move, but some days more certain than others. And then there was this cat. He seemed to know her; he walked up and curled himself around her legs in greeting. She bent down to stroke him and the feeling of his warm fur was so comforting. She smiled. She was pretty sure she knew him. She leaned against the wall and he hopped up next to her, as if he was saying you don't need to bend down, I'm coming up to keep you company. Maisie and her new friend sat there for quite a while, he just sitting, enjoying the attention, Maisie taking comfort from the slow gentle purring as she stroked, across his head and down his back. Beautiful creature, obviously well looked after, certainly not a street cat. He looked well fed and his coat was beautiful. Maisie loved a ginger cat, mind you she seemed to remember for some reason that this cat had a couple of friends, one was a really lovely silvery grey, with a swishing tail and the most gorgeous green eyes. And somewhere along the line there was a black one as well. She was sure she had seen the three of them together.

Why did the sight of three cats having their dinner suddenly come into her mind. Their bowls were lined up at the edge of a beautiful conservatory type building all laid up for dinner with lots of people she half knew all sitting having dinner and chatting and laughing. And music playing softly, she couldn't quite remember the tune but she was pretty certain it was from one of those blockbuster movies she'd seen too many years ago now. But the music was nice and soothing.

The cat stopped purring and jumped down from the wall; he turned and looked at Maisie. She wasn't sure why, but she was certain she should go with him. It was as if he knew where she should be. Maisie pushed herself up from the wall; she must have been sitting there for a good fifteen minutes, lost in her own thoughts.

The cat started to walk very slowly up the street, stopping every few paces to make sure that Maisie was following. He walked slowly, as if he was aware that Maisie couldn't walk as fast as she could a few years ago. And very slowly the beautiful ginger cat and the frail old lady started to make their way up the street.

Strange the way things make you feel, Maisie sort of knew that she didn't quite remember why she was where she was, or even for that matter how she'd got there, but equally she wasn't really bothered by that.

She remembered, well maybe, that she didn't really like being on her own, but somehow at the moment she didn't feel like she was on her own. She had Bobby for company, she wasn't sure why but she knew that was the ginger cat's name. He kept wandering along the path and then stopped at the corner and waited for her to catch up, it was as if he was making sure that she knew exactly where he was going, and also Bobby was thinking to himself it was a lot easier if she was always in clear sight.

Maisie wandered along looking at all the old houses, the neighbourhood was very familiar, at least it seemed like it was. But not quite how she remembered it. She remembered children out playing, her children out playing. Nelly's children, and there were quite a few of them, out playing with her two. Such a happy place, it looked sad and lonely now, and she missed the company, but at least Bobby was still there.

Slowly Maisie and Bobby made their way along the streets, turning left, waiting patiently to cross a road, walking down another familiar street and then turning right. Bobby obviously knew exactly where to go.

A couple of people acknowledged Maisie as if they knew her, she smiled, mainly because it was polite to do so, and she'd been brought up to always be polite. Their faces were somewhere in her memory, some more clearly than others. One very polite gentleman looked very familiar and she remembered him helping her, he loaded her shopping into her bag for her and made sure that nothing was squashed and that the bananas were on the top, always important not to bruise the bananas. She smiled as she remembered; he was always cheerful and polite, so polite. Morning Mrs Briggs, how are you today, never Maisie, always Mrs. Briggs. Politeness from a bygone age. Bobby seemed to know him too; he stopped and waited to be stroked as if it happened every day. Bobby taking you home then Mrs. Briggs, he said, Maisie smiled, she knew he was probably right. It certainly did feel as if Bobby knew exactly where she belonged.

As they turned the next corner they saw a really big house, it had a beautiful garden at the front and lots of pretty baskets of flowers. The front door was wide open and it looked pretty and welcoming inside.

Bobby wandered up to the front door and waited for her to follow. Maisie had stopped to admire the baskets of flowers, the colours were beautiful and there was a wisteria climbing up the wall, the scent was beautiful and comforting, and very familiar.

Bobby walked back to her, sensing that she was not quite sure what to do. Bobby curled round Maisie's legs as if to remind her that they needed to go in. Maisie looked down; alright she said softly, I'm just coming.

Slowly they wandered up to the front door, in the doorway a very familiar face appeared, hello Maisie said Nelly, 'you been out for your morning walk, I sent Bobby out to find you, I knew he'd know where to look. Come through to the dining room, you're just in time for coffee and I've got a lovely lemon drizzle cake, if I'm not mistaken that's one of your favourites'.

Sue Skelton

"I still have fond
remembrance

The first day that we met

So few of us in number

But our future goals were
set

Now 7 years later

We've had to miss our
scones

With all of us in Lockdown

We've had to sing alone

So keep your chins up
everyone

One day we will be back

Sharing our songs and
friendship

You can be sure of that"

By Dilys Anscomb

June 2020