



AMONG THE STARS

by Neville Judson

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# AMONG THE STARS

A Monologue  
by  
Neville Judson

Running time about 6 minutes

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## MIDDLE TO OLD AGE MALE

Sometimes I remember quiet winter evenings with the cat curled up in the hearth so close to the fire you could smell its fur singeing. The boys tucked up safe in bed. Angela busy with her ironing.

... Was that the smell? Hot linen being pressed? Perhaps it was.

... Saturday afternoons at the match. Meeting up with Angela afterwards and taking the boys for tea and toasted tea cakes at Lyons. Watching them bright-eyed, laughing about something that wasn't anything but still got me and Angela laughing with them. Children.

Summer picnics in the arboretum with all the family. The leaves dark against a changing summer sky. Like in a Constable picture. Warm sun on our backs. A couple of squirrels chasing about. The band playing. Angela's mum handing out sardine sandwiches as if they were what royalty ate.

Funny how everybody jokes about mothers-in-law. I said to Angela, more than once, "you've got a mother in a million." A second mother to me, she was. Where would I have been without her? But she did fuss over me. Why do people do that? No room to breath.

We used to visit the George in Hubberholme when we came to the Dales for a week in the late Spring – me and Angela and the boys. We'd walk back to Buckden at dusk. Wafts of air against our faces, warm one minute, cool the next, carrying the scents of may blossom and elder flowers. Maybe the distant hoot of an owl.

I always come back this time of the year. I walk to the pub and then carry on up the lane into the dale. I imagine it's what they call nostalgia but isn't there supposed to be some sort of feeling in nostalgia? A hint of sadness? Sentimentality? How things might have been? There is none of that. I just like being here. It's the best time of the year.

I was happy enough in my past but I don't miss any of it. People like to think they remember but they don't. Memories are just bits of history that play themselves out if you let your mind drift. The bits that really matter – they're the bits people forget - the good bits and the bad bits. Dreams are what you're left with. The past you choose to have.