

I Am More than My Dementia

by John Buxton

I am more than my dementia
more than this reflection
gazing back at me in the mirror
I rub my stubbly chin, brush back my fringe
looking deep into my eyes, like marbles, sapphire blue
in this moment I am inquisitive, curious, scrutinising
lines, wrinkles, freckles, a birthmark
how bushy my eye brows are
a scar on the bridge of my nose
each line tells a story, a mystery, a tale
a rich tapestry of a life lived hard and fast
I am more than the lonely face at the window
more than the man I once was.

How I have loved and been loved
known great loss and despair
indelibly linked like a thread to the past
a sea of precious words
float around in my consciousness
many I still want to express, to share, to reveal
adventures, achievements, challenges and failures
never to give up my fight to be present
if only in words of wisdom
like a well-worn classic hardback
how I wish to tell you my life matters
I am more than my dementia
so much more than this reflection in the mirror.

Did I tell you I play the trumpet?
stowed away in the attic
a dusty wooden box hidden in the shadows
did I tell you I have walked and danced many pathways
that I appreciate the arts, adore poetry
and live theatre stirs me to great depths
I love the art of conversation, a social butterfly
still can be when invited, when included
living can be unforgiving and relentless in isolation
hear my voice, tales of a man proud
I can still delight and inspire
hear me play the trumpet
I am so much more than my dementia.

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