

**Bourne**  
**toWrite...**  
creative writing  
workshops

## Listen

by Tina Blower

‘Listen, I’m not crazy. I want you to save something for me.’ Said Bob as he held out a dongle. He had a habit of losing things and did not want to lose this. Rita looked at the dongle. ‘What do I do with that?’ she enquired. Although Bob’s mother was 92, she had her own laptop and smartphone which she could use and generally keep up to date. ‘You plug it into your laptop, Mum, and it’s got a file on it that I want you to save’. ‘Why don’t you save it on your own whatsit?’ said Rita who couldn’t always remember the names of the various hard and software she’d acquired. ‘The family has access to all of my files and I don’t want them to see this’. Rita remembered when Bob was young and she found the magazines under his bed whilst she was Hoovering. ‘I’m not keeping any of that mucky stuff on my whatsit!’ she said. ‘No! It’s not mucky stuff. It’s my band. I recorded our first album!’. Said Bob flushing slightly. ‘Band? Does Joan know you’re in a band? You’re not a teenager anymore Bob, you’re 63. What are you doing wasting your time in a band?’ said Rita. ‘That is exactly what I expected Joan to say’ said Bob.

He had spent his whole life working in a bank. He had bought the house they were living in, put the kids through university and a couple of years ago had seen an old friend in the pub. His friend had been playing guitar and had returned from a small tour. Their lifestyles had not been conducive to meeting up even though Steven still lived in the same town they grew up in. It had been so good to see him and when they got chatting, Bob realised that he became envious of Steven.

There had always been a kind of void in his life even though, to his friends, he seemed to have been getting along very well. Nice family, two holidays a year. Out of what seemed like nowhere, he asked Steve if he could give him a few lessons.

Every Tuesday evening, he sneaked out of the house and sat with Steve while they talked about music and showed him some notes on the spare bass that he had lying around. Soon, he put the bass in the back of his car and every morning, just before work, he sat in the bank car park and plucked away. It wasn't long before he could accompany Steve who played guitar and not long afterwards, they found a local drummer. He had never attempted to write songs before, but between the three of them they got a few decent ones together.

Bob noticed the difference not only at work but also at home with his wife. He had a feeling in his soul that he could only remember in brief moments like the birth of his daughters. It was Steve's idea to record the music but once Bob heard it, he wanted to share his new found joy, but was going to wait until Joan's birthday.

The morning of Joan's birthday came around and he plugged in dangle which he had looked after like an egg. 'This is part of my gift' said Bob. Joan listened. 'Who's this?' she said after the first few minutes. 'It's my band!' said Bob handing over his gift of joy. 'You're 63, Bob, what are you doing wasting your time in a band?' said Joan and opened one of her cards from her daughter. He put his arm around Joan and wished her a happy birthday. He was playing his first gig tomorrow and his soul glowed.