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## Foreseeing the Future

by Adam Phillips

She was nervous about the future now her Granny had passed away in that white new hospice. It was only reachable by car or a 'put on bus' that carried many people with the same face passed the old oak tree and the recycling bins.

Sitting next to an elderly woman in pink, Ann exchanged 'how are you?' and 'where you from?' and then the woman started discussing her parents' attitude to schooling, her pet-less childhood, and a sister that didn't have the family look who died 30 years ago.

The woman described it like it happened last year as she clutched her handbag and then stared at Ann for an agreeable response, as if it were a cure to heal some sort of ranting illness.

Ann started to humour the woman less, feeling that some sort of negative Karma would be lifted if she kept holding her company in a well-respected manner.

Why did she feel the need for atonement of her sins? Her abortion in 99 was mutual and early enough and her friends reassured her that the hospice was better than home.

"So what do you do when you're not being the model relative?" the old woman asked, waving her veiny left hand.

"Well, I was my Grandmother's full time carer until the accident."

The silence lasted between the first bin and the scattering of leaves that indicated the start of the Aldi car park.

The old woman fell asleep and another silence ensued.

Ann began to contemplate her life with her Granny and the strength of character she must have had to bring her up as her own since her career driven parents divorced.

Like Orlando or even Mr. Benn, Granny played with the idea that Ann could be anyone or anything. She was part of that very old generation who hadn't yet shaped their minds into a two-ply fudge of racism or homophobia.

"You can be a knight on a beautiful black cavalry horse leading thousands of men out of battle in gold and silver plated armour. How about Joan of arc or Boudicca. You could be the next Marie Curie, Neil Armstrong, a Nobel Peace Prize winner or I can even see you as a female Elvis impersonator."

The tears would roll down their faces as Granny would routinely offer these suggestions while peeling potatoes on a Friday night.

Now she was a little apprehensive about the future.

'If there's anything we can do'. 'So sorry to hear about your Granny' The Facebook messages were endless and typically shallow yet striving for meaning and basically kind.

'I'm okay.' 'Actually, you know this, I'm feeling fine.' Ann responded recalling the funny moments at the hospice when her Granny's wheelchair got stuck in a jutting out piece of rock near the fishpond, and how the carers secretly laughed when the wheels were wrangled free.

It is not compulsory to taint all memories with sentimentality or remorse, or even a guilt-edged film score. You're allowed to pick and choose, if any at all.