

Bourne
toWrite...
creative writing
workshops

Vital Part Missing

a timed exercise

by Sho Botham

All her life Julie felt that a vital part of her was missing. She couldn't fathom why she felt this but it was a feeling like no other she had. None of her friends had felt this and no one in the family could understand her feeling that a vital part of her was missing. Julie tried to give up feeling like this but it was always hovering in the corner of her mind.

When Julie looked at herself she compared her image with her friends and family but nothing appeared to be missing. Broad shoulders were a trait amongst everyone locally and Julie's shoulders were strong and broad. The saying went something like, 'broad shoulders are better to see with'. She had a slim waist, narrow hips and long lean legs. Her feet were neither big nor small. They were just about right for her size. Her hands were delicate in comparison to the breadth of her shoulders but she knew many locals with a similar build.

Sitting with friends at a sky bar one day, Julie overheard something about the arrival of aliens from outer space.

"Come on," she said to her friends, "let's find out where they're arriving."

The group of friends joined the rest of the locals and some from further afield, all curious to see what aliens looked like.

They didn't have long to wait before the walls slide back revealing a group standing still staring out at this other form of life.

Julie gasped. She knew immediately what was missing. She recognised it right away. She should be taller. She should have one of those big round things balanced on her shoulders like the aliens have. She noticed that they had eyes in the big round thing on top of their shoulders. Her eyes were at the outermost points of her shoulders to give her a good breadth of vision when travelling between sky towns.

No one that she knew had one of these big round things above their shoulders so she couldn't have known that's what was missing. But she knew now. She looked at her friends talking together about the weird newcomers and the even stranger ball thing at the top of their bodies to carry their eyes in. Julie walked away from them towards the aliens.

'They're not aliens,' she thought to herself as she headed towards them. 'They're my people. I should be like them. That's why all those years I felt something was missing. I too need a big ball thing to carry my eyes and then I can cover up my shoulders. Then I will be complete with what the aliens call, a head.'

