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Full of Promise

by Miriam Silver

“Being in love, you know isn’t like having a canary in a cage. When you lose one sweetheart you just can’t just go out and get another to replace her,” Fred said ruefully as he and his friend Arthur were wandering aimlessly, passing time before they were due at lunch.

“That’s very thoughtful of you mate, where did you read that?” Arthur asked, “you’re right of course, though I’ve never kept a bird in a cage!”

“Don’t be daft, I wasn’t thinking about cages, read it in my mag. written for us, keeps going round my head, just that I still miss her, the ole’ lady, Kitty, think about our good times, holidays an’ that,” Fred sighed as he sat on the bench.

“Come on Fred don’t be like that, there’s a lot of going and doing yet, you know me ‘never give up’, you’ll feel better after you get some food in you.”

“That’s the point, we haven’t much time left, anyway don’t fancy that shepherds pie”, he grumbled as his friend steered him towards the dining room.

These two gents met in the care home where they are both inmates now, reluctantly having given up their homes when things became too much after their wives died. Common experiences, that’s what brought them together. They agreed their wives had spoiled them, so here they were. Food not exactly like home cooking, activities definitely boringly sedentary, all of which they avoided where possible.

“Don’t fancy lunch,” Fred said suddenly, ignoring the lady on reception.

The self appointed 'miss bossy boots' heard that, "now now, no missing meals," she warned.

"Ignore her," Fred mumbled as he guided Arthur towards the door and almost broke into a run, he couldn't get away fast enough.

"I've been thinking, tell you about it over there, the pub, treat you to a sandwich and a half bitter, come on."

Arthur listened while his friend outlined his plan.

"Of course, I know I'll never be able to replace my Kitty, not that I want to of course, but we, you and me can still have some adventures while we're still up and well, nearly running," managing a smile as he said this.

By this time Arthur was 'all ears' as he explained, "Feel up for anything that'll stop me thinking of my young days, proper tear away I was, before I met my Lily of course, she knew all about me, tell you some day, let's hear it then."

"Remember those Bikers, saw them on the seafront the other day?"

"Yes, said they'd be there today."

"I just thought we'd better stop hankering after what's been, been and gone?"

"Absolutely, glad you're thinking like that, nothing will bring our two ladies back."

"You're right, can't replace them anyway, but we can still have some good times."

"Mustn't miss opportunities, let's go."

"Those fellas sounded as if they really meant it, even had spare helmets," and they pushed on purposely in the direction of the seafront, their minds on being one of the 'hell for leather' society.

"You did mean it didn't you?" Fred managed to ask, the black-leathered group who were tending their shiny bikes.

“We came back like you said,” Arthur added while joining the boys and girls all peering appreciatively at the assembled Harleys and Yamaha machines, their reflections clearly visible in the over polished bikes.

“We’re just going for a run, up the Downs, wanna come?”

With no further ado two Bikers offered them helmets.

“Let’s go, hop on,” each pointing proudly to their sparkling machines.

Fred and Arthur’s future was full of promise.