

the ONE that got Older

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I'm getting older...

I don't mean in the way that we are *all* ageing every single day

but in that I *feel* I'm past my prime

[I know this because my children constantly tell me I'm a dinosaur!]

I look around at my friends

and see that the ageing process has given them special attention

I glance at my parent [the one that's still alive]

who in one sense has *always* seemed old to me

but now they're like a

real

genuine

frail

pensioner

I mean

they've joined the crowd of the elderly

I watch favourite movies or TV shows from years ago

and look up on the internet about this or that actor

only to see a photo of them as they are today

and WOW

fuck me

they've aged!

Skin all wrinkled [and that's even *with* the cosmetics]

and in noticing how ancient these other people are

it makes me *so* much more self-aware

scared even

because the inevitable fact is

that just like them...

I'm getting older

I'm getting older...

and the gap between what I *want* to do in my mind

and what I can *actually* do in my body

is getting wider

so much wider!

I still think like I did years ago

[although I like to imagine it's mixed with a little more wisdom!]

but my energy levels

are *so much less*

The effort needed to move from decision to action

is *so much more*

It's like I'm a young person trapped in a fossilized body

My spirit is willing but my body oh so weak

Not totally weak

just weaker when compared to the last decade

or the one before

I'm so much more mindful of

my own humanity

my own limitations

my own fragility

and the fact that this body I'm in

is slowly decaying

and whether I like it or not...

I'm getting older

I'm getting older...

and more people that I know are dying

moving from this life to the next [whatever that may be]

I've stood by many a graveside at memorial services

and it's got me thinking
When I'm gone
what will others say or write about me?
What will I leave behind?
Now I know in one sense I leave everything behind
I came into this world with nothing and I'll leave it with nothing
but how will I be remembered?
Do I like what my legacy will be?
or should I change before it's too late
to leave behind
a taste that's sweet and not bitter
memories that are positive and not negative
I don't mean change the world [after all I'm a realist]
but maybe change the world for those individuals around me
family
friends
community
For what is the world if not individuals?
I never thought like this when I was younger
for then it was mainly about *me*
but now more recently
these legacy thoughts have grown
I think because I'm so much more conscious that...
I'm getting older

I'm getting older...
and though I don't want to think about what's next
privately and secretly [with never a word to others]
the thought is there
because all my beliefs
practised and preached to others with such conviction

that there is *absolutely* for sure
never has been or is
a god
of any kind
well
I'm still 99.99% sure
but not 100
There's that small fraction of a percentage
just a microscopic part
that questions my lifetime of beliefs
because *living* with them is one thing
but *dying* with them is quite another
and though atheism has been my *life*
I'm starting to doubt whether I want it to be my *death*
I mean [don't tell anyone this]
what if I'm wrong?
What if there *is* some kind of god out there somewhere?
What if all my carefully constructed arguments against him
make no difference in my death
because I find out then that
he
she
it
is real?
What then?
What becomes of me then?
I honestly never thought my strong beliefs would waver
Ever
BUT they are
at least just within myself [never to others]
and it's all because

I'm facing my mortality
or to put it another way...
I'm getting older

I'm getting older...
and there's a part of me
sometimes smaller
at other times bigger
that feels that life
my life
is basically over
The best has gone
and the future is nothing more than a slow decline
[gracefully or otherwise]
to the eventual grave
that my best ideas
most significant actions
are now in the past
The glory days have gone
all the best fruit from the tree that is my life
harvested and finished
and it feels depressing
I'm so obviously over the hill
that I wonder if there's any point to anything any more
but then slowly I open my eyes [or have them opened for me]
to those around me
famous and ordinary
to those from history
and those in the present
from all cultures
male and female

and I understand deep in my spirit
that often the most significant thing
a person did or does in their life
is when...
wait for it...
when they are older
It's like all the younger years
the decades that have gone before
were just a rehearsal for the main performance
and all that experience
often from the mess of life
combines with wisdom
maturity
hindsight
to create a magical mix
that flows into significant words and actions
one-off and ongoing
that become something *far* more than all that has gone before
and it gives me hope
real hope
that this is *not* the end
that I'm *not yet* past my sell-by date
nor destined only for the rubbish heap of humanity
but that in my senior years
I can somehow become
a jewel
crafted uniquely for such a time as this
that I still have so much to give to others
and in my spirit
that was almost dead and buried within me
something stirs

and a new lease of life wells up from within
and now
rather than dreading the inevitable ageing
there's a growing excitement
that I want to SHOUT FROM THE ROOFTOPS
which feels *so* liberating
like I've discovered the secret of life itself
and here it is
The positive
life-giving truth
which I'm *no longer* afraid to say...

I'm getting older
BRING IT ON!