



The fresh air ignited his mind and the environment inspired him.

Mr Wilson was an adventurer. He could often be found exploring local woodlands and hill tops, on foot or by bike; a get up and go kind of guy. Despite Mr Wilson's diagnosis of dementia, his inner explorer always prevailed. Sometimes it got him in trouble with his wife, he'd often go for too long or go too far. Mr Wilson was a gentleman who was always dressed for the weather, like he was prepared for whatever the Scottish elements had to throw at him. He was very in tune with the natural world around him; being outside was how he got his energy; the fresh air ignited his mind and the environment inspired him. His wife would always notice her husband was brighter, more animated, more engaging after a day of being out on an adventure. Being outside was a social experience for Mr Wilson too, he would often talk with people when he was out and about, exchanging stories and tales about the local area. This was a topic that Mr Wilson was comfortable with, he had knowledge to share and it made him feel good. I suppose when someone has dementia, nature is a safe place, it doesn't judge or expect you to follow etiquette; it just lets you be.

There has been a change in Mr Wilson since the start of this pandemic and all the changes to everyday life that have occurred on its account. Mr Wilson's world has shrunk. That once inquisitive man no longer wonders what marvels lie beyond his garden gate. Mr Wilson has been at home since the start of lockdown and has rarely stepped out of his house, even if he does, it is only briefly, and to the garden. Mr Wilson has resigned himself

to a room of his house that has become his safe place. He no longer has an interest in the world beyond his everyday cocoon. In his mind, that once cleansing air outside is contaminated and the people he might meet are to be avoided at all costs. Mrs Wilson has gone from struggling to keep her husband in, to being unable to convince him to leave the house. He is no bother to his wife; he eats and drinks, responds appropriately when addressed and follows household routines as best he can. The significant change is that Mr Wilson is flat, lifeless; he's lost his imagination. Mrs Wilson often finds him in a vacant trance like state, appearing withdrawn and disinterested. His conversation has become menial and he doesn't ask questions anymore; like what breed of bird is that on the feeder? Or I wonder how fast I could walk the circuit in the woods near the house? Would you describe this man as someone in distress? Does he feel apathy or social pain? Whatever the reason, he is a man feeling disconnected from the world that once invigorated him, becoming increasingly afraid of re-entering it.

It's as though his already fragile mind has gone into power saving mode. Taking what it needs from its surrounds to survive and no more.