

SPECIAL

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Created by WCA media team

Health and wellbeing

The Garden of Two Souls

In a town where the wind whispered old grudges and names,
Lived Art and Tom, men set in their ways.
Neighbours for years, with frost in their veins,
Their hearts held cold from unspoken disdain.

But time, like a river, can erode even stone,
And one winter's day, a letter was shown.
From Sam, an old friend, with hands that still cared,
Inviting the two to a project he'd dared.

A garden, he wrote, with earth to be turned,
With seeds to be sown, and lessons to learn.
Reluctant at first, both answered the call,
To the allotment they came, where green shoots would sprawl.

At first, they toiled with silence as shield,
Each man in his corner, his own rows to field.
But the soil has a way of softening the heart,
And soon their cold silence began to depart.

Health and wellbeing

Side by side, with spades in their hands,
They tended the earth, they nurtured the land.
Tom with his questions, Art with his plans,
Together they worked, like brothers, like friends.

The garden, it bloomed, with colors so bright,
As did their friendship, under the sunlight.
They laughed in the rain, they spoke through the night,
Two souls once apart, now entwined in delight.

The harvest was bountiful, the town gathered near,
To celebrate the fruits of their labor, sincere.
But more than the food, it was the bond that they shared,
That fed the community, that showed they still cared.

Years turned like seasons, and time had its way,
But the garden they tended still stands to this day.
A plaque tells the story of the men who found grace,
In the soil, in each other, in that small sacred space.

Now their names are remembered, their legacy sown,
In the garden where friendship and meaning had grown.
Art and Tom, two men once apart,
Found peace in the earth, and warmth in the heart.

By NJW -November 2024

Creative Writing

Title: The Lost Soul of Aldgate

Jai landed in London with the hope and fire of a young man who believed he could conquer the world. Raised in a small village in India, his parents had scrimped and saved to send him to study abroad, convinced it was the gateway to a brighter future. Aldgate, nestled between the financial hub of the City of London and the raw multiculturalism of East London, felt like a crossroads between two worlds. But it was the lure of the City—the gleaming skyscrapers, the frenetic energy of bankers and brokers—that called to Jai most strongly.

His first job, secured through an unpaid internship and sheer persistence, was at an elite consulting firm located just off Fenchurch Street. From the moment he stepped inside the office building, Jai felt as though he had arrived. The marble floors, the panoramic view of London’s skyline, and the impeccably dressed colleagues—he had left behind the dust and traditions of his village for this. He was surrounded by the so-called “masters of the universe,” young professionals who

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seemed to live for their careers, their networking dinners, and their relentless pursuit of status. Jai wanted to be one of them.

At first, he balanced both worlds. He called home frequently, visited the local temple, and attended cultural events in the Indian community. His mother reminded him of his roots on every call, warning him not to lose himself in the West. He had promised her he wouldn't, but the more time he spent in the City, the more distant those old ties felt.

As his career progressed, Jai's focus shifted entirely. He started working longer hours, priding himself on outworking everyone around him. His weekends were filled with networking events at rooftop bars, hobnobbing with people who seemed just as eager to show off their suits and salaries. Jai's accent softened, his wardrobe changed, and his weekends became indistinguishable from his weekdays—a blur of work, drinking, and flashing his growing wealth.

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There was an unspoken myth among his colleagues that life only existed within the confines of their elite bubble. They called themselves ‘global citizens,’ mocking traditionalists and embracing a life of excess. It was a life based on image, where the illusion of success mattered more than anything real. Jai’s sense of self began to erode.

He bought into their mythology of success—one based on material wealth and status. When he saw former classmates who had become artists, teachers, or even remained in India, he pitied them. They were tied down by their traditions, unable to escape their pasts. He was living the dream—or so he thought.

Soon, the pressures began to mount. Jai became a hollow version of himself, chasing promotions that never felt like enough. His interactions were shallow, his friendships transactional. His attempts to build real connections with people, either from work or outside of it, always faltered. He became a stranger even to himself, distancing himself from the values that had once guided him.

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The final break came when his parents came to visit. They wanted to see the life he had built in London, and Jai was proud to show them his fancy apartment and take them out to one of the trendiest restaurants. But the moment his mother entered his flat, she grew quiet. She noticed how sterile it was—barely any personal touches, not even a hint of the culture he had grown up with. His father said nothing, but Jai could see the disappointment in his eyes.

That evening, as they sat around the restaurant table, his mother finally asked, "What happened to you?"

Jai couldn't answer. He had no words to explain the gradual loss of his soul—the way the City had slowly consumed him. His mother could see the emptiness in his eyes, and it broke her heart. It wasn't just that he had adopted a new way of life; it was that he had forgotten who he was.

After his parents returned home, Jai felt the weight of his choices. He tried reconnecting with his old self, visiting the temple again, calling his mother more often, but it was too late. The City had changed him, drained him of the innocence,

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warmth, and grounding that had once been the foundation of his being. He no longer recognized the person he saw in the mirror.

Years passed, and Jai became more successful in the corporate world, but inside, he was empty. He had traded his soul for success, his roots for status, and his values for a version of himself that only existed in the reflection of others' expectations.

Aldgate, with its promise of opportunity, had swallowed him whole. It was a place where the high-flying myth devoured ambition and left behind only shadows of the people who had once believed in it.

Jai walked through the City, surrounded by glass towers and well-dressed professionals, but now he saw through it all—the false gods of wealth and status, the hollow promises of success. He had become one of them, and there was no way back.

To be continued.

By John

Creative Writing

Doom city – Short story

In a vast, colourless plain lay the community of Pallord, a place where the skies were perpetually overcast, and the winds carried a numbing chill. Here, imagination had been forgotten, and inspiration was but a distant memory. The houses were all the same: grey, square, and unadorned, with windows that let in light but no warmth. The people of Pallord walked with bowed heads, their eyes dulled by the monotony of their surroundings. They spoke in hushed tones, exchanging only the most necessary of words, for they had forgotten the art of conversation and the joy of storytelling.

In this land, the children did not play. They did not dream of dragons or knights or far-off lands. Instead, they sat in rows, learning only what was required to survive in their bleak world. Their imaginations, once fertile and boundless, had withered like plants deprived of sunlight. The adults,

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too, were shadows of who they might have been. They went about their daily tasks with mechanical precision, lacking the spark of creativity that could transform the mundane into the magical. Work was a means to an end, a way to pass the time in a place where time had lost its meaning.

The town square, once the heart of the community, was now a barren expanse of cracked stone. The fountain at its centre, once a symbol of life and renewal, had long since dried up. No one remembered what it was like to gather there, to share ideas, to create together. The walls of the buildings that lined the square were blank, devoid of art or expression. The few shops that remained sold only the basics, for there was no demand for anything beyond the practical. There were no books, no paintings, no music to be found. The people of Pallord had no need for such things, or so they believed.

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But the truth was far more tragic: they had forgotten how to desire them. In the absence of imagination and inspiration, they had lost their ability to see beyond what was right in front of them. They had become prisoners of their own making, trapped in a world where nothing ever changed and nothing ever would.

And yet, there was a deep, unspoken sorrow that permeated the air. It was a sadness that the people could not name, for they had forgotten the words that might have described it. It was the ache of lives unlived, of dreams unfulfilled, of potential unrealized. It was the weight of knowing, on some level, that something was missing, something vital and beautiful that had slipped through their fingers without them even noticing.

In the outskirts of Pallord, beyond the last of the grey houses, there was a forest. The people rarely ventured there, for it was said to be a place of wildness and danger.

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But the truth was, the forest was the last remnant of what Pallord had once been. The trees still whispered of old stories, of magic and mystery, of worlds beyond the imagination. But the people could no longer hear them, for their minds were closed, their hearts hardened.

One day, a stranger came to Pallord. He was not like the others; his clothes were tattered, but his eyes shone with a light that had long since vanished from the town. He spoke to the people, trying to remind them of what they had lost, but they could not understand him. They looked at him with suspicion and fear, for his words were strange, and his ideas even stranger.

The stranger wandered the town, searching for someone, anyone, who might remember. But all he found were empty eyes and closed doors. In the end, he left Pallord, disappearing into the forest from whence he came. The

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people soon forgot he had ever been there, just as they had forgotten so much else.

And so Pallord continued, a place without colour, without hope, without the spark that makes life worth living. The people grew old, their lives passing by in a blur of sameness. The sadness deepened, but it was a sadness without form or substance, a shadow that lingered at the edges of their consciousness, never fully seen or understood.

The saga of Pallord is not one of great battles or epic journeys, but of the quiet, insidious erosion of the soul. It is a tale of what happens when a community loses its source of imagination and inspiration, when it forgets the very things that make us human. It is a warning, a reminder that without imagination, life becomes a prison of our own making, and without inspiration, the world itself loses its colour.

Creative Writing



Picture of Pallord - By NJW Nov 2024

Creative Writing

The Inside Outsider

He counted steps and locked each door,
Chased patterns only he could score,
A mind entwined in loops so tight,
What once was day now bled to night.

He found in chaos a dark design,
Threads of control, a secret sign,
Conspiracies that danced and twirled,
The hidden hands that ruled the world.

His brilliance shone, but dulled by fear,
Each whispered word, a threat unclear.
He rose through ranks, sharp-eyed, alone,
But never trusted flesh or bone.

Colleagues smiled, but he'd suspect,
A silent plot, a coded text.
What truth they hid, he had to find—
Yet lost himself, inside his mind.

Obsessions grew, his tether frayed,
Paranoia's debts unpaid.
He saw the cracks where none could see,
Blind to his own reality.

Creative Writing

His work collapsed, they let him go,
A rising star turned far below.
He built a world, online, apart—
A refuge for his fractured heart.

The clicks and clacks of like-minded souls,
Spun webs of fear, with gaping holes.
Yet as he sought to prove them wrong,
His truth dissolved, his grasp was gone.

Now tangled deep in thoughts unspun,
A mind once bright, now come undone.
His brilliance, madness, side by side,
The inside outsider—denied, defied.

No foe to fight, no truth to claim,
Just shadows in a twisted game.
He whispers to the empty air,
A ghost who once was truly there.

A genius trapped in endless flight,
Lost in the day, consumed by night.

By NJW Nov 2024

Creative Writing

Green Balance

In a garden bright, where dreams entwine,
A balance sought, both yours and mine.
The team convenes, hearts laid bare,
In sharing's glow, we show we care.

Norms unite, a guiding thread,
Words unspoken, softly said.
Hands extended, burdens shared,
A world rebuilt, a future dared.

By the fountain's song, we gather 'round,
English tea flows, stories abound.
Community blooms in laughter's tune,
Beneath the sun, or under moon.

Oh, cherish this, a time so rare,
A world of kindness in open air.
Green balance whispers, "Together we grow,"
In harmony's embrace, our spirits glow.

By Shanthi - December 2024

Creative Writing



Creative Writing

BIG IT UP

Some people try too hard
And it isn't happening
Defending a friend and takeaway slapping.
Commit murder to be
head of the brood
Buy a bigger plate to get more food
Always at the front of the cue
But if you think they're worthy
Will they give clothes off their back
When it comes to work .
Will they get down and dirty
Alas it's a new year I'll watch what we all do .
By studying people should give us a clue .

By a local resident – December 2024

The Links page

All feedbacks, ideas and enquiries are welcome through

info@womensculturalarena.org.uk OR

<https://womensculturalarena.org.uk>

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Sociability and Fun



Thank you .

Media team, WCA

For your Diary

**Social Prescribing as the Norm
Just Come Along and Join In**
(No Referrals / No Stigma – Everyone is Welcome)

At a Glance:

- **Weekly:** Community Allotment Engagements & Community Meal Sessions.
- **Monthly:** Creative Writing, Art Corner, and Storytelling at Community Tea Party Events.

For more information, please contact us:

 Email: info@womensculturalarena.org.uk

 Text: 07557440567

All are welcome to connect, share, and grow in a supportive and inclusive community!

For your Diary

Community Allotment Growers' Breakfast Club

Starting January 2025, join us each Saturday from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM at Oakridge Baptist Church. As the new year begins, we invite all like-minded souls to celebrate the spirit of growing and gathering.

*Enjoy a wholesome breakfast in a warm and friendly setting, now featuring a **self-service station** for an added touch of independence and convenience. Share stories, foster connections, and explore this new experience of community engagement.*

*Together, we'll plant the seeds of camaraderie and cultivate fresh ideas in our **Collaborative Ideas Exchange**.*

Come and be part of this blossoming community as we embark on a new chapter. Let's grow, share, and thrive—together! 🌱🔍



For your Diary

❖ Community Allotment growers light breakfast club - In person

Ever Saturday from 9.00 am - 10.30 am (*Contact Volunteer 07566 294012*) @ Oakridge Baptist Church, 43 Oakridge Rd, High Wycombe HP11 2PH- (**Entry fee £1.50**)

❖ Wellbeing and mindfulness forum - words , thoughts and joy (**FREE – Donations will be accepted**)

1st and 4th Tuesday of each month from 10.30 am to 12.30 pm (*Contact Volunteer 07747623010*) @ Eden Library Room number 3 , High Wycombe .

❖ Community Allotment activities during the Spring , Summer and Autumn 2024 – Wellbeing and mindfulness activities including Social prescribing self-service. (**FREE – Donations will be accepted**)

See pages 21 and 22 @ Desborough Castle Community Allotment site (each Saturday from February/March 2025 onwards)

❖ The Collective Gardener project , High Wycombe in Partnership with local organisations with Green initiatives (**Partnership development and sharing resources**)

Please send pictures of your growing experience. Winter and Spring planting are started at the Community Allotments .(*For more details contact volunteers on 07566 294012*)

❖ Brunch club (**FREE – Donations will be accepted**)

Every Thursday (Except Bank holidays) from 10.00 am - 11.30 am (*Contact members on 07566 294012* @ Oakridge Baptist Church , HP11 2PH (Self-referral system enrolment is required)

For your Diary

- ❖ **Community Friendly Fridge , High Wycombe -(FREE – Donations will be accepted)**

Every Thursday (Except Bank holidays) **from 10.00 am -11.30 am @ Oakridge Baptist Church, 43 Oakridge Rd, High Wycombe HP11 2PH** (Self-referral system enrolment is required)

- ❖ **CFF meal deal initiatives , High Wycombe**

Every Thursday (Except Bank holidays) **from 10.30 am -11.30 am @ Oakridge Baptist Church, 43 Oakridge Rd, High Wycombe HP11 2PH** (Cost is £2.00 per bag) **AND**

Clean Hygiene Essentials: Refill your empty bottle with cleaning liquid and embrace sustainable living." (**FREE**)

- ❖ **Zoom Art Session - (FREE – Donations will be accepted)**

Monthly 3rd Sunday from 9.00 am - 10.30 am (Contact Aruntha on 07455106550)

- ❖ **Inclusive Opportunities @ WCA for Children Art session various locations during the term time @ £5 per 2 hrs session** (Contact Aruntha on 07455106550)

- ❖ **WCA's SPECIAL magazine – Quarterly basis**

We want your help with creative writing , poems , pictures and stories. Let's be mindful and creative. Please write to us info@womensculturalarena.org.uk or text to us on **07566 294012** please.

- ❖ **WCA's Seasonal day trips – Keep in touch with us on**

<https://womensculturalarena.org.uk/contact-us> OR text us **07566294012**