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WORDED LIFE
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WRITING KICKSTART
30 days of writing prompts
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Writing Prompt Day 1- Free association

Free association can increase your writing flexibility, break linear thinking and help you tap into your creative self. Let your eyes fall on something outside of yourself - perhaps a book, a person walking by, your own hands... Choose anything at all or whatever feels promising. List everything you think of, everything that comes into your head, everything you associate with the thing you have chosen. For example: I chose the coffee cup on my desk. Coffee cup, coffee, aromatic, early mornings, weekends, lazy breakfasts, cafés, energy... Get the idea? Using the list of things you just wrote as a spring board, write for 10 minutes. Don't worry if you go off on a tangent, just keep coming back to whatever you were looking at in the first place. The crucial things here are to write for 10 minutes and just let the associations flow. If you get stuck, write about that too. Let your imagination and senses run free.

Laptop, writing, words, storage, potential, stories, untold, mystery, hope, connection, relevance...

His fingers were sore from years of repetitive typing slouched over his typewriter. His manuscripts sat piled on the bookshelf by his desk. He had always been too anxious to ever send one off to be ripped apart and dissected by a publishing house. And still he was drawn to write more. Addicted to the metallic click of the keys. Stories flowing from his fingers needing to be told. Sometimes, late at night he would find himself staring at the pages before him and wondering who had written them- the words felt foreign; powerful and beautiful.

In his day job he laboured as a grounds keeper at a local hospital. He watched the patients go in. Some days he watched them come out. Some days he didn't; instead families with tear streaked faces carrying bundles of earthly possessions. He took pride in his job. He chose each new flower carefully and personally. Manicuring the grass so that it was at its most comfortable to cushion the weary bones that would lay upon it. The hospital grounds spoke to people in a way that words never could- offering the vibrant colours of life, the miniature cycle of life played out to those who sat staring into the leaf litter, the mouldy rocks that had been there long before the city and that would be there long after these battles with illness had played out.

Tonight he wrote of the love he never found; the words he never got to whisper in her ear as they fell asleep together in each other's arms. The children he never had and bedtime stories never told. The grandchildren that never sat on his lap listening to his stories of the olden days. He looked over again at his bookshelf; a sacrifice. Lastly, as pain shot through his frail body, he wrote instructions.

He woke in a small white room, overlooking a manicured and vibrant garden. The regular beeping of the machine keeping time with his tired heart. A nurse that he recognised came in to check his signs- clicking her tongue in frustration she lamented how he should have seen a doctor years ago. She asked if he was comfortable and if there was anything she could do. He handed her the small sheet of paper from his clothes folded on the chair by the bed. His stories would find freedom as his soul did.

The nurse looked back from the doorway tears welling in her eyes, a gentle wave goodbye. He was secretly glad that tonight someone would leave with tear streaked cheeks for him.

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