

## NOT TOO LATE AT SIXTY EIGHT

So we're coming into the home stretch or so it seems. A long life is tailing off and coming to a conclusion. I am shamed by people like the Queen, who at 80 are very much alive whereas I seem to want to curl up and die. It is not like that at all of course. Every vital spark is conscious in my make up; it is my duty to stay alive though I could drop off to sleep at any time of the day.

My magical powers have waned I could no more put on another magic show than fly to the moon. But then there is always the future which could bring renewed energy, second to none. I live in hope and resolution. At least fifteen years to go, well that's what John assures me but something tells me that I must rest and preferably sleep but not before I have pulled my socks up. All day centres are full of old people virtually on their last legs, not the finest incentive to get up and go. But I can pride myself on the fact that I'm younger than most of them, however, the whole thing is horribly geriatric, I don't want to be REMINDED that I'm one of them. I don't feel at all old alone in my flat, why should I admit to being old at all.

The fact remains that I'm physically old, I gasp for breath at the slightest effort, I long to laze, even my mind is sluggish or is it the hot weather. Anyone would feel like this with a temperature soaring, there is the other side of the coin: a strong desire to stay alive and flourish, the mind can perk itself up and get going. I am not stuck in some mental state as I was many years ago. I am free and well balanced. I would not wish schizophrenia on anyone but that is what I was suffering from. Apparently it was and is highly enjoyable but is undoubtedly an illness. If only I could wake up more with interest in my life, perhaps I can? Listening to the kids screaming outside spurs me onto make my own contribution and allow mind over matter. But the whole thing is a terrible effort and I give up too easily.

No! I must grasp the nettle with a little determination and attack, it is all in the mind and there the solution must be found it doesn't take great strength to think positively, it only takes a decision then the day blossoms with resolution and you start living again. The body clock perks up and you start flourishing again. Yet again I sink back and rest, not get up and go only a desire if that is the right word, to survive. Look back on a full life and you realise it is such a pity that self pity is apparent and abhorrent, I'd much rather be struggling to make my mark.

I exaggerate of course as I put this down on paper; things are not nearly as bad as that. There is plenty of time for laughter if John Aspey and I continue to make merry and my own company I find agreeable. But the struggle is phenomenal. You dear reader must be tolerant and I must pull my socks up. The path to Heaven is paved with good intentions, don't worry about me.

**Richard Jameson**

