

"THE HOME COMING"

It was a beautiful Saturday afternoon in June. The little rural community was quite and peaceful, just the occasional song of a lark or the sound of a Whippoorwill in the far off distance. The sun was just beginning to set behind the western mountains, filling the sky with vivid colors.

The old lady seated in a cane back rocker on her back porch, loved to watch the summer sun sets. They were God's art work she would say. As she rocked back and forth, the old rocker would creak and crack with each move. Beside her on a small table lay her Bible, a pair of reading glasses, and a half empty glass of ice tea.

As she looked down at her watch, she said my goodness old Tom, referring to the black and white cat curled up on her lap. Time for me to get up and get busy. Tomorrow is home coming at Church, and I've got to bake a peach cobbler. It's also time for you to go out to the barn and catch a mouse for your supper. You don't want to go to bed hungry you know. The old cat looked up at her as if he understood what she had said, jumped from her lap and started off toward the barn.

The old lady reached for her cane. Holding it as a brace in one hand, she pushed herself up from the chair with the other. As she looked back at the rocker, she thought my goodness it's getting harder to get in and out of that old chair every day.

She could well recall the day her husband Carl had given her the rocker. He had made it with own hands and had given it to her as an anniversary gift. That was many, many years ago and she still loved it now just as much as then.

As she went into the kitchen to start baking. Her thoughts drifted back to days gone by. I can remember a time when this old house was filled with love and laughter. I remember kids running every where, yelling and screaming as children do. I remember Carl saying children please be quiet. Your making so much noise I can't even hear myself think. I remember all the Holidays and Birthdays, oh what wonderful times. Those days are gone now, for many years ago my dear Carl went to be with the Lord. The children have all grown up and moved away. The house is silent now, just me and Old Tom.

When the cobbler was finished, she removed it from the oven and placed it on the kitchen table to cool. The sweet aroma of fresh peaches filled the

room. My, my that smells good she said. I'm thankful that job is finished. I'm tired. Think I'll call it a day and get ready for bed.

As she laid her head on the pillow she began her prayers, as she did each night. Lord thank you for this day. Thank you for watching over Old Tom and me. Thank you for all your blessings and love. Please watch over my children and keep them safe. One more thing Lord and I won't bother you any more tonight. If it should be my time to go please let me go in peace. I don't wish to be a bother to anyone. You have a good night Lord and I'll talk with you again in the morning, if it be your will. She would always end her prayer by saying, and God bless all amen.

The next morning she was up early waiting for the Church Bus. When it arrived, she eased herself down from the front porch. Holding the rail with one hand and using her cane for support with the other.

When the bus came to a stop, the driver got off to help her aboard. Good morning David she said. Why good morning to you sister Molly he replied. You sure look pretty today. Is that a new dress? My goodness no the old lady smiled. I've had this old thing for years.

Oh David before I forget, there's a big peach cobbler on the kitchen table. Would you get it for me please? I just didn't have the strength to carry it myself. I sure will miss Molly he replied. If I don't make it back though, you'll know I found a spoon and ate it all myself. Now David their not that good she said. Yes they are miss Molly I've been eating your cobblers since I was a small boy. They have all been wonderful. Thank you she smiled. Just close the door behind you, no need to lock it, no one will bother anything way out here.

As the bus pulled into the Church parking lot, she said to herself. Why there's sister Williams and sister Smith. They both lost their husbands this year. I know they miss them just as much as I do Carl.

The Home Coming and service was wonderful. Everyone enjoyed themselves. Plenty of good food and fellowship. Plenty of good conversation and a chance to visit with old friends and new members.

When the bus arrived back at home, the driver stepped off to help the old lady down. I'll walk you to the door miss Molly he said. Oh no David she replied that won't be necessary. I'll be fine, besides I want to look at all my pretty flowers before I go in. All right if your sure. You have a wonderful day, and God bless you. As the bus drove away, she waved to all her friends until they were out of sight.

The old lady stood there for a moment thinking to herself. I've been going to that Church ever since I was a little girl. Now I'm well into my

Eighties. My how things have changed and how quickly time has passed by.

As she turned to go up the drive, the old black and white cat danced at her feet. Now Old Tom she said you go off and play. You wouldn't want me to fall and break a hip would you? The old cat looked up at her once again as if he understood, and scampered off across the yard into another adventure.

As she looked at her flowers, she thought my aren't they all pretty this year. I'll bet the flowers in Heaven are beautiful this time of year. Lord I sure would like to see them some day.

When she entered the house, she sat down in an old faded velvet chair by the window. A photograph album lay nearby. As she turned the pages, she could recall each photo as if it were taken yesterday. With tears filling her eyes, she thought what wonderful memories. Some good, some not so good but all wonderful.

Her day quickly passed and once again the sun was setting behind the mountains to the west. Filling the sky with beautiful colors of red, gold and orange. As the old lady watched the sun set, she said Lord you sure paint a pretty picture.

Later that night, as she laid her head on the pillow to pray. She said thank you Lord for this day. Thank you for the wonderful Home Coming and all the good food. Thank you for letting me see all my friends once again. You have a good night Lord and I'll talk with you again in the morning if it be your will, and God bless all amen.

Little did she know that this would be her last prayer. That night as she lay sleeping quietly, her prayers were answered. The Lord sent for her to come home in peace, without being a bother to anyone.

Now her days are spent strolling the golden streets of Heaven. Arm and arm with her beloved Carl. Reminiscing with old friends and loved ones gone before, and looking at all the pretty-pretty flowers. They sure are beautiful this time of year.

And God bless all

Amen...

Donald Henson

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