

Sweet and Sour

By Zi Graves



Storing Memories

From the day of birth, memories are stored for future use. We may not realize the baby we are cuddling is absorbing every move we make and the sound of our voice is being remembered. But let a strange pair of arms reach for the baby or a different voice answer to his cries and his response is different. It is his mommy's or daddy's voice and the feel of security in their arms he/she remembers and responds to so readily. And so it goes with the human mind. It is the storage bin where all things, whether good or bad, is filed away and at some time in our life the scores it holds slip out when one least expects it. Some are good ones, others not so good, these I try not to dwell on.

My early years in Wellsville, Ohio, were a mixture of both. With a mother in failing health and household of children to take care of, our house was not always in the best order and

we often had to fend for ourselves. It was during this time I sought comfort from friends and the serenity of their homes. Ms. Perry was also a comfort and someone I could turn to when the blisters on my feet needed attention and room had other things to do. She had her hands full with the smaller ones getting ready for school and I guess she felt like I was big enough to take care of myself. And I did.

When I could find the time I loved to visit two girls friends at the end of our street. One was my age, the other a couple years older, and both were good friends. Anna Mae, the younger one, preferred friends her own age. Kathryn didn't mind that our house was always in a mess and spent many hours with me at the dining table helping with lessons and talking girl talk. Ish, of course was also present for he was a stickler for doing his homework. They were in the same grade and now, in looking

back, I wonder if it could have been a mutual teenage crush they were enjoying. At about this same time Ish brought his best friend, Bill Buckley, home to share in our fun. Regardless of the messy house it was always filled with young people. And no, I did not have a crush on Bill. He was another big brother I admired and I was pleased when he dated my friends. He and Ish became best friends in high school and remained so till time and distance separated them years later. By now Kathryn had become "Kate" to me and she and I were best friends till the same thing happened to us when we moved to Cincinnati.

When I visited Kate in her home it was a different kind of life from mine and I almost envied her. Hers was the home where the mother was always there and devoted her time and energy to seeing it was meticulously well kept and her two teenage daughters given the attention they needed. When we entered the kitchen door, the one we always used to enter the house, we were greeted with warmth and the welcome I received was genuine. The first time I entered the kitchen I gasped, maybe out loud, for this kitchen was, and still is, my dream kitchen. I had never seen anything like it before, but had dreamed about such one. Everything in it was color coordinated. Blue and white, even the ice box, work table and stove. The table in the center of the room was

covered with a white linen cloth with a simple center piece and the serving dishes had blue trim. The curtains were snowy white with some kind of simple blue trim on them. The big, golden oak kitchen cabinet (they are antiques now), was the only thing in the room that wasn't white. But its beauty only enhanced the soft tones of blue and white. The shiny blue and white linoleum floor covering gave the final touch to my dream kitchen. This was long before the days of installed cabinets and counter tops and I don't know why, but I liked it better that way. It at least had the look of being lived in, cared for and was so pretty.

The rest of the house was just as charming, but without the brightness of the kitchen. The dining room I faintly remember when we passed through it to get to the living room. The living room also is short of memories except a beautiful library table in the center with a glass top covering a collection of butterflyflies beneath. That was my first sight of such a collection being under glass and I was fascinated by it. The butterflyflies were lying on a bed of thistle down which showed off their beauty. That memory is indelibly stamped in my mind. We had been warmly greeted by Mr. Homer, Kate's dad, when we entered the room. He was a short heavy-set man with a receding hairline, and somewhat older than her mother, but his warm smile and

soft voice broke the barrier of age and I immediately felt comfortable in his presence. Then I was surprised when we excused ourselves and started upstairs that Kate went to him first and planted a kiss on his balding head. I was not used to this kind of expressing love to one's father. Kissing on our house was for the babies and little ones.

Upstairs, in Kate's room, there pleasant memories awaited to be tucked away for future reference to the days when I was growing up and preparing for the day I would be the homemaker.

It was a small room, but definitely a girls room. But not the unkempt rooms we associate with the now generation. Everything was in place, or so it seemed to me. Soon we were looking at her collections of party invitations, notes from, would like to be boyfriends, and best of all her diary. It was one of the most pleasant evenings I had ever spent at a girl friends house. And the memories of it is important enough that 70 years later I am sharing them with you, my readers.

There were no bowling allies, skating rinks or places of entertainment around for young people to entertain us made up for it by having all kinds of parties where we could choose and enjoy our own entertainment. Birthday parties were the most frequent and were given by the parents in the privacy of their own homes. These parties were dressed up affairs and everyone showed off his/her best clothes and manners. Parlor games

such as "spin the bottle, post office, guess who," were the most popular. The other popular game together was a wiccate roast. These were held outdoors usually in a big field or on the banks of the Ohio River or Beaver Creek. Invitations also went out for these so only the well known friends would be there. We did not want, nor tolerated, loose characters, drinking nor open smooching at our parties. But we did have fun. These outdoor parties allowed for more active games and also was the perfect place for story telling after the first began to die down. My very first date was at one of these and when I started to go home I had already forgotten about it and called out to Ish it was time to leave, when all of sudden this handsome young fellow stepped up and wanted to know why I wasn't allowing him to take me home. What a boo-boo I had made. Here was the pick of the crop and I had forgotten I finally had been asked to be his date for the evening. Years later I was on a hay ride party with an entirely different group, with my latest date, and heard a familiar voice say "Zi?" and in the far corner of the truck sat my childhood sweetheart. He was even

more handsome as a man than he was as a teenage boy on his first date. Guess what? Once again I forgot my present date and for the rest of the evening Dick and I went over old times and caught up on the whereabouts of the friends each of us had been separated from all this time. I haven't seen him since.

Points East

By: Ike Adams

Three years ago a group of high school kids in Estill County began discussing ways to get the garbage out of the river and off the sides of the road in their community. Some of them, having given a few of their Saturdays to walking the roadsides and wading the streams with huge plastic bags to collect it, decided that the solution to the problem wasn't cleaning it up in their spare time, but doing something to keep litter from getting there in the first place. They spent months talking with their parents, teachers and classmates and wound up writing a legislative bill that they submitted to the Kentucky Legislature. The short version of their proposal called for charging

a deposit on beverage containers and fast food wrappers that could be redeemed when the garbage was turned back in.

In other words, make the ignorant who toss their trash out car windows or into the creeks pay to have their diapers changed if they insist on tossing them. But better than that, the proposal offered an incentive for recycling and taking some social responsibility for dealing with in-your-face garbage.

The kids' proposal was sound, responsible, and sensible, which obviously meant that it would have about as much chance of working with Kentucky lawmakers as a stick

Mount Vernon Signal

Publication Number 366-000
Periodical Postage Paid in Mt. Vernon, Ky. 40456
606-256-2244

Published every Thursday since November, 1887. Offices in the Mt. Vernon Signal Building on Main Street in Mt. Vernon, Ky. 40456. Postmaster, send address changes to P.O. Box 185, Mt. Vernon, Kentucky 40456.

James Anderson, Jr., Publisher Emeritus • Richard F. Anderson • Editor
Perina M. Anderson • Managing Editor

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