



Points East

By:
Ike Adams

Last Saturday afternoon I joined, and followed along the train of cars and pick-ups crawling along behind the spanking new hearse that carried Junior Helton from Harmon's Lick some twelve miles from the Church of God to the graveyard in Lancaster. When the final prayers were said and his immediate family had begun making their ways back to their cars, I eased by beside his coffin, touched it one last time, and plucked a bright red rose off the family spray.

I clutched it to my chest, thinking to myself, that it was something I could keep. Maybe I could freeze-dry and shrink-wrap it and put it in my tackle box. Maybe, somehow, that rose could keep Junior alive and with me the next time I was fishing.

Alex Helton, Junior's father, has been my father in almost every sense of the word since 1983. We were not blood related, but when my own Dad died

Stripping the tobacco off the stalk, and being it at night for the funeral, December was almost like a bonus for having helped with the burn work and that's what we had been doing the night before I got the news of my Dad.

I'm not sure how it happened or why, but I know that I was nothing more than casual hired help for the Heltons up until that day.

For weeks after Dad's funeral, Junior checked on me every single evening.

"Hello Young Man. How is the weather on your end of the road? What are you doing tomorrow? Would you care to ride down to London with me to look at whatever? Where do you reckon the fish are biting?"

Sweet and Sour

By Zi Graves

In short order I had him involved in my photography business and for several months we spent every day together driving all over central Kentucky.

Junior and I bonded because he was worried about me at first and then because we had so much in common. We both loved to fish and hunt. We were both from the highest hills in Kentucky and we understood each other. And even though I had no love for the labor of tobacco farming, we became as close kin as family even though we shared no common blood.

I often tell my friends Junior and Molly passed me after I moved down to the flat lands. And it's the truth. To call us close is an understatement. Over the last fifteen years there has

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My Wandering Mind

By Zi Graves

So often, one hears the old complaint, or inquiry: "I must have lost my mind" or, "have you LOST your mind?" Well, let me tell you, the why my mind has been wandering around these past few months, and the habit of replacing everything I touch then use the shreds of what is left to search for what I had just put away. I am not sure if I have lost my mind or simply hid it in some obscure corner where I may someday run across it and say to myself, "uh-huh, I knew it had to be around somewhere, I couldn't have thrown it away and I am sure no one else would have any use for the worn out bit of grey matter," so it had to be tucked away somewhere in a bag that is now, mixed up with odds and ends, rescued by the team of workers cleaning up the results of the smoke damaged whatnots from the fire.

That is where I am finding many memories I thought were gone forever and is probably the reason I haven't written for the past few weeks. Depression seems to have taken over my ability to think or talk, especially, much less write about the past or present. I thought moving back home where everything was familiar and comfortable would dis-

pel the depression of being alone in one room at the Kastle Inn Motel but when I arrived "home" and found the work crew still emptying boxes of my belongings, some which hadn't yet been cleaned, and all that I must find places for, including the belongings from my refuge on the mountain top, I wanted to turn around, cancel my checkout at the motel and ask Larry if I could move back permanently. At that time, I felt like room 258 at the Kastle Inn was a safe, peaceful refuge where others took care of my needs and the scene from my window was beautiful. Again, I want to thank Larry and Linda Carter and all the motel staff and Kastle Inn Restaurant personnel, managers, Cathy and Tammy and the waitresses for their care, especially when I wasn't able to take care of myself.

By the time I got acquainted with the two young women emptying boxes of things I had forgotten about and not finding things I was needing and looking for, I was not just frustrated with the mess, I was getting confused by the demands of "where should I put this, and here is a box, I've got to go through" and the delivery and set-up of new merchandise. First, there was Dale and Scotty,

winning with two T.V.s, one each for the bedrooms and living room, then came Charles Saylor and helper with three mattresses, two for twin beds and one queen-size for the master bedroom. Polly and Chuck were here to help get the bed frames from the garage where they had been stored since the fire, so they also had to be cleaned and readied for the mattresses. And, I thought I was moving back to a newly redecorated and ready-to-live-in house. I guess I could call it my surprise home welcoming party for I certainly was surprised by the incomplete and not ready to live in condition of everything. Just last week, two of the helpers came over and put in the light over the sink, door bells, pulls on some of the overhead lights I couldn't reach and the coat rack. Yesterday, the back porch carpet was laid and, hopefully, next week, the edging around the bathroom carpets will be finished. Oh yes, the carpenters (they call themselves cabinet makers), did come and lower the cabinets two inches and it helped a little, two more would have been better for me. Now I have all these beautiful cabinets lining my walls but the most I can store in them is AIR. Thank goodness my niece, who was helping me, is tall. It was she that discovered the cabinets were built ceiling high without making allowance for a lower shelf. So, she adjusted the set to highest one in each cabinet within reaching distance for me, till the contractors could have them all lowered and bring the additional shelves - which have not arrived.

There are still boxes and bags of who knows what to go through and enough yarn was hidden in some of them to keep me busy crocheting for several years. New curtains have been hung but no drapes, a couple of pictures but no wall decorations till I

can sort through them and decide on which ones to keep, etc. So, I am not fully settled in, but things are looking like a woman is finally living here, even though some boxes of decorative plates and stacks of pictures are, evident along the baseboards and the old lady responsible for it all would like to be able to call the front office or the restaurant across the drive and say, "I'm ready for a cup of coffee and my morning paper." (I am always looking back on "the good of days". I am also ready to show off what has been done for you eyes to what I have been doing and ooh and ahh over what has been done.

Last Saturday, I took a break from T.V. and the lounge chair and went driving to the farm with new found friends, the Blantons, Frank and son, Don, from Ohio and Frank's lady friend, from Somerset. Frank had told Raymond Graves, his friend, and my nephew, that he had been an admirer of Sweet and Sour for years and wanted to meet the writer personally. So, here we were, having a wonderful afternoon on the side yard of my homestead, now lying in ashes I have written so much about. Of course, you know it wouldn't have been complete if Polly and Chuck were not there. So, they were the honored hosts for the day. Their charming little campsite that was once known as "the wash house" has now been renovated and transformed into quite a retreat for the week ends, or for that matter anytime the pressure gets too much or the lights of town obscure the beauty of flickering stars and a full moon. Or, to simply sit on the little front porch Chuck built on when he dispensed the wash house into a

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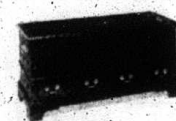


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