

## DREAMS, HOPE, MUSIC, AND RAINBOWS

John F. Hall

In nearly all of my stories, one can find lyrics to hymns and songs. It is one reason why, I believe, that young adults and older adults enjoy reading my stories. Jim Yerman wrote a poem called, "The Evolution Of Music In Our Souls." These are his words: "Listening to



music, like the Grammy's, I'm always amazed at the power of a melody. How it can make you smile, cry, or fall in love; how it can create a memory. How we silently listen to some songs as if we are in a trance; while other songs lift us off our feet and make us want to dance. I imagine there's a special time in our life, I'm not sure when or where it starts, when certain music, a certain song, imprints itself in our hearts. Within our soul it drifts, until it finds a comfortable place, its notes indelibly written on the lines across our face. A time when that music, that song filled a space

and made us whole. I suppose that's why we have an affinity, a love, for the first music that ever reached our soul. I suppose that's why, as we get older, we crave the music from before, and you hear some old folks saying, 'They don't make music like that anymore!' Still, we try to listen to the new music, the young musicians, the newest bands, even though we do not recognize who's singing, and most words we cannot understand. But every now and then a new song, a new singer comes along. We don't know when or where, but that new song they are singing imprints itself upon our hearts. Within our soul, that music, that song, finds its own unique and comfortable place, and its notes become indelibly written on the lines across our face. Perhaps that's why, as we get older, we have more wrinkles, more lines across our face. For the new notes to be written, as new songs, and within our souls, their own unique and comfortable place."

When I was a boy growing up in Miami, Florida, I would walk on a sidewalk, in what is now called "Little Havana." I carried a transistor radio, and the music that reminds me of that time is, "Theme From a Summer Place." Percy Faith and his band played the music that gives me pause. Mack Discant wrote the song. These are some of his lyrics: "There's a summer place, where it may rain or storm, yet I'm safe and warm. For within that summer place, your arms reach out to me, and my heart is free from all care. For it knows there are no gloomy skies, when seen through eyes that are blessed with love. And the sweet secret of a summer place is that it's anywhere when two people share all their hopes, all their dreams, all their love. There's a summer place where it may rain or storm, yet I'm safe and warm, in your arms,,,".

After serving three years in the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division, I served three years in the Kentucky National Guard, and 28 years in the Army Reserve. In one of the training films, that I was making for the Army Reserve, I used, as background music, a song called, "Climb Every Mountain." The lyrics were written by Oscar Hammerstein 11. These are some of his lyrics: "Climb every mountain, search high and low. Follow every highway, every path you know. Climb every mountain, ford every stream. Follow every rainbow 'till you find your dream. A dream that will need all the love you can give, every day of

your life for as long as you live. Climb every mountain, ford every stream... Follow every rainbow, don't you ever give up, no oh...".

The theme of the song, "Climb Every Mountain," is to encourage people to take every step toward attaining their dreams. And to follow that quest, every day, for as long as they live. I will turn 78 in June. I'm more prolific in writing stories, now, than I was when I first started writing stories, 45 years ago. The motivation comes, first of all, from the grace upon grace, and the inspiration from Jesus Christ. He gave me the talent, and the passion to write. Secondly, young and old adults love to read my stories. Actors love applause, writers love it when people tell them that they enjoy reading their stories.

The other day, I was driving to Cadiz. In the distance, I observed a cloud that had a partial rainbow, that is something that I had never seen before. When my grandchildren, Andrea, Heather, and John-John, were little, we watched the Wizard of Oz movie, on DVD, dozens of times. Harold Arlen and E. Harburg wrote one of the songs in that movie called, "Over The Rainbow." These are their lyrics: "Somewhere over the rainbow, way up high, there's a land that I heard of once in a lullaby. Somewhere over the rainbow skies are blue. And the dreams that you dare to dream really do come true. Someday I wish upon a star, and wake up where the clouds are far behind me. Where troubles melt like lemon drops, away above the chimney tops, is where you'll find me. Somewhere over the rainbow bluebirds fly. Birds fly over the rainbow, why then, oh, why can't I? If happy little bluebirds fly beyond the rainbow, why oh why can't I?"

In Genesis, Chapter 9, Verses 13-16 are these words: "I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the cloud, I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth."

One of my favorite country music songs, "Lord I Hope This Day is Good," was written by David N. Hanner. Even if people don't pray, when they get up in the morning, they can always ask God for a good day, as they go out the door. These are some of Hanner's lyrics: "Lord, I hope this day is good, I'm feelin' empty and misunderstood. Lord have You forgotten me? I've been praying to You faithfully. I'm not sayin' that I'm righteous man, but Lord I hope you understand. I don't need fortune and I don't need fame. Send down the thunder, Lord, send down the rain. But when You're plannin' just how it will be, plan a good day for me. You've been the King since the dawn of time, all that I'm asking is a little less crime. It might be hard for the devil to do, but it would be easy for you."

The word "hope" is such a powerful driving force in the world. We all hope that our days will be good. I'm always looking for hymn lyrics, and song lyrics, and poems, and scriptures, and short pieces that enhance the theme (s) of my stories. I try to tie them all

together. But I don't believe in reinventing the wheel. And when I find a short piece that was crafted by a writer, with better word crafting skills than me, I'll use it.

Clay Harrison wrote a short piece called, "Hope Is." It enhances the rainbow scripture in this story. These are his words: "Hope is the rainbow after the storm, a cozy fireplace to keep you warm. Hope is a friend who knocks on your door when times are bad, you're hurting and sore. Hope is a card that comes in the mail, the wind at your back to help you set sail. Hope is the glue that mends broken hearts, pieces restored to become works of art. Hope is the song that you hear, the voice of an angel heard in your ear. Hope is the sunrise even blind eyes can see, springtime blossoms on each cherry tree. Hope is a dream that keeps coming true, God's blessing from Heaven coming to you. Hope is the strength you need to survive, the joy you feel just being alive. Hope is a bug that lifts spirits high, the shoulder you lean on if you should cry. Hope is a miracle in any form. Hope is the rainbow after the storm."

It's another beautiful sunny day as I look out the second floor window. The fields are empty brown in front of my house. Soon, I expect the row crops, that Craig Perry has planted, to sprout forth, and show me some green. I have a routine, once I finish this special story. I will mail a copy to Andrea, Heather, Daniel, Skyler, Lexie, Jade, Trish, Audrey, and Ciera. This Sunday, I will hand a copy to Norman, Nancy, and Maria, at church. I will ask my Christian Fraternity Brother, Richard Hornbeak to batch email the story to our other Fraternity Brothers. I like to think of myself as the "Old Lamplighter" from long, long, ago. I try to make the world, a little brighter, where ever I go, by the joy in my stories.

My oldest granddaughter, Andrea commented that I mention Christ in my stories, something that other writers do not do. I believe that not enough glory, gratitude, and honor is given to Christ for all the blessings that He gives to all of us. The dreams, the hope, the music, and the rainbows are some of the things that Christ gives everyone. We can magnify these blessings if we truly have love in our hearts.

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\*Read other stories by John F. Hall and others at:

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