

MORNINGS IN KENTUCKY

By John F. Hall

Writing about my Kentucky mornings, with the sun rising over the majestic green fields of winter wheat, in front of my Antebellum home, soothes my restless soul. One of my favorite singers and song writers is the late Tom T. Hall. I've said it more than a dozen times, that song writers are the best story tellers. Tom T. Hall wrote the song "Kentucky in the Morning." These are his lyrics: "I sing of a place that you may have seen in the eastern half of our land so green. Where the sun is warm and the sky is blue and the love of a girl is true. Kentucky in the morning trimmed in green and blue, Kentucky in the morning I was only passing through. There's a bird that sings something sweet and pure. That tune goes on while the beat sounds sure. Oh, if I could hum that old song today I could chase my blues away. Kentucky in the morning... Oh I can't recall how I came to go by Kentucky shores on the Ohio. As I crossed the bridge I looked back to say I will sing you a song someday. Kentucky in the morning..."



In the summer mornings, I enjoy sitting on my front porch swing. Some mornings, when I get an early start, my wife, Paula will bring me some eggs, orange juice, and toast to eat as I sit on my front porch swing. My rheumatologist told me that my days of writing stories with a pen are over. The joints in my fingers makes it too painful to hold a pen. So I draft my stories on an old iPhone 6. I just use my' index finger to type out one letter at a time.

My old Kentucky home sits on a hill, where there is usually a breeze blowing between the tall maple trees in my front yard. My house was built back in 1860. The weather-beaten wood is concealed by aluminum siding that hides its age. It was a dusty road leading up to my house until the road was chipped and sealed. Looking down that road, and across the old Highway 68 is a small wooden Methodist church surrounded by trees. Tom T. Hall and Dixie Hall wrote the song "Somewhere in Kentucky Tonight." I doubt that Tom and Dixie knew about my old house, but these are some of their lyrics: "Somewhere in Kentucky there is a weather-beaten house on a dusty road that leads back in the hills. Where father and dear mother still wait my return, while I'm up in Ohio in the mills. Somewhere in Kentucky tonight that old blue moon is sending down its light. All I ever needed is waiting there for me, somewhere in Kentucky tonight. Somewhere in Kentucky there's a little wooden church nestled in a clearing in the trees. A white haired preacher talks about the lost and wondering souls. And I know he must be thinking about me. Some where in Kentucky there's a girl who walks alone, where once we walked together long ago. I promised that I would love her and she said she would be true until our names are carved together on a stone. Somewhere in Kentucky tonight..."

My son, John is working on a house that was all but destroyed by fire. The roof had to be replaced. All of the drywall in the ceilings and walls was ruined by the fire department's excessive use of water. The detached garage was burned beyond repair. My son

purchased the house for what I considered 'to be just the value of the lot. He plans to rebuild it and flip it. He has the know how and experience to “get-er done.”

Sitting on my front porch swing and looking at the sunrise, I'm reminded of the hymn that Cat Stevens and Eleanor Fargeon wrote called “Morning has Broken.” These are some of their lyrics: “Morning has broken like the first morning. Blackbird has spoken like the first bird. Praise for the singing, praise for the morning, praise for them springing fresh from the world. Sweet the rains new fall, sunlit from Heaven, like the first dew fall on the first grass. Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden, sprung in completeness where His feet pass. Mine is the sunlight, mine is the morning. Born of the one light, Eden saw play. Praise with elation, praise every morning, God's recreation of the new day...”.

The road to my old Kentucky home is two-tenths of a mile long from the main highway to my front door. Years ago, I would enjoy walking the length of the road and back, in the early morning. I enjoyed the sunrise and the fresh air. In John, Chapter 8, Verse 12 are these words: When Jesus spoke again to the people, He said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” Many decades ago, when I use to maintain the barbwire fences, I would allow one cedar tree to grow every 20 feet apart in the fence row. I did this to strengthen the fence as the cattle were constantly trying to find a weak spot to breakout. Today, the cattle, that I enjoyed feeding, are gone. The fence is gone, but the cedar trees that I allowed to live are 50 feet tall. My bad foot prevents me for taking long walks.

In the 1800s, Fanny Crosby wrote the hymn “Just a Closer Walk With Thee.” These are her lyrics: “I am weak but thou are strong. Jesus keep me from all wrong. I'll be satisfied as long as I walk, let me walk close to Thee. Just a closer walk with thee. Grant it Jesus, is my plea. Daily walking close to Thee. Let it be, dear Lord, let it be. When my feeble life is o'er, time with me will be no more. Guide me gently, safely o'er to Thy Kingdom's shore, to Thy shore. Just a closer walk with Thee. Grant it, Jesus, is my plea, daily walking close to thee. Let it be, dear Lord, let it be.” The late country singer, Patsy Cline is best known for singing that hymn. Easter Sunday is a few days away. Family and friends will be coming up the road to my house. After church, I'll pick up the sliced country ham, Paula has set the dinning room table. It will be another wonderful morning in Kentucky.

John F. Hall

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

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