

RAINY DAYS

By John F. Hall

In Australia they use the phrase “G'day mate” to wish someone a good day. I once thought that I would like to visit that country, but there is so much to appreciate and see in America. The 4th of July 18 just days away and I stand for the American Flag and I only kneel to honor and pray to Jesus Christ.



It has been raining, it seems like for weeks. On top of that, the pandemic is causing elderly people and young people alike to shelter in place. I recall an old song from 1971 titled “Rainy Days and Mondays.” The song was written by Roger Nichols and Paul Williams. Their lyrics describe some of the feelings that some people are feeling today. These are just a few of their lyrics. “Talkin' to myself and feeling old. Sometimes I'd like to quit, nothing ever seems to fit. Hangin' around, nothin' to do but frown. Rainy days and Mondays always get me down... What I've got

they used to call the blues...

In one of my previous stories, I wrote about Ray Stevens and a traffic accident that I investigated in 1973. Ray and his agent/manager, Don Williams were driving back from Paducah, Kentucky after seeing a psychic. One would have thought that this psychic would have told Ray that he would lose control of his car and flip it over that night just west of Oak Grove, Kentucky on highway 117. I don't believe in telepathy or clairvoyance or that a person can have extrasensory perception (ESP). I do believe in divine intervention.

Last Monday, it was raining and I was driving in Nashville, Tennessee on Interstate 65. Paula was with me and it was my birthday. My reason for being in the Musical City was to receive an epidural in my L5 to relieve some of the pain caused by my spinal stenosis. I noticed an extra large billboard that had a gigantic picture of Ray Stevens. The sign was an advertisement for his show. Ray is 81 years old and he is still performing before the fans that he loves. He is an inspiration and he proves the point that you are only as old as you feel. Once the FDA approves a vaccine for the Covid-19 and the Good Lord willing, I plan to see Ray Stevens perform. I'll try to ask his security to let me see him back stage. I want to ask him what that psychic told him 47 years ago. Everyone, doctors, patients and staff at the Vanderbilt Intervention Center had on masks. I know an elderly couple in my church. The wife texted me as I was at Vanderbilt. Her husband was in Saint Thomas West Hospital. He has Afib, but they found a blood clot in his heart. I believe that he had recovered from Covid-19, but that virus causes blood clots even after one has recovered. Wearing face masks in public should be mandatory.

I try to put a little humor in my stories and I will write a few things about chickens. When drafting my stories I use the Notes apps on my smart phone. A Channel 5 TV traffic warning came across the Iphone 6: “Chickens in cages on a flatbed truck spilled onto Interstate 40 and caused traffic delays in Nashville. The spilled chickens led to a ripple

effect in traffic delays on 1-24, 1-65, and 1-40.” The TV station showed an aerial view of a few broken cages on the side of the road. It showed about 12 chicken fatalities. I know a thing or two about chickens.

Paula and I live in an old house in the middle of a farm. We just own the house and an acre of land. My brother-in-law, Roger Garner and his wife, Marsha live next to us. Roger has a horse, several beagle dogs, and chickens. He likes to have fresh eggs for breakfast. Every morning about a half dozen of his chickens come into my yard, led by a rooster. This rooster must think that I don't own an alarm clock. This rooster likes to get by my bedroom window and lets his hens know that he is the boss. He crows about three times, wakes me up, and then leaves. When I hear that rooster I'm reminded about Luke, Chapter 22, Verse 34: “I tell you Peter,” Jesus said, “the rooster will not crow tonight until you have said three times that you do not know me.”

I start each day and thank Jesus for those that love me. I know that I would not be alive and writing stories except for Christ. In 2000, Darrell Scott wrote the song, “It's a Great Day to Be Alive.” I like some of his lyrics such as: “I got rice cooking in the microwave. I got a three day beard I don't plan to shave. It's a goofy thing but I just gotta say, hey I'm doing alright. Yeah I think I'll make me some home- made soup. I'm feeling pretty good and that's the truth. It's neither drink nor drug induced, no, I'm just doing alright. And it's a great day to be alive. I know the sun's still shining when I close my eyes. There's some hard times in the neighborhood, but why can't every day be just this good. It's been fifteen years since I left home. I said good luck to every seed I've sown. Gave it my best and then I left it alone. I hope they're doing it alright. Now I look in the mirror and what do I see? A lone wolf there looking back at me. Sometimes it's only me and the shadows that fill the room. Sometimes I'm falling, desperately calling...” Country singer Travis Tritt puts some strong emotions into singing that song. You can watch him perform on YouTube. There is one lyric in that song that is appropriate to what is happening in America today: “There's tough times in the neighborhood...” The 44 million people unemployed are having tough times.

In previous stories I've written a few things about the four adults that first receive my stories in the mail. The late writer Jesse Stuart wrote things about fictitious people. In this story, I write a few thing about the four adults that first receive my stories in the mail. The first person is Patricia “Trish” Cunningham. She went to high school with my son, John. I was a Kentucky State Trooper at that time.

Trish first worked at Western State Hospital. For the past 20 or so years, she has worked at Flynn Enterprises in Hopkinsville. Seventeen years ago, she brought a tiny baby named Jade to church in a child's car seat. There was a small oxygen bottle with the baby. She weighted two pounds and four ounces when she was born. She was not expected to live. She has cerebral palsy and she fought through so much. I called her a miracle baby. Trish is her godmother. I've been an usher at the church for more years than I can remember. I am usually in the back of the church and I sit in one of the chairs behind the church choir. This allows me to assist late comers to their pew. Trish sings in the choir. Sunday after Sunday, Trish would bring this baby to church. Sundays became years and the baby

became a child and she liked to sit next to this old churchman. I would let her play with my rings, my watch and my tie. I told her that she had to be good if she wanted me to give her a peppermint after the church service. I began to sing in the church choir with Trish and Jade.

The second person that I mail my stories to is Mike Herndon. We were in the first class of the then UK Hopkinsville Community College (HCC). He became a newspaper reporter and then editor of the Hopkinsville New Era. He taught part-time before retiring. I think of Mike as a good friend. We share a history going back to the 1960s and the 1970s. He moved to Richmond, Kentucky. He came to HCC's 50th Anniversary. Although I had degrees from Murray State, I did not graduate from HCC. I asked the college to give me an AA degree. HCC said, "No." I would have to demonstrate that I was computer literate. I would have to take a computer course. HCC gave me a scholarship to pay the tuition for the course. My oldest granddaughter, Andrea gave me her old computer text book. My next to the oldest granddaughter, Heather gave me her old laptop. The course was taught online. HCC invited me to walk the graduation line as the oldest graduate, at age 70. My wife, Paula, my son, John, and Andrea came to the graduation. Also, Skyler, Lexie and their mom, Loretta came. HCC gave Mike Herndon a long over due trophy. We had our picture taken together with my son. Mike encourages me to continue writing stories for posterity.

The third person that I mail my stories to is my family physician, Dr. Daniel Butler. If my memory serves me correctly, he is a former New Orleans medical examiner. He decided to raise his daughters in a more hospitable and safer city. So he moved his family to Murray, Kentucky. Years ago, at an Oakley Reunion, held in the Land Between the Lakes, Dr. Butler's daughter came with her fiancée. The man is the grandson of my wife's best friend, Karen Hopkins. I wrote a story about the reunion and I gave Dr. Butler a copy of the story. I continued to give him other stories. I attended the marriage of his daughter at his house. I jokingly told him that if we had lived 100 years ago, I would have to pay him with chickens and eggs. I told him this because I would not make much money writing stories. Dr. Butler's "tinkering" has helped to keep this old writer alive. He is a deeply Christian doctor that rightly told me that it is Christ that keeps me alive.

In the first part of this story I mentioned chickens falling off a flatbed truck. If anyone should ask you this simple question: "Do you know what came first, the chicken or the egg?" You might ponder it first. They did not teach logic in high school, but I believe the best answer to that riddle is another question: "What comes out of the egg?" I don't mind Roger's chickens being in my yard. They are a natural pest control and they eat bugs, insects, spiders and worms. They scratch down in the earth and eat grass grubs. The only chicken that is not welcomed is that stupid rooster that crows outside my bedroom window at 5:00 in the morning.

The fourth person that receives my stories is Audrey June Lambert. As Jade's mother, Mary Ann told me, "God puts other people in our life for a reason." That describes Audrey. There are no coincidences unknown to Christ. I believe that He allows and even makes things happen. The probabilities of two absolute strangers working together for no

reward or financial gain is astronomical. Audrey and I have never met in person. She is from Cookeville, Tennessee. Her parents moved to Michigan. She retired from the Postal Service as did her husband Mike. I was in Cookeville a few years ago to see a Mayo Clinic trained spine surgeon. He is the only one in all of Kentucky and Tennessee. Paula and I had lunch in a restaurant. I decided to write a story about that restaurant. I was told to contact Audrey by email for assistance. I used her research for the story. I gave her a copy of that story and continued to give her copies of other stories that she graciously puts on her web page. Anyone can read and copy those stories. The main thing that Audrey, Trish, Mike, Dr. Butler, Jade, Skyler and Lexie have in common is that they are Christian people that believe in Jesus Christ. As long as Christ allows me to craft stories, I shall continue to write. And rainy days and Mondays will not get me down.

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

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