

THE WRITER'S MEMORIES

By John F. Hall

As a writer, I like to write about memories. Other writers do a much better job than me. Sandra Town Lytle wrote a short piece titled "Misty Moms and Memories." These are her words: "In this, the Autumn of my life, I hope and pray my years will be as golden as the leaves of Fall and filled with friends and gaiety. May I be blessed with hours to dream and strolls beside a turquoise sea, where misty moms and memories and shells inspire my poetry."



Alan Bergman, Marilyn Bergman, and Marvin Hamlisch wrote the song "The Way We Were." These are their lyrics: "Memories, light the corners of my mind. Misty watercolor memories of the way we were. Scattered pictures of the smiles we left behind. Smiles we gave to one another for the way we were. Can it be that it was so simple then? Or has time re-written every line? If we had the chance to do it all again tell me, would we? Could we? Memories may be beautiful and yet what's too painful to remember we simply choose to forget. So it's the laughter we remember, whenever we remember, the way

we were, the way we were."

My old house on Dyers Hill was built 160 years ago, and it has accumulated a little mold. My son, John brought over two foggers. I taped off the house vents and my son put one fogger in the crawl space. I put the other fogger in the first floor bedroom. My wife, Paula and I had to leave the house for six hours to let it air out. I closed the doors to the two upstairs bedrooms. They were mold free. We drove to Murray, Kentucky and watched the high school band competition held at the Roy Stuart stadium on the campus of Murray State University. We just sat in the car and watched. The Muhlenberg County High School had two simulated smoke stacks that shot out confetti. It was very creative, and unusual. Paula was in the Trigg County High School Band where she played the flute. Watching the bands compete brought back memories from her high school days being in the band. Memories, precious memories.

I start each day with a little prayer. Christ sets things in motion that we do not comprehend at the time. He gives His grace upon grace upon grace when it is most needed. Coming back from Hopkinsville, on the Eagle Way Bypass, I was behind four other vehicles. We were making a left turn onto Highway 68. I was looking at my rear view mirror and I noticed a fully loaded grain truck about seven car lengths behind me. I was not sure if I was going to be able to make the turn before the traffic light turned red. I thought the grain truck would have to stop. I heard a sound and I looked again at my rear view mirror. The driver did not stop and he made the turn going too fast. I watched in awe as the truck flipped over and dumped the freshly picked corn off to the side of the road and into the grass. I called 911 on my cell phone, but I was routed to Todd County 911. I was told to hang up and dial 911 again. I managed to get through to the Christian County 911. I told the dispatcher about the accident. I turned around and went back to the over turned grain truck. I told the Christian County Sheriff Deputy, standing by the truck,

what I saw. I asked if he needed any thing from me. He said “No.” So I made a u-turn and drove back to Cadiz.

One of the reasons for my trip to Hopkinsville was to get Jade Hakes a birthday present for her 18th birthday. I first met her when Trish Cunningham, her godmother, brought her to church when she was a baby. Over the next ten years, Trish would bring her to church. I served as an usher and Trish sang in the choir. Jade, to make a long story short, just decided that I belonged to her. Jade moved to Russelleville, Kentucky with her mother Maryann and stepfather Bill Trembly. I have not seen her for two years. I’m also an adopted grandfather to Skyler and Lexie Crisp. Their dad, Jason, is a Major in the Army. I mail my stories to Jade, Skyler, Lexie, Trish, Audrey, and Daniel.

Life yields many circumstances that we cannot avoid. As mortals, our bodies grow frail, and our mental capacities begin to diminish over the years. I feel the frailties and the inadequacies of my worn out body. The fatigue and pain from my rheumatoid arthritis gets me down some days. Sometimes I long for the yesterday’s when I could run like the wind. John Lennon and Paul McCartney wrote the song “Yesterday.” I will only use a few of their lyrics: “Yesterday, all my troubles seemed so far away. Now it looks as though they’re here to stay. Oh, I believe in yesterday. Suddenly, I’m not half the man I use to be. There’s a shadow hangin’ over me. Oh, yesterday came suddenly...”

Herbert Kretzmer and Charles wrote the song “Yesterday When I was Young.” Their lyrics tell so much about life and the many things that some people do. These are their lyrics: “It seems the love I’ve known has always been the destructive kind. I guess that’s why now I feel so old before my time. Yesterday when I was young the taste of life was as sweet as rain upon my tongue. I teased at life as if it were a foolish game. The way the evening breeze may tease a candle flame. The thousand dreams I dreamed, the splendid things I planned, I always built to last on weak and shifting sand. I lived by night and shunned the naked light of the day. And only now I see how the years ran away. Yesterday when I was young so many happy songs were waiting to be song. So many wild pleasures lay in store for me. And so much pain my dazzled eyes refused to see. I ran so fast that time and youth at last ran out. I never stopped to think what life was all about. And every conversation I can now recall concerned itself with me and nothing else at all. Yesterday the moon was blue. And every crazy day brought something new to do. I used my magic age as if it were a wand and never saw the waste and emptiness beyond. The game of love I played with arrogance and pride. And every flame I lit too quickly, quickly died. The friends I made all seemed somehow to drift away. And only I am left on stage to end the play. There are so many songs in me that won’t be song. I feel the bitter taste of tears on my tongue. The time has come for me to pay for yesterday when I was young.”

I like the power in their lyric about being the only one left on stage to end the play. William Shakespeare was spot on when he wrote: “All the world’s a stage, and all the men and women merely players; they have their exits and entrances; and one man in his time plays many parts. And I’ve played many parts from soldier to lawman; from

historian to teacher. But if I succeeded as mentor, then my memories, as a writer will live on. I find that I am happiest when I write and can give honor and glory to my Creator.

John F. Hall

*Read other stories by John F. Hall and others at: <http://www.ajlambert.com>