



Bear Mountain

**Amos Hawkins
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BEAR MOUNTAIN Bear Facts



- The picture above is of a Grizzly Bear. They are a sub species of the Brown Bear and differentiated from the Brown Bear by the silver color of their fur; however, some people use the words Brown Bear and Grizzly Bear interchangeably. The Brown Bear including the Grizzly is the second largest native mammal in North America, the Polar Bear being the largest. Below is a list of facts about the Grizzly that I found interesting.
- A Grizzly Bear normally can weigh between 300 to 850 pounds, but just before hibernation can run up to as much as 1500 pounds!
- A Grizzly will measure from the ground to the top of his hump 3 to 3 1/2 feet.
- Preparing for hibernation a Grizzly can gain 3 pounds a day.
- The Grizzly Bear has a hump just behind the neck and above the shoulders which distinguishes them from other bears. This hump is solid muscle.
- The length of a Grizzly is between six and seven feet, yet when he stands he will measure between 7 and 9 feet tall!
- When he is running, he can go as fast as 30 to 35 miles per hour! Not too many creatures he might be chasing can go that fast-people included.
- A Grizzly eats all kinds of things-vegetables, berries, fruit, nuts and other mammals such as rodents. He is omnivorous.
- The Grizzly's ears are rounded and not pointed such as the Black Bear.

- A Grizzly can hear very well close by and from long distances.
- The Grizzly has a very keen sense of smell. He can smell food a long distance away! His sense of smell is better than any dog.
- A Grizzly Bear is anti-social except at mating time.
- The male Grizzly is very aggressive most of the time. Most opponents get that idea rather quickly when attacked.
- The Grizzly Bear's claws are not curved like a Black Bear's and feline's, they stick straight out, so he cannot climb trees.
- The female grizzly can have babies once a year with two usually being born at a time.
- The female grizzly is smaller than the male.
- The dog is a close relative of bears.
- Theodore Roosevelt, then president of the USA, went grizzly bear hunting one time. The group had looked all day for a bear and late in the day they found an old, wounded bear and Theodore refused to shoot the wounded bear. A political cartoonist drew a picture depicting Roosevelt refusing to shoot the bear. After seeing the cartoon a woman made a stuffed bear and showed it to others. Other people, little girls especially, thought the stuffed bear cute and lovable with the result that stuffed bears were made and sold as Teddy Bears. Roosevelt's nick name was Teddy.
- I need to mention here that because one does not know the intentions of any bear that one comes upon, one should avoid them. To run from them would be a bad mistake as they can run faster than people and it also draws their attention to you. Stand still and do not make any gestures at the bear. He would think that you were attempting to kill him. The best thing to do is to slowly walk backwards away from him until you are a safe distance from him Make certain that there are no other bears behind you.
- Never get close to a bear to take pictures especially flash pictures. Use a telephoto lens or take pictures at a safe distance and crop your pictures
- A flash bulb to him looks like a flash from gun barrel.
- **UNLESS YOU CAN RUN SIXTY MILES AN HOUR AND CLIMB TREES QUICKLY, YOU SHOULD TAKE THIS INFORMATION SERIOUSLY!!!**

DISCLAIMER

This is a fictional story is about a little girl that plays with a Grizzly Bear. Most Grizzly bears will eat or kill anybody that tries to play with them. In addition, you should never try to feed a grizzly bear because, if you do, you will be desert.

The safest bear to play with is a Teddy Bear. All the rest have sharp teeth and claws that they will not hesitate to use on you.

A.H.

Preface
Big Bear's Life

As a one month old grizzly cub, he had been abandoned by his mother for some reason. A man from the circus discovered the cute little cub almost dead from starvation. He decided that it would be good to have the cub in the circus side show. After nourishing the little bear cub back to health, he gave it to a little girl in the circus that had grown fond of the cub. She trained the cub for a side show with love and kindness.

Her show was enjoyed by patrons more than any other side show at the circus. The cub grew to his full size and was exceptionally huge, but this little girl kept her show going to the delight of the audience. They enjoyed watching the bear do stunts and tricks at her command.

Before, the sword swallowing act had been the most popular with the audience, but the new bear act had now exceeded it in popularity. One of the sword swallows was insanely jealous of the little girl because everyone was coming to see her act and not his. He decided that if he killed the bear, she would no longer have an act. He took one of the swords used in his act and made his way to the bear's cage at night. The swords used in the swallowing act are not sharp on the edges, but are still deadly sharp at the point.

As he came near the cage, the bear sensed that he was up to no good and was ready for him. The man opened the grizzly bear's cage door and thrust the sword toward the bear's heart. The bear instinctively shoved the blade to the side with his paw causing it to miss him entirely. The bear grabbed the man's arm with his mouth and then slung him around like a rag doll. The man dropped the sword as there were no bones in his arm that were left unbroken. The man was slung against the ground and the steel bars of the cage a number of times breaking other bones as well. The bear could have easily killed him, but only meant to frighten him.

The little girl, as well as others, heard all of the screaming and went to see what was going on. The little girl got to the cage just in time to see her bear disappearing into the night on a mountain near by. That mountain was Totto (tut'too) Mountain. The sword was found at the scene and the man later confessed what he had planned. Even though he did not succeed at harming the bear, the bear was gone so the girl had no bear for her act.

The little girl hunted and called for her bear friend on Totto and could not find him. She had spent days hunting and calling for the bear. The circus eventually had to move on to another town. The little girl was devastated about having to leave her bear behind, but it had to be.

In the meantime, the bear ate rodents and berries from the side of the mountain and fished the waters of Totto Creek. One day he went over the mountain to fish in the Ibo (ee'bow) River. He started to fish when he noticed another little girl (Annie) playing with a little dog. The bear remembered his days with the little girl in the circus and longed to play with this little girl. He went over to where she was playing with the little dog. The dog saw the bear and barked incessantly. Annie was too young to know the dangers of bears. The bear approached Annie and began doing some of the stunts he had been taught. Annie just sat on the ground laughing.

Because of his huge size, Annie was a little timid around the bear at first, but when the grizzly had finished all of his stunts, she went over to him and gave him a hug around the neck. After this Annie began to play with the bear and her little dog. She showed the bear where the berry patch was and he helped himself. When Annie went home, she didn't tell her parents about the bear because they had never asked her about her little friends on the mountain. This bear was very friendly toward people and never meant any harm to anyone – not even the man with the sword.

This bear was a **BIG** grizzly bear! Measuring from the base of one ear to the other ear base was 12 inches. From the end of his nose to the back of his skull measured one and one half feet. From the ground to the top of the hump on his shoulder was four feet. From the tip of his nose to his back end was six and one half feet. His legs were three feet long so when he stood on his hind legs, he was over nine feet tall. When he ran he could easily do 35 mph because of his long legs and body length. He was probably one of the largest grizzly bears in the world and most certainly, the kindest.

Annie named her grizzly, 'Big Bear'. Although she kept him a secret from the family at first, his existence became known when he nearly died protecting Annie during a tornado. While the family learned to accept Big Bear's presence, others in the area were not so accepting.

Although Annie and her grizzly bear had been on TV, there were some people in the area that considered the story to be a myth. Annie's teacher had a 'Show and Tell' time. During that time, the children would bring something to show and share with the class. Annie got up in front of the class and told them about Big Bear, but then said that she couldn't bring him to class because he was too big. The teacher had not heard of Big Bear before, so she reminded Annie that Show and Tell had to be about something that was real.

Annie was hurt by that remark, and some of the other kids that had been to Annie's house spoke up, and acknowledged being to her house and playing with Annie and her bear. However, the teacher was not swayed and made Annie carry a note home that essentially said that she needs to learn how to tell the truth.

Annie's mother read the note and called the teacher and asked her to come to the house. The teacher did the next day and was greeted by none other than a tall grizzly bear named Big Bear. The teacher opened her car door and ran into the house for protection. Suddenly, the teacher no longer believed that Annie was a liar. As the teacher left, Big Bear ran up to her and gave her a big slurpy lick right on her face. Although the teacher was terrified, she quickly realized that Big Bear had not harmed her. This was Big Bear's way of giving someone a kiss.

Big Bear became a part of the family and was respected and not feared by them. In return Big Bear watched over their place and sent the unwanted on their way. This is how Big Bear became part of Annie's family. Her little dog and Big Bear lived out their lives with Annie and her people knowing that they were the luckiest animals in the world.

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Chapter One The Courtship of Ann and Bill

There is a place where a mountain rises above the flat plain about it like a rooster comb. The mountain, Totto (Tut'-too) has trees (Mostly Cedar and White Pine) on its sides up to the snow line that may never have been touched by man. These trees average six to eight feet in diameter. The top of the mountain has several shorter peaks before the main peak of the mountain rises with its snow cap. There is a small glacier on a flat area on the snow cap.

One side of the Totto descends to a plateau that reaches out about a fourth of a mile. At the outer edge of the plateau is a cliff that varies in height from 100 to 150 feet to the bottom land below. This bottom land goes for about 200 yards to the Ibo (ee'bow) River. Across the Ibo this bottom land extends for miles in all directions only interrupted in places by huge boulders projecting upward from the earth. This makes the place look a little like Stonehenge in England.

The plateau is covered with a beautiful cacophony of colors from wild flowers in the spring of the year. The bottom land is also covered with flowers, but of a different kind. The soil on the plateau is very poor and shallow. It does not support large plant life. For this reason there are only two or three trees on the whole plateau. Underneath the soil on the plateau is solid, white marble rock. This plateau follows the mountain to its end.

The bottom land soil is thicker. It is about two or three feet thick and a lot richer than on the plateau. The bottom land is mostly silt deposited when the Ibo overflowed its banks years ago. There is also some muck that has been building up for years. Along the banks of the Ibo, some reeds, bushes such as cattails, Willows, blackberry bushes and Elders grow there.

The other side of Totto comes down all the way to the bottom land. About fifty feet from the mountain is Totto Creek. It has plenty of fish, huge crabs and all kinds of turtles. People come from all over the area to fish in Totto Creek. I don't mind them coming to fish as long as they abide by the law and have a license.

Scientist and Geologists claim that this area was made by a collision of the earth with an asteroid millions of years ago. There is no rim around the area or even a part of one. I am not certain that it was made from an asteroid. It appears to me to be more of an upheaval from underneath the surface. Perhaps an earthquake of huge proportions caused by the movement of the tectonic plates of rock that are under everything and move occasionally shaking all the earth above them.

The Ibo River is more of a canal than a river. It is about twenty feet deep in the channel and three feet deep at the channel edge, narrowing to the shore. The channel is about 200 feet wide. Water for the river is primarily from the melting snow and ice on Totto. The center of the river has a strong current that keeps everything moving because of a falls about a mile down stream. The falls are seventy-five feet high and two hundred feet wide. The falls are caused by a rift in the plain where the floor of the plain drops suddenly down and the Ibo drops over the edge of a cliff that is formed. It is a beautiful sight in the winter with the spray of the falls going into the cold air releasing heat and causing a thick fog. Some people come in the winter just to see that sight. I have put flood lights of different colors to shine on the falls with spectacular results.

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I put the hydroelectric plant for the house near the house and from the Ibo River when I developed this area. Later, I put a larger plant at the falls which produces electricity for the entire area. All electric and phone lines are underground which allows the area to maintain its pristine appearance.

The Ibo is host to a number of fish and aquatic creatures. Some types of fish come up the river to spawn while others swim around the cattails and reeds near shore eating the plenty supplied by God. Although it gets below freezing in the winter, the Ibo never freezes completely over because of the swift current.

In the winter after a new snow has swept in, all of this land is draped with a beautiful white blanket of snow on which only animal and bird tracks can be seen. The Ibo can be seen snaking its way through the snow with some willows, blackberry bushes and elders laden with snow hanging over the water.

The soil being very shallow does its best, but the only permanent living plants that can be seen on the plateau are wild flowers which do not call for deep roots. The bottom land can and does support trees and shrubs.

In the spring of the year when every thing is beginning to awaken from its winter sleep, the trees on the mountain turn beautiful shades of green and all the wild flowers of every color are blooming on the plateau and the bottom land. In the fall the leaves of the trees on the mountain turn varied colors of red, yellow and orange making the place look ever so much like a valuable oil panting.

All of this has drawn me to make this the place where I will live and rear my family! I am a twenty-two year old man with much work ahead of me to make a nice home for my family and something of the land.

I am not a native of this area, but my girlfriend is. Her people live on a small farm about six miles from here on the plain. She has four brothers and six sisters. The family lives in an old two story house that was built in the 1800's. The house is divided into four sections down stairs. There are four large rooms downstairs-the living room, the dining room, the kitchen and one bedroom. The upstairs has a partition through the center of it. The boys sleep on one side of the partition and the girls on the other side.

The entire family has naturally curly, red hair and good looks. My girlfriend, Ann, is the tallest of the family, but the others are no midgets. All of them, including her parents, are over six feet tall. The whole family is loving and caring, not just to their own family, but to all who are around them.

Totto Mountain can be seen from her home with its snow capped peak. It is a little like looking North from Jerusalem and seeing snow capped Mount Herman in the distance.

There was a young fellow buying land in the area. His name was Bill and he was handsome. A number of the girls in town were trying to get his attention, but he paid them no attention. He was looking at the beauty of the land and not girls. Ann had not seen him for she was not looking for a good looking man. She was a working girl in a store. She had to keep her mind on what she was doing.

Bill was born to a very loving and caring Christian Family. They loved to take hikes and observe the beauty of God's creation. One day Bill's father convinced his mother to go with him up a mountain to view something that he had happened to see one day. Bill was nine years old so he went with his mother and father on this hike.

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They climbed this mountain up to the snow line and tried to go on up, but not having the proper shoes they walked just below the snow line to a huge cliff. They climbed above the snow line again slipping and sliding. By grabbing saplings as they went they made it to the top of the cliff and were just going across the top when the top of the cliff broke off and slid down one hundred feet to the bottom carrying Bill's mother and Father with it and depositing Bill in a large bush that cradled him. He grabbed the limbs of the bush and hung on.

Bill's father had made arrangements at the ranger station near by that if they did not call or see him by the next morning they were to send out a rescue party. The rescue party went out the next morning as arranged. They came to the huge cliff and found the remains of Bill's parents.

The rescue party climbed to the top of the cliff and yelled to see if anyone was alive there. Bill tried to yell back, but his voice was not heard easily. One of the rescue crew got on his belly with a rope around one leg and slid on out to the edge of the cliff. As he neared the edge of the cliff he could hear faint yells for help. When he got to the edge of the cliff and looked over he could see something or someone lodged in a bush growing from the side of the cliff. He yelled to the other crew members that there was someone or something caught in the branches of a bush on the side of the cliff and for them to pull him back so he could take a rope out and send it down to the bush.

The crew pulled the one near the edge back and made a loop on the end of another rope with a slip knot so the loop would tighten around Bill. They weighted the line down with a rock so the rope would go where they wanted it to go. There was a strong updraft from the cliff.

The crew tied the other end of the rope to a small tree and the crew member slid out to the edge of the cliff on his belly again and dropped the rope down to the bush. The line dropped down to the bush and the crew member told Bill to grab the rope.

Bill yelled back up, "It is not close enough for me to get and I'm afraid to let go to grab it!"

"I'll try to get it closer to you and when it gets close enough grab it with one hand and hang onto the bush with the other. Can you reach it now?"

"Yes I have it now."

"Now you place the loop over your head and under your arms. Do you understand that and can you do that?"

"Yes, I can do it and have done that. Do you want me to pull the rope tight around me?"

"Yes. When you have done that, hold onto the rope and let go of the bush. When you have done that pull the rope to let us know you are ready to come up. As we pull you, keep pushing yourself away from the rock cliff. Not big pushes but enough to keep you from bumping the cliff. If you bump the cliff you may get hurt."

Bill gave the rope a gentle pull and the crew began pulling him up. In a minute or two, Bill could see the top of the cliff and the crew helped him over the top of the cliff and back on more solid ground, Just then there was a rumble and the whole side of the cliff sheared off again and fell to the bottom taking Bill's bush with it. One of the crew said, "Praise the Lord that we got him when we did!"

"Bill spoke up and said, " Praise the Lord that he held that section up until you got me up here."

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"You have that right, son." another crew member said as they began checking to see that he was all right. After that they all went down from the mountain. The next day they turned Bill over to Family Services and they sent him to a foster home. Bill was in a foster home until he was 18. His foster parent had been very nice to him and allowed him to work when he was old enough. Bill put all of his money he made into the bank. After a while he had a large sum in the bank and someone introduced him to how stocks and bonds work. He took some of his money from the bank and put it into bonds and stocks. He found that he made more money in stocks than he did in bonds, so he put the bulk of his money in stocks. He Began to study how the stocks varied from day to day. He found some were rising rapidly in value and some were not. He took some of his money out of some stocks and put it into those that were rising in value quicker. When those stocks were at a certain value, he would sell. People at the market began to call him the wizard of the stock market.

When Bill was 18, he was a millionaire and he could now leave his foster parents. By the time he turned 21, he had become a billionaire. At that time, the country didn't have that many billionaires and he was the only one under the age of 25.

Bill had gone over the country looking for the spot that he thought would be the ideal place for his future home. He had found a place near Totto Mountain that he thought was the prettiest place in the world. He made arrangements with the seller for the property and was to sign for it the next day.

Bill went into a restaurant to get a lunch and look out the front window as he ate. If this was to be his home he needed to see some of the people.

Ann was walking down the street in front of the restaurant and she saw a handsome young man that was a stranger looking out of the window. Ann smiled at the man and he jumped out of his seat and rushed out and caught up with her. He asked her to come in and have lunch with him.

"Why should I? I don't even know you!"

"I thought that maybe you would hate to see a handsome stranger sit and eat by himself,"

"OK I will if you will behave. Being that you have asked so nicely, I'll eat with you."

"I will 'behave'. That's my middle name."

"And what is your first name?" Ann snickered.

"I am called, Bill. What is your name".

"I am called Ann and if you misbehave I will crack you over the head and they will be calling you shorty." Ann laughed as she said this. Ann would never have done this normally, but for some reason she felt compelled to eat with this stranger.

"I tell you what. You order what you want and I'll order then we can sit and exchange insults." Ann looked at him and laughed aloud. He called the waitress for menus. When they got them they ordered what they wanted and sat waiting for their meals to come. They talked to learn things about each other.

Ann was well known in the town for she was a basketball star and a star of about any sport she was ever in. The people on the street gathered around to see what would happen. When Ann agreed to eat with Bill they all dispersed.

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Bill proposes to Ann

Bill looked at Ann and in all seriousness told Ann, “I am here to buy some of the most beautiful land I have ever seen. I would very much like for you to come with me to see it. Could I take you over there to see it now?”

Ann looked at Bill, “You have got to be kidding! I have to be back to work by 12:30 and it is twenty after now. I’ll have to take you up on that at another time.”

“I’m glad to know that you will see me another time. How about tomorrow at noon? I’ll see you tomorrow at noon here and take you to the land I will have bought by then. I plan to build *our* house on that property, someday soon.”

Ann heard what he had said, but decided to not correct him on it just yet.

The next day at noon Ann was at the restaurant waiting for Bill. Bill drove up in a beautiful red convertible that he had just bought. Ann got in and they went to see the house site Bill had purchased the day before. As they pulled up to the place, Ann looked out and saw the flowers in bloom all over and the entire scene and saw how beautiful it really was.

Bill looked at Ann and said, “I plan to build *our* home here. Nestled back against the cliff. I hope you don’t mind. I have taken the liberty of getting a lunch packed. I thought that being you are so nice as to come out here on your lunch time with me, the least I could do was to bring a picnic lunch with me for the two of us.”

Bill opened the trunk of his car and took out a big cooler with their picnic lunch in it. Everything was wrapped in wrappers to keep it sanitary and clean. Bill spread a large, white table cloth on the ground and pulled all the lunch out of the cooler and placed some before Ann

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and some before him. "I noticed what you ate yesterday and asked the restaurant to wrap that same order in wrappers to go. If you prefer to sit in a chair, I have one in the trunk."

"You have to be the most persistent person I have ever seen! I thank you for this lunch and I will sit on the ground and eat. Now this whole thing is very thoughtful of you. I still have to be back by 12:30."

With that said, Bill bowed his head and said a short prayer of thanks and they began to eat. "I wanted to bring you out here so you can see the place where we will live when we are married."

"You stop that! You haven't proposed and I don't know anything about you."

With this said, Bill got down on one knee in front of Ann and said, "Ann, its true that I have only known you for a short time, but I have prayed for God to show me the girl he wanted me to marry. I prayed for that each time I prayed. Then yesterday when you walked by the window in the restaurant and looked in and smiled, God let me know that I best catch you for you were the girl he wanted me to have. Will you do me the honor of becoming my wife?"

Ann sat stunned for a moment or two and then replied, "You apparently have a lot of money which makes no difference to me. The man I marry must show me respect, love me and not treat me like a slave. He must love me and care for me like himself for if I marry him I believe the Bible where it says that we become as one flesh. Anyone who mistreats their wife would be treating there own flesh badly. If you would let me, I would like to have time to think about this and talk to my parents about this. Then I will give you my answer."

"You may have all the time you need to think about it, but I want the privilege to date you. May I take you to dinner tonight?"

"You may take me to dinner tonight. It may help me to make up my mind." Ann said all of this with a smile on her face.

Bill looked at Ann and said, "Has anyone told you that you have a most beautiful and captivating smile?"

Ann just smiled at him and started to pick things up to put them in the cooler. Bill helped and then put the cooler back in the car.

As they drove back to her place of work, she sat close to Bill and smiled down at him for she was about a foot taller than he.

That afternoon she made a lot of bumbles in her work. She had fallen in love with this fellow she hardly knew.

Bill was feeling the same. He was even having second thoughts about what he had done. He hardly knew this beautiful young lady and here he had proposed to her! Bill thought it had to be the will of God.

When Ann's brother came by to pick her up after work to take her home, he noticed the foggy look on Ann's face. "What is the matter Sis. You don't seem to be your usual self."

"I am not my usual self, brother dear. I have been proposed to and I don't know what to answer him."

"WOW! You certainly do have a lot to be thinking about. Do you want to talk with me about it? Do I know the guy?"

"I would like to talk to the whole family about it and get some of their ideas. I can't do it tonight for the two of us are going out for supper."

"If you are going to get our thoughts, you are going to have to get with us."

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"I realize that. Why don't we make it tomorrow evening and I'll have him come and meet the family at that time?"

"That sounds like good logic. I think you are the smartest sister I have. I know you will do what is right."

"I think he really is in love with me. He offered me a choice of the kind of life I wanted to live. A high social life or the life I now live. A mansion and servants or a simple little house. He seems to have the money to buy whatever he wants."

"You be careful that he isn't trying to buy you."

"I don't believe that of him, but I will know more about him this evening. I don't care how much money he has. If I marry him, it will be because I love him and he loves me and will care for me and be kind to our children."

During that day before Bill was to see Ann, people were offering to sell their barren land to Bill. They began to call Bill 'That crazy man that is buying that worthless land over by Totto Mountain'. The people kept selling to Bill until he had 100,000 acres of land secured.

That evening Bill came by the house in his red convertible to pick up Ann and said to the family that he would take all of them to supper, if they wanted. The family was mixed on what they wanted. Bill then said to them that he would make that a date for the next night when all of them could get their things in order to go. The family agreed to that.

Bob said, "You realize, I hope, that there are twelve of us involved."

"I thank you for reminding me of that, but that is no problem and when we go I want each of you to buy what you want regardless of the price. If you buy cheap, it will make me look cheap. Order what you want just eat what you order. My mother taught me to always eat all I order."

Ann went with Bill that evening. They ate in the same restaurant they had been to before. After that they walked on the street and passed some stores and then they came to a jewelry store. This was an old time store with a big pocket watch on a metal post in front. Bill asked Ann if she would like to go in and look around. Ann agreed. They went in and looked around and Bill asked the owner if he had any engagement rings different from what he had out. The jeweler looked at Bill and asked, "And what did you have in mind?"

"I think a large diamond of about five carats in the center and small diamonds on the side with matching wedding bands."

"I believe I have just what you want. Come with me." Ann and Bill followed the jeweler to a private room, he seated Bill and Ann at a little table and then went to the safe and brought out what Bill had asked for. The jeweler opened the case and showed Bill the ring. There was a large diamond in the center with smaller diamonds on the perimeter of the setting. The diamonds glittered in the light with all kinds of colors emerging from them.

"That is exactly what I had in mind. May I take it out and try it on Ann's finger to see how it looks." Ann could hardly believe the size of the diamond.

"You certainly may."

Bill took the ring out of the case and took Ann's left hand and slid the diamond on her finger. "That looks just right for a beautiful young lady" the jeweler remarked.

Bill looked at Ann and said, "I think he is right." Bill whispered to the jeweler, "I'll be back later to see you." With that he pulled the ring from Ann's finger and replaced it in the box.

"What do you think of it, Ann?"

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"I think it's gorgeous! Do you really think THAT much of me?"

"I don't just think that much of you, I love you that much and more."

They walked out of the store holding hands and walked on through the streets of the town until they were back to the restaurant and Bill's car. Bill opened the door for Ann to get in and after she was in, he closed the door, walked around to his side, got in and drove Ann on home. As they were about to say goodnight they embraced for the first time and kissed.

Ann's family has six girls and four boys. The oldest boy is Tom and the next one is Luke. Then there is John and Matthew. There was also a boy named Mark, but he died when he was a baby. Of the six girls, Lilly is the oldest and Ann is the second oldest, followed by Ruth, Naomi, Mary and Elizabeth. Their father's name is Bob and their mothers name is Lena. All twelve of them live on a 100 acre farm. They tried to eek out a living from that farm with antiquated equipment that was always breaking down.

That evening as Ann arrived home a little later than usual, the other girls were all in their bedroom waiting for Ann's return. When she came into the bedroom, all the girls started teasing her about having a boyfriend.

"How do you know about that?"

"Everybody in town knows about it. They say that you are going out with the crazy guy that is buying all that bad land."

"Let's get something straight about him, HE IS NOT CRAZY!"

"You didn't have to bite my head off about it!"

"I am sorry about that, Sis, but I have a lot to think about now and I do love him. He has a lot of money and has that 100,000 acres. I'm not worrying nor do I care about his money. I need to know if he really loves me and will treat me right as a wife."

Lilly looked at Ann and remarked, "Do you want me to see if he will try to get me?"

"No! You leave my man alone unless I have left him and he wants you."

"OK, Sister dear. I have tried to help you."

"I want all of my sisters to listen to what I have to say to you tonight. I have always thought that some of you would get married before me. I have always thought of myself as being the 'ugly duckling' no one would want to marry me because of my extreme height and size."

"For these reasons I have prayed in my private prayers at night for God to show me the man he wants me to have and who will in turn love me, be kind to me, and care for me and our children."

"The other day I walked by the window of this restaurant and he was sitting there looking out. I could look straight into the window and his face. I smiled at him. He smiled back and then ran out of the restaurant to catch up to me. He said that God spoke to him and told him that I was the girl for him and for him to catch up with me. That is how we met and if he is correct, nothing will stop us from being married and having a happy, long life together."

"Lilly, I always have thought that you would get married before me because when you are all fixed up you are absolutely beautiful!"

"Ruth, I have always thought of you as being the kind of girl that every man would love to have as their wife. You are smart and witty and can make a rock fall to pieces laughing at you."

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“Naomi, I always thought that you would get married before me because you have a natural beauty about you. A quality that any sensible man would want.”

“You other two girls are too young for me to be able to know that about you.”

“I want all of you to know that I love you as sisters. That will not change. Any time you want to come and visit me after I am married, feel free to come and visit.”

“If I should marry Bill, I want Lilly, Ruth and Naomi as Brides maids if you will be and I want Mary and Elizabeth to be my flower girls. Bill and I will pay for your gowns which will be long flowing evening type gowns. My gown will be the same except I will have a train and a veil. What do you all say to that?”

Lilly spoke up as usual, “I don’t know what the others think, but I am all for it.”

“We are for it too. Count us all in. We can’t let our sister down on her wedding day!” Naomi remarked.

Tears were running down all of their cheeks. This was a happy time for Ann and sad too, because they were not going to see their sister much anymore. Some were all grown up and they would all be parting soon and going their way in life. Ann would apparently be the first.

With that said, they all went to bed, but Ann could not sleep thinking of what she would answer Bill when she saw him next.

The next night Bill came to take them all out in a long, white limo. He told Bob and Lena that he couldn’t get all of them in a car so he hired the limo for the evening. The limo driver took them to a very fancy restaurant. They all went in and the maître d’ told Bill to wait a minute and he would see if they were ready for them. The maître d’ left and in a minute he returned and showed them this private room. There was a crescent shaped table there that they all were seated around. Bill and Ann were at the apex of the crescent.

In a few minutes a group of musicians came in and began to play chamber music softly. Then the waitress came and lit the candles on the table and then distributed the menus for the group to choose from. Everyone gave their order and Bill rose and spoke. “There will be dessert when you have finished the main meal. Eat and save room for the desserts.”

In a few minutes the waitress brought in the orders and gave them to the proper person. I don’t know how they do that. I would get it all mixed up. After everyone had their meal before them, Bill stood and returned thanks. The musicians then played soft music as the family ate. It was a very pleasant evening.

After everyone had finished eating Ann rose and began to speak, “Most of you do not know, but Bill has asked me to marry him. I have thought and prayed about it and I believe that God wants me to marry Bill. Bill, I will marry you.”

Bill jumped up from his chair knocking the chair over and gave Ann a big hug. He then reached into his pocket and pulled out an engagement ring with a huge diamond. This was the same one they had looked at the night before. He slid it on Ann’s finger and kissed her. Everyone applauded and stood. This was a happy time for all. As they all headed for the limo, the women ganged around Ann to see her beautiful ring and to congratulate her. Everyone was surprised for most of the family didn’t know Ann was serious about any man.

Bill and Ann made a nice couple. They set the date for their wedding and all the family watched the papers for the announcement to appear. That was when Tom saw something none of them had been aware of. There was a list of this country’s wealthiest men. Topping

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the list was Ann's future husband, Bill! Tom showed this to Bob and Lena and they showed it to Ann.

Ann looked at this and remarked, "I knew he had money, but I didn't know this. Apparently he wants to keep it a secret, so we tell no one. It is his business."

One day Bill came by and Tom and Bob were working on the old tractor with no luck. Bill saw this as he walked up and said, "I can cure your problem if you will go with me to the tractor and supply store. I will buy you the best tractor they have as a payment like dowry for Ann."

Tom looked around at Bill and said, "You are kidding aren't you?"

Bill looked at both of them and said, "If you will get in that car over there, I'll show you how much kidding I am doing." Bob and Tom both ran to get into his car.

At the tractor place, Bill told them to pick out the best tractor there. Tom and Bob came back in a few minutes with the cheapest and poorest made tractor on the lot. Bill took the salesman and told him what tractor he wanted them to have with all of the attachments. When they finished there, Bill went over to the Rotor-tillers and told the salesman he wanted two of them and a barrel of fuel for the tractor. The salesman figured all of this up and showed that to Bill. Bill checked it over and took out a check and paid the man for them with the stipulation that unless they could have them to Bob's house the next day with someone to assemble them and demonstrate how everything worked and fastened to the tractor, or there would be no deal. The salesman agreed and took the check which amounted to more than one hundred thousand dollars. The salesman had probably never had a check that big in his whole life.

Lena had been concerned because the farm and the gardens were not getting planted. She was calling the men lazy and other unkind things. Tom told her that they were waiting for a tractor to come that Bill had bought. Lena began to cry because money was being used for a new tractor.

"Lena, stop that! Tom told you that Bill bought it as dowry for Ann".

The next morning Lena was onto them again for not working. They told her again that they were waiting for the tractor. Before she could open her mouth again, Trucks with trailers loaded with the tractor and all its parts plus the rotor-tillers came in the drive.

Lena looked at all the trucks and said "Bob, I will never doubt you again!"

Bill came up to Lena and said, "To even this out a little, why don't I take all the ladies to town for a shopping spree. How does that sound?"

"Keep talking, son. You are now talking MY language!"

All the women piled into their car. Bill and Ann got into his car and they all went on a shopping spree. No objections were heard to that. Bill paid for all that they bought and the clerk mentioned to Bill that her house had burned down and she and her family were sleeping in the car with their only clothes on their backs. Bill sent her to get her necessities and told her when they found a house to live in he would pay for it also. She looked at him and asked, "What do I have to pay?" Bill assured her he expected nothing from her or her husband. Bill paid for her purchases and left with Ann for her family farm.

Ann sat next to Bill in the car and asked him, "Are you going to pay for things like that while the family and I starve?"

"Don't worry, honey. I won't let that happen. I'll explain why when you and I are alone.

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When they had arrived at home, Lena looked and everyone was working doing something. The gardens were about all planted and the farm was almost completely set out. Lena looked at Bill and said, "If I had known that a tractor would make this much difference, I would have gotten one before now!" Lena went to Bill and gave him a hug and a kiss on the cheek.

All the girls followed suite except Lilly. She was the last to show her appreciation and went to Bill and gave him a big hug and kissed him on the lips. Ann saw this and yelled to Lilly, "You can't have him, Lilly. He is already mine!"

Bill went to his land and built an access road from the main road to his place. He had roman arches put across the Ibo river to where his house would sit. Tom helped him cut trees on the mountain and then they brought the logs around to the place where they would saw them. They figured how many of each size of timber they would need. They sawed each kind and stacked them in like size stacks to dry. When they finished, they had all the lumber sawed and stacked to dry. They built an access bridge to the plateau and then quit the sawing for a while.

Tom said that they owed Bill a lot for getting the tractor and he was just trying to pay his indebtedness. He would have helped in the building, but Bill said that he and Ann would build it so they could have real pride in the house they built.

Ann is thin and 6'-11". She wears her beautiful red hair waist length and being naturally curly, it has a beauty of its own. Why she wanted me for her husband, I'll never know. Her mother told me that she had plenty of good looking fellows wanting to date her at school. I am blessed to have such a beautiful, Christian girlfriend!

I am slightly shorter at 5'-11" and she will look down at me with a smile on her face, a twinkle in her eye and remark, "You better behave yourself 'Shorty' or I will crush you like a fly!" Then she will laugh and kiss me on the head. I love her anyway and she came in handy when we built our first house.

I bought this land a year before we were married. I loved it so much that I found who owned the land next to mine and bought it for twenty five cents an acre. Other owners found out that I was buying this "worthless" land and offered me their land for twenty five cents an acre also.

This land looked like a moonscape. It was dry and rugged, but I could see something that everyone else apparently missed. The people in town were all a twitter about that "crazy" man who was buying worthless land. I feel that I have bought land that I can and will use, but not for what they think I should. When I finished buying land, I had over 100,000 acres! I now own land on both sides of the Ibo and land on both sides of Totto Mountain and also the mountain.

That sounds like a big expenditure, but when you think of the fact that I only paid twenty five cents an acre, that leads one to figure that I only paid \$25,000 for the whole thing. If I had bought land in town, I would have had to pay that much and more for just a lot! Owning this land makes me have a very cheap property that is very remote from my neighbors and very quiet! What am I going to do with it? I am not certain, but I will probably deed some to my children, if I have any.

Before Ann and I married, I found out who made her wedding dress and told them to charge Ann's family for half of what it cost and I would pay the rest. I did this for all of the

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items Ann's parents would have to pay for because I knew that they could not afford to pay the full price and I wanted Ann to have her big wedding. I have never told Ann or any one else as that would make her thoughts about her wedding seem cheap. That would spoil the whole thing. We had a BIG wedding with all her relatives and friends in attendance and half the town. Ann made the most beautiful bride I have ever seen. After Ann and I were married we lived with her parents until I could build.

Ann helped draw the oversized plans for the house and I built it with her help. We struggled with some of the beams and some of the heavy rafters, but we figured ways for them to be put in place without too much struggle. My 'come along' was a big help. Tom would have helped, but we wanted this to be our home that WE built.

We put up the trusses, the roof, the siding, the floor beams and the inside partitions. Everything was oversized to accommodate Ann's size. The ceilings had to be twelve feet, the kitchen cabinets had to be five feet high. Our bed had to be extra long to accommodate her long body.

We plastered the walls and painted the whole house four times. Twice with the primer and twice with the regular paint. We sanded the wood floors and shellacked them, sanded them again and then put on two coats of varnish. The house was a big job, but we were proud of the results. It was something that we had done ourselves! It was ALL ours!

Now we had to go shopping for furniture and other household items. If you haven't done that, you should, so you'll know how much that costs! We almost spent as much for furniture and the furnishings as I did for the whole one hundred thousand acres!

All of our furniture had to be special built to accommodate Ann's size and weight. The whole house and land are paid for and we don't owe anyone a cent! This makes us happy and able to sleep nights because we don't have that worry.

Some people may ask, "Where did a young man get all this money?"

If they really wish to know, I will be happy to show them. In the meantime it is none of their business other than the fact that I got it honestly.

After we did a little landscaping and sowed some grass seed, we invited the church people to come and share in the blessing of the place.

The Sunday came for the church members to come and come they did! Some came that I had never seen before at the church. After the blessing of the place, Ann served snacks. While the membership was eating, we heard people asking one another, "Did they really do this by themselves?", or "What a beautiful job they did. We should have had them come and do ours." One fellow looked at the high ceilings and asked another fellow why we had made the ceilings so high when Ann walked over to him. He looked up to Ann and never finished his question!

They then began to ask where I had gotten the lumber with a comment like, "It smells like cedar."

I would tell them that it was cedar. "I cut it on this property and sawed it with my own saw mill. After I sawed it, I had to make certain that all of it was the thickness it was supposed to be. That is when I used my wood planer. There probably isn't a board standard to lumber elsewhere. If a piece is supposed to be 2 inches, it is in this house."

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“How in the world did you get the heavy pieces in place. You must have some heavy beams for some of these large rooms must have a beam or they would have to have a support under them.”

“You are correct on that. Ann and I wrestled them into place and it wasn’t easy. I could not have done it without Ann’s help. She was a big help all through the building of our home. The plans for the house were drawn by her.”

The Preacher is a short fellow with a bald head, a booming voice and a big appetite for chicken and dumplings. He is very pleasant and preaches the best sermons I have ever heard. When he speaks, everyone hushes to hear what he has to say. If someone is hurting, he is right there to comfort and console them! Everyone loves and respects him. “Between the two of you, this is a beautiful home!” the Preacher remarked with his usual grin. “Are you going to hire out as a carpenter?”

“Not if I can help it! I have a lot of work here that has got to be done,” I replied.

The people from the church left, but not before the women had done the dishes and straightened things up in the house. When they were all gone, I looked at Ann and asked what she thought about the people who came. She looked at me with that tired look she gets when she is ‘bone tired’ and said, “It was nice to have them, but I will need help if they are asked to come again. I am so tired I could go to sleep on rocky ground!”

“Then by all means let’s go to bed!”

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Chapter Two Fields of Greed

We slept well that night. We didn't get up the next day until the sun was up. We wouldn't have gotten up then if it hadn't been for the ding-dong of the front door bell. I thought to myself that we weren't as isolated as I had thought.

We were so tired the night before that we had gone to sleep on the bed in our clothes! We hadn't even turned the covers down. I went to the door and there stood a tall, slim man in some kind of uniform with a weathered face from being in the sun a lot. He was also balding on the front of his head. "May I help you?"

He looked at me and replied, "My name is Frank and I'm with Drug Enforcement Administration and I have reason to believe that you have some illegal drug activity on your property." He reached into his side pocket and pulled out a business card and showed that to me as he also showed me his badge. "I know that you recently bought this property and may not have had time to look it over good. I have been after these guys for years, but the former owner would not let me on the property. I assume you will not object?"

"I certainly will not object. As a matter of fact, I will help you if I can. I have a small helicopter and will fly you over the area, so you can see it from the air. What are they supposed to be doing out there?"

"They are growing pot. I'll accept that ride. When will you be ready to go?"

"I am ready to go now. I will just have to give my helicopter a ground check and we can be in the air in five minutes. Is that soon enough?"

"That will be acceptable. They are out there early in the morning to water and care for the plants."

"Honey, I am going to take Frank to check on something on the other side of Totto Mountain. I'll be back shortly." With that said, I headed for the shed I had built for the helicopter. I did the ground check, filled the gas tank and pulled the helicopter out of the shed and started the engine. I motioned for Frank to get in and belt up, I revved the engine and took off for the other side of Totto.

I asked, "Do you have any idea where they are?"

"I think I can show you. It is on the other end from you and not too far from the base of the mountain."

"You better look for it soon or we will be past it. When you spot where you think it is, yell and, I will slow down so you can get a better look."

In a moment he yelled, "Slow down. I think I see it. Do you see that patch near the base of the mountain just ahead where the color of green is a different shade?"

"I see that. Is that the pot growing that is the different shade?"

"That's it. Do you think we can get a little lower to get a better look? I need to get a picture."

"I can, but I can't go below the trees."

"Get down as close as you can, but if they start shooting, get out of here fast. I will try to get a picture before you have to move the helicopter."

I lowered down to the tree tops and we could see that there was one man and he had a gun. He hadn't raised it yet, but I lifted and pulled out of there. I looked at Frank, "What now?"

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Pot farmer shoots at Bill's helicopter

“Let’s go to your home for now. I got a good picture and I want to enlarge it some and then print it. I’ll be back in touch in a few days. I assume you want to get rid of him.”

“You bet I do! I don’t want someone poisoning our children from my property!”

“I’ll be out to see you in a few days. I don’t use the phone much as they have a scanner that lets them tune into my conversations. If they think we are on to them, they will clear the area of pot and move out before we can grab them and put them under arrest.”

In a few days my front door bell rang again early in the morning. I went to answer it and there stood five men with Frank. Frank introduced me to the fellows. One was tall and slim named Jack, another one was short named Bill, one was average size named Steve, one was heavy set and named Bob and the last one was tall and heavy set named Joe “What are we up to today?” I asked.

“If you don’t mind, I would like to sit down with you and the others here and go over what our plans are. We all need to be on the same page.”

With that said Frank headed for the table and unrolled a large topographical map of the area. It showed Totto Mountain with all of its ridges and valleys. It was interesting to just look at. Frank was a little older than I and was balding with a fuzz of hair around the sides of his head. He had let the hair on one side grow longer so he could comb that hair to the other side. It looked funny and when he leaned over the map that hair fell down over his eyes. He just kept talking as he brushed his hair back from his eyes.

Frank pointed to a spot on the map and said, “This is where we are now. Over here is where the illegal activity is going on.” Frank’s long, bony finger pointed to that area. “If there is

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only one fellow involved, he could take off in any direction. It is most likely that he will head for his vehicle, what ever it might be. That could be a car, truck, motorcycle or a four wheeler. That is where you come in, Bill. You will be in your helicopter. I will furnish you with this radio so you can call down the direction he is headed. We all have radios also, so we will all know the direction he is headed and surround him. If he gets away again you will call that direction to the ground also. If he finds out you are the one giving directions, he may shoot at you. Try to be high enough that he cannot hit you or at least be evasive. I don't want anyone hurt or killed."

"Is everyone clear on what we are going to do?"

"I just have one question, I have some flares in the helicopter. Why can't I throw one over the top of where he is? You should be able to see it from the ground. That would eliminate giving him our location."

"That is a great idea, Bill! You do that."

"It will take us a half to three quarters of an hour to get in place, so, Bill, you can start your helicopter and be there in a half an hour and we should be in place." They all started for Frank's vehicle and left.

I checked the time and began my ground check of the helicopter and then filled the gas tank. I pulled the helicopter from the shed, put my box of flares on the seat beside me and got in and started the engine. In a half hour I was in the air and flying to the location. I was high enough that bullets would not bother me, I thought.

I could see the area and the fellow took off for his vehicle which happened to be a pick-up. I swooped down to steer him away from the truck. He started to go uphill. I threw a flare in his direction. The fellows saw that and I headed after him. They caught him after a little scuffle and brought him to a clearing to show me. I found a small clearing that I could land in and did so.

Frank looked at me, "That was a good idea that worked better than the radio." He noticed a hole in the side of the helicopter and asked, "Where did this come from?", He pointed to a hole.

"That is a bullet hole! Someone shot at your helicopter!"

"I didn't hear any shots. I thought I was too high for that."

Frank looked at the prisoner and asked, "Did you fire a shot at the helicopter?" The prisoner was a young man very slim and frightened.

"No sir, I don't even have a gun!"

"Then you have an accomplice that we haven't caught. Where is he?"

"He ran off before you came and was going to use your wife for a hostage." He looked at me as he said this.

I got into my helicopter and headed over the Mountain to try and get home before him. I could see him coming down the mountain and heading for the house. He had chosen to run between two peaks where the land was almost level, but still high on the side of the mountain. There was one thing he hadn't planed on – the cliff behind the house. The only ways to get down are to climb down or to jump. He started to climb down in a hurry and slipped and fell the rest of the way. I set the helicopter down, turned off the ignition and headed for the house to get my gun. I heard a yell as I opened the door.

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Ann was OK, but he wasn't. When he fell, he broke both legs and couldn't go any farther. I got my gun and headed to where he was. I was surprised to find that he was one of the church members who had just been to our house! It was Al. He was of medium build weighing about two hundred pounds. He should have known better than to try to climb down in a hurry! I went up to him and told him that I was sorry he had chosen the wrong way. I yelled to Ann to call 911 as Al had two broken legs and couldn't go far on his own.

About this time Frank came and asked what happened. I told him and he went back to see the culprit. He returned to me and said that he was glad that I had gotten home in time to save Ann. Now Frank knew why the other owner wouldn't let him on the property.

The ambulance came screeching in and Frank informed the medics, "This fellow is a felon and you need someone to keep an eye on him, so I am sending one of my men to guard him."

"That is good! I don't want to be responsible if he escapes."

With that said the medics put the prisoner on a stretcher and then on to the ambulance. One of Frank's men went on the back of the ambulance and they were off to the hospital.

Frank thanked me for the help and entered his vehicle and left with the other prisoner.

I looked at Ann as they left the drive and said, "For a quiet out of the way place, we have had all kinds of excitement today. Let's get something to eat, sit down and rest. For the life of me I can't see why a young person with a whole life ahead of him would want to ruin what he has like that just for a little money!"

Ann looked at me with her green eyes twinkling, smiled and said, "I am glad I have you." With that said she went with me to the kitchen to get something to eat and rest.

While we were eating, I decided to tell her a little of my past and how much money I had and would be getting.

"Honey, A few days ago you were worried that I would spend all of my money helping others. I have a lot of money in banks all over the country and some in stocks. I am a billionaire and I know that I would not have it if God had not blessed me. The more money I give helping people, the more money that God blesses me with."

"I guess this all started when my parents were killed in a land slide and the only thing that saved me was a bush on the side of the cliff. I was pulled out of the bush by rescuers and ropes. I believe that God put that bush there just to catch me because he has a job for me to do. I also believe that job is helping people who need my help.

"I also believe that He led me to you because you will help me in helping those in need. If you find someone you think truly are in need, but you are not quite certain, you can come to me and talk it over with me. Some people are not in need and to prove it they will do anything. Liars belong to Satan and they are his so he can take care of them. I am going to give you money yearly to spend on household things and your clothes. From that money will be what you also have to give to those in need. If you run short of money, let me know and I will give you more if you have given to those in need wisely. I have no doubt that you will give wisely."

After the house was finished and Bill could put his mind to his wife's needs, he went with her to the bank and transferred one million dollars into her account from his account. He showed her the amount he transferred and she did a double take and said, "Honey, that is too much money for me. I don't need that much."

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He looked at her smiling and said, "You might. I just don't want you to run short." The chief executive officer of the Bank told one of the tellers that he hoped his wife didn't get any ideas from that!"

Ann went to a clothing store and bought some clothes and brought them home for Bill to approve. She didn't have to, but she wanted him to approve of how she dressed – being the richest wife in the country.

She modeled the clothes for Bill and he looked at them and said, "You look just as beautiful in them as you ever have. Honey, you don't have to have my approval of the clothes you wear. I know you will be sensible about what you wear, I have seen what you wear and you are very conservative. That is one thing that makes me love you."

"While I think about it, I am giving you my little red convertible. I think you will look great in that car wheeling around town. I'm going to get me a pickup to drive. I already have my helicopter. The car is yours. I'll sign it over to you when we go to the courthouse for something.

"Honey, you don't have to do that. I know how much you like that car. I can take your pickup and you keep the car. "

"No way! What do you think your Dad and brothers would think of me if you went around in a pickup while I drive in a new red convertible. The convertible is yours!"

Ann could see that there was no way she was going to drive a pickup while he drove a shiny new convertible. Ann asked for the keys to the convertible so she could drive home and show her new clothes to her mother and sisters. Of course she would show them her car.

Ann arrived home and called for her sisters and mother to come out and help her into the house with all of her packages so they could see her new car.

Lena and Lilly came out first and ran to the car to help with the packages. "How come you are driving Bill's car around?" Lilly asked.

"Sister dear, that is no longer Bill's car, he has given it to me. He is getting a new pickup to drive. While you are here help me carry these packages in. I want to show you my new clothes that I got." With that the others carried packages into the house. They all looked at Ann's new clothes and ood and awed at them. Lilly said, "To think that he might have been mine.

"In your dreams, sister dear! He did something else for me. He placed a million dollars in my bank account for my "pin money". And that will happen each year."

"Ann, I hope you are not forcing him to do these things," Lena remarked.

"Mom, you have brought me up better than that!"

"I hope so dear. Money has a way of causing many a divorce and a lot of hard feelings."

"Mom, he is the most wonderful man and very considerate. I wouldn't exchange him for any one else!"

"We will see in a year or two how you feel then."

"Yeah! Maybe you will want to give him to me then!" Lilly remarked.

"I have got to pack all this up, into the car and get back to Bill and supper."

"That's the trouble with you married people, you don't have time to talk with your family," Mary remarked. They all took Ann's packages to the car and Mary remarked to Ann, "We are

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all proud of you Sis. Who would have thought that someone in our family would marry a handsome man with lots of money! That is a first for this town.”

Ann came to me one day and told me that she was going to go to the doctor. “Do you have something wrong with you?”

I don’t know honey, I just feel bad. I’ll drive to the doctors and maybe he will know and can tell me.” Ann drove off in her red car. After a while she returned and told Bill, “It looks like you are going to be a father is all.”

“Are you kidding me? That is great news. I think I will call your folks and see when they can go out to celebrate with us.”

“Honey, you don’t understand. Right now nothing tastes good and I have a hard time keeping anything down. If you and my folks have a party, you will have to go without me.”

“Darling, I didn’t know that. You hadn’t told me about that before. Its no wonder you were worried and went to the doctor. Is there anything I can do to help?”

“As a matter of fact there is something you can do to help. The doctor gave me a hand full of prescriptions to get filled and guess who just volunteered to do it for me. Most of them will be ready when you get there.

Some you may have to wait for. You can take my red car if you want to. Have fun. I’ll be in bed when you return. “Oh yes,” she said almost as an after thought, “thank you for volunteering to do that for me.”

The medicine did help Ann and at the end of the first month, Ann got better and could then have that party Bill wanted before. Bill made arrangements for the party with Ann’s parents and sisters. One evening they all got into a limo Bill had rented for the evening and went to a restaurant. There was a big cake in the room they had with little baby things all around it. Ann and Bill sat at the table by the cake.

Little Elizabeth and Mary played violins and then bowed to Bill and Ann like they were the king and queen of some country. Ann and Bill complimented them on their violin playing. Bill looked at Mary and asked her if she would let him play a tune on her violin. Mary agreed so Bill got up and played “Turkey in the straw”. Everyone looked at Bill surprised for that is not an easy piece to play. Everyone applauded and laughed at the look on Mary’s face. No one knew that Bill had any talent for playing anything. Ann was surprised also. They all laughed and enjoyed the evening.

After a while of fun and laughter, the waitresses brought in the food. This time the food was in large bowls and on platters on a long table beside the eating table. This time they all had to take their plates and go by the food and help themselves to what they wanted. Bill told them, “Get all you can eat, but don’t get a big helping of something you don’t like and then have to be put in the garbage.” He didn’t have to tell that family anything about wasting food for they were well aware of the value of not wasting anything. Before Bill, they were lucky to get Soup beans and corn bread to eat.

When the evening ended and they went out of the private room on their way to the limo, reporters were gathered around shouting all kinds of questions at Bill and Ann. Ann’s family was surprised with Mary and Elizabeth in tears. Bill saw this and told the reporters that there were better ways to get information than shouting at them. Bill went to Mary and Elizabeth and gathered them to him in a huge hug and explained that those reporters didn’t have very good manner. He then told the reporters that he was leaving and if they followed him, he would

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have them arrested. The family with Bill and Ann walked to their limo and headed home. Bill told the family as they were on the way home that he was sorry for those reporters spoiling their happy time.

After Bill and Ann arrived home, Bill told Ann that he was going to stop having those little parties. He enjoyed them but the reporters were going to spoil every one if he had anymore.

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Chapter Three Race to the Hospital

The next morning Frank was ringing my door bell again. I think he loved the sound of it. "What is the problem this time?"

"There is no problem. I have to go back to the pot area and cut and pull all the pot out of the ground and burn it. I just want you to go with me to verify that it was all burned."

"I'll be glad to do that. It's being shot at that bothers me."

"Would you like to fly back there?"

"That would be nice. We will get there quicker and be able to come home sooner. It shouldn't take long to get rid of it. Maybe an hour or two."

I yelled to Ann, "I will be gone with Frank for about an hour. We have to get rid of that pot." I like to let Ann know when I am going to be gone so she won't wonder what happened to me.

I went to the helicopter shed and did the preflight. I put gas in the tank and, pulled the bird out and started the engine. I motioned for Frank to get into his seat and buckle up. I got into my side and buckled up as I rewed the engine a little. Everything was working, so we lifted off. We went over the top of the mountain and to the pot site. This took us less than five minutes.

"Do you know that if I drove over here it would take me more than a half an hour," Frank remarked.

"I know. That is why I got this helicopter. I can travel over my land a lot quicker than I can with a car or truck. I really enjoy this thing."

"I don't blame you. I wish the Government would get us one. I think it would cut our travel time down a lot. We have a lot of ground to cover in our daily routine.

I set the helicopter down near the pot site and got out ready to start pulling. Frank stopped me until he could get a picture of its size. He then took a picture of me standing beside the plants as evidence that I was there. We then started pulling the plants and piling them. When they were all piled, he took some of the dried pine needles that were all around and set them afire under the plants. He gathered more pine needles and scattered them on the pile. In no time the pile was burned completely.

Frank looked at me with a half smile on his face, "I wish I had a bunch of pine needles to put on all the piles of pot I have to burn. After the plants had burned completely, we took a can that was lying there and carried water from Totto Creek and poured it all over where the pot plants had burned. It took several trips to the creek before the ground was saturated. When this was done, we got into the helicopter and headed for my home, but only after Frank had taken a picture of the spot where the pot plants had stood.

On arrival at my house, I bade Frank adio and headed for the house to let Ann know that I was home.

Frank stepped over to me before he left and asked, "You wouldn't want to be a regular agent with me would you?"

"I don't think I would. Its exciting work, but I don't like being shot at!"

"I don't blame you there." With that said, Frank went to his truck and drove away laughing as he went.

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Ann's time was coming up soon, so I thought it best that I work closer to home. I had a four wheeler, a helicopter, a truck and a car. I should be able to get her to the hospital in one of them.

I got on the four wheeler and drove out on the bottom land towards the river. Every few feet I would stop and drive a steel rod into the ground until it hit the solid rock. I was astounded by what I had been finding. The rod indicated that there was a lot more soil than I had been told. The rock layer was down in some places about a foot and in others about six feet.

I went back to the shed and got my well drilling outfit and brought it back and set it up over the six foot area. I drilled down until I hit the rock and then brought it back up with a core sample. The sample showed that the soil was even deeper than I had figured with the rod. Apparently the steel rod had hit a small rock or something and stopped. The drill slid the rock aside or ground through it. The core sample was over eight feet and the soils was a rich black muck! That would support any vegetation that I might induce upon it. This muck seemed to be composed of rotted organic material. It was not a living muck.

I got excited about this find and set my drilling outfit up a few feet up stream from where I was before. It didn't go down as far as the other one. It was a good four feet with the same type of soil. Of course there was silt soil on the top, but it was only inches deep. I could till the soil and mix the silt with the muck and it would make a good soil in which to grow a garden.

My cell phone began to ring and I answered it. It was Ann! She was in labor and needed to get to the hospital! I dropped my tools, got on the four wheeler and sped to the house. I checked my helicopter, started the engine and then went into the house and got Ann. I sat her on the passenger side, buckled her in and went around and got in myself on the other side. As soon as I was buckled up, I lifted off and headed for the hospital.

I called ahead to see if they would let me use their landing pad on the roof. "I am sorry, but we are expecting a helicopter in any minute with casualties from a wreck. How big are you?"

"I am a personal two-seater. If you would let me sit down on a corner of your pad, I think the big helicopter could get down OK."

"Go ahead and we will see if the big helicopter can come in over you."

"I see you now. There shouldn't be any problem."

I set the helicopter down on the corner of the pad. The nurses were out with a wheelchair for Ann. They wheeled Ann in and just then the big helicopter landed and the place was swarming with medics getting the injured off the helicopter and into the emergency room.

I asked one of the pilots what happened and he replied, "There was a bad accident on the highway involving several cars. When I am through here, I want to talk to you about your little helicopter. Why are you on our pad?"

"My wife is in labor and they let me set down on a corner of the pad because I am small and wouldn't interfere with your helicopter."

"You certainly didn't. Where are you going to be later?"

"Probably in maternity."

"I'll look you up there."

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Ann arrives with Bill at the hospital by helicopter

With that conversation concluded, I went on into the maternity ward. The nurse at the desk told me that my wife was being prepped. “You can have a seat in the waiting room and we will call you as soon as the baby arrives.”

I hadn’t anymore than seated myself when she called me to the desk. “I need you to fill out these forms. If you will please. Sign the ones that I have put a red X on.”

With a fist full of forms to fill out, I sat down and began filling them out. I had just finished them and was giving them to the nurse when the fellow from the big helicopter hailed me.

He started out, “I like the looks of your helicopter and the size. Is it a kit or did you buy it already built?”

“It’s a kit. I bought the kit and built it myself. I bought it because it has the same controls as yours. I had to learn to fly a helicopter and get a license before I could legally fly it around. There are a lot of safety things that I like about it. For instance no one can exit the helicopter unless the blades have stopped rotating. It has an automatic autogyro position that comes on automatically if the engine stalls or the tail rotor stops for some reason. It can be crashed, but not for those reasons.”

“How about letting me go up with you while you are waiting?”

“I don’t mind, but I do think it wise to let the nurse know.” I walked up to the nurse and asked about Ann. After she answered, I informed her that I was going to be out for a few minutes and that I would check in with her when I returned.

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I went with my new friend back to the helicopter pad on the roof. We walked over to my midget helicopter. "You will notice that the tail rotor is driven by belts. This is about the only bad part of this design. I showed him the engine.

He looked at it and laughed, "Wow! That certainly is small. That is about as compact as they can get. What horsepower does it furnish?"

"That is 130 HP. On a small bird like this one you only need enough HP to get into the air. It is true of yours, too."

"That is correct."

"Get in over there and I will take you up so you can see how well it flies." He got in, buckled up and I started the engine and took off from the roof pad and hurriedly got up to 100 miles an hour air speed. He looked at me and remarked, "I never saw anything like this!"

I slowed down and hovered. Then I slid side ways and landed on the corner of the pad where we had taken off,

"That has got to be the best little helicopter around! Where can I get the company address so I can order one?"

"I'll give you that when we get inside. I've got to get back to my wife now."

"That helicopter is good for what it is made for, but I would like to have one like yours for my own use."

We unbuckled and I headed into the hospital and the maternity section. I looked at the nurse and she said, "Congratulations! You are now the father of a 6 pound 8 oz baby girl. You can go see her as soon as everything is cleaned and ready for you. Your wife is doing fine!"

I looked at my new friend and said, "You'll have to give me your name and address, so I can mail that material to you." With that said, he pulled out a business card and handed it to me. I put it in my pocket, told him goodbye and followed the nurse to my wife.

Ann was propped up in a half sitting position holding the newcomer. I looked at her and smiled as I asked, "What are we going to call her?"

"I really don't know, dear. What do you think?"

"I was thinking maybe Annie. She looks just like you. Red hair and all."

"Thanks! That will be fine with me and then if we ever have a boy we will call him Billy."

"How long are they going to keep you in here?"

"They said I could go home in two days if all goes well."

"That is fine with me. I hate my cooking and that will give me time to get her crib ready." I kissed Ann and told her I was going home and get some things done that had to be done and get everything all set for Miss Annie. "I'll be back early in the morning."

With that, I left and headed to the helicopter and went directly home. I went out on the bottom land and picked up my tools I had left scattered about and put them away. I put the helicopter away and went into my workshop and started working on a little project.

I worked on the project most of the night and slept about two hours. I got cleaned up and headed for the helicopter. I pulled the helicopter out of its shed and checked it and filled the gas tank. Anyone would think that I had a small tank for the gas, but I like to keep it filled each time I use it. There is no telling when one might need the extra gas for some reason.

I flew to the hospital and asked for permission to land on the corner of the pad. There was some hesitation, but it was finally granted. I landed on the corner of the pad and went in to see Ann and Annie.

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Ann had done so well that the doctor let her go a day early. Ann was all set to go and had her discharge papers in her hand. I held the baby waiting for the transport person. It is the policy of the hospital that all patients discharged have to be wheeled out in a wheel chair by staff. They had already called for transport and they still had not arrived. I took Ann's suitcase to the helicopter and returned with no transport person in sight.

I was somewhat irritated over this unnecessary delay. I went to the nurse at the desk and asked what was the hold up. The nurse got on the phone and called the head of the transport department to find out. It seemed that the lady assigned to pick Ann up had tripped getting onto the elevator and was now in the ER. They were assigning someone else to come immediately.

The replacement arrived and she helped Ann into the wheelchair and pushed her to the helicopter. She helped Ann into the helicopter. I gave her a tip as I climbed in and started the engine while I buckled up. We headed for home with our daughter and a couple of smiling, proud parents.

I found out later that the first woman who tripped was very nervous because I am the one that owns most of that county and I can make or brake the hospital. I am on no board of directors, but my taxes pay hospital bills. It is not my goal to be rude to anyone or swing my weight around to get my way. That is not me.

When I landed at the house, I got as close as I could to the door of the house so Ann would not have to walk very far. I opened the door for Ann and the baby. She walked in and was welcomed by a crowd of people. Her parents and relatives mostly. Ann went to lay the baby down and I gave her the cradle I had made for her. Ann looked at me and with tears in her eyes said, "Bill, I never thought you cared about me or the baby. You must have worked on that all night."

"Most of it. It was a labor of love." I smiled.

This was the signal to all the others and they all brought presents and gave them to Ann and Annie. Late that night I finally got to sleep in my bed only to find out that a baby has a two AM feeding. Ann gave the baby her feeding and the baby quieted down. I guess that I will get my chance at feeding the baby before it is all over.

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Chapter Four Kidnapped

The next morning at breakfast I told Ann about my find on the bottom land in front of the house.

Ann's face lit up as she remarked, "You mean that this land may not be as bad as we have been led to believe?"

"That is right. I want to do a little more work collecting core samples and then I will send a soil sample for analysis to see what we might need for growing a garden. The silt on the top of it will mix in with the muck and make a great garden, I believe."

"That means that if it turns out good, we will have a great garden!"

"Before we get the good news, I want to see if I can get a few more pieces of land to straighten my boundary. That way we will own a big square chunk of land instead of it being with a crooked boundary. I don't want to cheat anyone, but I do want the boundary straight."

That afternoon I went to see who owned the pieces next to mine that would make my boundary line straight. It turned out to be the same fellow from whom I had bought some other parcels. I went to see Ned and I told him what I wanted and why.

"I'll sell you all that you want and more too. If you want it. That land is barren. It is just a waist land as you have probably found out by now."

Ned looked and sounded like a Kentucky Colonel with his southern drawl. He was a little on the 'pudgy' side and balding. His face was round and decorated with a mustache and goatee. He had a walking cane that was originally used to whack slaves across the back. He was straight faced as he talked and laughed all over when he did laugh.

"I am really not interested in more. I just want to straighten my border."

"I can sell you another thousand acres that will straighten your line and I will be rid of it. I will sell you the whole thousand acres for ten cents an acre just to get rid of it."

"Are you kidding me?"

"I am serious. I can't get rid of it to anyone else and you seem to be interested in that land for some reason."

"Consider it sold! I will go to the bank right away and get a cashier's check for that amount and have it made out to you and get my lawyer to draw up the papers. It will take a little time to get all that done, So I probably won't be back until morning. How much do you want now to hold it until morning?"

"I know you to be honest. I'll trust that you will be here in the morning with the money. Its not like I have people rushing in here to get it." He burst out laughing after he said that. He had it in his head that I was crazy for buying worthless land at any price.

I went on home and then flew to the bank to get the check for the amount specified. I then went to John for him to draw up the papers, He would have them ready in the morning and would send his secretary with me to notarize the transaction. Now I would really have everyone wondering what I was up to with all that worthless land.

The next morning I went to John's office and picked up the papers and Luann, his secretary, and flew to Ned's place. Luann and I went into Ned's home at his invitation. I showed Ned the land agreement the lawyer had drawn up. He looked at it and signed and dated it. I signed the agreement and dated it. Luann filled in what she had to fill in as a notary

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public and then took out her seal and sealed the papers. She tore the papers apart and handed Ned his copies and handed me the papers I was due. I gave Ned his check.

I started to get up to leave and Ned said, "If you don't mind there are some other fellows here that would like to see you." Before I could say anything three men came into the house and wanted me to buy some of their land, Luann had brought a large area map that showed who owned what property, so we spread the map out on a table and it showed that they all owned land adjacent to my land and they wanted me to buy it for ten and fifteen cents an acre. This was just too much to resist. How could I refuse to buy their land that was adjacent to my land for ten and fifteen cents an acre? I agreed to buy their land and told them I would have to wait until John could get a land agreement written up for each of them.

Luann got their names, the amount per acre and the land they were going to sell. She marked the land plots on the map and then rolled it up. She looked at each of them and said, "We will notify each of you as soon as we can get the agreements typed up as they should be and ownership verified. I am the one who types up this work and it will take at least two days and maybe more, but I will do it as fast as I can. You all may have to come to our office to sign these agreements."

When Luann finished with what she had to do, she picked up her things and we left. On the flight back to the lawyer's office, she looked at me and remarked, "I don't know what you want with that much bad land and it is none of my business, but you are going to probably own more land than any individual in the country!" The secretary is a young woman, blue eyed with blond hair and a little on the matronly side.

I looked at her and said, "I like seclusion."

"You certainly will have that!" She laughed with gusto as she said that.

I let her off at John's office and then took off again for home. At home I greeted my family and Ann told me that the mail had come and that I had a report about the sample I had sent them. She handed it to me. I read it and was amazed at the report. It stated that the soil was very rich in everything, but it did need lime to sweeten it. I looked at Ann and shouted "Praise the Lord!" This meant then that we could raise our garden."

Ann looked at me and said, "You missed something in the letter. It said that it was dry and needed water before anything would grow."

I looked at her, "Honey, that is NO problem! We have the Ibo River in front of it. We will just irrigate with water from the Ibo."

"I hope you are right. In this area we have water rights guaranteed to the land owners. You can't cut it off or restrict the water in any way."

"I don't plan to cut the water off or restrict it. I plan to use the water for my land. The same way as they do!"

"I hope you are right. If we can use that water, we will have the biggest farm in the world."

"I plan to leave some areas dry for the dry wild life, but I do plan to irrigate a lot of the land and grow things on it."

"What do you plan to grow?"

"I plan to put whatever you want in the garden, but I plan to have some fruit trees and berries and grapes."

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She looked at me and smiled as she said, "I hope you can get some of those things to grow. The bear and coyotes will probably love you for trying. The antelope love fruit also. Of course they love the fruit, the leaves and bark on the fruit trees. Birds love berries and whatever they can get."

"I guess that I will have the biggest bunch of pets and pests in the world then won't I?" I looked at her and laughed. Little Annie laughed also. She didn't know what she was doing, but she laughed with her daddy.

The next morning John called and reminded me that what money these fellows were getting for their property wasn't even going to be enough to pay the recording fees. I told him that I would pay those fees for them. They hadn't asked for much in order to unload that property.

"They are almost giving it to you to get rid of it. That must be pretty poor land."

"Not really. I had a soil sample tested and the report came back that it was very rich soil. The problem is that there is no water in it."

"Do you plan to irrigate?"

"Yes, I do."

"You will need to look that up with the authorities because there is a law about using the water upstream and leaving little or none for those downstream."

"I am aware of that law. Do you know who I have to talk to?"

"I don't really know, but if I were you, I would see Frank. He should be able to tell you."

"I'll see him. That sounds logical. If anyone knows who these government people are, he ought to. You know that I own all of the land along and including the Totto Creek behind Totto Mountain."

"That is so, but anything you do to it could affect the stream below you. You better check with the authorities."

"Oh yes. I almost forgot to tell you that Luann said to tell you that she has the papers ready for those fellows and you to sign. She is notifying them to come in to sign them tomorrow. Are you able to make that?"

"I don't see why not. I am going to be spending all my time in here for the next little bit until I can get that water law straightened out in my mind and know what I can do about the water that flows through my land."

"I am certain that Frank can help you with that."

"I am going out and look over that land. Would you like to go with me?"

"I have a case coming up that I need to prepare. I have to say no this time. Maybe another time."

I left his office and went to Frank's office. He was out, so I headed for home. Ann was beginning to feel that I didn't care about her with me being gone all the time, so home was a good bet for now.

Ann was happy to see me and Annie was also happy to see me. I picked her up and kissed her bare little belly. She giggled. I carried her into where Ann was and kissed Ann.

"I was wondering if you were going to kiss me." She said this with a stern look on her face which meant that I better spend more time with her.

"I was in town so I went over to see John about this water thing and he wasn't sure who I had to see, but he suggested that I ask Frank. I went by his office and he was out. I have

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been trying to get the right to irrigate your garden. They all know that there is a law, but don't know who administers it in this county. Frank may know who it is."

"I am glad you are trying to get me some water for the garden. That makes me feel a little better knowing that you are spending time on my project."

"I guess that you know that I am getting some more land which will give me all of Totto Creek. That should give me some rights."

"I hope you get that straightened out so I can get my garden in. It's getting too late to plant. The frost will kill it off if I don't watch."

"I know dear, I am working on it. I will call Frank after lunch and see if he is in. What are we having for lunch? I am hungry."

"We are going to have a sandwich. I haven't had time to fix more. Annie is cutting teeth and has kept me busy trying to pacify her."

"If you want, I will take her with me this afternoon."

"Where were you planning to go and for how long?"

"I planned to fly over some land and see what I am getting. I would land and change her diaper, give her bottle to her, that is of course if I had the diapers and the bottle."

"You are not going to take her in that helicopter of yours. I'll take care of her!"

"I would take good care of her. She is mine too and I wouldn't want anything to happen to her."

"I know that you would try. Its flying around in that helicopter that worries me. You can't fasten her in, so she could fall out. Until you seal that helicopter up or if you would make something that can be used to buckle her in, she stays on the ground!"

I offered, "I'll be back in a short while. I just want to see what I am getting for the small amount I am paying for it. I have to get your garden plowed and ready for you to plant as soon as I can see Frank. I may check on him when I get back"

I filled the helicopters gas tank, got in, buckled up and took off for my new purchases. These were comparatively small parcels of land compared to what I had already bought. The one parcel was wet from the water of the Totto Creek entering the Ibo River. The Ibo River current was so strong that the creek had a hard time entering it either that or the silt that had been carried down by the Creek had built up too high for the creek to go up the silt and into the Ibo. If that silt were to be moved, the Ibo might suck the Totto creek dry. Maybe I could make a flume at that entrance.

All of Totto Creek belonged to me now and I am depending on there being water in it when I need it or want it. I headed for home and the family.

Before I set the helicopter down, I called Frank. I got excellent reception when I was in the air. Frank answered the phone and I asked him if he knew who was in charge of administering the water law. He paused a minute and said, "Yes, I know the guy."

"Can you give me his name or phone number. I need to talk to him about my water situation,"

"I certainly can give that to you, but you don't need it because you already have it."

"I have it? I don't even know who it is!"

"Yes you do, for I am the one you need to see about that."

"Can you come out tomorrow afternoon?"

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“Just about all questions about the water can be answered with one word, but I believe you have a good reason for wanting to know about your water and I want to help you if I can. I may even put you on the board.”

“Not if I am going to get shot at!”

“I’ll see you tomorrow afternoon about two.” He hung up laughing.

I set the helicopter down and went into the house. I told Ann that Frank would be here tomorrow afternoon about the water situation.

Ann looked at me with a big smile and said, “Thank you dear. I know you will work hard on that because all your plans depend on getting that water”.

“That, they do.” I smiled back.

The next morning I headed for John’s office. As I was about to land in his parking lot, I noticed that there were no cars in the lot except John’s car. When I touched down, a group of children came up asking all kinds of questions about my helicopter. I answered them the best I could and then went into John’s office. None of the men were there as yet. I looked at John and asked “Have you heard from any of them?”

“No, I have not. They must be plotting something or they would be here. It isn’t like them to be late to get some money.”

I sat in his office for an hour and they hadn’t shown, so I told John, “If they don’t show in another hour, I shall consider that they have changed their minds about selling. I am going over to the library and do some reading. If they come call me over there and I will come on over.”

I went to the library and looked for a book on the water law. There wasn’t a book on it, but there was a book of laws passed and comments about them. I looked for the water law and found it. I read about how come it was passed and what the written law stated. This was the best thing I had found about it.

This was about the time the librarian came over and told me that John had called and they were ready for me over there. I asked the librarian, “May I check this book out?”

“I am sorry, that is a reference book and I can’t let you check it out. If you are going to come back when you are through with John, I will set it aside so you can continue to read it when you returned.”

“That will be great if you will.” I left and went back to John’s.

The fellows were there and Luann already had them signing all the papers they had to sign. She handed me a stack of papers and told me to sign them. I told her that I wanted to know what each paper I was signing was about. She looked at me and said, “You don’t trust me, do you.”

“I just like to know what I am signing. I once signed something that I should have understood first or I wouldn’t have signed it. Now I ask for information first. It is not that I don’t trust you. It is just good practice for anyone.”

“That IS a very good practice.” John remarked.

Then Luann told me what one set of papers was for and then said, “Each set of papers is the same, You don’t want me to tell you about each one, do you?” She said this sarcastically.

“I think that if each set is the same, I can accept that.”

By the time she had finished her explanation, I was almost through signing the papers I had to sign. She looked at me and said, “Your wife must have a hard time with you!”

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I laughed at her. After all the papers were signed, John separated each set and handed the right papers to the right fellow. When he had finished, he looked at me and said, "Now you owe these fellows some money."

I had made the money up in packets for each man, so that I would not have to set there and count it out to each man in John's office. I handed the amount to each man that he had told me he would sell for. Each man looked at what he got and counted it, then left the room taking his papers with him. One fellow looked at his money and said, "I don't believe this is right. Didn't I tell you I would sell for fifty cents an acre?"

"I am sorry, but you told me fifteen cents an acre. I believe that the secretary wrote it on the map she had as to whom was selling and for how much."

The secretary got the map out and checked to make certain that she was right. "I have it written here that you wanted fifteen cents an acre."

"I heard fifteen cents an acre and if you don't want to sell for fifteen, then I guess that we don't have a deal because I will not pay fifty cents an acre when the others said ten and fifteen cents an acre and you did too."

The fellow's face turned red and looked at me and said, "You are going to be sorry for this!" He then left John's office."

"What do you think he meant by that?" I am not trying to shake him down for that small amount of money. If a man agrees to a certain amount, he should stick to what he has said or quash the deal. He was trying to shake me down for the difference and I don't shake. I appreciate Luann having written it down. That was a big help!"

"I don't know what he meant, but if I were you I'd be watching out for him. He is crazy and capable of anything."

I had a few minutes left until I could pick Frank up and take him to my place, so I went back to the library and asked the librarian for the book I had been reading. She pulled it out and handed it to me. I took it and sat down at a reading table and found where I had been reading. It was very interesting reading. I learned a lot about that law and time had passed so quickly that I was about late picking up Frank. He was ready and waiting, so we headed for John's office and parking lot.

As I got in I noticed that things weren't the same as they should be. I looked around and found that some of the controls had been moved so I checked the engine over and it was all right, but there was something in my gas tank that didn't belong there. I wasn't sure whether it was sugar or sand. Whatever it was, it was going to have to come out before I could fly it again. I looked at Frank and asked if he were in a big hurry because I was going to clean my gas tank first.

He looked at me and asked, "How long will it take?"

"I am not certain, but if that is sand in the gas tank, it will be just a matter of flushing the sand out. If that is sugar, it will take a lot longer."

"It looks like we are going to have to take that time if we are to fly to your house. Who would want to do such a thing?"

"I don't know, but I have a good idea." With that said I pulled out my little tool box and began to remove the gas tank. As I did this I asked Frank if he would please see if John had a can or something that we could dump the old gas into. Just as I got the tank out and was

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ready to dump its contents, Frank came with a can. I dumped it and found the material in the gas tank to be sand. That was good news.

I flushed and replaced the tank. I asked Frank if He would give me a hand pushing the helicopter across the street to a gas station. so I could fill the tank again. He helped and I got the gasoline that I needed, paid for it and pushed the helicopter into a clear area. Frank and I got in, started the engine and lifted off. We headed for home and everything seemed normal with the helicopter and engine. We arrived home shortly. Frank and I got out and headed to the house. Ann came to the door and let us in. She was almost hysterical.

"I am so glad to see you. I just got a note on the TV that Annie has been kidnapped and to be watching for additional information. There was a note at the end that said if we call the police in, he would kill the kid."

Frank looked at me and said in almost a whisper, "When I go back I will call the FBI. He doesn't know that I know about it. The FBI handles cases like this a lot and will know better what to do than our local police."

I whispered back, "You are a true friend Frank and I appreciate your doing that for me."

In the meantime I showed Frank what I wanted to do concerning the Ibo River. He looked at me and asked, "If that is all you plan to do, I don't see that you are going to be cutting off or interfering with the natural flow of the river in any way. You have my approval to go ahead. When you get that hydroelectric plant going, I want to see it. Electricity and water are the two things that are keeping this area from growing. You show us the way, my friend, and we will be deeply indebted to you."

"Then you agree that I can go ahead?"

"Yes, I do. I will have your permit mailed out to you as soon as I can get it written up, When you get it, be sure to post it in a place where it can be seen easily. I got this position because I was already out in different parts of the county for other things. Why don't you become my assistant and help me do this job?"

"What would I have to do? I don't want to dodge bullets."

"You take this job and I will assign you this area of the county. How would that suit you?"

"That might be all right. What would my actual job be?"

"If I get a call that someone was not abiding by the Water Law, I would send you out to check on it. That would mean that you would have to be knowledgeable about the water law and all its ramifications."

"Do you have a copy of the law so I can look it over?"

"If you take the job, I will give you everything that you need to do your work. The only person that you can not check out is yourself. I would have to do that. What do you think?"

"You send me that material and I will read it over and give you an answer soon. Will I get a large map of this part of the county, so I will know how to get to a place."

"Everything you need should be in the kit I send you. Would you mind taking me back to my office now?"

"I will be glad to, if you trust my helicopter."

"If someone like you could catch the fact that your helicopter had been messed with and saved our lives coming here. I would trust you anywhere."

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Kidnapper hides Annie in the woods

We went out to the helicopter and I checked everything again and then started the engine. I revved the engine a little and everything was good, so I motioned Frank to get in. I took Frank back and then lifted off for home once again.

Frank notified the FBI and they came right on out in an unmarked car.

I motioned for them to whisper, or we could go somewhere and talk where this guy couldn't hear us. The agent began looking the house over for "bugs". He didn't find any and whispered how do I know he is listening in on our conversations.

I said, "Watch the TV."

I remarked aloud, "If you are listening, whoever you are, please let me know what I have to do to get my daughter back."

A written note appeared on the screen, "If you have notified the cops, you will never know or see your daughter again."

The agent wrote on a pad, "He seems very dangerous! Assure him that you haven't.

"You told me not to call the cops and I haven't. The police are not here nor have they been notified. They would be worthless to call anyway."

A note came up on the screen, "Now you are being smart. Keep on doing what I say and you will see your daughter again. You get a million dollars and put it on top of that big rock at the junction of the Ibo and the Totto rivers. There is a big rock there. You go get that money and fly in your little helicopter to that rock and leave the money there. When I get the money I will tell you how to get your daughter."

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I spoke up and said, "I doubt that this bank has that much money in it. They will probably have to get more from another bank nearby. That will take more time."

Another note came up, "Do that. Wait as long as you want. I have no way to feed your daughter. She is hungry now." He put the phone over near where Annie was crying and let me hear. That let me know that she was alive, hungry and with him

I wrote a note to the agent, "What do you want me to do now?"

He wrote back, "Get into your helicopter and go like you are going to the bank. I have it triangulated as to where he is. Go by the FBI office and give them this note then return over the mountain and over a little flat meadow that is up there and on to the rock he is talking about. Drop a big bag onto the top of the rock and then on to the house here. When you fly over the meadow you will see him up there in a 'lean to' that he has put up. I should have some agents up there by the time you get back here and when he returns to the 'lean to' we will grab him and put him under arrest. Now go so we can get him."

I wrote him back, "How will the agents get there so soon?"

He wrote back, "The same way you are."

I checked my helicopter and got in and flew to the FBI office. They read the note and scrambled into their helicopter and flew behind me and low. They held back some as I went to the rock. I flew over the rock and hovered over it until I could get the suitcase of supposed money out of the helicopter and onto the rock. Then I flew away towards home. I traveled slow in order to see if he would come and get the money. He came out of the bushes by the Totto Creek and scrambled to the top of the rock. That was when some of the agents came out of the bushes by the creek and grabbed him. In the meantime the other agents went into his 'lean to' and picked up little Annie. I flew on home and went into the house to tell Ann that the agents had Annie and would be bringing her home. About that time their helicopter flew in and Ann ran to get Annie. Someone in the helicopter handed Annie out to Ann and Ann had tears running down her cheeks when she returned to the house. She went to the bedroom to feed Annie. The agent was still in the house so I went to him and thanked him for all that he had done.

The agent let me look at this fellow and it was the same fellow that had sold me that piece of land that he tried to make me pay 50 cents an acre when he had agreed to 15 cents an acre. This was his way of getting even and it didn't work!

He explained to me how they had found where the kidnapper was, "On this map of yours, I located where we are and when he wrote about the rock at the junction of the two rivers, I could draw a line back to where a line from here to there would intersect and then I knew where he was. That is why I had you fly over that meadow on the mountain. Our helicopter followed you down low to the meadow. The agents in the helicopter set down on the meadow and behind some trees. The other agents got out and waited for him to go after the money. He was only interested in the money and not the child. Once he got the money he would have gone off and left the child to starve to death.

"You don't mean it!"

"Yes I do. People like him could care less about killing a child or a person."

"I am certainly glad I had Frank call you folks instead of the local police. They wouldn't have known how to do any of that."

"Probably not. They are not trained in this type of work."

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“What will happen to the kidnapper?”

“He will go to federal jail until we can run a check on him to see if he has any priors. If he does, he will probably never get out. If he doesn't he will stay in jail until his trial. This is a serious crime he has committed.”

“I certainly do appreciate all that you have done for us.”

“I guess you know that you will have to testify in his trial. Don't take any long trips.”

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Chapter Five The Mission

The next morning I headed for town and viewed my property as I went. The view was beautiful! As the sun rose and cast the shadow of Totto Mountain over the rest of the land, it made one marvel at the hand of God.

I was going to town to get Frank and some papers that I needed for building my generator for the house and a permit so I could do the work. I got Frank and the papers and headed for home. I had gotten so enraptured over God's creation that I almost forgot what I was going for.

After we got home Ann talked with Frank some and then excused herself as she went to the kitchen to get some dinner. When dinner was ready, Ann had us wash and come to the table. Ann had her usual dinner where everyone eats too much and feels more like sleeping than working afterward.

After dinner, Frank opened the packet and pulled out its contents on to the table after Ann cleared the table. Frank and I talked about what I planned for the place. He pulled a large map from his packet and unfolded it on the table so we could refer to it as we talked. Frank then pulled a large certificate that was my permit for building my hydroelectric plant and for irrigating the garden.

Then he got down to the serious business as to whether I wanted to work with him on enforcing the water usage restrictions. He told me what I would be expected to do and I told him that I thought I could do that.

He smiled a big smile, "I want you and everyone here to know that I am indebted to you, but I can't let that get in the way when I am dealing with you. Business is business." How have things turned out with that worthless skunk that tried to kidnap Annie?"

"He is in federal prison awaiting his trial. I doubt that he will ever get out, he had attempted the same thing somewhere else that he lived. The FBI agent said that if he had, he would never get out. The federal government has zero tolerance for those attempting to kidnap or those that do. We got word the other day that his trial will be coming up soon and for us to stay close to home until after it happens.

In a few weeks we got a summons to be at the trial of this fellow for the next week. I went to the designated court and checked in as a witness. I was not allowed in the courtroom until I was called to testify. I sat and waited for what seemed like months instead of hours. After a while, the government attorney came into the room. He and the defense lawyer had been negotiating. The defense wanted us to accept a plea deal that would allow this character to serve only one month in prison and ten years probation. The law states that there is no probation or plea deals that can be made in a kidnap case. The defense attorney was ordered by the judge to either have his client plead not guilty or guilty. The attorney and the kidnapper agreed for him to plead guilty and that is what has happened. That means that the case, as far as you are concerned, is over. You can go home and enjoy your family and go where ever you want. The sentencing will be in about a month, but we do not need you for that.

"You are right, my dear husband, I guess you remember that we are having a man and his wife who are missionaries from some place in South America speaking and after church they will be coming here for dinner."

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“Are they going to stay with us?”

“Yes, they will be. You better get your good manners warmed up. They will be here until next Sunday when they will be speaking in another church.”

“That will give all of next week to talk to them and show them around.”

That was the last of that and when next Sunday came. Bill was all dressed and ready to go before me. “Why are you in such a hurry to get to church?”

“I want to get there and meet these people who have dedicated their entire life to the cause of Christ.”

I finished getting ready and getting Annie ready to go with us. We drove to church in my car. Bill had a special pew down front that he sat in each Sunday during church. As soon as the preacher began to speak, Bill would be sound asleep! I thought that this Sunday would be no different, but he surprised me. He sat there and listened to the missionaries all through the service. They had done the impossible, they had kept Bill wide awake through the entire service! They deserved a button for that!

As we were waiting for the missionaries to pack up the things that they had brought to show the congregation, Bill went to help them and helped them carry their things to their car. Bill then told me that the wife would ride home with me and he would ride with the man. This would avoid any possibility of getting lost. When we arrived home, I had the wife, Mary, go with me to their room they would be in for the week.

I went back to the kitchen and got everything on the table. Mary had come to the kitchen with me and helped set the food on the table. I explained to her that I was curious as to what was going on in Bill’s head. He has never acted this way before.

After Bill had Jack, the husband of Mary, return thanks, We passed food, so all could eat. Bill then spoke up asking Jack and Mary, “What is the biggest need you have at this time?”

Jack answered, “Our biggest need at present is a building. We have a congregation of about one hundred and we have to meet under the trees.”

“Is that all you need?” Bill inquired.

“You asked for our biggest need. We have a lot of other things we need. Supplies for the Sunday School, chairs to sit on, running water, a well with pure water, A sewage system for inside toilets and sinks. There are many things we could use, but our sponsoring churches cannot afford them, yet those people need to hear about Christ and money seems to be the obstacle.”

“I believe that I can help you folks out. You make a list of all the things you need and I will find a contractor who will be willing to go there with some men and build you a building. I’ll see if we can get some of the men in our church to go there and drill a clean well and put in a sewer line for you. I have the money and I will be happy to do that for you!”

“That is wonderful! You talk to the contractor and we will get the list of things we need. This list will be for bare necessities.” Jack remarked.

“You make the list for all that you need and I will see that you get them.” Bill remarked.

After breakfast the next morning, Bill took Jack and went to see a contractor that he knew. Jack outlined what he wanted for a building. George, the contractor, looked at Jack and said, “That should be no problem. The question now is how much of these materials can we get locally?”

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Bill and Ann discuss the new mission with the pastor

Jack looked at him and replied, “None, this is far out in the boon docks and there are no settlements for thousands of miles and they don’t have building supplies.”

“Then we will have to bring them in from here.”

“You get all that you are going to need for that and I will see that they are flown to the site,” Bill told the contractor. “How soon can you get all that together?”

“I probably can get it all together in a couple of days, but they will need some ‘earnest’ money to pay for it.” George replied.

“You get me the total amount and I will pay for all of it. How soon will you have that?”

“By the end of today.”

“Where will you have it delivered? If you are short on space, they can unload it at my place.”

“That would be the best. That way you can have access to it any time you are ready to move it.”

Jack and Bill came on home and Jack told Mary that the building supplies would be delivered soon. “I want you to pinch me so I know that I am not dreaming.”

Mary looked at Jack and said, “While you were gone, I made a list of things we need and Ann and I went shopping and have all of that in a room here ready to go. The people we dealt with gave us a big discount because it was for a mission.”

“This is happening so fast that I find it hard to believe.”

Bill looked at Jack and said, “Wait until you see the building that is going up on the mission site. Ann, did you get a well driller lined up?”

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“No we didn’t get any of that lined up.”

“Good that will give Jack and me another task to be done for this project. We need to get water and sewage going or we can’t do much building. I’ll check on that tomorrow. I want to spend the rest of this day taking Jack and Mary on a sight seeing trip around this place.”

Ann and I took them out the main gate and out to where they could see the arches holding the road across the lbo. I then took them to the falls. They were really impressed by the falls. I then took them to the main road and showed them the beauty of the flowers and trees in the background changing colors. They also could smell the cedar wood we had used for our home. I also told them that I had 100,000 acres here.

“I don’t mean to sound like I am bragging for I am not. I think that people who have dedicated their entire life to working with people in foreign lands to win them to Christ, need all the support they can get. God is blessing me for helping you.”

Mary turned to Ann and asked, “Is this all true, or am I dreaming?”

“You can believe it, Mary I know. This road he made himself. The bridges with the arches going across the lbo, he supervised that work. He has cleared around the falls and put in lights shining on the falls. The house you will sleep in tonight, he cut all the timber and sawed it himself and the two of us built this house ourselves.”

“You certainly did a great job. This looks better than most of the houses we have stayed in on our leaves.”

The week went fast and Bill made arrangements for Jack to show him where the nearest place a large cargo plane could land with his supplies. This was done and Bill chartered a cargo plane to bring the supplies to that area and unload. A large helicopter would shuttle them on to the mission site. After they were all at the site, the well would be drilled and the sewer lines put in with a large septic tank and drain field. The building foundation would cover much of the sewer lines.

Bill had bought a large pump to pump the water into a large storage tank on the top of the building. He had bought a number of solar panels to place around the water tank and on the roof to produce all of the electric they would need.

Men and women were flown from the church in a large passenger plane and then shuttled in as they did the materials. These people all went to work on the project. Before too long the building and all of its rooms was built and painted.

Bill and Jack went onto a nearby hill and looked at the building and praised God for how he had blessed them.

The congregation came that Sunday and admired the building, but they really enjoyed being able to get fresh clean water for their own use (to wash clothes and drink). This was something they had never dreamed of. They about wore the electric switches out turning the lights on and off so many times. They played in the water in the sinks and flushed the toilets so many times. Jack had to stop that before they emptied the water tank. These people were aborigines who had never heard of electricity or running water much less see it work. They still believed in witches and witch doctors which had caused some problems when the building was being built It was at this time that newspapers all over the world heard about the huge airlift and sent photographers to take pictures of it. They showed the cranes that lifted the materials and the planes flying the materials. They showed the number of people involved in the lift

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along with the materials. Bill would not allow any pictures of him or Ann to be taken. He said this is God's venture not mine. Take some pictures of the natives and how happy they are.

Bill returned to our church the Sunday after all of this was done and reported to our church that the project was completed and being used. The congregation applauded Bill and gave him a standing ovation.

Bill stood there for a moment and then told the congregation that he saw a need that he could help and did. If you want to brag on someone for what they are doing, brag on those missionaries who have given their whole life to working with those people for Christ. All I and others who worked there did was to facilitate their work.

The Lord gave me this money I have because he thought I would use it wisely for Him. God has given all of you the money you have and expects you to use it wisely. All the money I spent on this mission project God will return to me double. If He will do that for me, just look what He will do for you. May God bless each and everyone who helped on that mission project.

Bill smiled a big smile when he got his next bank statements. I say statements because he has money in banks all around the world. I asked, "What is so funny?"

"I was just reading my bank statements and you won't believe what I discovered."

"I wouldn't have the slightest idea."

"The amount of money I made in interest on this account was exactly double what I spent on the mission in South America – just as God promised. God certainly moves in mysterious ways doesn't he?"

"He certainly does. The money I spent on getting Mary what she needed has been replaced into my account also plus the double he has promised!"

Ann used her money wisely and her parents and family benefited from this sudden increase in wealth. Missionaries around the world also benefited. This was doubled by the fact that Bill was giving to the missionaries working on the mission fields. Ann was proud to be able to help people that needed help all over the world.

The economy took a drop and a lot of people were out of work and losing their homes. Ann devised the plan that she would pay the mortgage money due for some of those people and hold their mortgage until they could get work and pay on it again. This kept the people in their homes and helped the economy. She would foreclose on anybody that had a good income, but still refused to pay. Other millionaires saw this and copied her plan. Ann did the same thing for people that could not pay their mortgage such as veteran's widows and widowers. Bill helped her with this also. Homes that people couldn't pay for and didn't want, Ann and Bill would pick up their mortgage and pay it off and the home was theirs. Bill and Ann would fill those homes with renters that couldn't afford to buy a home. This kept some of the homeless off the streets and helped them keep their pride. They did all of this praising the Lord that they were able to do it.

This whole thing made Bill more interested in other missionaries in other places. He would invite other missionaries to stay at our home and he would talk with them and find out if they had any real needs. If they had any, he would fill that need if he could. I also filled needs where I could. I can't speak for Bill, but I know that I have a great satisfaction in helping those that need help.

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Most of the missionaries we have helped have given us a standard invitation to come to visit them when we can. We did go visit with Mary and Jack the following year and they were happy to see us and introduced us to their growing congregation.

The congregation had a large feast for us while we stayed there and we did not question what kind of meat they served. As a matter of fact, we missed our flight to the next mission so we wouldn't let the congregation think we really didn't care for them. God fixed things to where we really didn't miss a thing at the next mission stop. They found they could not do what they had intended because of conflicting schedules. Doesn't God work in mysterious ways?

Word got out about our trip and what we had done for the missionaries to South America and churches from all over wanted either one of us to come to their churches and speak to their congregation about what we had done. There was a church that had a ladies union that wanted me to come and speak to their ladies of their church. I agreed with some question about how to get there. They gave me directions on how to get there and the most I got from them was the city and the time. It doesn't do any good to get directions if I am excited. I found out the name of the church and had Bill fly me to the church. We were going to land in the church yard and found that the place was jam packed with cars. We located a school yard nearby and landed there. I got out and walked back to the church.

I went into the meeting and sat next to the one I thought was the head of the meeting. "I'm sorry that I am late, but I will explain to the crowd in there."

I was introduced by the speaker. I then began telling them a little about my personal life.

"I was born and lived on a farm, an old fashioned farm, with a mule to pull the plows and such. When my oldest brother got big enough to work he bought my dad a broken down tractor and some equipment to go with it. It was always braking down. As a matter of fact it was slower to use that the old mule we had."

"During my school years I played a lot of sports and was good at that because I thought some fellow might want to marry me or at least take me out. As I got into my teen years, I wanted attention from the opposite sex, but because I was not petite and pretty, no boy was even interested in me. They cheered me on the basketball court, but on the street they wouldn't even give me the time of day."

"After I had graduated from school with honors, I got a job working for a company in town. One day as I was going to lunch, I passed a restaurant widow and looked in. There was a handsome man sitting at a table close to the window waiting for something. He looked at me and I smiled back at him. He almost tore up the restaurant getting out of it and to me."

He invited me in to eat with him. He explained his actions. "I have been praying for years for the Lord to show me the one he would have me marry. As you passed by he told me that you were the one and I had better catch up with you."

"Now this was the way we met. He had been praying for the same thing I had." God picked out our mates and there are no erasers in heaven." I had no prior knowledge of him. He was a total stranger. I had lunch with him and enjoyed every minute of it. I looked at my watch and found that I was going to be late getting back to work.

"Don't worry about it. I own that company and they will give a little slack if I say so." He asked me to go out with him that night and I readily agreed. When he said that he owned that

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company, I thought that he was pretending in an effort to impress me. As I went home with my brother that evening, he told me that the owner of the company was in today and everyone was trying to make everything look better and be ship-shape. It made me wonder about his statement earlier, but I didn't say anything."

"That evening, I didn't say anything about what had taken place and what I had found out. He told me about his time in town and his visit to some land he planned to buy. I thought no more about it."

He took me to a fine restaurant that evening and was a perfect gentleman. "Will you go with me to lunch tomorrow? We will go look at the land I will have bought by then. Where we will build our house when we are married."

"We talked about marriage and the beauty of the land until I had to go to work. He put me in his car as any gentleman would and drove me to the company. He took me into the main office and told them that I was the one he was going to marry and because of that we would be late from time to time."

I spoke up. "You keep talking about OUR HOUSE and about when we are married and you haven't even proposed yet!"

He got down on his knees in front of me and asked me to marry him. I looked at him and said, "I will have to think about it and talk it over with my family."

"We of course had a big wedding with flower girls and ring bearers. The whole works."

"May God bless each and every one of you and do remember that when you are upset with your husband that there are no erasers in Heaven!"

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Chapter Six Tornado!

I had taken on the job of doing part of Frank's region for enforcing the Water Rights Act. There wasn't too much work concerning it, for nearly everyone knew what it said and did. The only ones that didn't know were new people moving into the area and there weren't too many of us. Everyone wanted land that was green with grass and no rough edges.

Days that there was no need of my services, I worked on getting Ann's garden plowed and ready for her to plant. I had some surprises as I plowed. In places there was plentiful moisture and in places there was none. The sample I had sent the government for testing was from a dry area. In one place where the water was plentiful was plenty large enough for her whole garden. I showed her this and she was thrilled that she wouldn't have to irrigate. After I got that spot plowed and leveled (which were both done with my Tiller), she put her garden in. She planted the beans, peas, lettuce, tomatoes, sweet corn, broccoli, cauliflower and carrots. She planted her potatoes and made a ridge for her sweet potatoes and planted them. She had planted a big garden and waited a few days for things to begin coming up.

In about a week the beans poked their heads through the ground and Ann was elated over that. A little while longer about everything was up along with the usual weeds. She had bought a hoe and went to work hoeing the garden to get rid of the weeds. Some of the weeds matured and bloomed, so she decided that instead of hoeing the weeds out she would transplant them to the yard in flower gardens. She bought Annie a pair of bib overalls and showed her things she could do in the garden. The more the garden grew, the more weeds there were.

Ann had made her rows wide enough that I could run my tiller through the garden. I ran the tiller through and it chopped up the weeds and made fertilizer for the garden, All she had to do was hoe in the rows.

When the corn and potatoes got big enough, I put the 'hiller' on the tiller and hilled the corn and potatoes.

Ann looked at me and ask, "Is there anything else that tiller will do? I believe that it can save me a lot of work."

As the vegetables grew, a few bugs found the plants and began to eat holes in the leaves, The tomatoes and the potatoes got worms on them. Ann took a quart jar out with some kerosene in it and pulled the worms off and put them in the jar. I saw her problem and ask at the seed and feed store if they had something for it. They did. I bought it and sprayed the garden and the bugs were gone and Ann's garden was saved. She would now have to spray her garden again in about two weeks to kill the young hatchlings. She did this and it cured the worm and bug problem. The vegetables were saved. Ann was so happy with her garden that she would work in it and sing as she worked.

While Ann was working in the garden, I went to work on my hydroelectric plant, The Ibo was about a thousand feet wide and the very center was running in a channel about twenty feet deep. This was where the strongest current was. That is where I wanted to make my pick-up tunnel. I built a coffer dam at an angle to the current above where I wanted to work and shunted the water away from where I had to work. I had bought several pieces of aluminum culvert - one foot diameter by twenty feet long. I laid it perpendicular to the dam. By

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doing this it allowed the people below me to still have the same amount of water as usual. I dug a ditch with my backhoe on the tractor. This ditch was a little wider than the culvert diameter and from the center of the deep channel of the river and in the bottom.

I now had to have a valve of some kind to hold the water back until I was ready for it. I found what I needed and bolted it into place. Now the rock side of the channel was of sandstone, so I could dig a hole in it with the back hoe. When I was level with the bottom of the channel, I placed the culvert in the ditch and cemented all around the culvert pipe and sealed the culvert in the channel. I placed more culvert pipe from the turbine box back to the river. I built the turbine box of cement and to the specifications recommended by the manufacturer of the turbine.

I discovered that the sandstone channel had cracks in it that let water seep through and keep the surrounding land moist. That was why Ann's garden didn't have to be irrigated.

I finished working on my hydroelectric plant and let the cement set for twenty four hours. After everything was set good, I took the coffer dam out. I checked everything for seepage and structure soundness. Then I checked the turbine and the generator. Everything worked great! I had all of the power I needed. I had enough amperage to run a lot of motors at the same time and still had power left. I had purposely over powered it, so I would not have to count how many amps I was expending.

I went up on the plateau with my tractor with the loader on the front and pulled some dirt from Totto mountain and brought it back on to the plateau and scattered it. After I had built the dirt on the plateau above the house to about a foot deep all over that area, I planted grass and rye seeds. The rye would come up first and protect the grass seed until it could come up. Of course this area had to be irrigated so the seed could sprout and grow. In a short while the seeds began to sprout and grow. Now when I look down from my helicopter, I can see where my house is.

Ann asked me if she and Annie could go up there and plant some flower gardens. I told Ann to draw what she planned to do and let me see that it is not going to interfere with my future plans. Ann did that and it was great what they had planned. I told Ann to go ahead with her plans.

One of the things that had drawn us to this place was the flowers. By planting these planned flower gardens, we were preserving that look. Ann was being careful to make certain that the bottom land flowers were not put on the plateau. Now when spring came, the place would be alive with flowers,

I had a lot more that needed to be done, but I could not get to those things because winter came early that year. One October morning I woke up a little chilly and went to see if something were wrong. When I looked out the window, I found the trouble. A snow storm had moved in and covered every thing. It was a beautiful sight, but not so good on Ann's garden. Ann was well pleased with her garden, but had not finished gathering everything. The most of what was left was the peppers, the last of the tomatoes and things that can stand a little cold on them like the cabbage, potatoes and carrots.

I woke Ann up and had her look out the window. Her first statement was, "Its beautiful." Her second statement was, "My garden! It will kill my beautiful garden!"

I said, "Honey. It was about gone anyway. You have frozen a lot of things and canned more. We have to dig the potatoes, both sweet and Irish. The cabbage can still be cut and

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made into sauerkraut or stored in the ground. This time of the year has to come and the end of your garden has to come for this year. God has been good to you and me and we need to praise Him and thank Him.”

“You are right, oh wise husband of mine. I will praise God and look forward to a garden next year. I have some pictures of this one and will look at them throughout winter and dream of next year.”

“That is the idea. Just don’t forget the one who allowed you to have this one!”

During this winter we decided that we would get a little dog for Annie. She loved animals and they seemed to like her. We thought about getting her a little kitten, but we settled on a little dog because a cat wouldn’t be able to scare off bad people. We found a very nice little puppy. It was a mixed breed. A terrier mix related to a Jack Russell. The little thing barked and ran around Annie in circles barking. Annie loved it. She would grab it and hold it up to her and love it. It definitely became Annie’s dog. Anytime you saw Annie the little dog was close by. Annie decided that we would call it Little Doggy and that settled that. He was Little Doggy.

During that winter, I met with Frank to see what we were going to do the next year concerning the water law. He told me that if it wasn’t broken, don’t fix it.

Frank and his wife, Lois, came to visit us a time or two and bragged on Ann and Annie’s garden. Frank and Lois couldn’t get over the size and taste of the vegetables out of Ann’s garden. Ann likes to take the credit for her garden, but what really did it was the muck soil underneath the garden and God’s blessing. The soil test indicated that there was an abundance of minerals and elements in the muck that would grow anything if it had moisture. The Lord had made everything just right for her garden.

During the winter, I bought some fruit trees - Apples, pears, Peaches and cherries. I bought a variety of each kind and some grape vines, blueberry, blackberry, red and black raspberries. I hired some young boys that had nothing to do around town and paid them to plant the trees and shrubs. They did a fine job and I gave them a little extra for doing such a good job. The trees had all been planted on the bottom land. They had spaced the trees nicely to where I could get my tractor in to cultivate and my mower in to keep the weeds and grass down. The young fellows that I had done that were so good that the next time I needed workers, I hired them again. They were in school, so I had to hire them on Saturdays and evenings during the week.

I had them dig ditches for the irrigation pipes. They did an excellent job. The ditches were at least a foot deep and exactly where I wanted them. I had bought a load of PVC water pipe before hand and I had the fellows lay the pipe where I was going to need it. Then I came through with a load of tees, elbows and connectors for the pipe. I showed the boys where I wanted to put the tees and that the pipe would have to be cut and the ends beveled. They did this and I brought out the primer for all of the joints. After they had finished that, I brought out the glue and showed them that they would have to work fast with the glue because it dries so fast and the joint has to be in the position it is supposed to be. There is no second chance there. They did it very well and now the glue would have to set. I paid them well for their work and took them home. The next time I had them fill the ditches which was done nicely and they tamped the dirt over the ditch to where it was packed tight, so the pipe could not move. I paid them again and took them home. One of the fellows looked at me and wanted to know if he

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gave up his pay for today, would I take him up in my helicopter some day? "I will take you up some day when we have finished, free." He was a happy young man.

We worked until my orchard, vineyard and the shrubs could all be watered. We had finished on a week night and getting dark because of clouds. I promised to take them up Saturday if the weather was OK. They came back on Saturday to work. I didn't have anything for them to do. I showed them how nice the water system worked thanks to them. I checked the weather and there was rain coming in from the south.

I told the boys, "I'm sorry, but the weather is bad. We will have to postpone the helicopter ride for another day. I will have to get you fellows home before it gets bad."

They grumbled and got into the car. "If I live, I will take you boys up for a ride as soon as I can."

"I know you fellows are disappointed, but I can't take a chance on crashing or maybe killing one of you. There will be another day, I promise.

Paul yelled at me as he was about to enter his home that he wanted to see me some day about a business deal. I yelled back that I would talk with him sometime soon.

Winter set in and I didn't need the fellows any more until it came into spring. The winter passed quietly and Annie had her third birthday. All of her cousins and friends came by to the party her mother had set up for her. All of her cousins brought gifts and they in turn got all the ice cream and cookies they could eat. The little girls screamed and giggled and laughed all afternoon until their mothers came. They had a great time and were probably sick all night from all the cookies and ice cream they ate. Their mothers probably had to give them some kind of medicine to cure their upset tummies.

Paul came by one day and told me that he would like to buy a chunk of my land to build a house on. "How big of a piece of land do you want? An acre? Five acres? I need to know before we can see what I can and will deal.

He looked at me and then said, "I had thought that maybe something on the order of ten acres."

"Where did you think you wanted it?"

"I thought that maybe on the other end of the apple orchard. That way I could keep an eye on that end of the orchard and be of some help to you."

"That is good thinking. I was going to ask if one of you fellows would like to have a piece of land there. Let's go see what we are talking about."

We flew in the helicopter to that area and looked. The bottom land on that end was a little shallow. "This land looks like it may not be any good. I'll take a core sample in a day or two and let you know the results. You may want to move over another acre."

"How many acres did you think you would let me have?"

"I thought that maybe a strip three hundred feet wide and all the way back to Tutto Mountain with an easement for a thirty foot road."

"That sounds great. How much are you going to want for it?"

"I really don't know at this moment. I will have to talk it over with my wife before I can give you an answer. I'll get back with you after I take the core sample and have seen my wife about it."

"That will be fine with me." On the way back to the house, Anyone would have thought that a young boy would have been excited about getting a piece of land to build and live on,

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instead Paul asked all kinds of questions about the helicopter. I think he was more interested in the helicopter than he was the land.

The leaves on some of the trees were beginning to come out with their beautiful color of green and red. Things were looking more like spring was springing. Ann was ordering her seeds and plants for the coming garden. She wanted to get her seeds in by the fifteenth of May. This meant that I was going to have to get her ground ready for the garden.

I went out one morning and was getting the tiller ready for the garden. I noticed that the sky had all at once gotten cloudy. I stepped out of the shed where I was working to look at the sky. It was very dark and wild looking, so I hurried to the house to get my family to some kind of safety. I feared it was a tornado, and it was.

I found Annie and Ann and the only place I could find was under the bed. I had Annie get in the middle under the bed and Ann was on one side of Annie and I was on the other side. We heard the wind howling and screeching, sounding ever so much like a freight train headed for the house, as the hail began hitting the roof. There were no sounds for a moment and then the hail and the wind began again. We heard it for a moment and then we didn't hear it. Then the bed lifted and flew away after which Ann disappeared, then me and apparently Annie was the last to blow away.

The wind carried me apparently up into the air higher than the cliff behind the house. It carried me for quite a ways and then threw me down on the plateau. I regained consciousness some time later and discovered that both arms and both legs were broken. I couldn't do anything. My back was either broken or close to it. It hurt to even try to move. My head hurt worse than any headache I ever had.

According to Ann she was scooped up and then dragged along picking up splinters as she was blown along. She was deposited on a tree that had been blown over with other debris landing on her. She had been blown in one direction and I another.

The wind had pushed Annie out from under the bed and Little Doggy grabbed for her and caught her by the leg and dug in all four feet to try and hold her. His feet just scooted along in the wind. He was no match for the wind, but he didn't give up. Suddenly Little Doggy got some help. There was a big Grizzly Bear that was helping to hold Annie. The bear stepped into the wind so it couldn't blow Annie away. A large piece of wood about a foot long and four inches square had been picked up by the wind and blew end wise onto the bear's head and he dropped to the ground. The wind blew Annie against some debris and dumped more on top of her. She was trying to keep a space open in front of her mouth, but the wind kept blowing more in. Little Doggy saw this and he clawed at the debris to keep it from blocking Annie's air passage. It destroyed everything they had worked so hard to build.

I want to take time here to give the reader some idea about how a tornado works. A storm front gets a bad place that the winds begin to swirl and move in a horizontal position then a tornado forms and pulls away from the front and grows stronger as it goes. The winds in a tornado are moving horizontal to the ground in a circular, counter clockwise direction. The wind forms a dead place in the middle of the circular motion that has no wind blowing. This dead spot may be as much as a quarter of a mile or less usually less. The smaller the dead spot and how thick the walls are, generally indicates how strong the tornado is. This dead spot is the center of the funnel which moves with the storm, wobbling as it goes. Tornadoes generally take a west to east direction. If a tornado starts in Missouri, it will generally go

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Big Bear and Little Doggie save Annie from being sucked away by the tornado

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towards Illinois and Indiana. This particular storm moved in a path between the Totto Mountain and the Ibo River and directly over Bill and Ann's house. It destroyed everything they had worked so hard to build.

Just as soon as the wind had started, it suddenly stopped. Rescue crews were already on the scene. They found Annie first and Little Doggy. They also found the grizzly lying there. The rescue crew was going to leave the bear, but decided that he had apparently tried to save the little girl. They called for the Vet to come and help them with the bear. He asked if the bear were alive or not. The rescuer listened for a heartbeat and informed the vet that there was a faint heartbeat.

The vet came and checked the bear and informed them all that the bear was out because of a fractured skull. He then took a vial of something and injected it into the bear, He remarked that he wanted the bear to stay unconscious while he worked on him. He pulled the bear with a rope and a winch up a chute and into the back of his truck. He then drove the bear to his hospital.

Little Doggy had lost a lot of his foot pads as he was scooted along the ground by the wind. One of the rescuers took Little Doggy to the vet and showed him the torn and bleeding foot pads. The Vet told him that all he could do for that was disinfect them and cover them with bandages to keep the dirt out.

The ambulance came and took Annie to the hospital for treatment. She had a number of slivers in her and some bruises. Of course there was the teeth marks in her leg from Little Doggy trying to hold her.

The rescuers found Ann next. She was pinned to a tree by some debris. They cut through the debris and dug her out. She had plenty of slivers in her and a whole lot of bruises. Other than that she was in pretty good shape. They rushed her to the hospital and treated her there. They kept her for a couple of days to make certain that she was OK.

While she was in the hospital, Frank found out where she was and came with his wife to visit. At the end of the visit, he informed Ann that she had no house anymore, so when she and the rest of the family were released from the hospital, they would stay with him until something could be done about their housing situation.

The news media were running articles about the tornado and especially about Bill and his family. Headlines came out, "One of the world's richest man missing and presumed dead". No one seemed to know anything about Bill. Rescuers went out from the hospital where Frank had been and found Bill in a pile of debris on the plateau. They dug him out and rushed him to the hospital. After they had examined him they said that both arms and legs were broken and possibly his back. He had several fractured ribs that they taped up. He also had a fractured skull and a concussion.

They wrapped his head in bandages to keep his head from getting bumped again They set the bones in his arms and legs and then put casts on his arms and legs and put a body cast on his body. He was totally immobile. This was the way he would be for about six weeks or more.

There was no way he would be able to get Ann's garden done. This was when help came from an unexpected source. Paul found where Bill was and went to see him. He looked at Bill and said, "I hope you don't mind, but I have been coming out to your place in your truck. I have been driving the thieves off and I plowed your wife's garden, so she can plant when she

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is ready. Your hydroelectric plant was still going, so I cut it off where it goes to the house, I keep the lights on in the shed you have for the truck and I keep them on in the shed where you keep your helicopter. I couldn't find out how to cut the generator off."

"You have done very well. I will have to reward you some way. Do you happen to know where my wife and child are? Your parents must be very proud of you."

"They could care less about me. They are both drug addicts and alcoholics and that is all they care about. Your wife and daughter are in another hospital for now and they expect to get out probably tomorrow. Frank plans to take them in until you get something for a house. Your pet bear and dog are in the vets hospital. That bear and dog saved your little girls life. They are both up for an award for that."

"I don't know anything about a bear. What kind of bear is it?"

"It's a big old grizzly bear. What do you want done when it is well? A piece of wood hit him on the head as he was trying to save your little girl."

"I guess that I will have to be good to him for her sake. Have the vet take him to the house site and release him there. When Annie gets out there he will probably find her again. That girl has had more animals for pets than I ever saw. You stay on out there and care for the place until I can get out there again. My arms and legs are both broken, I've had a concussion and there is something wrong with my back. Other than that I'm in fine shape."

"You still have your sense of humor, I see. Your wife and daughter will probably come to see you tomorrow. I better get back now. Someone may have tried to steal your 'copter by now."

With that said he left and I thought what a nice boy he was with such terrible parents. When a person sees that kind of thing, it makes one wonder where the heads of those wanting to legalize drugs are!

The next day around noon Ann and Annie came in with Little Doggy. Little Doggy had bandages on his feet, but he was happy to see me. I was happy to see my wife and daughter. They tried to give me a kiss, but had trouble because of all the body casts and apparatus near the bed. I rejoiced to know that our whole family was all right and I thanked God for that!

I looked at Ann and asked her if she had any ideas about living quarters.

She looked at me and said, "You know that trailer that Uncle John has? Well it is empty and we could pull it out there and live in it until we can get a new house built. If that meets your approval I'll have him pull it over to our place."

"That is fine with me. Did you know that your garden is ready for you to plant. One of the boys I had help me, has plowed it and has been keeping the unwanted from coming in there."

"He certainly seems like a very nice boy. We are going to have to do something nice for him."

"He has been camping out in the truck while I am gone. When you get out there, see if you can't find him a bed to sleep on anyway. Just don't take him into the trailer as that would not look right to others."

"I hope you know me better than that. I'd hit you, but I'd break my fist on those casts. Frank and his wife have taken us in until we can get something of our own to live in. The insurance company has been knocking the door down trying to get me to settle with them. I won't do it until you are able to see what they want to give. We stopped by the vet and paid

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him for caring for Little Doggy and your daughter's bear named Big Bear. What do you want done with him?"

"It is my understanding that Big Bear helped Little Doggy save Annie. That being the case, have the vet bring Big Bear out where the house was and turn him loose there. He will go back to his own den from there."

The town council called a special meeting for the purpose of awarding Big Bear and Little Doggy's medals for saving Annie's life. I would have loved to have been there to see that meeting. I was told by one of the councilmen that a discussion was had about who was going to hang the medals on the animal's necks. One of them stated that he thought the mayor would be the proper one to do that.

The Mayor's eyes got as big as saucers, "I'll hang it on the dog and one of you can do the bear."

"Don't tell me that our brave Mayor is afraid of that bear! That little girl not more than three feet tall and probably weighs less than fifty pounds is not afraid of that bear and a full grown man like our mayor is afraid of him!"

That is when a small scuffle took place each councilman stating that he wasn't going to hang anything on that bear's neck or any other bear's neck! They finally agreed that the safest thing to do was to let the little girl do it. I would say that they are really brave men!

"The ceremony will be tomorrow. Maybe Frank has a camera so I can take pictures of that. I know Little Doggy will be proud of his medal, but I don't know how Big Bear is going to take it. Annie will have to put it on Big Bear's neck. Everyone else is afraid of him. I'll try to get back as soon as I can now that I have found where you are."

"Maybe some of the news people will take pictures of the ceremony tomorrow so I can see it."

"That is a good idea. I'll bet they will, being you are not going to see the ceremony other wise. I'll try any way."

"If I know you, you will get that done well."

With that said my family left me and went to Frank's for the night.

The next morning the staff wheeled a large screen TV into my room and said that they would be back to turn it on when the service began. That screen was so big that it would be like sitting up close in the auditorium.

In a while the ceremony began. Annie was sitting in the front row with her dog and Big Bear. The rest of the family was sitting next to Ann. The audience was sitting back two rows and away from the bear.

When time came for the dog and bear to get their medals, Annie rose and led the two animals to the stage. The mayor handed Annie the medals to put on their necks. Little Doggy, a terrier mix, stood facing the audience with his tail arched over his back and his head proudly at attention showing that he was proud of that medal. Big Bear was on all fours and Annie put his medal on his neck and told him to stand, so all could see his medal. The bear stood on his hind feet and must have been nine feet tall. Little Doggy, not to be outdone, also stood on his hind feet. The audience was ready for the door should the bear move toward them. The bear just stood there on his hind feet until Annie told him he could get down. Annie stood between the bear and the dog facing the audience for a photo-op.

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Annie explained to the bear that they were going to take pictures of them and there would be flash bulbs going off and to not get excited. The bear stood there beside Annie while pictures were taken. One of the photographers asked Annie if she could get the bear to stand as he had before so he could get a picture of the three of them like that. Annie had the bear stand again and they took pictures of them like that. After that the mayor asked that all photographers please leave so the bear, dog and child could go outside and get ready for home. They were no doubt tired as they all had been in the hospital recently.

Ann looked at Annie and asked, "Where did you learn to train Big Bear?"

Annie replied, "I didn't mother. He just does what I say. Big Bear is hungry and would like to go back to his home and get something to eat. A man from the market heard her say that and went to his store and brought Big Bear a piece of raw meat and threw it down for Big Bear to pick up and eat. Big Bear wouldn't touch it. Annie told the man that Big Bear wanted to have it given to him. Annie picked up the meat and the bear wouldn't have it. Annie told the man that Big Bear wanted him to give it to him.

The man looked at Annie and asked, "He won't bite me instead will he?"

Annie assured the man that the bear wouldn't hurt him, so the man picked up the meat and handed it to Big Bear who took it and ate it. The man went to leave and the bear growled a little growl. Annie assured him that Big Bear was saying thank you for the meat.

The cameras cut off there and the staff wheeled the TV screen out of the room. My room was full of people watching that little girl and that BIG bear. I would have been afraid to be that close to the bear when he stood over the top of me, but not my little girl! I was very proud of her and would have hugged and kissed her had I been there to do it.

Later, some of the nurses came in and asked if I had seen that cute, little, red haired girl and that big bear. I replied that I had and that little girl is MY daughter!

"Your daughter certainly was not afraid of that bear!"

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Chapter Seven The Recovery

At the end of three weeks in the casts, the doctor took them off my arms and legs. He took the pumpkin bandage off my head and then took off the body cast. That really felt good to feel the air on my body for a change. I was always sweaty and hot in those casts and the bandage. I told the doctor how good that felt. He looked at me and said, "Enjoy it while you can. I have to put some plastic splints on your arms and legs and a brace on your back. It won't be as hot as the casts, but at least you will be able to get around."

He put the splints on and the brace on my back and said, "Now you are ready for therapy. You will have to learn to walk again and even stand up."

"You mean that I am paralyzed?"

"In a manner, Yes! You haven't been using those legs and arms and they have forgotten how to walk or work. Try raising your hands over your head. I'll bet you can't do it."

"I tried and I could not! My arms were not functioning. "I guess that I do need some therapy!" I was in worse condition than I thought! I never thought about not being able to use my arms and legs. I thought that was one of those things one never forgets.

"You cannot try to get up on your own or walk on your own until we give the 'go' sign, if you do, you might fall and break something all over again! Your bones have healed some, but if you fell, you could easily break them again. They will not be completely healed for almost a year. Even after you can walk again, you are going to have to be careful.

Ann and Annie came to see me. They were elated to see me out of the casts. Ann sat in a chair beside the bed with Annie on her lap. We were all silent for a while and then Annie broke the silence by asking, "Daddy, did you see me give Little Doggy his medal for valor?"

"Yes, I did. I saw a cute little girl give a medal to a big bear also. Who was that and where did he come from?"

Annie got a girlish smile on her face, "That was me Daddy and that was my bear. I call him Big Bear. Did you know that he almost died trying to save me from the storm?"

"You didn't answer my question, WHERE DID THE BEAR COME FROM? I questioned emphasizing each word. Did he hatch out like the baby birds? Did he come out of the woods? Did someone going by give you the bear from a show he had?"

"I really don't know where he is from, but I do know that I was in the yard playing with Little Doggy and the bear came up and wanted to play with us. I was a little afraid of him at first because he was so big. He did some funny tricks for me and made me laugh. He did what I told him, so I let him play with us. He got hungry, so I showed him your berry patch and he helped himself to your berries. He is a good bear. He plays with me and protects me from bad things. One day, out by the berry patch there was some kind of animal trying to bite me and Big Bear came over and took his paw and slapped the animal way far from me and wouldn't let it come back. Each time it came close, Big Bear slapped it away again. This happened a few times and finally that animal left for good. I gave Big Bear a big hug for protecting me that way. Ever since then we have let Big Bear play with us. I think he lives on the mountain."

"I am glad you have a friend like that, but I am afraid he will forget who you are and try to hurt you some day."

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"I don't think he will, Daddy. He is my friend." Annie said this with her hands on her hips just like her mother when she is irritated with me.

"You don't have many friends around there, so as long as he behaves himself, we will let you play with him."

Ann spoke up, "I found out something when they were examining me at the hospital. They told me that I was expecting another child."

"Are you kidding me?"

"No. That is the truth and I was as surprised as you are. Annie is going to have a little brother or sister. If it is a little boy, we may have trouble with Big Bear wanting to kill him.

"Why would he do that, Daddy?" Annie looked at me as she asked this.

"That is one of their bad habits, I guess. How come I have not heard about you expecting before now?"

"I didn't want you to break your arm trying to kiss me!" We both chuckled about that. The nurse came in and told my family that they were going to have to leave as they were going to have to give me a bath and take off the splints and back brace.

The nurse looked at Annie and said, "Aren't you that cute little girl that was on TV with that great big bear?"

Annie's face lit up as she proudly said, "That was me. He is my friend."

The nurse asked, "Aren't you afraid of him? He is a lot bigger than you!"

"I was a little afraid of him when I first saw him, but when I saw that he meant no harm, my fears left."

"I'll bet no one bothers you!"

My family left the room.

The nurse began taking the splints and the brace off of me and said, "If that were my child I would be afraid that bear would turn on her or you folks and kill someone!"

"At this time I think the only ones that need to be afraid are those who would mean harm to the family. He will be a good watch dog."

In a weeks time I was able to get around and do all the normal things I ever did, so the doctor discharged me. I paid my bill and I don't mind saying that it was a whopper. I didn't mind paying for the services that they had given me.

I called Ann to come and get me as I was coming home! I don't think she even hung up. I know that she must have gotten into the car and had broken all speed limits. She came into the room and grabbed me in a big hug. Annie's bear couldn't have given me a bigger hug. I flinched a little and she said, "I am sorry honey! I didn't mean to hurt you. I forgot that you are still fragile."

"That's OK honey. I've got to get healed in the back. A little squeezing Might help it get better. Where is Annie?"

"I left her with Big Bear, Little Doggy and Paul. Paul just loves it at the place and he is looking forward to you letting him have a place of his own."

"I promised him a place, but I wanted to talk it over with you first and the storm came before I got that done."

"What were you thinking?"

"I was thinking that I would give him a piece on the upper end of the orchard up on the plateau. That is providing he continues working for me. I don't know whether you know it or

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not, but he grew up more or less on his own. His parents are alcoholics and drug addicts. He doesn't even want to be around them!"

"He has made himself at home around the place and has turned up my garden and has tended the vineyard and the orchard. He has always come to me and asked if I would mind if he did these things and he did an excellent job. I say let him have that land!"

We pulled into the drive and headed for the trailer. It certainly did not look much like the house, but we were blessed that we were able to get it. I got out of the car by myself and headed for the trailer. Ann helped me get up the steps and into the trailer. "I know that this isn't much for a house, but I know that we will have even better than before!"

"I hope so, honey," About that time Annie had seen us come in and came running all the way from the apple orchard to see me with Little Doggy running with her and Big Bear bouncing along side.

Annie came up to me and grabbed me in a big hug and I stooped over so she could kiss me on the cheek. "Daddy, we are so happy to have you home! We have all missed you very much." She saw the splints on my arms and asked, "What is that, Daddy?"

"That is what they had to put on my arms so they won't break again."

"Are you going to have to wear them all the time?"

"No, Dear. They will probably be taken off in about three weeks. That's when my bones will be strong again and not break easily."

"I'll be careful not to break your arms again."

"You didn't do it the first time. That bad old storm did it. Where is this Big Bear character. I want to see him and thank him for saving you from getting killed in the storm."

"He is waiting outside the door and wanting to meet you."

With that said, Annie and I stepped out side. This great big old Grizzly Bear stepped up to me and Annie said, "Big Bear, I want you to meet my Daddy." At that time Big Bear gave me a big slurp on the cheek with his tongue that reminded me of a wood rasp. That was his way of saying "Howdy! Glad to meet you."

"Thank you, Big Bear. I want to tell you that I really appreciate how you almost gave your life to save Annie. That was wonderful and I want you to know that you are welcome here as long as you want to stay. I turned to go back into the trailer when Big Bear stepped in front of me and wouldn't let me in. "What is wrong Big Bear? This is where I live, too."

He turned and looked down the lane to the orchard and there coming down the lane was Paul. "Thank you, Big Bear. I do want to see Paul also. He needs my thanks, too. I don't know what I would have done if he had not stayed on here while I was in the hospital."

"Paul", I said as he approached us, "I owe you a lot, too. You have kept things going here and it looks like a good job. I want to talk with you, maybe tomorrow, about that land you wanted. I am going to have to pay you a lot for all the work you have done on the place. Thank you just isn't enough."

Paul broke down in tears and couldn't speak for a minute. "Bill, my parents never thanked me for anything I ever did for them. They would curse me if I did something wrong because I hadn't learned how to do some things. You and Miss Ann are the first people who have ever shown appreciation for me. I wish I had met you sooner in life. I would have loved to have had you and Miss Ann for my mother and father. You two are the greatest."

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Pictured (L-R) - Kevin, Kyle, Jason, Paul. Paul and a few of his friends clean up after the tornado destroyed Ann and Bill's home. Kyle is Kevin's older brother. Paul met the two of them in church a few years ago after their own home was destroyed by a tornado. Jason is Paul's best friend and they have known each other since they were both toddlers. When Paul's father came home drunk, he would look for Paul to scream at or beat. Paul would sneak out and sleep in a tree house in Jason's back yard. Jason knew Paul was back there and kept it secret. Paul's parents were so inebriated that they never realized that their own son was missing. Paul would always return home in the morning before they got up and pretended that he was there the whole time.

Big Bear was standing beside Paul and when Paul had tears running down his cheeks, Big Bear leaned over and licked the tears away. “Big Bear, thank you for that, but I have a handkerchief for that.” Everyone laughed.

Ann came to the door in a minute and announced that supper was ready and for all of us to get ready to eat. I went into the trailer and asked where the bathroom was. Annie took my hand and led me to it. I went in and washed my hands and then all the rest of them came in and washed their hands also. I headed back to the table and Ann said, “You just wait a minute and Paul will say grace for us.” Even though the trailer was old and falling apart in places, Ann had it all fixed up and everything shining.

When we were all present, we all held hands around the table as Paul returned thanks for the food and that we were all together again. When Paul was through, we all dropped hands we were holding and sat in a chair as we waited for supper to appear. Ann was great about making a meal out of nearly nothing. This time she had splurged. There was plenty of

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everything, New potatoes cooked in gravy the way I like them. Apparently I wasn't the only one that like them for Ann had to go back and get more out of the pot. We had meat that she had saved from somewhere. Home made bread. Fresh churned butter from some where because we did not have a cow. Ann had gone all out for this meal. I thanked her for it and gave her a big kiss.

The next day I worked on the hydroelectric system and found that only circuit breakers had blown. I reset them and all was well there. I had to throw the switches for the old house and other buildings that were no more. This also cured the problem in the sewer system, so now we did not have to use the "old time" system.

I checked the water system and found that a circuit breaker in the fuse box had to be reset and the pump worked fine. The water storage tank had to be bled so the water would have air pressure to push the water through the lines. Somehow the air had escaped from the tank. This cured most of the problems around the place. The only thing left before we could start building was to get the wood from the old house gathered up and separated into piles. Solid pieces of wood in one pile and broken pieces with some good wood in another. It was surprising to find that almost all the wood had been splintered. We found some pieces of wall that were not splintered and we could carefully take that section of wall apart and would have some good wood for our new house. I know that most people would not go to that bother, but while wood is a renewable item, I don't want to have to wait for it to grow to the size I can use!

We collected broken wood and tore good wood from bad the rest of that day. We were all tired and ready to go to bed that night. I did take a little time to go to the shed that held my sawmill. I looked it over for troubles and found one stick of wood across the belt that ran the saw. I checked the oil and the gas and filled the gas tank. I checked the tank for leaks and it was solid, so I started the engine and it started up. I put the drive for the saw in gear and it worked. From this I assumed that it would work OK and went to bed for the night. As I passed the hut that Paul had made for himself, I checked on him and found he was really cramped in that hut. "Tomorrow we will enlarge your hut so you can be more relaxed."

The next morning I was a bit sore and lame from not having worked much for a while. Ann noticed this and said, "You are going to take today off!"

"I can't, Honey. We have got to get this place ready for rebuilding! I want a place cleared and leveled for the pad of the new house. God must not have liked the house we had for some reason, so he tore it down. We are going to build us another house out of rock that will not blow away!"

"I see you have some big ideas. Do you suppose that is the reason He tore the place up?"

"I don't think he tore it up. He allowed that to happen to us and saved our lives, so now he wants us to do better. Tomorrow I want to go over on the mountain and cut some of the timber we are going to need for our new home. We will haul the logs over here somewhere and I can saw them in my sawmill as to what we need. I want to take Paul to the place he wants and tell him what I will give him if he wants. I want him to have a strip of land at the end of the orchard on the plateau all the way back to the mountain. How does that sound to you?"

"I think he has earned it. While you were in the hospital, he worked around here hauling water and emptying 'thunder mugs'. He was busy all the time doing something."

"I can see that he was and I want to repay him with something he wants."

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"I think that will be nice!"

Later that day when Paul was present, I got my four wheeler out and checked the oil and gas and found that it seemed to be OK. I started it up and took off on it to see if it would run. It did, so I came back and picked Paul up and went up on the plateau. I drove along the plateau until the end of the apple orchard. I stopped there and we both got off. Paul looked at me and asked, "I guess you know that you are the kind of dad I have always wanted and didn't have. Would you mind if I called you Dad?"

"That will be fine with me. You are about as close to the family as a son would be. I might say a 'good' son. Your folks are missing one of the biggest blessings they can get by loving that drugged state more than you. I will be glad to accept the blessing they are missing by calling you 'son'."

Tears welled up in his eyes as he hugged me. "You are the nicest person I have ever met and I am honored to call you 'Dad'."

I showed him the land that he had said he wanted before the storm. "I want to double what you are going to get. Your land will be about 600 feet wide and all the way back to the mountain with the exception that there will be a road going through here some day that will have a right of way of 60 feet. You can do anything you want on it. Just don't build anything permanent on it. How does that sound? Is that satisfactory with you?"

"I don't know if I can get enough money to pay you for that much land!"

"I am giving you this land with no hitches except one. You have to stay on and work for me some. If you want go to college somewhere, you may and the land will be yours when you get back if you want it."

"I will take it! I guess that I will have to build a house on it someday."

"When we have built our house, I will come and help you build yours."

"God has heard my cries for help and has given me you for a Dad. I think you are the best Dad in the world!"

"I kind of doubt that you are in a position to judge that, but I will accept your statement. Thank you for saying that. We better get on the four wheeler and back on the mountain and mark trees we are going to cut tomorrow. I want to start building our new home soon." We drove back to the trailer and got some spray paint and headed for the mountain.

When we got to the mountain we looked for cedar trees and marked them. Most of them were in the higher altitudes of the mountain, so we had to climb higher and it got colder. When we had marked about twenty trees, we came down and headed for home.

I had Paul help me get the chain saws ready and set them together in the shed with the gas can and chain oil. Ann came and told me it was time for us to eat. I looked around and didn't see Annie. "Where is Annie?"

"I don't know. She was here just a minute ago." Ann yelled for Annie to come for supper. No response. We all went hunting for her. Paul went where he knew she might be. I went to the barns. Ann went to the cliff hunting her. When I had finished looking in the barns I went along the river looking for her. She was out in the river wading towards the center of the river. I yelled for her to come back. She didn't come back. It looked like something was under water pulling her along. I went into the water and as fast as I could, I grabbed her and pulled her back with something stuck to her foot. I got her to shore and discovered that a large snapping turtle had been dragging her to the strong current. She was small enough and

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buoyant enough that he could drag her along. I made the turtle let go of her by putting fire under his mouth. When he let her go she hopped to her mother and told her that her toe was sore. It was actually broken, The turtle snapped her toe and his snap broke the bone in the toe. I carried her on to the house and we called Paul back. We put a little splint on her toe and wrapped two toes together so it would hold.

Ann asked her, "What were you doing down by the river? You have to stay away from it. If you had gotten in the deep, swift current you would probably have drowned."

"I know Mommy, but I saw this turtle and he was interesting to look at. I didn't know that he would hurt me."

"Well, he did and almost killed you. Where was Big Bear that he didn't help you?"

"I don't know. He hasn't come to see me for a couple of days now."

"After we eat, I'll look for him. Let's eat now. I am hungry and the food is getting cold."

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Chapter Eight Gunned Down, Shot Dead

In town there is a family owned grocery store that few people frequent because of the attitude of the owners and their little girl named Priscilla. They will, for instance, peel a head of cabbage down to about the size of a baseball getting rid of the dead leaves and then charge full price for it. They just aren't very nice people.

The parents have doted on their little girl so much that she is spoiled rotten. Her father comes home in the evening after his day at the store is finished. He will pick up his little six year old and ask, "How is my little princess tonight?"

Priscilla in turn sticks her nose up like her Daddy smelled of skunk and asks, "What did you bring me tonight?" She can't say that she is fine or that she had fun today. Everything in the family is centered on giving her something. If my daughter acted like that, I'd give her something that she would remember a long time.

The mother has had Priscilla in ballet and had to take her out because of her behavior. She has been in tap dancing class and knew so much that they threw her out of that class. The whole family is jealous of anyone that does better than they. The mother was the one who told me that I ought not let Annie play with the bear because he might kill her. She really didn't care and probably privately wished the bear would hurt or kill Annie. She apparently had been brought up in a family that spoiled her, at least she couldn't stand for anyone to do better than she or her family. She has pushed her daughter into things that the child was too young to do and when the daughter failed it was everyone else that was at fault.

When Priscilla went to a birthday party with other girls and for another girl, she always acted like she should have been the one for whom the presents were brought. Other girls mothers kept inviting Priscilla to parties, but all of the girls would stay home or act like Priscilla wasn't around. The other mothers were hoping that maybe they could teach Priscilla manners and their daughters that we all live in this world together and we have got to learn how to get along. That was like watering a rock and expecting flowers to come up and bloom.

The day that Annie was on TV with her bear and dog, Priscilla was watching it and asked her mother why she couldn't be on TV. Her mother replied that no one wanted her on TV. She decide right then that she was going to get her daughter on TV some way. They have the notion that they can go where they please and take what they want. They believe that they own everything!

This was when trespassing on my property began and I did not know it. Priscilla's dad built a big trap to catch Big Bear. He tried several times and got Big Bear in the trap a time or two and Big Bear always escaped when the door was opened.

They had it in their heads that all they had to do was get Big Bear and then they could give Big Bear to their daughter to play with. They hadn't taken into consideration that Big Bear was devoted to Annie. He loved her and she loved him. In their sick minds love was just a word and didn't enter into this situation.

By trying to get Big Bear for their daughter, they had angered him towards them and he had reason to take his paw and knock them far away, but he didn't.

After we had eaten supper, I got Annie in the helicopter and buckled her in good with the misgivings of her mother. We flew over the one side of the mountain and searched it with no

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Priscilla's father shoots Big Bear.

luck. We then turned to the other side looking for Big Bear. About half way down the other side of the mountain We saw this strange looking contraption that had been pulled in behind a pickup truck.

I came down lower and there was a man ready to shoot at us. I hastily moved the helicopter's position to where the shot missed us. I looked at Annie and asked her if she were all right. She assured me that she was. I moved in closer to the man and about set the helicopter down on him. I cut the engine and jumped out of the helicopter and grabbed the man's gun and told him, "This is private property and you are trespassing. Now I want to know why!"

Annie had gone over to look in the contraption and yelled, "Daddy, Big Bear is in there and hurt. He is bleeding all over!"

I went over and looked in. Annie was correct. This man had shot Big Bear and it looked like it was several times. I looked at the man and yelled for Annie to get over by the helicopter. Annie went and then I handed her the gun and told her not to let him have it. I looked in the contraption and Annie was right and it looked like we were too late and this man had killed Big Bear. I went over to the man and took him around the neck and would have killed him there, but then I would be as bad as he. I looked at him and asked, "Why have you done this to a child's pet?" He just looked away. "You look at me and give me an answer or do I use your gun on you?"

He finally looked at me and replied, "He is a dangerous animal and no child should be playing with him!"

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“So you come on private property and shoot him?”

“He was dangerous. He knocked me down with his paw.”

“He probably had good reason to. Why were you fooling with him? He doesn't belong to you and he was on private property. You have driven in on this property about a mile, so you can't say you accidentally got on this property. You pulled this contraption in here intending to get Big Bear. For what reason?” The man just stood there and didn't say a word. I found some rope in the back of his truck and tied him hand and foot to where he couldn't get away. I was tempted to tie the rope around his neck and hang him on a tree, but I didn't. I took my radio from the helicopter and called the county sheriff and told him, “I have a man that was trespassing and tried to kill me and my daughter. Please come and get him. I want to press charges on him for attempted murder.”

“You will have to come in here for that. Can you bring him in here?”

“I could, but I am in the helicopter with my daughter. I think it best that you come and see the situation anyway.”

“OK. I'll be there in about a half hour. Where are you any way?”

“I am on the back side of Totto Mountain. It would probably be best for you to take the back route. It will be bumpier, but faster.”

“I'm not sure I know that road well enough after dark. Can you get home somehow?”

“I'll have to check with my wife and then get back to you.” With that I called home.

Ann answered the phone and asked, “What is wrong, honey? You have been gone a long time.”

“I know, but we found a trespasser and he has apparently shot and killed Big Bear. I have called the sheriff and he can't come here after dark. Is Paul there somewhere. I need him if he is.”

I could hear her lay the phone down and call Paul. I then heard him pick up the phone. “What is wrong, Dad?”

“I need you to come to the back side of the mountain on the four wheeler. I have caught a man trespassing and I have reason to believe that he has killed Big Bear. The sheriff doesn't know how to get here on the back road at night. Can and will you come?”

“I will be there shortly. Do you want me to bring a gun to shoot the guy?”

“Please, just come. I'll call the sheriff back and tell him to come to my place to get this guy.”

“How is Annie taking this?”

“Very well at present.”

I called the sheriff to come to our home site for we hoped to be there.

It wasn't long before Paul arrived. We put the man in the truck and took the keys from it. We then loaded the four wheeler in the back of the truck. I gave Paul the keys to the truck and told him to drive the whole thing to the house and then I got Annie into the helicopter and buckled her in good. I had forgotten to get the gun from Annie and put it in the back of the truck, so now I had to stow it some way on the helicopter. I took all of the shells out of the gun and gave it to Annie to hold. Then Annie spoke up and asked, “Daddy, when we get home can I shoot that man for killing Big Bear?”

“No dear, he has to be given a trial before anything can happen to him. That is why the sheriff is coming.”

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We arrived over our home and I set the helicopter down. I took the gun from Annie, unbuckled her and lifted her from the helicopter. She ran to her mother right away. In a few moments Paul came in with the contraption on the back of the truck. The man looked a little shaken up from the trip, but I got him out of the truck and stood him on his feet leaning against the side of the truck. I looked at him and said, "You are going to wish you hadn't even looked at that bear. Much less killed it."

I went to the contraption and opened it to get a better look at Big Bear. As I did the man started hopping to get away. "You go ahead and hop away. I have your gun and bullets with one bullet wishing to reside in you. A prisoner trying to escape is open for free target practice!"

The sheriff came in a few minutes and he looked at the prisoner and asked, "What have you been up to now, Tom?"

"I haven't been up to anything. I was driving around and this guy comes and grabs me claiming that I have been trespassing on his property and that I killed his daughter's pet bear."

"That sounds just like you, Tom. You people are never at fault. It's always someone else's fault. I suppose that contraption on the back of your truck just hitched on as you were cruising around."

"That thing on the back, that guy over there (Pointing to Paul) put it on there after he got here."

I had to stop Paul or he would have beaten the guy to death for that. Paul had grown both in height and muscle wise. He could have killed the little weasel with his hands.

"Suppose I have a look inside and see what you have been up to." The sheriff walked over to the trailer and unhitched the tail gate and looked in. It was dark by now, so I handed him my flashlight. The sheriff saw Big Bear lying there and the blood all over the trailer. The sheriff checked the bear for a heart beat and found none. "The sheriff came out of the trailer and remarked to Tom that it appeared to him that Tom had shot a bear and a Grizzly at that. "Don't you know that bears are a protected species?"

"Not only are they protected, but this one in particular because he was the pet of this little girl. Not only can you get a big sentence for that, but because you took a shot at Bill here and little Annie which is attempted murder. Both of those will get you about a life sentence and if your wife was in on this with you, you will both go to prison for the rest of your lives. Does that sound like you are going to like that? When your sentence is up, you and your wife will be labeled a child pet killer. Don't try to tell me you didn't know it was hers because everyone around here saw her and the bear on TV the day that bear and a little dog got awards for saving that little girl's life during the storm."

The Sheriff looked at me and asked, "Where is this gun he used? Do you have it?"

"Sheriff, I have a gun that I took from him when I landed and he had been shooting at me. If there is another gun involved I don't know. You may have this gun and the bullets that were in it. If you want, I'll go back out there in the daylight and look for another one."

"That won't be necessary. This is probably the one. Who all has handled this gun,?"

"I have and my daughter has and of course he has and that is all I know of." I handed him the gun and the bullets.

He looked at the bullets and the gun and remarked, "This has the appearance that Tom was planning on going bear hunting."

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Tom said, "Sheriff, this looks to me like a cooked up lie against me. I have never owned a gun!"

"We will find out when we find the finger prints on the gun and where it was bought and who bought it." The sheriff put Tom in the back of his car and the gun in the front seat beside him. He stopped by me. "I will send someone after the truck and trailer in the morning. Watch it closely tonight So someone wont steal it and change the evidence. These people will do anything to keep out of jail."

Knowing what the sheriff had said about the truck and trailer, I put a hot wire to it and chained it to the tractor and made certain the chain didn't touch the ground. If anyone came to get it, they would get a big surprise. The hot wire should make them want to drop their tools and run if they can drop them. I told Paul, "I will take the first shift guarding the trailer and you can take the second shift. Just remember not to touch the truck or trailer."

I turned the voltage onto the vehicles and I made a dummy and sat it in the chair on the porch. I sat in a chair around the corner of the porch guarding the vehicles. Along about 2 AM someone took a couple of shots at the dummy. They came close to the truck and when they touched the handle they froze and didn't get away from that. I got up and Paul was already there. I gave him my gun and told him to keep that person covered until I turned the power off. When I came back and looked at who it was, I really was not surprised. It was his wife and she was not able to do anything for a while. I got her gun and found the casings where she had attempted to shoot me.

She finally could talk and said, "You must have nine lives!"

All I said to her was, "I do."

I had Paul take the next shift as it was his turn and I bound the prisoner with bailing twine which was all I could find. The rest of the night was quiet and I called the sheriff and told him I had the other part of the prisoner if he wanted her. He wanted to know how that happened and I told him.

"That should clinch the case in your behalf. I'll be out there to get her myself in a little bit. Don't let her get away. She is the instigator of the whole thing."

In about half an hour, the sheriff was here. He had his lights flashing and siren going. He pulled up with a deputy with him and got the woman and put her in the back seat of the car. I told them, "Don't touch that vehicle or the trailer. They are hot." I went to the shed and turned off the power. Then I came back and took the hot wire and the chain off of the front of the truck.

The deputy got into the truck and started the engine. The sheriff got into his car and they all took off for the jail. I got into my helicopter and flew over them to make sure there wasn't any monkey shines on the way to the jail. After they arrived there, the sheriff waved his hand that all was well. I started home and then I thought that she might make a break for it going into the jail, so I waited and watched. There was no problem that I could see, so I headed on home.

In the morning the telephone rang. I answered the phone and it was the vet. "I was supposed to do a necropsy on the bear this morning and when I got there, there was no bear. He was gone. Did you or someone in your family come and get him during the night?"

"No way! I was here most of the night, I did follow the sheriff in to make certain that he got the other prisoner into the jail. Other than that, I have been here all night."

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"What about your daughter? Is she there?"

"I'll look, but I think it kind of silly to think that a 6 year old girl is going to carry a 1000 pound bear away."

"That does sound silly doesn't it? Would you check her, please?"

I looked in on Annie. She was in her bed sleeping soundly. "She's in her bed asleep."

"I am sorry to have disturbed you, but I do have to check."

"When you find his body and have done what you need to do, may I have the body so I can give him a decent burial to satisfy my little girl."

"I'll do that for her."

I hung up and went straight to bed. At nine o'clock, the phone jangled again and I answered it. "I am sorry to get you up this early, but the judge just informed me that he is going to hold a hearing on the case this morning so those prisoners will be given a speedy hearing and cannot claim that they were not given due process. You and your daughter will have to be there at ten AM. I trust that you can be there."

"Where is the hearing going to take place?"

"Here in this court house. A second thing I need to know. The vet called this morning and said that the bear was gone. He said that the trailer had been all cleaned of any blood and the body was gone. Do you know anything about that?"

"I do not! The vet called me earlier and told me the body was gone and asked me to check and see if Annie was here. I did. She was. Is there anything else?" I answered him sharply from lack of sleep.

"That is it. See you at ten."

I hung up and headed for the bathroom to clean up. I had Ann get Annie up and ready. They weren't giving us much time to be there by ten, but we will be there. I don't want those people to be turned loose to do something like that again. If they do turn them loose, I may be tempted to let Annie do as she wanted last night. I rushed and Ann rushed my daughter and we were ready to go before ten. I got Annie into the helicopter and belted her in. I filled the gas tank, checked the oil and other necessary thing. I got in and belted up as I started the engine. Every thing was as it should be, so I gunned the engine and took off for the hearing. I went into the court room with Annie. This was a new experience for her and she started asking me questions. I whispered for her to be silent until the judge asked her to speak. She then sat silently.

A few minutes after ten the judge came in and we all had to rise. I got Annie to rise and when the judge sat down, he told us that we could sit.

"I want both sides to remember that this is not a trial. This is a hearing to see if there is enough evidence to hold these people in Jail. Will the prosecutor make his presentation."

The prosecutor got up and stood before the judge outlining all that happened. How the man had been discovered by me trespassing on my property and how I had discovered that he had killed Big Bear. The prosecutor went on to the end including how the man had attempted to kill me with his gun. Then he went on about how the woman shot at the dummy and assumed I was dead. Assuming this she then tried to take the trailer and truck.

"Your Honor, I believe that these two should be tried separately and for attempted murder! The male defendant tried to shoot the victim while he was flying over him and his wife, the female defendant shot a dummy she believed was the victim guarding the truck and

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trailer. Before that, the male defendant shot a grizzly bear which was the pet of the daughter of the victim. Evidence to these points will be available at the trial. Thank you, your honor.”

“Will the defense lawyer please make your case?” The defense lawyer got up and disputed all that had been said by the prosecutor.

The judge looked at Tom who was all banged up and asked, “How did this happen sheriff?”

“He was beat up in prison by the other inmates. The inmates were very angry that he had killed the little girl’s pet that they had seen on TV. We had a problem getting the prisoners off of him. We had to put him in a cell by himself to keep him alive.”

“You continue to keep him that way, I want him to look better in the trial!”

“Thank you your honor, he will look better.”

“Court adjourned until 2:00 pm, I will render my decision about bail at that time.”

Annie and I went to a Burger King and got a bite to eat. After we had eaten, we went to the library so Annie could see what a Grizzly Bear was like. I had to read the words to her because she could not read big words. When we had finished that, we went to a little park to watch other animals in the park. Annie knew all of them and talked to them. Birds came and sat on her hat and shoulders. Squirrels came and sat on her lap. Annie was as happy as she could be with all the attention the animals gave her. People strolling through the park saw her and were amazed at how the animals responded to her and seemed to love her.

When it got close to 2:00 pm, we returned to the courthouse for the judge’s decision. The judge came in a couple of minutes late and we all had to rise again. When we were all seated again, he looked at the defendants and gave his decision, “I have looked at the evidence in this case and find that for the best interest of all involved that the two prisoners be kept in the jail separated from the other inmates for their protection until the trial. That date will be set as soon as possible. Their child will be remanded over to her grandparents until a suitable foster family can take her. Court adjourned!”

We all had to rise again, but this time we could leave and head for home. Annie looked at me and asked, “What does all that mean, Daddy?”

“That means that they will stay in the jail until after the trial. Priscilla will stay with her grandparents until after the trial and the parents are found guilty and sent to jail, if the grandparents do not wish to care for Priscilla any more, she will be put in a foster home and put up for adoption by suitable people.”

“You mean that she will be like an orphan?”

“That is the idea.”

“In that case, I have to feel sorry for her!”

Annie and I arrived home and found Ann getting ready for some kind of outing. I asked Ann what was going on. She looked at me and responded, “The pastor has requested this meeting. It has something to do with the case.”

We couldn’t get them all in the trailer, so I built a bond fire in a bare spot in the drive and drew up some of the logs I had brought in for the new house, for the people to sit on around the fire. Paul brought more wood in for the fire. Ann had been to the store in town that afternoon while Annie and I were in the courtroom and had picked up some hot dogs and buns with all the trimmings.

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Ann found some wire coat hangers and brought them for people to roast hot dogs. Ann then brought out a card table to set all of the food on.

The preacher was there and he returned grace and the hot dog roast began with children scrambling for coat hangers and hot dogs. When the children and adults had finished eating the hot dogs, the preacher remarked, "We all came to console Annie and to see what you folks were going to do with the two prisoners and what is going to happen to Priscilla."

I looked at him and replied that I was going to seek whatever the law would give in this situation. "I believe that they are about as low down as a skunk when they try to kill a little girl and then shoot her pet! As far as Priscilla goes, the court will appoint someone to be her foster parents."

"I know how you feel about this, Bill, but do you think this is what God would have you do?" the preacher asked.

"I think God would be for it. These people have broken the law several times in this and the Bible says that we are to obey those who have the rule over us. They have violated that!" I am willing to go with the court on this except I will not allow them to be turned loose to do this type of thing again."

Another person spoke up, "They have done a very bad thing here and I agree with Bill on that. They need to be punished severely. I wouldn't want them to get the death penalty, but they do need some kind of punishment for their crimes."

This conversation continued the rest of the evening with the men while the women went with Ann into the trailer and had their talk. The children had their little talk and then went out to play, but not too far from the fire for fear of what might be out in the darkness.

About ten o'clock they all began to head for their homes. The Preacher was the last to go. He wanted to talk with me privately. "I hope you are not wanting vengeance on them for that is the Lord's."

"You are right there, but I do want them punished for their crimes."

The preacher left for home. I didn't sleep well that night wondering whether I was wanting vengeance or if I was wanting punishment.

The next morning I located a sheet of paper and began to sketch out some ideas for a new house. I worked on various ideas and finally I asked Ann, "What would you think of a house made on the outside of heavy stones. Like some of those castles in Europe?"

"That sounds like a good idea. Some of those castles were built several hundred years ago and they're still standing. They have gone through all kinds of things and are still there."

Annie heard our conversation and remarked, "That would be great, Daddy. Then I could be a princess in a castle!"

"That is right and then I could be the king of the castle and your mother could be the queen of the castle!"

"What would the sister or brother be that is coming?" Annie remarked. "They would be a prince or a princess."

"The only problem is, I was not thinking of a castle. I was thinking of something like this. We could build our house up next to the cliff and have the main house of stone. Then the back part of it would be carved out of the cliff. That carved section would be for a walk in cooler and a walk in freezer for your Mother and a large area for us to live should another storm come like the one that nearly killed all of us. Being in that stone it might be the coolest place to live. The

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walls on the inside of the house would be made of cedar. Between the wood wall inside and the stone wall outside would be a space big enough for repairmen to repair electric wires, water lines, sewer lines and garbage lines.”

“You mean like secret passages?” Annie remarked.

“If you want to think of them like that.”

Ann spoke up and remarked, “I am with you on all those lines except what are you thinking of in a garbage line?”

“Ann, dear, the garbage line would be a line that would have all the garbage flushed down it and then it would run through a grinder that would grind it into tiny pieces after which it would be compressed into blocks and dried. We could stack them and when they are dried good they would be used in the furnace to heat the house in the winter. Tin cans and bottles would still have to be taken out separately, but I expect most of our cans would be the Mason jars from canning our own food that we didn’t freeze in the walk in freezer. We would be almost a self sustaining home.”

“When you dream, Bill, you dream big! I would be happy just to get a new house,” remarked Ann.”

“You just wait and see! I am going to get started on this today. Paul and I are going to the mountain and start cutting timber for it. Tomorrow I want to see if I can find some stone cutter to begin cutting blocks out of the cliff and others to lay them as they get them. How would you like a house 100 feet long and fifty feet wide outside the cliff and another 100 by 50 feet inside the cliff.”

“That would be big enough for us, I guess. How many children are you expecting to have. I only expect to have two or three myself.”

“If that is all you want, then that will be it. We will fill the rest of it with Annie’s animals. Right Annie?”

I grabbed my hat and got Paul and we headed for the mountain. We didn’t have too much time before dark so we started cutting trees and clearing the logs ready for the saw mill. By the time twilight set in, we had cut and trimmed a dozen trees. We could come back in the morning and haul them to the house site. If I make the rock house like I planned it would take a lot more trees. We were tired when we reached the trailer and sat down to rest a minute and fell sound asleep. Ann woke us up for supper. “Are you two lumber jacks going to be able to work tomorrow?”

“Of course, I replied. Just get us up early enough to get the lumber all cut and brought in. After it is in, I want to figure how many pieces of a kind I need to cut, so I wont waist any lumber.

“I can help you with that, Dad. I learned a little of that at school,” Paul remarked.

“That is good! With the two of us on it, it should cut the time that it takes in half. You can also start drawing up the floor plans for the down stairs and the upstairs. We will have to have a tower in front for exhaust gases. We don’t want gases to make anyone sick in this house!”

“I’ll draw up floor plans and you can add the tower because I don’t know what you really want,” Paul remarked.

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“Of course you know that Ann is going to have to approve all the plans before we can build. I guess you know that she made all the plans for the house that blew away in the storm.”

“I didn’t know that. Maybe she ought to do all of them this time,” Paul remarked.

“I’ll just approve them and you can draw them Paul.” Ann said

Annie was getting ready for bed and had heard all that was said and asked, “What do you want me to do, Daddy?”

“You can keep all of your animals away from where we are working so we don’t accidentally hurt one. That would be a big help.”

“I can do that, Daddy.”

“Now it is off to bed for you and Paul and the rest of us. We have a big day ahead of us tomorrow.”

Paul went to his shed that we had enlarged for him. Annie went to bed happy and Ann and I went to bed tired. It wouldn’t be long before Ann’s time for the new little one would be on us and we would have to have as much done on the house as we could get done. I would like for the new baby to come home to some part of the new house if we can make it.

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Chapter Nine A New Beginning

The next morning I got up at first light and got my crew up and ready to go as soon as we ate. Paul headed to the mountain with the four wheeler and I followed in the pick up loaded with saws, oil, gas and tools we might need. Annie also came with us to have the creatures small and big to get out of our way, so we would not hurt one of them.

After Annie had sent word to all of her friends, I asked her if she could find her way back to the trailer OK. She assured me that she could, so Paul and I began to pull the logs off the mountain that we had already cut.

Annie had a surprise awaiting her once she had gotten on the other side of the mountain. There coming to her limping, was none other than Big Bear! He had survived the shooting! He had almost died, but the bleeding had stopped. That was when he woke up and found himself in that trailer. The door was unlatched, so he pushed it open and went out and then through the people gate to the pound, which was also open and on out to his mountain. He had caught and eaten several small animals on the way.

Annie was happy to have her bear back and he was apparently happy to be with her. Ann thought it best that she have the vet look at him as he was in part of the case going to the judge soon. She called the vet and he told her that it would be best if Ann could bring the bear in for a physical.

Ann told the vet that she had no way of doing it. The vet came out and began checking for bullet holes. He found three holes in front and three in the back. The bear apparently stood up to fight that battle. Being about nine feet when he stood, he would have possibly frightened anything smaller. Tom was smaller, but he had a high powered rifle which he used to shoot Big Bear three times, The bullets went through Big Bear's body and out the back side. This would be a clear indication that Tom had planned to kill Big Bear before he started.

The vet checked Big Bear's blood pressure. It wasn't the best in the world, but considering the loss of blood he must have had, it would be OK. He checked his heart beat and it was above normal. But considering what he had gone through, it was OK for now. He didn't take any blood samples for Big Bear had lost enough blood. He checked Big Bear's leg to see why he was limping and found a bullet hole in the thigh. It hadn't touched the bone so Big Bear was fortunate that he hadn't had more damage. The doctor left some medicine for Big Bear to take as he healed. He left instructions with Annie, "Don't let him run, don't let him get excited and don't lay or ride on him as any of those could cause his wounds to reopen inside and he could bleed to death this time. In about two weeks he should be all healed and back to normal."

Annie took her job caring for Big Bear seriously and made him lay around a lot. After a week of this, Big Bear sneaked off on Annie and was gone for a couple of days. When he came back, his wounds were nearly healed and he had no limp.

While all this was going on with Big Bear, Paul and I had cut all the timber we thought we needed for the new house. We cut the boards that we would need and stacked them in a pile so they would dry and not warp.

Paul and I went to look for a person or persons who was a good rock cutter. It took a lot of looking, but we finally found one. He would have to be taken home each evening and

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picked up each morning and fed each noon. This was a lot of bother, but he was good at cutting rocks. What I was going to need was two or three cutters, then I could get something done. He cut blocks to hold the supports up and in place. This was a lot of cutting. I said something to a friend one day and he suggested that I get an abrasive disc and a saw that would fit and use that where we could. That sped things up until we had to get another disc. I bought three of them this time and we began to see the end of the rock cutting for a while. When we used the disc to cut, we were also making a smooth side. The fellow we had hired saw how fast it was moving and said, "If you keep that up you won't need me much longer."

"I am sorry, but I would like to get this house completed before winter, if I can."

"I hate to throw water on your fire, but I don't think you will make it. You have got to get them placed and you have to put up support columns inside the cave as well as some inside the house. That is still a lot of stone cutting."

After I had taken him home that evening, I went with Paul and tried cutting some of the rock myself. We cut the rock horizontally as marked and we cut the vertical marks and then cut the edge holding the rock in. We cut sixteen rocks in just a few minutes. Having to take this fellow to work, feed him and take him home again was costing us time.

That evening and the next morning before I got the fellow, we had cut almost as many blocks as we had with him since he started. I told the fellow that I was not going to need him for a while after today.

He looked at me and Asked, "You have found a way to do this faster than I have been doing it haven't you?"

"Yes, we have."

"Do you realize that there is a grain in the rock and if you aren't careful to watch that grain, the rock will crumble and mess everything up when weight is put on it."

"No, we didn't know that. I guess that is why I hired you in the first place. We have a lot of rocks cut, so I am going to let you go while we place them where they go and when we have that done I'll call you to come back and finish the job. How will that do?"

"I'll have to see when you need me again. I may be on another job by then."

"We will have to take that chance. "I paid him what he asked and headed home. I didn't realize how much he was charging and I still had to get him in the morning, feed him at noon and then take him home in the evening. He was downright expensive besides holding all the work up! His work was great but it was coming too slow.

I took the front end loader and scraped the place where the house was to sit. I purposely made it lower than the depth it was going to be. I tamped it down good and ran the loader across it several times to make it well packed and then smoothed it.

After that I took the loader to the top of the plateau and scooped some of the silt that was fine grained. That would make it pack well. I scooped a load and then took it to the edge and dumped it onto the place we needed it below. Paul directed me to the correct spot.

After I had dumped several loads, I went back down to the bottom land and spread the dirt over the place for the foundation. I tried to pack it, but it wouldn't pack. I had Paul bring a bucket of water so we could see if that would make it pack. The water made it almost like cement! That was a bonus that I hadn't expected. We could wet the silt and then pack it down and smooth it with a mason's trowel. We worked at this until the whole floor looked like a poured concrete floor.

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Bill (Left pointing), the stone cutter, Paul (squatting on stone), Several volunteers from the church, Annie (Right sitting on stone) and Annie's future husband (far right). Bill helps cut the stones for the new building while Annie supervises. This time their home will be made of stone so that it will be more tornado resistant. Members of the church join the construction crews. Ladies pass out water and sandwiches to workers that want them.

We let it set up over night and then we placed cut blocks across the floor. The floor blocks were laid close together to where it was almost impossible to see where one block ended and the next one began. I pushed dirt up to the outside layer of block. This floor was up against the rock cliff on one side.

Paul and I then laid a layer of blocks along the other two sides that we locked into the cliff. We made certain that the first layer of blocks lapped over the blocks on the floor half way of the fresh block. We then laid the three walls of the house to the seven foot level and stopped. We had to leave openings for the doors and the windows. Over the top of where a window was to go, we cut a long block of rock for the casings that would be set in later. The floor and the outside wall became one piece.

Paul and I put about four blocks in the front end loader and we drove them to the spot where we would place them. We kept that up until the wall was as high as we could reach with the front end loader. After that we had to stop until we could find a way to get the blocks higher.

We thought about using the helicopter, but the helicopter might not be able to lift them. We thought about working from the plateau, but that wouldn't work because of the difference in height. The wall was up to about seven feet and the cliff was 150 feet high at this point. The

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only other solution was to make a strong ramp that would hold the loader and run the loader and the blocks up the ramp.

One of the men from our church stopped by and asked if he could be of help. He was in construction and had a crane that he would use to help us. He said that he had told me when I was at church after I got out of the hospital that he wanted to help me if there was anywhere I needed help and this looked like that time.

“How much you going to need?”

“Nothing! I told you I would help and when one helps, he doesn’t charge. If I may make a suggestion before we go further, I know that this wall is going to fall without some kind of reinforcement to hold it from the outside.” He explained how it had to be done. We liked the idea although we would have to take the corner blocks down.

“When can you bring your equipment?”

“I have it on a job at this time, but it will be free in about a week.”

“That will be fine. That will give us time to cut the extra blocks we will need and pull the corners down.”

“You get the extra blocks cut and I will show you an easier way to do this when I have the crane here. Be sure to cut 10 blocks twice as long as the others for each corner. You will need them to tie into the corners. I’ll see you in about a week with the crane.” With this said he left.

I told Paul, “I don’t know why I didn’t think of that before. All of the castles had them.”

“Don’t blame yourself, Dad. I should have put them on when I drew the plans.” Paul remarked.

“I have to take the blame. You aren’t acquainted with this type of structure. I thought we had a simple problem that we could solve, but if he hadn’t shown up and if we had gone higher with the wall it might have fallen on one of us and injured or killed one of us. Isn’t it great how God looks out for us? It looks like we are going to have to extend that floor out from the corners, so let’s get that first.”

We worked the full next week cutting more blocks, extending the floor at the corners and smoothing the floor area. The center of the buttress would be hollow which could be used for storage.

When my friend came Monday with the crane on a flatbed, we were ready. We built the buttresses fairly quick and were soon ready to go ahead with raising the wall. By the end of the week we had the wall up to the ten foot level. Now we were going to have to put the support columns inside the walls and the second level floor resting on the walls and the support columns inside the walls. The support columns were actually Roman Arches that went every ten feet across the open space. Beams of marble were cut that went across from one arch to the next one. On top of the arches, slabs of marble were laid to make the flooring. The slabs of marble had lips on their sides to where the one lapped one over the other. These laps were cut and polished so they would fit snug and left no seam. It was very solid.

We started the walls for the second level and brought the buttresses on up as we went. When we had reached the twenty foot level, we capped it off similar to the second floor. Before the slabs were slid together, they were sealed with sealant poured on the lap joints. After they were slid together, a sharp flat knife was used to cut the excess sealant making the

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floor level. On top of this, a sealant coating was brushed on making a solid roof completely sealed against the weather.

My friend looked at me and said, "I guess that you won't need the crane anymore, so I will load it and take it back as I go today,"

"Are you sure I don't owe you something? That crane certainly was a big help!"

"I really don't want anything, but if you would let me show a picture on a brochure of the stone we laid as an advertisement for my company, I would appreciate that."

"I don't see anything wrong with that. You have been a big help. I should be able to finish this now before cold weather sets in."

"If there is anything else I can do to help, just let me know."

Paul and I helped him load the crane onto the flatbed and chained it so it wouldn't roll off. He mounted the cab of the truck and left. I looked at Paul and said, "We should be able to get this thing finished now and all of us moved in before cold weather, don't you think?"

"If we have the good help we have been having, we should be done sooner."

"I'll believe that, son." We went into the trailer and Ann was already fixing supper and had it almost ready.

"You fellows must be tired after working so hard. You can go get cleaned up and ready to eat. From what I see, I am going to like the house. I don't think any tornado is going to blow that away! That ought to be standing for at least two or three hundred years!"

"Paul and I expect to have it finished, furnished and us moved in before cold weather."

Ann mentioned, "That will be nice, but you have forgotten a couple of things that will slow that down. You have forgotten that I may have our next child any day now and we have got to go to court when that date comes and there is no telling how long that will take."

"You are right. We will just have to work twice as hard and make every move count."

Ann said, "Just be careful that you don't get careless and get hurt or something."

"We will be very careful, honey. I have been in a hospital once longer than I ever want to be again. Let's get washed up, Paul."

We washed up and before we could finish eating the phone began ringing with people wanting to help from the church. Some were carpenters, some were electricians, some were painters and some were just plain 'go-fors'. I didn't refuse a one. The next morning the yard was full of people waiting to go to work and I didn't disappoint them! I put Paul in charge of some and I took others and even Ann put some to work.

By evening our house was starting to look like we would be living in it before the cold weather hit. I was certain to thank everyone for their help that day. We had centered our work on the main house that day and for several more. The inner walls of the house were built three feet from the outer walls. This would give workman room to put in all that needed to be put in without taking space from the rooms.

The next day Paul had gone into the space between the outer wall and the inside wall in the back corner behind the kitchen and discovered a lot of water on the floor. He came out and picked up a chisel and went back in to check where the water was coming from. He tapped the wall where the water was emerging and water gushed out and he had to walk fast to get out to keep from drowning! He came and got me so I could see the problem too. This wouldn't hold up the work on the inside, but we had to do something to keep the outer wall from collapsing and the inner wall from being destroyed.

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I went and got a piece of 4 inch pipe that was left from the electric plant. I found an elbow with a shorter piece of 4 inch pipe. I then took the short piece of pipe and the elbow and put them together. I went in to the area where the water was flowing and forced the pipe into the hole where the water was coming out. I then put the longer piece of pipe into the elbow and aimed the water out of the entrance to the access area. Paul had found a joint of pipe that he fit to the end of the pipe I had. The water now could easily go outside the house and on to the river. I looked at Paul and asked, "Do you think there are many gallons of water coming out of there or do you think it will cease running in a while?"

"With the amount of water coming out, I would say that we have found an under ground stream of water."

"Let's measure how many gallons a minute. We can measure the gallons per minute with a five gallon bucket and time how long it takes to fill it. You get a five gallon bucket, Paul. I will find a pressure gauge to measure the pressure."

Paul ran for a five gallon bucket and I went to find a gauge. We both returned about the same time. "Paul, put the bucket under the end of the pipe when I say to." I looked at my watch and said, "now". Paul slid the bucket under the pipe and in 15 seconds the bucket was filled! We took the bucket from under the end of the pipe so the water would go outside again.

Paul looked at me and asked, "What did you get?"

"You won't believe this, but it filled that bucket in 15 seconds which means that we are getting 20 gallons every minute! That is a lot of water to let go to waste."

"That certainly is. What do you think you can do with it?"

"Let's see if we can get a pressure reading first and then I will tell you." I took the pressure gauge that I had and had Paul lift the end of the pipe to where I could slip the pressure gauge on the end. I read the pressure and it was in the area of 100 pounds. I took the gauge off and Paul dropped the pipe and looked at me and questioned, "Well?"

"Paul, the best I could read was 100 pounds. This will mean that I can collect this water in a tank and supply the house with water and still have enough to run a turbine and generator. This electric can supply the house with electricity and we would still have enough left to supply the house with water, if it is safe and clean water. We would still have enough left to discharge into a garden fountain. What would you do?"

"I think that is a great idea. When do we start on that?"

"I'll get a sample and send it off for testing. In the meantime we will finish the house and then come back here and cement this pipe in secure and put the fountain in the yard and connect it to this water. I'll have to see what kind of fountain Ann would like. I'll also get the material that we need for the power plant and put that in and hooked up to the house wiring."

"Then we will finish the house first, then build the fountain and then hook the water up to the house lines."

"That sounds good to me."

The inner walls were made of 2x4's, wallboard and plaster on them with designs in the plaster on the ceiling. Batts of insulation were nailed into the space between the two by fours holding the walls after all the plumbing and electrical work was in place.

Ann told the painters what colors she wanted in each room. I bought the paint. Paul looked at all of the supplies and checked them in to make certain everything was there and

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signed off for them. He looked at all of the material and remarked that it looked like we were planning to start a hardware store.

I looked at him and remarked, "My bill looks like I have!" When an electric outlet has to be every four feet and electric boxes for the light fixtures in each room, the figures built up.

All of the volunteer help worked hard to get their jobs done as they should be and as fast as they could do it. I couldn't have done better had I hired help.

The staircase coming from the second floor came down from two directions to a landing where they joined and went out towards a large living room. Ann loved that. She was already planning what she would place in certain areas of the house. She bought a large grandfather's clock and put it on the landing between the staircases coming down from the second floor.

One room on the second floor, she designated as her sewing room. She told the ladies of the church that was also the quilting room and they could come and do their quilting and sew wedding dresses for their daughters. The ladies took great care to see that everything about that room was perfect!

The kitchen and dining room were two other rooms that the ladies took great care to have them perfect. They were all planning to have their daughters married in this house. I guess what I wanted made little difference.

Early the next morning, Ann let me know that her time had come and it was time to go to the hospital. I woke Paul and told him what was taking place and he would have to handle things there. I got the helicopter out of its shed and did the preflight quickly. Then Ann got into the helicopter and we lifted off and headed for the hospital. Ann could see our house from the air for the first time and remarked about how large it was.

"That is all you see! About half of the house is in that rock ledge."

"Honey, How did we get such a large house? I thought when you started that it was to be of stone, but smaller."

"It was going to be smaller, but we kept adding things as we went along. I'm not complaining that we have a medieval castle. There are a lot of things in there that are for your comfort that will make less work for you.

We arrived at the hospital helicopter pad. I had notified them that we were on our way and would take the same corner of the pad that I had last time. I set the helicopter down easy on the pad and the nurses were there to take Ann into the delivery room. I filled out and signed the usual papers at the business office and told the nurse at the desk by the maternity ward that I was going to be gone a few minutes and would be back shortly.

She looked at me, "I don't think you better be gone very long as the baby was almost born when Ann arrived. What would you have done had the baby arrived in your helicopter? She laughed at me."

I responded with a smile, "I would have set the helicopter down and delivered the baby myself and then I wouldn't have had all those papers to fill out and sign!"

She looked at me surprised and said, "Humph. Men! They always say WE had the baby and didn't do a thing!"

I left the nurse and went to see John. I hadn't seen him for some time. He was still the same old John smiling and asked me, "Are you here to buy more waste land? Since people have been out there helping you build your new home, they have seen the value of the land and are asking for land like it. You have raised the price of that land!"

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"I have? They ought to wait until I have finished what I am going to do with it!"

"Just what are you going to do with it?"

"I am not going to tell. You will just have to wait and see! Do you have any more parcels like that? I think I need more.

"You must be crazy like some people think you are. You own half the county and now you want more land!"

"That's all right. I'll just go to another county and buy land there through another land broker."

"You wouldn't dare!"

I laughed at John. He didn't think I would do such a thing, but I would. I really didn't need more land, but it made John think twice about what he was saying.

I left John and went to Frank's office to see if everything was all right with him and his wife. Frank wanted to know how everything was going with my work on enforcing the water law.

"It is going fine. I had a question come up from one of the owners and I referred him to the law and showed him what it said. He was satisfied with that."

"From what I hear from the landowners in your area, they are all happy with you and want me to be certain to never let you go. They say that you treat them like a person and not a number as the government usually does and they like that. I expect that you will never have any trouble with any of them. Keep up the good work."

"They are a good group of people to work with. I have got to go now. Come out and see our new house when you can."

"How is that coming?"

"We are just about finished now. I'll see you." With that I left his office and went to the hospital.

When I got to the maternity ward, the nurse who had care of Ann, came to me and said, "Congratulations! You are now the father of an eight pound three ounce baby boy!"

"When can I go in and see my family?"

"You can go in now if you want, everything is ready for you."

I went on in and there sat Ann with a big smile on her face, holding the newborn. "Why are you smiling?"

"Someone asked me if you were really going to buy more land. I told them that with a big baby boy, you would probably need it.

I went home that afternoon to see how Paul and the rest of the family were doing. I didn't expect the volunteers to be there, but they were and Paul had them doing things they were supposed to be doing had I been there. I am going to miss him should he decide to go to college or get married.

"Why didn't you tell the volunteers that they could have taken the day off?"

"They said that being Ann was having her baby, it would be nice if they could get the house finished to where she could bring the baby home to its permanent home. I agreed and we all went to work getting things finished. They are working in the nursery and your bedroom."

I went to see the volunteers and what they were doing. I also wanted to thank them for all that they had already done. The nursery was next to our bedroom and ladies were in there

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putting signs and pictures all over the walls and ceiling of the nursery. One of the ladies asked me, "Is it another girl or a boy?"

They hadn't heard yet and I told them. They asked how big it was and I told them. One woman spoke up, "That boy is almost grown already!"

"You folks didn't have to come today and work. You should have taken the day off."

"When we heard that Ann was in the hospital we wanted to have things ready in here for her when she returned."

"I want you folks to know that we appreciate what you are and have done for us on this house."

"We want you to know that we really felt sorry for you folks when that storm took your house and almost killed you and Annie. It skinned Ann and bruised her badly. We decided right then and there that we were going to help you if we could in some way. This house was that way."

"I think that you have done more than you should have. Thank you very much! Ann will be totally surprised when she gets home in a few days."

When I got ready to return to the hospital, I got Annie all cleaned up and in a pretty dress, so she could see her baby brother. She was all excited. I took her into the room and she was tickled to get to see her mother. In a few minutes, the nurse brought the baby for Annie to see. Annie kissed the baby on the head and the baby smiled a little. I kissed Ann on the cheek and she smiled.

Ann and I sat and talked for a while about what we were going to name the boy. We decided that it would be William Jr. We would call him Billy. Now we had Annie and Billy. Annie liked that and Billy smiled when we called him Billy.

It was beginning to get dark, so I got Annie, headed for the helicopter and home.

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Chapter Ten A New Child Goes Home

In a couple of days, Ann was ready to leave the hospital and come home with Billy. I preflighted the helicopter and took off for the hospital. When I got to the hospital, I set down on the corner of the pad as usual. I went in and checked with Ann that everything was OK, then went down and paid the bill. When I returned to Ann's room, she was all set to go with a nurse pushing her out the door. When we got to the helicopter, the nurse took Billy and held him until Ann was seated and belted. At that time, the nurse handed Billy to Ann and headed back into the hospital. I started the engine and lifted off just as the big helicopter was coming in with some injured. I waved to the pilot and headed for home.

As we were on the way, I told Ann, "You will be going into your new home when we get back. The ladies from the church and the volunteers have worked overtime to finish it for you."

"Are you kidding me? There was a lot of things that had to be bought as well as other things that had to be done when I went to the hospital."

"The ladies from the church worked hard and late at night at times to get things done for your return."

"That was certainly nice of them."

At that moment I set the helicopter down near the front door and helped Ann into her new home. We entered the front door and turned right to take the elevator to the second floor. She looked at me and said, "I'll bet we are the only ones around with an elevator in our home! Whose Idea was that one?"

"I'm afraid that was my idea. We aren't going to be young forever and climbing stairs several times a day is soon going to get old with us, so I had this put in for us and the kids. Annie loves to come in here and play elevator operator and run the elevator up and down pretending she has it full of people."

We got off at the second floor and went right into our bedroom. Ann looked at the bedroom and said, "I'll bet we have the biggest bedroom in the area. I love the way you have finished this room and furnished it."

"I didn't furnish it. The ladies went to town and picked out the furniture. All I did was give them the money. The ladies picked out the furniture and said that if you didn't like something it can be returned."

"You should see the nursery. They painted pictures on the walls and everything."

"You don't mean that."

"Wait until you see it. Little Billy should like it. Annie helped them." We walked through the door to the nursery. Ann looked all around and said, "My word! I think they out did themselves in here."

"If you don't like it, we can repaint the walls."

"Are you kidding? I love it! I think Annie and Billy will both like this."

Ann put little Billy in his crib and we left and went into the other parts of the house. Ann loved everything about the house except the tower in the left front of the house. I explained, "Honey, I am sorry that it is where it is, but it had to be placed there because it brings fresh air into the back part of the house, garage, sewing room, walk in cooler and freezer, We have to keep fresh air going into those areas all the time to keep poisonous gasses from accumulating

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Ann holds Billy while Annie looks at her new baby brother

in those areas and the rest of the house. That tower also pulls the stale air out of those areas and exhausts it. It also contains the elevator. I put a top on it and a parapet for Annie and Billy when he gets older. Annie thinks of this as her castle and she the princess. Besides that, it will be a good place for Annie and Billy to have their birthday parties. There isn't anything there that they can get hurt on and they can't fall from it because it is fenced over.

"That tower is also the place where all of the electric, sewer, water and disposal lines come into the house. There is also a special door on the one side that is the entrance into the area between the walls for service men to get to where something needs repair. That door is always locked and the key kept in a special place to keep people from going in there that shouldn't be there."

"Honey, I can put up with that tower after all you have put into this house to please me and make my life easier. I think you are a very thoughtful and considerate husband." She embraced me and gave me a kiss.

"Thank you, dear. I want you to go see your kitchen and the dining area, the den, your sewing room and the laundry room. Don't forget to go on the other side of the house and see the garage. I will get Annie and go up to see Billy." I did this and Ann went through the rest of the house and then came back to the nursery.

"I don't know if you noticed, but there is a TV and a camera in the nursery that is connected to TV's through out the house, so you know what is going on in the nursery at all times. What is your opinion of the house now?"

"I am speechless! I never thought that I would ever have a house like this in all my life! I am happy that I married you instead of Morris. He would never have gotten me a house this

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nice and the best part is that it will be a lot harder for a tornado to tear it up. The smell of cedar is wonderful.”

Paul came wandering in wanting to see his little brother. “Mom,” he asked, “What do you think of your new house?”

“I love it, Paul. I know that you worked hard to get it finished by the time I came home. Thank you, son.” She stepped over and gave Paul a big hug and a kiss on the cheek.

“Now I am jealous. All she did for me was thank me. She didn’t even give me a hug,” I said laughing. She looked at me, gave me a big hug and then laughed.

While Ann was in the hospital, I had received a letter saying that the water sample was safe to drink. The only thing in the water was a lot of lime. Now that the house was completed, it was time to fix the water lines to the water in the back of the house. Paul and I built a cement tank for the water and while the cement on the tank was setting we built a housing for a small hydro electric plant for the house. This electric plant would be just for the house, fountain and security lights for the yard.

We made a large fountain for the yard with water shooting up from several nozzles. The nozzles are changed automatically so it would be interesting to watch them. The catch basin at the bottom had about four inches of water so children could wade in it under the watchful eyes of their parents.

We placed floodlights of different colors shining on the spray. The lights were only on during the evening and night, but the fountain was on all the time.

Paul and I put the fountain in and changed the water from the old well to the new source with a filter in the house. We installed the new hydro electric plant with the return water going to the lbo in a pipe. Now the house was completely separate from the out buildings.

We planted rye grass seed and regular grass seed around the fountain. Now it would be pretty with shrubs planted in the area and benches for visitors to sit on. When it was all finished, people came from all over to watch the fountain and see our castle. Paul and I took great pride in the fountain and the castle.

When we had everything cleaned up and looking nice, I hired a caterer to come and cater a banquet for all those who had worked on the house in any way. They also toured the house to see how everything they had completed, worked or looked. We opened the dining room for that banquet. This was our thank you to them for what they had done for us.

A week later, Ann wanted to have a house warming, where people could come and look the house over and munch on sweet goodies. The people at church were invited and an open invitation was given to the general public.

The day of the open house came and people from everywhere came to see the house. The TV people came and took pictures of the inside and outside of the house. They loved the fountain. Ann and I were sure to give all of the volunteers credit for their help. One woman came out of the Laundry Room and made a remark to those about her, “That woman won’t have any ironing to do! She has a mangle to do her sheets and presses that will iron collars and cuffs. She can call on me to help her wash and iron. I wouldn’t mind doing a wash if I had all of those things in my house! This is wonderful! Her husband must think a lot of her!”

I stepped over to her and said, “Wait until you see the kitchen and the walk in freezer and cooler!”

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She looked at me and asked, "Where is the kitchen?" I told her and she went on her way. I tried to steer the people around the place so they wouldn't accumulate in one place and block the hallways so others could not get through.

When the end of that day came I was tired. Standing around isn't one of my desired activities. I went into the den to watch the news and there were scenes of our house being shown to the general public. I was getting tired of seeing things about our house!

That night I had a dream like I have never had before. I call it a dream, but it was more than a dream. It was a warning from God! I heard this voice calling my name. I looked and saw no one. I asked, "Who is it?"

The deep baritone voice responded, "I am the Lord, your God. I have watched you and what you have done with the things I have given you. I have blessed you with all the money you might need and you have used it wisely. I have given you a land that some thought you were crazy for buying it and you have made it into a place where others can come and enjoy it. I have given you an older boy to rear and you have done a fine job. I have given you a wife to love and bring you children. You have loved her and she has brought you children that you also love. I allowed your first house to be destroyed and your family almost killed. You have not complained and set about building the home you now have which is bigger and better than the first one. You have never tried to make others think of you as a great man."

"There is one thing more that I would appreciate for you to do. I would like for you to use some of the money I have given you to help others less fortunate than you. I will not tell you how, but will guide you into the work as you discover what I want. If you do not do what I lead you to do, I will not bless you any more."

The dream ended there and I woke up. When I told this to Ann, she looked at me and said. "I am sure that you will find what God meant,"

Since that time I have given money to build schools in foreign countries. I have given money to build orphanages all over the world. Strange as it may seem, the more money I give for these things, the more money I have to give! I trust that God is blessing me and that is what he wanted.

Hi! I am Ann and I thought it might be a good thing to enter into this book some of the things that my new house has that make it very nice.

When one enters the house through the front door, they are greeted by ten foot ceilings and a huge room with golden drapes. These drapes have real gold threads in them! Bill wanted them in the material and saw that they got there and over the windows. We had to have solid, stainless steel rods to hang them on. They are held back over a hook on the side of the wall beside the window. They are so heavy that it takes two strong men to lift them and unhook them or to return them to the hook.

"Hanging from the center ceiling are three beautiful five tier, real crystal chandeliers. These chandeliers are centered in front of the grandfather clock on the stair landing. There is a beautiful plush rug on the floor and stairs that when one walks upon it, one sinks into the pile of the rug. No one dares to come into this room with dirty shoes for they will answer to me!

To the rear of the staircase is the entrance to the Dining Room. It is another huge room with two, three tier crystal Chandeliers. This room has two side windows with regular drapes. The windows in here and the living room are ceiling to floor of a special unbreakable

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glass. The dining table is 15 feet long and four feet wide with large solid wooden chairs around it. The dining room has a pass through area that is used for the dishes to be passed through either full or empty to or from the kitchen. Above and on each side of this pass through area are cupboards holding all the dishes for setting the table. Underneath the pass through area are drawers holding all of the silver ware that would be used for a meal. On the side wall of the dining room is a large china cabinet that displays all of the fancy china that is seldom used. At the end of the pass through area is a double swinging door for people to enter the kitchen with dirty dishes or to go the other way with food on trays without having to work a knob. Above the pass through area on the kitchen side of the pass through area is access to the cupboard with the dishes. This gives those washing dishes access to the cupboard without having to go into the dining room. The wall section with the pass through is made with sound proof materials so kitchen noises will not interfere with conversations in the dining room.

Just beyond the swinging door side in the kitchen, there are two commercial stainless steel dish washers side by side. One dishwasher is for plates and glassware and the other for pots, pans and silverware. To the left in the kitchen are two large stainless steel commercial stoves and ovens with preparation tables in front and pots and pans hanging above it. Off to the right of the kitchen is a walk in refrigerator and a walk in freezer. Inside the freezer and cooler are shelves and bins to hold the food. We will buy our food in bulk quantities. This will decrease our long drives to town. Not to mention that things should be cheaper. I will also keep my canned goods that I have canned from the garden as well as all the other garden vegetables in this refrigerator.

To the left of the kitchen towards the back is a door that goes out to the laundry room. There are two commercial washing machines and one extra large commercial one. There is also a dry cleaning machine. There is one mangle, one cuff press, one sleeve press, one collar press, one pant leg press and one skirt press. That will beat ironing all those things by hand. There are soiled clothing chutes coming from each bedroom going to the laundry room and into a large bin in the laundry room.

Going out of the dining room towards the front is a door that goes to the garage. The garage is a large room that houses three cars, one helicopter and Bill's workshop. That is about all that is on the first floor.

On the second floor if one takes the stairs on the right they will go to the nursery and then our bedroom. There is a hallway running from the nursery and our bedroom on to the front of the stairwell meeting a hallway going to the front of the house from the rear of the house. There are several large bedrooms off of it. Each bedroom has a walk in closet and a bathroom, This hallway ends at the door to the sewing room. MY ROOM!! There are two regular sewing machines, one heavy duty sewing machine with several bobbins for different colors of thread, a knitting machine, a table for cutting patterns, a drawer of spools of different colors of thread and yarn not to mention several pairs of electric scissors and regular shears. Of course there is a drawer with assorted needles and pins of various sizes. Naturally there is a couple of quilting frames in the room. Several women can work in there at one time and not get in each others way. This sewing room was made with the idea that some of the ladies from the church could sew their daughters wedding dresses here.

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If anyone is interested in the size, the house is 125 feet long (not including the garage) and 100 feet deep with half of that carved into the cliff. The height is fifty feet not counting the tower to the left front of the house. The outside of the house is of carved marble and the rock of the cliff for the back half.

The entire house and garage is air conditioned and each room separate to where one room can be cooled more than another automatically. A good example of this is the kitchen and dining room. When cooking is going on in the kitchen and people are also eating in the dining room, two different temperatures are needed and the system adjusts to that. I think that is great!

I love this house with all of its time saving items, wouldn't you love it too?

OK, now back to Bill.

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Chapter Eleven The Great Performance

The next day after open house I got a call from a 'Do It Yourself Magazine' wanting to come and see if there were things they could show the general public about the house that individuals could make for their homes. I told them they could come, but I had no idea as to what they might want to see. They came in a few days and loved the service man's access to every area of the house. I guess they showed that in their magazine.

We moved Paul out of his shack and into a room in the house. He was over whelmed and broke down and cried. He had thought that he was going to have to live in his shack until he could build on his land. He is our 'adopted' son and he should also have a room in the house, especially since he was such a help in building the house.

When all of the uproar died down, we had time to get back to our regular routines. Paul came to me and said, "Dad, you are the greatest dad and I love you and mom very much, but I think I will see if I can get into a college somewhere. I don't have too much money saved for it, but if you will loan me some, I will be able to get started."

"Have you thought of what you might major in?"

"I thought that perhaps I might take up architecture for a living."

"That would be good. If you are serious about it and do well, I'll give you money to open your own business when you get out. I will give you all the money you need for the college you are accepted by and don't worry about returning it for you are my son and fathers pay for their sons to go to college, if they are studying as they should."

"Thanks, Dad! I will study hard and not disappoint you. Because of this, you can forget about building my house for the time being."

"That is OK with me. We have just finished this house and I am a little tired of house building. How much are you going to need for your college tuition or do you have any idea?"

"I really don't have a firm figure, but I am told that most colleges are charging in the neighborhood of twenty thousand dollars to start."

"When you find out for certain and have been accepted, let me know and you shall have it for them."

"Dad, I love you! My biological father would never have been able to send me to college because he would have spent it on drugs or alcohol. I wish I had come to you sooner because you are what a father should be and I appreciate that."

Paul did go to college and did very well in all his studies. We were sad when he left, but we knew it was the best for him.

When Annie was six years old, she got a notion that she wanted to be a model. Some of the stores nearby that issued catalogs asked her to pose for some of their catalogs. She did well in it. When she turned ten, her mother got her interested in becoming a country singer. She bought her a guitar and taught her to play.

Ann coached her with some success. Ann decided that she would make up a program where Annie would sing and dance as she played. I wished Ann good luck with that! Ann worked with Annie until Annie became really good! I was amazed! I should have known better. When Ann decides she is going to do something, she will succeed.

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Now Ann had Annie playing the guitar very well and singing at the same time. She took on the job of teaching Annie to dance. This was dancing to the music that Annie was playing! That is quite hard for a grown up to do, but Ann didn't give up on Annie. By this time Ann had taught Annie to play the guitar, dance and sing all at the same time. To me this was a great accomplishment. Ann didn't feel that way.

Ann told me that now she was ready to make up a ballad about a child going through all the stages of growing up. Ann sat and worked on the words for several days. In a few days, she had her ballad ready to put to music. She was musically inclined, so putting her ballad to music wasn't that much of a problem. The problem now was to teach the tune to Annie so she could play it on the guitar. Annie picked that up easily and was now ready for playing her mother's ballad.

The program had Annie wearing different costumes for the four different parts of the ballad. Ann worked with Annie to decide which or what costume would be best for what they were wanting to display. They decided what they would make and Ann set to work making the costumes that would fit Annie.

The costumes would have to be changed at different times during the ballad. I made them a screen that folded into three sections so it could be portable. Each section was three feet wide and six feet tall. They didn't want a long time taken during the costume changes, so they devised a plan that when Annie had to change a costume, it would only take seconds. Now this would be a feat for a girl 10 years old! Another problem appeared. They didn't want these changes to appear like a strip tease show. The two of them worked it out and put the whole ballad together and tried it out on Billy and me. Everything went as smooth as clockwork. Annie had complained to her mother about having to do the ballad, but now her enthusiasm couldn't be stopped. "Now that we are ready to put it on, where are we going to put it on?" Annie questioned.

"How about over at the middle school or the senior high?" Ann suggested.

"Do you think I can do it at my school?"

"Of course you can, Honey! Just pretend that you are doing it for your daddy and brother."

"I don't know whether old Miss Bean will let it happen."

"We won't know if we don't try, will we? I'll go see Miss Bean in the morning. You better keep up your practicing." With that Ann was preparing what she was going to say to Miss Bean in the morning.

In the morning Ann went to see Miss Bean and was greatly surprised to hear her say, "We are always looking for things the children can do for assemblies. Can you be ready by next Friday?" This amazed Ann and she did away with her prepared speech.

"We are ready now. What time do you wish us to be here?"

"We have our assemblies at ten. If Annie is good enough, I believe the High School would be interested in seeing it also. I'll speak to the principal over there and let you know when you can come for their assembly, if you want. They have two assemblies in the afternoon on the same day as ours. If you think Annie would be able to do one here and two over there on the same day, I know they will appreciate it."

"I believe she will. She has been practicing so long, she is anxious to put it on as many times as she can."

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"I'm putting this in the plan book. Don't disappoint us by not showing."

"Miss Bean, I have never missed an appointment in my life except for when I had my children and when the tornado put me in the hospital a few days. We will be here!"

"That is a remarkable record!"

With that said, Ann headed home to tell Annie. Annie was jubilant. Ann had to reach up to pull Annie back down to reality! "We are going to have to practice those changes to get them down pat", Ann said. They practiced the changes with the screen in place, until they could do each in less than 5 seconds. Annie danced up to the back, center curtain behind the screen and danced away in the new costume. That is a record for a ten year old child!

Everyone who saw her thought that she was older than ten. The reason being that she was going to be as tall as I or taller, so she was about five feet now. Boys thought that she was older and tried to date her. She was really pretty and shapely.

The next Friday was on us before we realized it. Annie was excited and ready to go. We got to the middle school before time and Miss Bean let us go to the auditorium to look over the place we would have to put on the program and get ready. The stage was small, but doable. We pulled the curtains around the stage and made arrangements to put it on. I put up the screen and set up the PA system that we would use. I had practiced it with them and knew what to do.

We pulled the curtain in front of the stage and Bill had some soft music playing as the children entered. Miss Bean came on stage and made some necessary announcements. Bill had turned the music off for Miss Bean. Annie began playing her guitar after the announcements. The curtains in front were opened and Annie was on her own now. She was dressed in a child's party dress. She danced, played the guitar and sung the ballad. When it came time she danced behind the screen and moved away in a different costume. This time she was in "hip huggers" and singing about the zit on the end of her nose. She had everyone in the audience watching and waiting to see how things were going to turn out with the zit on the end of her nose.

As soon as the zit song was about to close she went behind the screen and came back with a Bikini Bathing suit on singing "I Am Beautiful". As soon as that was about over she went to the screen and came back in a beautiful wedding dress. Then she sang her closing song about waiting for Mr. Right. When she had finished, the entire audience stood and applauded her for her performance. She curtsied and went behind the front curtain. The audience shouted "More, more!"

Annie looked at her mother and asked "What should I do?"

Ann thought for a moment and told Annie to do a certain number. Annie had the curtains opened and she did the other number. It was also about the zit on the end of her nose. They all laughed and applauded and asked for more.

Miss Bean stepped to the front of the curtain and the audience quieted as she told them, "We thank Miss Annie for coming and doing such a wonderful job, but she has to be at the High School in just a few minutes."

With that said we all got our things together. Annie changed to the first costume. We all got into the car and headed for the High School. Annie was beside herself that they had all loved her act at the middle school.

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Annie performs her routine on stage.

The principal welcomed us at the high school and showed us the stage. "I understand that we are in for a real treat this afternoon. He looked at Annie and asked, "I understand you did a wonderful job. Are you going to be rested enough to do two shows here?"

"I believe that I will. Thank you for asking."

He informed us that the boys and girls would be coming into the auditorium in fifteen minutes.

We pulled the curtains around the sides and the main one in front. Bill set up the screen and got his PA system hooked up playing some soft music. I checked Annie's costumes to be certain they were all set. They were and everything else seemed set to go. We waited for the children to come in and get seated and the principal came forward to make his announcements. Bill turned the soft music off. As soon as the principal was through, Annie was near the opening of the curtain and began playing her guitar, dancing and singing as the curtain opened. Annie went through her routine of the little girl, went to the screen and returned in her next costume singing the ballad about the zit on the end of her nose. She had the boys and girls all watching her and laughing. The audience was hers. As she neared the end of that part of the ballad, she went to the screen and came back with her Bikini on singing I am beautiful. She gained a few whistles from the boys. When that part was finished she went to the screen and came away wearing a wedding gown.

As she neared the end of that part of the ballad, Bill pulled the front curtain shut. The audience jumped to their feet and applauded shouting, "More, more!"

Annie went to the front by the curtain and sang another song about the zits and had the audience sing with her. When she finished the entire audience was laughing and shouting for more. Annie came back singing and dancing to the one about obeying your parents. The entire audience hushed and listened to it. Annie finished and Bill closed the curtain and the show was over with the audience wanting more which couldn't be.

The principal had come to remind the boys and girls that they needed to go back to their home rooms so the other group of children could enjoy it also.

Annie did the second show as she captured the hearts of this group. When she finished there was the usual call for more. The principal stood before the group and reminded them that they needed to go to their home rooms in preparation for going home.

After the children had returned to their home rooms, the principal came to Bill and told him that this had been a wonderful experience for the students and asked if we planned another show that the boys and girls would enjoy.

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"We don't have anything planned for now. Annie is getting taller and soon will be too tall to play small children's parts."

"You mean that she is expected to grow taller?"

"She is only ten and the doctor has said that she will be as tall or taller than me." Ann remarked.

"That will present a problem. If you think of anything else and want an audience, we are available. This was excellent today. Thank you for thinking about us. I know you have not asked for any money, but I think your daughter should have something for all of her work." With that said he handed me a check for one hundred dollars. He left and we had no time to return it. We gave it to Annie and told her that it was hers.

Annie took off the wedding gown and kept the Bikini and went to the car and laid down in the back seat holding her check and went to sleep. She was indeed tired from all the excitement and hard work of the day.

What we hadn't counted on or didn't know was that Mr. Hicks and Miss Bean had been calling all the other principals and telling them about Annie and the program. When we arrived home, all of those principals and many others were trying to get a hold of us to book our show for their schools.

Ann had a Date Book that she accepted dates or told them that date was taken. Before long all of the available dates were taken until the end of the school year. This had turned out to be something bigger than even Ann had thought might happen. Dates were even beginning to come in for the next year. This was beginning to get a little questionable because Annie might be too tall. Ann thought that perhaps she could change the first part or leave it out. As usual Ann thought of something.

People were advertising for us. Some told others that it was every bit as good as a Broadway show. When I told Annie, she just looked at me and said, "Really?"

The media people heard about it and there were pictures in the papers and the TV people came and ran an interview with Annie. When they found out she was from Bear Mountain, they labeled her "The Miracle from Bear Mountain".

The program went on until Annie was way too tall for the part. We hated to do it, but we had to stop the show. We all came home somewhat sad at this turn of events, but we had known that it was going to happen.

We went to other schools and presented the program in other schools. The popularity of the show began to wane and we were not as busy with it as we had been. Annie began to drag about and not be as excited about her popularity as she had been.

I knew that Annie was not feeling good about something so I went into her room to have a little chat with her.

"Annie, I know that you are feeling bad about something. What is your problem?"

"I'll tell you if you won't tell Mom."

"I never tell your Mom about our little chats. I appreciate you telling me about your problems."

"Daddy, I don't want to hurt Mom's feelings, but I don't want to do her little show any more. I am tired of doing what Mom wants and being a good daughter all the time. I would like to do some things that I want to do."

"And what does my little girl want to do?"

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"You know how I love playing with the animals. Especially Big Bear and Little Doggy."

"I certainly do. They love you, also. They go where ever you go and I would say that they probably would protect you if anything should happen like the time of the tornado."

"They really did try to protect me, didn't they?"

"They certainly did, honey, and Big Bear almost lost his life because of it."

"That is so and I want to do something with them and some of the other animals. I believe that I can get several animals to put on a show that the kids in school will enjoy and learn to respect animals."

"That sounds great to me. We could call it 'Annie and Her Animal Friends'."

"I don't want to name it just yet, Daddy. Let me see what I can do. Big Bear already knows some tricks that he learned from somewhere. I will use those and involve other animals as I go along."

"You work on your show and I will talk to your mother about stopping the other one. I will tell her that I think it should be stopped as you are getting too big for it. She will listen to me. It may hurt her feelings a little, but she understands logic too."

I talked to Ann and she had to agree with me and said she would stop the show.

In a few days Annie had worked up her show and asked me to come and watch it and see what I thought. I did watch it and it was terrific. She had Big Bear, Little Doggy, some squirrels, some rabbits, some birds and other animals that I don't know what they were. The only human in the show in any way was Annie and the only thing she did was announce the different acts. She said she would have included Billy, but this was for the other animals. She snickered as she made this remark.

"You have good show and don't use this as a time to make fun of your little brother. I know you love him and wouldn't want to hurt his feelings. Don't ruin you show by using it to belittle your brother. He is your brother and I think that some day you will be very proud to claim him as your brother."

"Thank you, Daddy, I just couldn't resist the temptation. I meant it to be funny. I'll not do that again."

"When are you going to put the show on for your mother?"

"Anytime she wants to see it."

"I'll talk to your mother and get a time set." I did this and Ann came to see the show and was amazed at how Annie had trained the animals. She asked Annie, "How in the world did you train these animals to do those things?"

"I didn't," came the reply, "they did this themselves when they knew what I wanted."

"That is a very good show. When and where do you expect to put it on?"

"I was hoping maybe you could help me there. I certainly can't put it on in a building."

"Maybe you could put it on out by the corner where you catch the bus and maybe the school will bus the students to that corner." I suggested.

"Do you really think so, Daddy?"

"I am quite certain of it, if I furnish the bus." I built small sized grandstand for the kids to sit on and made a little stage for the animals to perform on. Annie was pleased and went with her mother to invite the middle school boys and girls. The school was glad to have the opportunity to see Annie's animal show.

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I hired a bus to haul the kids and had them sit in the grandstand. Annie tested the animals to see that they would perform on the stage. They did so everything was all set for the show. The bus shuttled the children in as they were ready for them. The shows were put on and the children were given an opportunity to pet the animal they wished to pet. The animals enjoyed being petted. Little girls would go over and hug Big Bear and pet Little Doggy. The boys petted whatever animal they wanted. The birds sat on the girls shoulders and the squirrels sat on the boys heads.

Annie had all of the animals let the children go to the bus and back to school. Annie always told the children, "All wild animals are not like these. These are my friends and they do as I say because they love me. Never, go up to a bear out in the woods because most of them have a bad disposition. When they see you coming they say to themselves, "Oh boy! Here comes lunch. I am really lucky today!"

"If you have a desire to pet a wild animal and your mother will let you by coming with you, I will be happy to call the one to us so you can pet it."

Not many mothers would let their daughters or sons come to pet the wild animals. Some of the children wanted to know how Annie could do this and she always responded that she did not know. "It must be a God given ability that he has bestowed on me ". It certainly did seem that way.

Annie's animal show died from old age. Anyone who wanted to pet animals had done so.

After Paul graduated college and had his structural engineering license, he found a nice young lady for his wife. They were married in our living room and they returned to his land to build that house he wanted to build. Needless to say, he drew his own plans and figured all the materials for the house and I bought them for him. Tina, his wife, a tall thin, brunette young lady, was excited about getting a house of her own in such a beautiful Area. Tina and Ann became very good friends and when Tina was expecting her first child, she spent most of her time at our house asking questions of Ann.

It was during this time that we started building Paul's house and some of the townspeople saw what a nice couple Paul and Tina were and came to give them a hand with the building. They didn't want a building of rock, so they built a conventional house with all kinds of reinforcements against a Tornado. It was a nice house for them and their family and safe.

After the house was built and they were in it, Paul put up his shingle that he was an available architect and engineer. Any business he had was done in a portion of his house he called his office. Business was slow at first and then he got so much that he had to build another building for his office and a shop for drawing plans and copying them. Tina helped him by answering the phone and taking orders. They were doing OK.

One day Ann was working in the living room dusting when the door bell rang. Ann opened the door and discovered a short girl. The girl was pretty. "May I help you?" Ann asked.

"I think so. My name is Betty. Years ago I was with a circus and the circus stopped here in town for two weeks. A friend of mine in the circus at one of our stops found a bear cub that had been left by its mother. It was almost starved to death. My friend took the cub and cared for it. He gave the cub to me to train to do some tricks. I did this and had a side show in the circus with the bear. People enjoyed my show so much that they came to see it. Another

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circus performer who was jealous tried to kill the bear. He was unsuccessful, but the bear escaped to the nearest mountain and wooded area. That was Totto Mountain.”

“I spent the week that we were here searching for him with no luck. Now we have left the circus and are living on a farm outside of Totto City. I have been searching again for that bear. I believe that the bear your daughter has is that bear. I would like very much to see if it is the one if you and your daughter will let me.”

“That will be up to Annie. Let me call her. Annie came almost immediately. Big bear and Little Doggy came with her. Big bear came over and smelled her legs and her clothes. She looked at him and gave him a command and the bear responded. She gave another command and the bear went through a routine. “The girl looked at Ann and asked, “Do you have any questions? That is the bear that escaped me years ago. I don’t want the bear, but I would like the privilege of being able to come once in a while and playing with him and Annie.”

“I think that would be Nice. That will give Annie someone to play with if that is OK with your parents.”

“I believe that it will be.” They will be happy to know that I have found the bear that left me years ago. Don’t try to call them on a phone because we don’t have one. You will have to come out to our place to see them.”

“That will be OK. Why don’t we take you home when you are ready and see them then?”

“I rode my bike over here. Can you take it as we go?”

“We will take you in our truck with your bike. Will that be OK?”

“That sounds good to me. I’ll let you know when.”

They played for a long time and about wore the bear out. The girl came to me and said very politely, “We are through playing. Can you take me home now?”

“I hope you had a good time with the bear and Annie. Let me get my hat and the keys to the truck. I got the keys to the truck from Bill and we put her bike in the back and I got in the drivers seat and Annie got in next to me and then the girl. I was given directions and got her home to her parents. I made a discovery. This was one of the mothers who had helped when we were building our house.

I also discovered that they are very poor. I told Bill and we set about to get them things they really needed. God had shown us where he wanted us to spend some money. We bought Betty a new bicycle as her other one was about to fall apart. Her brothers had gotten the best out of it before it was handed down to Betty. We bought them some clothes to wear. We paid for there house to be repaired. We paid to have their heating system and air conditioning modernized. We bought them some canned food to have all the time. I had Betty's mother come in and work for me as a maid part time as she preferred it that way. Bill hired Betty’s dad to work for him part time. I like to think that we improved their situation. By having Betty’s parents working for us gave Betty more time with Big Bear and Annie. Betty’s parents quit working for us the next year, so we didn’t see them much after that.

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Chapter Twelve Tom's Revenge

Annie grew older and animals didn't interest her as much as boys. Not too many boys would show an interest in her because they were actually afraid of her and her size.

Annie followed her mother's footsteps through high school in that any athletic sport she tried out for she excelled in it.

There was a boy that had always liked Annie and he asked her to marry him when she was eighteen. They did marry and she moved out. I gave them land to build them a house.

Annie turned out to be a great housewife. Her husband was a hard worker and I put him to work for me. Annie did grow to be taller than her mother a little and looked just like Ann — voice and all.

One day Annie came to me and told him that she hadn't seen Big Bear for some time and was worried that something might have happened to him. I told Annie that I would get the helicopter ready and we would go looking for him from the air. I did this and Annie got in and we flew over one side of the Mountain and back down the other side. Annie looked out her side of the mountain and she yelled, "Daddy over there." She pointed to something shiny on the ground. I lowered down and it looked like Big Bear's medal for bravery. Big bear always wore it around his neck as he was very proud of it. Here it was lying on the ground without the bear. I lowered the helicopter down so Annie could get onto the ground and go look.

I looked for a place to land the helicopter and ran back to where Annie was. When I found her she was in tears standing beside Big Bear. It appeared that Big Bear had been in a fight with someone with a knife and was slashed in several places over his body. I left Annie and Big Bear and looked to see if the person were around. I didn't have far to look for lying on the ground by a bush was the slasher. It was Tom that was supposed to be in prison. He had scratches all over his body and his belly was cut open and his insides were all gone and he was dead. I went back to Annie and Big Bear. "Is Big Bear still alive?"

"Yes, Daddy, but he has lost a lot of blood. We need to get him to the Vet as soon as we can!"

"That is undoubtedly true Honey, but how are we going to do it? We can't carry him because he is so big. I can't get the truck in here and I am not sure the helicopter will carry his weight."

"If we don't try Daddy, we will never know and he will lay here and die. We have got to try. Do you have anything on the helicopter that we can make a sling that the helicopter will be able to pick him up and out of here?"

"I have some parachute cord that might work."

I got the cord out of the helicopter and we set about making a sling for Big Bear. We began to make a rough looking sling, cutting and tying cords as we went. In a while we had fashioned something that might work. I tied the long cords to the underside of the helicopter. We rolled Big Bear onto the sling. I got in the helicopter and began to lift. The helicopter struggled, and almost didn't make it, but it got Big bear off the ground just barely. I yelled to Annie, "I'll take him to the house and then come back and get you." With that said, I headed for the house with Big Bear in a sling underneath. I had to go around most trees as I could only get Big Bear a few feet off the ground.

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I was able to lower Big Bear directly into the back of the pickup truck. I went back for Annie right away because I didn't want her out there alone. When we returned to the house, we drove Big Bear to the vet in town.

I phoned the Vet as I drove and he was ready for us when we got there. The Vet got Big Bears vitals while he was still in the truck.

"I'm afraid that you have wasted your time. I can't find a heart beat."

Just then Big Bear moved his arm.

"He is still alive!" I shouted.

The Vet and I got Big Bear onto the animal buggy and wheeled him into the Vet's operating room.

About an hour later, the Vet came out sounded sad. "He has multiple arterial lacerations. I was able to stitch them all up so they won't bleed any more. However, the bear has lost a lot of blood and I have no idea about whether he will make it or not. I would be more positive if I had some blood to give him."

Annie asked, "What kind of blood does he have to have?"

"Bear blood would be best, but since we can't get that, I think we can probably use human albumin," he said.

"What's that?" I asked.

"Albumin is the part of the blood that contains no antigens that could react and kill the bear," he said. "It will have to be separated out with a centrifuge."

Annie spoke up right away and asked, "Will my blood work?"

"It should, but keep in mind that albumin has no red blood cells and the bear needs those too. Not only that, but because of the bear's size, we are going to need a lot of it."

"Daddy, you know I would never say anything about you not giving blood to save Big Bear..."

I told the vet that he could use some of my blood as well. The vet then inserted needles into both our arms and drained off about a pint from each of us. He then took it into the back room where we heard whirring sounds as he prepared the blood. In a few minutes he emerged with a bottle of a yellow liquid that I assume was the albumin he was talking about. He ran a tube from the bottle to needle in Big Bear's arm. In just a few minutes, Big Bear began to show signs of feeling better. The Vet let the albumin go into Big Bear until the bottle was empty. He then removed the needle from Big Bear.

"I'm afraid that is all I can do. The rest is up to Big Bear. Thanks to your blood donation, his chances are much better," the vet said.

As we were driving home, I called the sheriff and told him "The escapee you are looking for is laying dead on my property and I would appreciate it if someone came out and removed what is left of him after dawn in the morning." I admit being a little snarky given the circumstances. "Next time you lose a prisoner, I would appreciate knowing about it before he tries to kill some of us. Thank you." I then hung up so he couldn't ask a lot of silly questions.

The next morning the call I expected came at dawn. "What do you mean an escapee? I haven't any prisoners to lose."

"Maybe you don't, but someone has. Tom now lies dead on my property from deadly wounds after trying to kill Annie's bear. Had I been told that he had escaped I could maybe

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have prevented his death. Now he's dead and Annie's bear might die also from the knifing Tom gave him. What have you got to say about that?"

"That is the first I have heard about Tom escaping. He was in state custody. That wasn't my prisoner and I have not received any word on his escape."

That may be so, but some one needs to be fired over it and you can bet someone will be!" I hung the phone up and called the Vet to see how Big Bear was doing.

Big Bear was up and around and wanting to go home. I couldn't let him back home just yet. Someone had to come and remove the body first because if it wasn't, Big Bear would head for it and destroy what was left of the body. I hung up and the phone rang almost immediately. It was the warden for the state prison. He told me that I was not to let that bear go for any reason as it was a dangerous animal.

"Don't worry because he is still in the hospital where Tom almost killed him. You get down here and remove that dead body off my property! I should have been notified the minute Tom's escape was discovered and I wasn't. It looks like to me that had you been doing your job, none of this would have happened. Now try to do something right and get that body off my property!"

I hung up the phone and went to see Big Bear. He was doing all kinds of funny things to get out. Annie fixed his collar and put the medal back on it as it was before. Big Bear was still proud of that medal and after Annie had put the collar on him, he slurped her cheek. He still wanted out.

When we got word that the state had removed the body, we put Big Bear in the back of the truck and drove him home. He was so happy to be back home that he laid on the grass and rolled in it. When he had finished his celebration he headed back into the woods where the body had been. He looked all around and sniffed all over trying to find Tom, but Tom was gone. When he came to realize that the remains were gone, he stood on his hind feet and growled a huge growl like I never heard from him before. He then came to Annie and slurped her cheek again and ran off through the woods. Annie seldom heard from Big Bear again. She seldom played with him anymore. So the bear went back to living in the woods. Having human albumin in his veins didn't seem to affect him in any way.

Billy was a different matter. Billy was a 'home boy' and wouldn't go out of the house unless we were with him or he was in school. There were a lot of girls that would have loved to have been his wife, but he just didn't care for the girls. I guess that his sister had left her mark on him. She had always mothered him like she had Big Bear and he resented it. I assume he thought all girls were like that. Perhaps someday he will find 'The One' and marry.

One day when Billy was twenty-five, six foot five, he came flying into my office dragging a pretty young girl like a rag doll.

I shouted at him, "Billy! Stop! You're going to pull the arm off of that poor girl!" With that said I went over to the girl and asked her, "Are you all right? Is your arm OK?"

She looked up at me from her full height of four feet ten inches and smiled as she responded, "I'm OK Mr. B, my sisters and brothers are always pulling me around because I have short legs and they have long legs. It takes me about three steps to one of theirs and they don't realize it. I also have to tell you that I am as big as I get. I'm the same age as Billy."

"I'm sorry. I didn't mean to insult you. I was worried about how Billy was treating you and didn't realize that you were the same age. I'm sorry."

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"Now Billy, what is your reason for this intrusion?"

"Dad, this is Betty and the two of us are thinking about getting married. I wanted to show her the living room so she can see it and know whether she thinks it will do for our wedding or not."

"Have you asked her dad for her yet?"

"No, I haven't yet, but I will if I have to."

"Son, you don't have to, but it would be proper. How long have you two known each other?"

"We have known each other since grade school, haven't we Betty?"

"That is right Mr. B. We have grown up together and I used to come here with mother when she worked for Mrs. B."

"How come you two haven't talked about marriage before?"

"Mainly because we were too shy to talk to each other," Billy remarked.

"Is that so Betty?"

"Yes, Mr. B. I was afraid to talk to Billy because he was your son and wealthy. He might think I was after his money and not for who he is."

"And who do you think he is now?"

"I still think of him as the richest son in the area, but I have come to know that he is very gentle and loving. He cares about me and I care about him. Being shorter than most people, that means something to me. A lot of boys have asked me on dates and I found they just wanted a 'Brood Mare'. I don't want that kind of attention. Billy has shown me consideration as another human being. He has compassion for others and when he is with me, he shows it. He is concerned about me because he loves me and I love him. We are two human beings, not animals."

"If it means anything to you, Betty, I think you are very sensible and pretty. I believe you will make Billy a good wife and the mother of his children. Now, Billy, you and Betty go see your mother about the living room. That is her territory."

They left to go see Ann and found her in the kitchen.

"Mom, can you stop a minute and come with us?"

"Sure, Billy. What is your problem? And who do we have here?"

"I'm sorry, Mom. This is Betty and we are thinking of getting married. I want her to see the living room, so she can decide if she would like to have our wedding here."

They all walked to the living room slow enough that Betty could walk, too. Ann took them outside and around to the front door and in to the living room. As soon as they opened the door, Betty looked in and exclaimed, "It is beautiful! Those chandeliers and the drapes make it like a palace."

"The chandeliers are made with real crystal and the drapes have real threads of gold in them. The grandfather's clock is also real! When this room was constructed, we made it with the intention of having our children married in here if they wanted."

"Mrs. B, I can't think of any other place I would rather have the wedding than in here."

"I believe that your mother was one of the ladies who helped us finish this house and she knows that we had this room fixed like it is so her children and other boys and girls could be married here. That is why we made it so extravagant."

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“Knowing that means that I would be slapping my mother and you in the face if I didn’t get married in here! I still think it is beautiful and want my wedding in here. Not because I feel an obligation to you or my mother, but because I think it is the most beautiful place to be married.”

“Now that we have that settled, let’s go see if the dining room will suit you for the reception.” We walked on back to the banquet hall. Betty’s first words were, “It is beautiful, also! Billy, we would have to be some kind of fools not to have the wedding and reception in this castle. I am sorry we took you from your work, Mrs. B, but I have never been in your castle.”

Billy proposed to Betty and gave her a very nice engagement ring that he purchased with his own money. Betty’s parents could not afford a big wedding for Betty, so we helped them pay for Billy and Betty to have the wedding of her dreams. Betty’s mother and other ladies from the church made Betty’s wedding gown, veil and train in Ann’s sewing room. They sewed sequins in to the dress material so when Betty stepped up onto the landing, she would be in the light from a flood light aimed at the clock and the gown would glow. She made a beautiful bride and the light made her shine like an angel! Betty was a beautiful young lady. She was slim and shapely topped with a small round face, sparkling black eyes framed with black, curly hair.

Their wedding was every bit as nice as ours. Billy and Betty wanted to have their honeymoon in the ‘Castle’, so we let them. We gave them a room on the other side of the building, so they could be more private. Billy took his wife all over the grounds and through the castle. Every time we happened to see them on their honeymoon Betty and Billy both had big smiles on their faces.

Annie came by one day and asked Billy if he had told Betty about Big Bear. He assured her that he had and she went off happy about that.

I had a house built for them between the Castle and Paul’s House. Betty was amazed at all that she had in it. I guess she thought that I would put up a lean-to for them!

Two very important things happened after we had the new house built that were important to us. Both Tom and his wife had been tried and sentenced to life in prison. Their daughter Priscilla was placed in foster care and given to a very nice couple. When Priscilla was to wed, she wanted to have the wedding in our living room. We readily agreed showing the people of the town that we held no animosity toward her for what her parents had done.

The other thing of importance to us was that another tornado came through several years after the new house was built and the only damage that it did was to wreck havoc in the orchard, grove and vineyard. Paul’s house had been so well built that it did not bother it. Annie’s house had a little damage to it, but nothing structural. Paul had drawn the plans for both of those houses.

Now Paul is overwhelmed with work to where he has hired workers to help him and a secretary to answer the phone and take orders while Tina helps Paul in drawing the plans by staying out of his way.

Ann and I have settled down to enjoy our home and children and grandchildren.

I would be remiss if I did not tell a little about Ann’s Family. Her mother and father have grown older and unable to farm any more and gave the farm to their oldest boy, Tom. He was the only one in the family that cared about farming and he is good at it. All of the other

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Billy gets married.

brothers got married and left the farm for the cities. The girls all were married and most of them live nearby. Lilly went to Hollywood thinking that she would become a famous actress. It didn't happen and she returned to the farm with Tom. Later she found a fellow and was married and lives in town.

Most Holidays they find their way to our place. Little Mary grew up and married the finest man. She lives in a house on our land and her husband works for Paul. All of Ann's family are doing well and have lots of children. Ann has more relatives than she can count and remember their names. I have no relatives so I can't tell you about mine. God has been good to Ann's family and we have been blessed of God for certain and we praise Him for it.

The view is just as beautiful as ever. In the spring we still see the fresh green of the fields and the beautiful wild flowers. In the summer we see the green of the fields and our garden growing. In the fall and winter we see the beautiful colors of the leaves changing. One thing that has changed is I have built small cabins all over the property for vacationers. There is one rule for all that come which is that they do not leave any trash lying around. If they do, they are asked to leave and never come back. This way the pristine look of the area is preserved.

I did put a flume in at the junction of Totto Creek and the Ibo River. This formed a small pond that gave me access to the water of Totto Creek for irrigation of the land on the other side of Totto Creek without interfering with the flow down stream. Now there is green grass in places on the bottom land that was once barren land.

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One thing we changed was the name of Totto Mountain. One day, Annie discovered her old friend, Big Bear, dead on the side of the mountain so we changed the name of the mountain to Big Bear Mountain and then later to just Bear Mountain.

There hasn't much been said about Little Doggy. Little Doggy was Annie's dog and when you saw Annie the little dog was nearby. He couldn't protect her like Big Bear could, but he tried. The time of the Tornado showed just how much he loved her. All the attention at the time was on Big Bear because he was so huge, but Little Doggy was the first to try to save Annie. Annie loved the dog and slept with him and cared for him.

As Annie got older she played less and less with both animals, so I wound up caring for the animals. Little Doggy got older and one day I found him curled up on the passenger seat of my helicopter. I noticed that he wasn't moving and went to see about him. He had a hard time lifting his head. He had crawled up into the seat of my helicopter because he was sick and he knew that I took him to see the vet in that seat. He was telling me that he needed to see the vet. I called the Vet and he said to bring him right on in. I did and by the time I arrived at the vets, Little Doggy was dead. The vet said that he probably had a heart attack. I took him home and buried him in his favorite place next to the house. I told Annie about Little Doggy and tears came to her eyes and wanted to know where I had buried him. I told her and she went to see the grave. I had a stone placed on the grave one day that said, "Here lies Little Doggy who risked his own life to save his mistress's life." Annie saw this and approved it.

We have honored Big Bear who had saved Annie's life by using his body to shield her that time and being the best watch dog we ever had. Big Bear had very good hearing and a keen sense of smell. If anyone came onto the property near the house, Big Bear would go and investigate. When they saw him, they would usually get out of there fast. He knew those who were welcome at the place and never bothered them unless he would sniff their shoes.

I built a little grotto near the entrance to the mountain with Big Bear's story there with pictures of him with the family and Annie. One of those pictures is the one taken when he received his medal and was standing on his hind feet next to Annie and Little Doggy. One can see how he towered over Annie and how tall he really was.

Some people have asked why we do not have his medal in the grotto. Big Bear loved his medal so much that he wanted to wear it all the time. I made a big collar to go around his neck that held his medal so he could wear it all the time. When we buried him, we thought it fitting that his medal rest with him for he was proud of it.

I built a lodge on top of Bear Mountain where people can come and just sit and enjoy the view, go skiing, sledding or just throw snowballs at each other. They can walk openly on the glacier.

I have also built a cable car up the back side of the mountain for those who want to look and not have to climb the mountain. There are trails for those who do want to climb.

Nearly every year, the President of the United States reserves the lodge for a month. He loves to sit and relax in the Fall of the year. For that month we cut all electric from the cable car and close the trails, so he will not have anyone bothering him. He loves to fish in Totto Creek and ski. I guess when another person is elected president, that will cease. The secret service stays in the small cabins nearby in order to be able to keep an eye on the President.

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Now the whole area is known as Bear Mountain Resort. That's pretty good for land that was considered waste land when I bough it and people considered me crazy. The land has now increased in value considerably and people are on waiting lists to come and visit the area.

Everyone now has a chance to come and see the beauty of the area that we saw in it years ago. Wild flowers still grow on the plains and Bear Mountain still has its glacier for people to visit.

Yes, I would have been crazy if I had NOT bought all this land! God has blessed me and I praise him!

One thing that I have done for Frank was to give him my old helicopter and I bought a larger one to haul people to and from the resort. This gave him the helicopter that he always wanted. Now he can fly where he has to go and save that time he always wanted to save.

I don't want to sound like I am bragging for that would violate my promise to God. I just want to tell it like it is.

I trust you have enjoyed reading this story about Bear Mountain Resort and its people and animals. May God bless all of you! Come and visit with us sometime.

The End.