

My Red Chair

As my bride used to say about this time everyday, whether we were home or at the lake in the trailer, "Well, its gotta be 5:00 o'clock somewhere." She even gave me a light blue shirt with the same expression with drawings of the ole pirate Jimmy Buffett who said in one of his books "*One of the inescapable encumbrances of leading an interesting life is that there have to be moments when you almost lost it.*"

As I sat down in my red chair with my "one drink a nite" - in my tall 32 ounce green North Texas State glass (since 1977) - my thoughts again began to sink. Again. My sinkers maybe spread out some over the last almost 21 months since Jeanne died but I still sink. Five o'clock or not.

Here at home she used to sit in her chair to my right. I could watch her as we laughed through our English comedies, enjoy Ranger baseball, and root for the Sooners. The poodle would usually sit with her. Later, I would fetch her second glass of wine and we would have our pleasant moments enjoying the moments in life.

What about the moments that are not "almost lost" but just ^%\$ damn lost? I lost her. She is gone. And now it is just me, the poodle, my red chair, and my big ole green plastic glass. Can I tell you there is no difference in how much it hurts from the time she left to now? The pain, the tears, the grit, the guts, the gnashing of teeth? The questions are the same: Why did she die? Why did she have to suffer the 99 days in the hospital? Why, Why, and Why again?

My two girls have lovingly worked with these same issues and they miss her as much as I do and they also have the same reoccurring questions but I feel to their credit they have the moments in life where they can address the fact their mother is gone. But, again to their credit they can talk about it more easily than I can. I have heard them talk to Grammy. They will be going through the house and say things as if she were here - knowing she is not seen but felt - and for sure still as loved and remembered as much as if she were sitting in her chair.

I can't do that. I mean I can't sit down and have a conversation with Jeanne. I have tried but I can't do it. It hurts too much to try to visit, or see, or talk to her...Jesus, I can't even start a conversation with Biscuit about Jeanne without one of my grief episodes causing the tears to come straight out of my poor ole eyes...no, not now. Maybe never, but not yet.

One evening about this time, I was sitting in my red chair watching a recording and decided I could not keep my eyes open. I was obviously tired but this was unusual for me to want to put my head down. But I turned the TV off and rested my head on my shoulder. I slipped smoothly into a nap - but Poodle was not disturbed.

In my dream I heard a low calming voice. It asked "***How are you doing?***"

Mumbling in my slumber I said "I am not doing well - at all...Don't you know my bride is gone? I hurt. My heart is still just *&^\$% broken....it is really...just awful..."

"Where is your bride?"

"I told you she is gone!...She won't be coming back. I will never see her again!"

The voice asked "***How do you think she feels being gone?***"

"Give me a break...how in the world would I know? I guess she would enjoy the moment with me and ole Biscuit....I couldn't talk to her before she died...I didn't get the time to hold her in my arms and tell her how much she meant to me...She certainly has not talked to me - Jesus God help me..."

..."***Heart, I love you...***"
