

## A DAY TO REMEMBER

How much can a day hold? Enough to start the mind to thinking. What is important in life? How long is life? What do those who have lost a loved one long to hear? Where does giving begin? Where does receiving start? Why does love make the difference? What is love? "Love is God." What is God? God is mind, life, truth and love. How is God expressed? In his own reflection, man. Love is fulfilling another's need. Love is unspoken words pressing their way from the heart into tear filled eyes. Love in the inner you reflecting all that is good.

Living today was like watching a film.

We drove sixty-nine miles to Coeburn, Virginia, a small mountain town. Our purpose in going was that my husband was to conduct a burial service for Mr. Charles McCoy on request of his daughter and wife.

Mr. McCoy was born sixty-five years ago in these mountains. Through impossible odds, he secured an education and for his lifetime worked with boys and girls that they too might feel the importance of an education.

This same enthusiasm he instilled in his daughter and two sons. All became teachers.

Today his friends and family paid their last respect. High on top of a mountain with fog filling each hollow, he was laid to rest. He had selected this spot. He felt a deep love for these mountains, and so today, he became a part of them.

The rain which had fallen all day refused to let up. From Coeburn we started the ten-mile ride to a cut-off to his mountain. We reached the cut-off. The sign read, "Three Miles To Dead End." The road followed the terrain of the mountain showing off its tall trees, its deep valleys, with its tall peaks only a gray shadow on the sky line.

Finally we reached the road to the cemetery. The casket was put on a four-wheel drive truck with the flowers on top to start the climb.

With the Bible, three sprays of flowers and our umbrellas, we started ahead of the truck. With our feet incrustated in mud, we reached the top of the mountain and saw the tent over the grave. My husband took his handkerchief and wiped the chair seats dry as we waited for the family.

It was a long hill for aching hearts and they apologized for the rain, the mud and the road. My Joe responded with praise for the mountains and their beauty. The family took their seats as lonely tomb stones stood silent holding many secrets of long ago, while we waited for the body.

The road was too bad. They could not drive into the cemetery. Finally, the wire fence was taken down and loving hands lifted the casket across and rested it beneath the tent.

The flowers were placed as best they could be in the small space, with the rain falling from all sides of the tent. I noted one in particular because the rain was hitting so hard making a sound. This piece contained a blue plastic telephone with the phone off the hook, resting on a solid blue background with white polka dot on top surrounded by blue and white mums. As the rain beat on the phone, the lettering above, "Jesus is calling," gave the appearance of breathing.

I recalled my thoughts and heard my husband repeating the 23rd Psalm: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

My gaze rested on the little wife and mother, her tiny form shaking from the cold and rain, her new shoes showed about the coating of mud, holding her daughter's hand and her head resting on her son's shoulder. To myself, I thanked God for love.

The men of the family were asked to stay to help with the box. My husband, taking the arm of the little wife, we started down the mountain.

I walked behind, pausing now and then to look at the mountains, to picture them in spring when life again would return to this part of the high country.

So, what appears now to be dead will in due time bring forth life, showing it was not dead but needed only this phase for awakening.

The words my husband had spoken in the Chapel are now returning to me:

"So many things I planned to do,  
Ere the close of life's short day;  
Some of them I would do now,  
If I could find time to stay.  
I'd walk in an April shower,  
Feel the raindrops gently caress,  
And wait for the sun to shine again,  
To catch nature at her best.  
I'd gather my loved ones around me,  
And thank them for being mine;  
Then quietly without a murmur,  
I'd surrender myself to time."

We drove back the sixty-nine miles to home. Still the rain was falling. We thought of many things. We felt uplifted. We had seen love in action today. We went forth to give of ourselves and returned rewarded.

*Marguerite Louise*