

Blessing and Curses

by Kenita Gibbins

Everyone should start their day with the comic section of the *Denver Post*. This day Mother Goose and Grimm failed in creating a smile. Grimm looks into the mirror and declares to his friend. "MY LAUGH LINES ARE DUKING IT OUT WITH MY CROW'S FEET." The quote made me remember that my daddy said, "My dimples have turned into lines." I thought to myself it must be good that I have only one dimple.

More than three-fourths of my life I relished hearing my skin was beautiful. I have never had a pimple. I haven't even had a blackhead. I think I kept my skin clean. I didn't lie in the sun with baby oil rubbed all over me like my friends. I learned early on that I could sunburn quickly.

I didn't even know what dry skin meant until after we had lived in Colorado a few years. Moisturize, moisturize became a mantra. I had to seek a dermatologist. Then I had to see a Mohs surgery doctor. Yep I had skin cancer, but the doctor had to only dig into my skin once. I'm now better with the sun screen and wearing a hat.

When I went back to my high school reunions I noticed my girlfriends looked younger than me because they live in a moist climate. These same wonderful friends had to teach me how to inhale at a time when we thought smoking a cigarette look sophisticated. I did quit smoking forty-three years ago, but I think I smoked long enough for the wrinkles around my mouth to remember my sin.

I'm thankful that I like to smile. I also learned a smile makes me look younger. It tightens ups those wrinkles. I view life with the attitude of a hard-bitten realist. I've earned my wrinkles and I just think about the girl who had the beautiful skin. It is a reality that my husband George has low vision. I've been driving for us since 1988. He once said the hardest part about losing his vision was having to ride with me. It seems like I'm causing him more and more anxiety. I really can't help that our garage is very narrow and on occasion I scape the side of the car – the curse a different kind of skin. The only thing good about his low vision is he can't see my wrinkles. He must hold in his memory the girl he married with the beautiful skin – the blessing for me.