

George and Irene

*By Marilyn Reeves*

George and Irene were driving up a country lane, when he suddenly pulled off to the side of the road and stopped.

“Why are you stopping here, George, in front of that ugly old barn? Look at that! I’ll bet it’s crawling with vermin – mice and rats and maybe even raccoons.”

George said nothing as he opened his door and walked around to the back of the car. Facing him, on the other side of the broken-down rail fence, the dilapidated ruins of an old Ford truck sat listing to one side, its left front wheel bent at an awkward angle, stuck in a ditch. The windows were all cracked and broken and the front windshield looked as if it had been used for target practice by boys throwing rocks. Here and there hints of blue – possibly its original color – could be seen peeking through the over-all shades of brown and rust.

Next to the barn sat the equally rusted remnants of an old hay mow, overgrown with weeds. The silvery boards of the barn itself had fallen in on one side and half of the old structure was overgrown with honey suckle.

Behind it, the tragic remains of a giant cottonwood that had been split in two by lightning lifted one blackened arm skyward, as if in supplication. The other half lay forlornly on the ground, although a few brave branches continued to put out new leaves, in hopeful anticipation of reincarnation.

Off to his right sat a small pond surrounded by tall grasses dotted here and there with wild white and yellow daisies and deep blue cornflowers.

“What are you doing, George?” Irene called out the window as he lifted the lid to the trunk.

“Getting out my tripod, Irene. I want to take a picture.”

“A picture of that ugly old thing? Why on earth would you want to do that?”

“It’s all a matter of perspective, my dear. And perhaps a difference in perception.”