

OUTSIDE THE DOOR

by Nancy Martz

"See, how gorgeous the world is outside the door!

...last sentence of D. H. Lawrence's poem, "SPRING MORNING"

My glass lanai door allows a prime view from where I sit, knees drawn up to make room for Wicket, my little mama's dog who will always be a puppy and who fits on the recliner's footrest. Beowoof, my other Shih Tzu prefers the ottoman. We sit where we can see through the branches of our trees across the expanse of grass to the street and sidewalks.

It's a cloudy day, a sunny day, a rainy day, a snowy day, and there strides the shirtless man, one arm flung forward, the other behind, and he's gone. His good form and apparent good health allows a growing sense of guilt inside me as I half sit, half lie lazily in my recliner eating a root beer popsicle as I watch. Squirrels dart past as a neighbor out for a smoke tosses a couple of peanuts. Abruptly a city bus blasts by since no one is waiting at the stop. Then a big white Buick inches and slows to a stop along the curb. No one gets out. A low growl begins in Wicket's throat just before a plump black poodle appears by the nearest tree, straining on its leash followed by its walker who lurches into view, leash arm stiffly outstretched, and they are gone before Wicket gets off his territorial bark. Wicket has nothing to bark about as he's getting fat around his middle and actually sways a bit from side to side when he's out for a walk.

Across the street a conscientious dog walker carrying a sensible pooper grabber stops awhile to allow her pet to enjoy all the smells and sights along their path. Chaco, my aging big black cat sits atop my lanai couch and stares a half minute before looking away as if bored. The woman and her dog cross the street and disappear along a path planted with roses.

Soon the sun spreads shadows through the tree branches and a unicycle rolls backward, its rider flailing his arms for balance, then catching the light pole. Starting forward, he suddenly circles, heading south fast with his arms out like a balancing stick. Later, he and his wife whiz past on their chair backed bicycle built for two, their fuzzy white square jawed terrier trotting happily along side.

A red and white striped smart car about the size of my over stuffed recliner scoots into the parking lot, a tall flag flying smartly from its back bumper and two fat grey birds fly up from the street into the tree branches. Finally the driver's door opens on the white Buick next to the curb and a man steps out, glancing approvingly at a tall, svelt, blonde outfitted in black from toe to cap who glides gracefully along the sidewalk as if it were a runway.

I doze a bit in my chair, when Wicket barks, and I look out the glass door to see a herd of fluffy tailed squirrels chasing each other up and down and around the tree just outside my lanai. My big black cat Chaco utters tiny guttural sounds but doesn't flinch. A large tricycle surrey with fringe on the top wheels by. Seeing how gorgeous and novel the world is outside my door, I forgo another popsicle, halter up the pups and step out there.