

Our House

My brother Jack and I are in Louisiana, Mom passed away a few years back and my Dad has Alzheimer's disease. We are selling the old house and are in town sorting out the remaining belongings of our parent's lives. Comparing notes for the most hours we have spent together in many years, we remembered numerous anecdotes from times past.

My parents had a 1950 two-tone Ford sedan. The car was gorgeous, just not very reliable. My Dad was a carpenter. We didn't have much money, but we never missed any meals and we always had a warm place to sleep. Vivian was and is a small rural town. On Friday nights, farmers and ranchers would come to town. For entertainment, we would park on Main Street and watch people pass on the sidewalks as they window-shopped.

Television was in its infancy. We had no TV but the local electronic shop had a black and white set in the front window. On Friday nights, cars would drive into the parking lot to watch the Friday Night Fights, the set left on courtesy of the owner. Later, we would dine on hamburgers and soda pop at the Stone Tavern on the other side of the tracks.

The house is almost empty. "The place seems different," Jack says. "Like its dead or something."

It doesn't seem dead to me, just missing something: my parents. An old friend Ronnie and his wife Debbie are buying the house. Ronnie grew up across the street from us and I have known him and his family all my life. They want to paint and change the tile and carpets. The old house, I feel, will prosper under their ownership. To me, the vital old house has a life of its own. Yes, it's older than both Jack and I but it isn't dead. It's just a house that needs a loving owner, someone to baby and care for it, just as it did for us for so many years.

My parent's house, the house Jack and I grew up in, has a glow I didn't see or feel the last time I was here. Friendly, caring people will soon occupy its walls again. Though empty now for two years, I can almost feel its impending joy.