

A Dream of Restoration

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I was at a small town along a busy two lane highway. I stopped along side the road at a business with a gravel parking lot. The landscaping was overgrown with low bushes and taller trees. Behind the landscaping I saw a one story building that looked like a log cabin with hewn timbers. To the left was a vintage gas station.



I noticed as I entered that the large picture windows were dirty and greasy making it difficult to see in. I noticed a neon beer sign in the window but the light was not on. There were no signs outside to indicate what this building was used for. Inside I discovered that the building was a restaurant. I met a middle aged plump man that I knew was the proprietor. I saw a young woman in the kitchen to the left. There were tables and chairs in the open seating area of the restaurant. The tables were all set but no one was in the restaurant. Everything inside was made of wood, making the interior dark. I saw rustic chandeliers hanging from the ceiling. Dust and cobwebs covered everything inside the room.



The proprietor asked me if I could help him make his business profitable. I

looked out the dingy windows and could see a little bit of the busy highway. I told the proprietor that I could help him by starting with the landscaping so people could see the business. I went outside and within a few moments the underbrush was gone and the trees were limbed up allowing a view of the business from the road. (I don't remember working at all on the landscaping, but it was like it was done miraculously with no work on my part).

While looking at the freshly trimmed landscaping I was approached by a black man who had walked over from the vintage gas station next to the restaurant. He was dressed in work clothes that were greasy from working on vehicles. I asked him why he was in this town because I sensed that non-white people were not welcome in the town. He did not speak, but his attire instantly changed to a basketball uniform and he was spinning a basketball on the tip of his right index finger. I instantly knew he was a very rich professional athlete who decided to move to this small town and work at the old gas station.



His clothing instantly changed back to his work clothes and he returned to work.

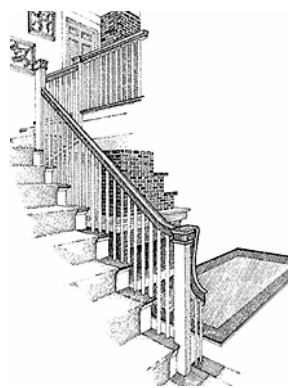
The proprietor came outside and looked at the landscaping. He said that he would rather the trees were removed completely rather than just trimmed. This is what I had wanted to do also, but I didn't want to cut

them down without his permission. I then cut down all the trees to get rid of them quickly. I had plans to return later and remove all of the stumps and roots with an excavator.

I went into the restaurant with the proprietor. He asked me if there were other thing I could do. I told him that all of the dust and cobwebs needed to be cleaned out. As we talked I had a sense that the food and the cooking were good, but the ambiance was very uninviting. I looked out the dingy windows and could see the highway now. It had lots of traffic driving by. I suggested that he clean the large picture windows and take down the old neon beer signs and replace them with a new neon sign that simply read "OPEN".



I then saw a set of stairs at the end of the dining area. I walked up the stairs and discovered that they went up about 4 stories. This was odd since the building looked like a one story structure from the outside. On each floor I saw many doors to many rooms, like a hotel. Nothing seemed to be in use and no one was seen. At the top floor I discovered an elevator. I rode the elevator down to the bottom floor. When the door opened I was standing on the front porch. I looked at the building again and it was still a one story structure.



The dream ended.

Some Impressions

The wealthy black man was living and working in the town because he was "sent" to bring change and make a difference in the community. even though the community was uninviting to non-whites. He is a missionary, if you will, patiently waiting for his moment to initiate change.

The community was a small highway town like so many that we have all passed through but at which we seldom stop. At one time it had been an important wayside to weary travelers. Now it is only an annoyance that makes a traveler slow down while passing through. It is not a destination.

The log cabin represents the church. It was obscured behind landscaping that had once been beautiful but was now overgrown from neglect. The cobwebs, dust and dirty windows suffered similar neglect.

The building looked like a single story structure from the outside but had 4 stories with stairs and an elevator inside. This represents a humble exterior appearance but there is so much more inside. At one time it had been new and beautiful. Now it is old and ignored.

The proprietor represents church leaders that no longer know what needs to change to make the church visible to those passing by. The proprietor did not see the dingy windows, cobwebs and dust. He hadn't noticed that the overgrown landscaping had obscured the view of the building. Although the food and cooking is still good, no one knows they neither exist nor would stay because of the uninviting ambiance.

The changes we made, I sensed, would make an immediate difference and people would again begin to discover this once bustling restaurant and its good cooking.

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