

Acreage at Julian, My Haven

It was a day after a storm, which is what made it perfect. The sun shone bright against the bruise colored clouds that covered the horizon, leading on for miles. White storm clouds dotted the sky above racing each other as the swift cold wind that stings your face carried them to the south. They seemed to symbolize rebirth, and the always constant light within the darkness. To the east small purple mountains that looked as though they had been painted by God rose from behind the hills. To the west hills continue to the ocean that lies about 65 miles away. The hills continue to the north as well. Centered between these beauties below the azure blue sky was a lush green valley surrounded by hills on three sides that came sloping down to a field that lay against this majestic backdrop. The backdrop of my dream, my dream to be able to stand and not see another building for miles, to be one with Mother Nature and to be every engulfed by her presence every second that I am alive. Because for every second I am out here, I am happy.

In the center of this valley is a house, but its more than that, that is home. As I approach it I feel like a hawk soaring overhead with the wind under my wings as I stare in awe at this beauty from the cab of my truck as I sneak into valley via the twisted tree lined road. My house, which faces north, is a two story white clapboard house with bluish violet trim and a huge porch that extends for the entire front of the house. The house has new fresh cut pine lumber shingles that sends that just-fresh-cut-down-Christmas-tree-scent seeping through the entire house.

On the porch roof lays a cat, white chested and splattered orange, his name is Bob and he hangs his paws over the edge of the porch and rests his head on them as he stares lazily into the distance. In a second story window sits a seal-point Siamese (who has fur soft as velvet) tall and bold, guarding his stronghold. As I drive up a golden retriever and a red Irish setter-and -golden retriever mix emerge from the barn that sits just back and south east from the house. Two horses also emerge from the side of the paddock that encircles the front and east sides of the traditional painted barn. They rear and neigh as I approach in my rumbling blue Ford F-150 down the dirt road driveway.

I park along the west side of the house, and I as I jump out of the cab, I'm met with, cold wet kisses and warm muddy paws (which I don't mind at all), a lazy yawn from Bob and a impatient shriek from the Siamese, named Sinatra, exclaiming that I should have called before making my unexpected visit to "his" house. But presently the dogs are distracted from my homecoming by a silent noise, and they go barreling off into the forest that runs along the creek that lies to the east of the house.

I walk to the front door, and my hand retreats the moment my fingers touch the frost covered doorknob, but my mind thrust my hand forward as I push open the heavy oak door. The moment my foot is inside a "rrr000w" sounds behind me. I turned to Bob, "You can just jump down lazy cat or go round the ladder I left up this morning." I lectured him, "But, you say 'that requires moving, and why waste energy when you have a personal servant to help you down'." At that I burst out laughing at his "why yes that's exactly it so get me down" expression. I scooped him up and turn, only to trip over Sinatra who in turn gives a howl that sounded like a police car had put their siren right up against my ear. "Sorry!" I exclaimed apologetically, but Sinatra ignored me and made a beeline for the kitchen where he expects lunch to be served to him.

The kitchen and dining room are on the left side of the house, and are open to one another. I set down my passenger (Bob), and went over to the stove which was situated in the back of house and put the rest of a pot of home made potato soup I had made the day before on the stove to

reheat. When it is done, I go over to stove to take it off the burners and as I leaned over my face became warm and slightly dampened by the steam rising off the top. The soup's smell was warm and intoxicating; I poured myself a bowl, scooped it up, pulled on my soft lined waterproof jacket and left the house. I hiked 3/4 of a mile to the top of the hills behind my house, and as I walked I felt the strength in my legs pull me forward a feeling of joy spreading through my entire body. This was something I had never felt in the crowded smog filled city. When I reached the top I settled on the cold hard wood bench I built last summer. I began to sip my soup as I stared off into the distance at the miles of hills and mountains below me that faded away into the desert. Bob hopped up onto the bench beside me and curled up into my lap his warm body acting like an electric blanket heating my legs. In a few minutes my mind had left my body and I had become a hawk soaring over this scenic view, my strong wings straining against the hard gusts of wind circling my territory, my home, my haven, my greatest dream come true.