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Hands...

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Cover Page Footnote

This poem is available in The Angle: http://fisherpub.sjfc.edu/angle/vol1987/iss1/12
"You may be right. Are you okay, I mean, you didn't get hurt back there . . ."

"No," she simply returned as she motioned for me to come closer. As I did, there was a tap on the door. A rough-looking farmer took me out and yelled four-letter words as he pinned me against the car.

"Something wrong with you, buddy?" I asked.

"That's my cousin that you been helping yourself to a hearty portion of, you #@$*!" he spat (excluding obscenities), "I'm gonna' lay you out!"

Now, I wasn't about to be "laid out." That didn't sound like too much fun. I lifted my knee. I was so short that my knee hit his leg. It was enough to send him off balance to the ground. I darted around the car and grabbed the baseball bat that I always carxy in my trunk.

As he charged recklessly, I drove it into his stomach. I could have hit him harder, but he got the message. He ran off leaving his Honda motorcycle which I used for gasoline to get me to a nearby village.

"You're quite impressive, babe," she remarked.

My mind wasn't on the farmer boy. I wanted to get this angel back to her car. The day was crazy since she became part of it. The trouble was that while half of my being wanted to see her go, the other wanted to see how hot her lips were. As I pulled onto the shoulder behind her car, she decided for me. Those lips were hot for sure! I counted five cars as we were locked in a love-headlock. She was obviously better at it than me, because I suddenly needed air. She took it as a brush-off. Before I had taken in enough breaths to recover, she was in her car and was history. I couldn't even get the license plate number. I returned home to find that my mother was home early. As I entered the house smelling like strawberry lipstick and expensive perfume, she asked, "Where have you been, honey?"

"Never mind, Mah, never mind."

Mark Murphy

Sawyer: Hands...

Hands. Crippled. Arthritic. Gnarled and ugly. Useless. Hands that caught a ball, held a jumprope, cuddled a kitten. Hands that picked corn, milked cows, stacked hay, planted tulips. Hands that wrote sonnets and typed term papers into the night. Hands that held a boy's hand for that very first time. Hands that hung clothes, churned butter, shaped meatballs, That touched the softness of a newborn baby, his little hand lost in this one, That rocked him to sleep, that cooled a feverish brow. Hands that clapped the loudest at a school play and, all too soon, a graduation. Hands that ran up and down the lines of his face, felt the prickle of his whiskers, the mole on his back. Hands that dropped a love rose on his grave. Hands. Crippled. Arthritic. Gnarled and ugly. Useless. Had these hands really contributed to this world? Was the story they told not worth hearing? Had they really reached out all these years? If so, why does no one reach out to them now? The deep longing for a touch. So that these hands could close together for the last time in peace.

Maryann Sawyer