

Adventures in McCloudland

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Chapter 32

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One afternoon in May, our previously projected opening month, we were in the hotel meeting with Ray, and got a phone call from Barry. There was an offer coming in on our house. Could we be back in Oakland tomorrow morning?

A young couple loved the house and offered us \$550,000 contingent on a formal inspection. They couldn't come up with the 20% down and wanted us to carry papers for 10%, or \$55,000. Of course we took it. Barry said we could always sell the note if we had to.

I started calling moving companies for estimates. We'd have everything packed up and wrapped for storage, then moved to the hotel and stored in the basement until we needed it. We were doing something productive and moving on. It was wonderful to take some positive steps. Even though we knew we'd realize very little on the house because of the three outstanding loans, it was wonderful to clear them up. A 30-day escrow was opened.

The next week an inspector they had hired came and examined the house. Barry called and gave us the news. The roof was bad, the front porch was in danger of falling down, the drainage around the house was not adequate, and the heater system was 70 years old and would probably die any moment. A week later we agreed to accept \$25,000 less. Escrow would close in two weeks and the couple wanted the house immediately,

Twenty-seven years raising three children and we had two weeks to vacate. It was more difficult to leave the house this time. Our enthusiasm for the project was diminished and I knew this move would be final. What if we could never find the money for the hotel project? What would become of us?

Our sons helped us drive the cars to McCloud. Along with the van and my Fiero, we had a '38 Plymouth Touring Sedan and a Business Coupe of the same make and year.

We also had a '29 Plymouth unrestored touring car, but because it wasn't anywhere near running, we donated it to the local college shop class for restoration and resale.

So our caravan was off to McCloud, each in our own car and each with our private thoughts and fears. We never had these fears and doubts last August. What a difference 10 months made. The moving van beat us to the hotel and checked the wrapping on everything and stored it in the basement toward the street side of the building where we would not have to move it again.

I got settled into my three former rooms, and Lee resumed a weekly commute. During the week he would stay with Scott, or son in Oakland. Lee would come up on Thursday nights, which avoided the Friday night rush, and would return on Sunday afternoons; facing the Sunday returning traffic.