



PART I



LIVING

TO

LEARN

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HOGHEY

Every waking moment is an adventure in living.

Hogey stretched his hands to release the tension. He'd been gripping the wheel too tightly. Large palms sweating even though 80 degrees was cool for Kansas in June. "Driving too fast," he thought. The speedometer didn't work, but still he knew. Bubba, the '49 Chevy half-ton pickup, couldn't tolerate acceleration above 45 MPH. It was geared low for hauling, not highway travel. "Slow down. Take a long breath. Should be enjoying retirement," he thought. "Oh well, lives that hover on an even plane are never interesting enough to write about." He had taught others that interesting lives are a sequence of valleys and peaks. Can't appreciate the mountaintop without the agony of ascent. The higher the peaks, the deeper the valleys. Hang in there. Get a grip. Expect the bad with the good and appreciate the challenge. Learn from it. Grow from it and, most importantly, remember that there is always a good reason for everything, even if those good reasons don't reveal themselves until after the pain of endurance.

He was very uneasy, not nervous exactly, but something like a horse with a saddle cinched too tight. He kept reminding himself to unwind but anxiety hovered around him like a ghost, seeping into him

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whenever he let down his guard. Feeling insecure about anything at his age was something that irritated him, so he kept talking to himself. Encouraging himself. Of course it's easier to say it and think it than to believe it. "Better believe it now," he told himself. "This could be one long hot summer."

"How much farther, Buddy?"

"Can you tell time Becky?"

"What do you mean Buddy? I'm going to be in the third grade," she said with an innocent hint at a little sarcasm.

His grandkids call him Buddy. It began with Matthew, the eldest. When the boy was still an infant, Hogey always greeted him with, "How's my little buddy?" Hence, one of the first words Matthew spoke was, "Buh-dee." It stuck. Hogey liked it. Sounded better than the usual reminders of old age.

"Sorry. Here, take my watch. When it's 4:00 o'clock we should be there," he told her. Rebecca, Matthew's sister, was five years younger. Watching a timepiece will keep her from asking how much farther. Miles don't calculate with eight-year olds.

Becky enlivens life around her. She's blessed with an infectious curiosity and an ingratiating smile. All of her being laughs when she laughs. Even her eyes and ears smile friendly. For Becky, every waking moment is an adventure in living. It was a theme Hogey used to teach his students. Learning should be an exciting adventure. Every waking moment is an opportunity to learn. To live with the curiosity of a child is to learn more, faster, and find life more interesting. When Becky was only thirteen months old and barely able to balance herself on his manicured lawn, he watched as her eyes glazed over in a vacuumed stare while, for a moment, all of her concentration was focused on the sensation under her tiny toes and bare feet as they squished the spongy grass. Blind but sensitive Helen Keller said,

To me, a lush carpet of pine needles or spongy grass is more welcome than the most luxurious Persian rug.

Becky made that discovery at a very tender age. The memory of it now brought a smile to Hogey's sun-beaten, weathered old face. "Aristotle was right," he thought, "like Ms. Keller and baby Becky, all people learn first through sensation." And so do horses. Actually all animals do, but horses are Hogey's 'thing'.

He hadn't always philosophized about such things while raising his own children, but with grandchildren, everything changed. What used to be most important is replaced by what used to be least. Maturation of experience does that. From the beginning, two powerful forces—heart and mind—compete for supremacy. Before experience, the heart more frequently gets its way. That's not necessarily bad, but ultimately it must depend on a mind for discipline. The mind, on the other hand, must depend on the heart for compassion, sympathy and all the characteristics of humanism. Too often, increased intellectualism degrades the importance of emotion and that can run counter to humanitarianism. Contrarily, emotion without intellect is no substitute for knowledge. Hopefully, a fruitful maturity brings both to a ripe harvest simultaneously. That balance is what Hogey sought in making music—heart/emotion in combination with mind/technique, neither one at the expense of the other.

*Every waking moment is
an adventure in living.*

A Kansas Highway Patrol car was parked near the Osawatomie exit. If the trooper saw that Bubba was missing an inspection sticker, he'd issue a citation. The truck's beat-up condition easily attracts attention. One headlight is missing and neither taillight nor wipers work. Hogey was in the process of converting Bubba from a six-volt to a twelve-volt electrical system. Procrastination stalled the project. His sweaty hands tensed. He watched for swirling red lights in the cracked rear view mirror. When nothing happened he exhaled and loosened his grip again. "Should have had that fixed by now," he thought, then reminded himself not to 'should on himself'. A hint of a smile creased his cheek at the thought. It was one of his wife's favorite expressions. "Crowding the agenda, over scheduling and setting impossible goals is what makes one should on oneself," she used to say. She had been so