

Erma Bombeck
Appalachian Style

Sub-category: Life Experiences

Submitted by:
Laurie Schneider
nom de plume: *Edna Burbank*

Rooster Crow

Sitting on the front porch watching the busy goings-on of our barnyard is a favorite pastime of mine. I'm remembering one sunny Sunday afternoon while relaxing on the porch spring, I gazed down at the gaggle of free-range chickens pecking in the yard and gasped when I noticed one of the hens suddenly crow. She belted out a crow to end all crows. Hmm...well, I guess I have another rooster.

Hercules grew to be a spectacular stud; the ladies swooning when he sauntered by admiring his gorgeous feathered physique and huge talons. That was until he opened his beak. I'm assuming while going through that all important adolescent stage, Herc developed a lisp.

"COCK-A-DOO-DOO," he bellowed.

Oh, good grief. His crow completely fails to pronounce an "oodle" which immediately sends the ladies into hysterics, cackling under their wings and scattering like flies.

On that sunny Sunday afternoon relaxing on the porch swing realizing I had a hen that crowed, it didn't occur to me *what* the hen crowed, just that she *did*. Perhaps I may have played a slight role in Hercules' developing this rather embarrassing communication glitch by thinking I had an Amazon sized hen that would possibly lay double-yokers.

But then I came to my senses and chalked it up to our particular setting. Leave it to my barnyard to have the only rooster in the tri-county area with a speech impediment.

Cemetery Flowers

Living beside a cemetery has its beneficial, amusing, and mischievous sides. The beneficial side is having extremely quiet neighbors and any type of building next to you is out of the question. The amusing side occurs when giving directions to your home. "Take the first drive on the left past the cemetery", to which we are met with stutters and pauses. "Aren't you somewhat frightened to live so close to a graveyard?" I make light of this by replying, "Well, how many people do you think are dead in that cemetery?" I'm greeted with mostly, "I don't know," unto which I reply, "All of them!"

The mischievous side of living beside a cemetery we've experienced has nothing to do with its occupants, but rather with our beloved dog. Returning home from work one day, I noticed a colorful display strewn across our porch. Fido escaped his enclosure and commenced to gathering a vast array of plastic flowers, flags, and mementos from the cemetery and depositing them in plain sight. Shock washed over me like a thunder bolt, mouth agape staring at the scene in front of me and finally jolted back to reality by my boys bounding up the drive and the sound of the departing school bus.

"PINK FOR GIRLS, BLUE FOR BOYS!" I screamed. We hurried to the cemetery, arms full, and quickly set in to replacing flowers at grave sites as best we could.

In retrospect, I realized that this is gesture of love, a gift from our beloved Canine. Would I prefer a gnawed-on bone or piece of trash next time? Yes, those I can toss in the garbage.

Smell This

When your teenage son bellows down the hall, “Mom, come smell this!” you tend to not jump on this request too quickly.

“Um, busy right now, honey,” I replied. I followed this reply silently with no thank you, I don’t want to, you can’t make me, and the ever popular, I’d rather have needles shoved underneath my fingernails. So, he came to me.

I made myself look busy in the kitchen, making sure the cans in the pantry all faced forward, being sure the spoons were spooning, and the slices of bread in the bag were in order. Not wanting to face him but knowing I must, I instinctively took a deep breath and turned to face him. Much to my surprise, as I didn’t have a clue what to expect, in my face was shoved an athletic gray sweatshirt, one that I recognized and have dutifully washed innumerable times. Is there a dead frog in the pocket? Or, perhaps a rotten hardboiled egg? To the contrary. This old, faded, ratty sweatshirt had the aroma of freshly cut grass, a just baked apple pie, and a meadow of multi-colored wild flowers all rolled into one.

I was curious. “Where have you been with this?”

“When Justin and I went four-wheeling and got muddy, his mom washed it for me.”

Well, isn’t that just great, I thought. It’ll be a cold day in hell next time I allow Justin’s mother to wash any of MY children’s clothing. That’ll show her.