

*The Way Things Ought to Be*

*by Frederick Wickert*



Every month on a Sunday, My wife Tae and I, my sister Ruth and my brother-in-law, Walt get together for lunch somewhere. A day or two before we meet, we choose over the phone where and when we will meet.

A couple of weeks ago we decided to meet at an Italian restaurant named Mama Maria's on state route 23 in the town of North Harpersfield, New York. It is an excellent place to eat and we have been there many times before. Walt's sister is an Alzheimer's patient in a nursing home two miles away, and he always visits her after we have lunch there.

We enjoyed a wonderful lunch and some pleasant conversation and were preparing to leave, when we noticed Amanda, a lovely girl who is a bank officer and a part time waitress, was out on the patio waving a broom. At first I thought she must be sweeping spider webs from the underside of the roof.

As we arrived outside, we could see there was a Humming Bird trapped under the roof. The roof over the patio was of a clear Plexiglas type material to allow light to come in. The bird seeing the light did not understand it had to go out from under the roof for freedom and was banging itself against the clear plastic roofing. Mandy was trying to herd it towards the edge of the roof so it could fly out from under and to freedom. As soon as we came out the exhausted bird was resting on top of one of the rafters.

I suggested that if a stepladder was available, perhaps one could reach the bird from the step ladder and cup it gently in both hands and carry it to the edge of the patio and release it. Mandy immediately left with the broom and said "Don't go anywhere." She returned in no time with a step ladder. Without hesitation she went up the ladder and cupped the exhausted bird in her hands.

Mandy carefully came down from the ladder. She walked out from under the roof into the parking lot. When she was about twenty feet out from the patio, Mandy raised her arms and opened her hands. The bird flew up and away to freedom as we all cheered.

Feeling very good about what had just taken place, we all got into our cars to leave. As I backed the car out of the parking space, Tae said, "That was really something with that little bird."

I replied, "That's the way things ought to be."

As we drove towards the end of the parking lot we were admiring the wild geese in the pond beyond the parking lot when I saw something out of the corner of my eye. A concrete walk divides the parking lot. At the end of the walk there is some statuary with a water fountain. On top of the statuary is a figure of St. Francis of Assisi. Perched on the shoulder of the St. Francis figure is a small bird. I couldn't help wondering if that was just coincidence.

What do you think?