

## Hitting the Wall

Clint surveyed his competition. He knew all of them, except for one new guy. Clint had been doing the Overton County Iron Man Bricklaying contest for the better part of twenty five years, generally winning. He wasn't the best bricklayer in the county. He just had the most endurance, and in this contest, that's all that counted. Whoever lasted the longest, climbing up and down a ladder cementing one brick on top of another, won. When the whistle blew to start the contest, they all grabbed a trowel and a brick and got at it. Twenty four hours later, Clint was one of two remaining. The others had tossed their trowels into a white painted circle near the competition area – the Circle of Resignation – indicating defeat. Clint himself was tempted. He couldn't feel his fingers any longer and he was getting delirious. But next to him, the new guy was still going strong, whistling as he climbed the ladder, brick in hand. Oh no...! Clint's trowel slipped out of his hand and clanked on the concrete floor near his ladder, not far from the Circle. Clint slowly descended from the ladder. He winced as he tried to bend over to get the trowel. "Hey pops! Let me help you with that." Clint turned to the new guy and responded, "Naw. I'm good." But instead of trying again to pick up the trowel, he slowly pushed it with the tip of his foot towards the Circle. He had had a good run all these years, but now he realized it was time to toe in the trowel.

