**Chapter II: Chickpocolypse**

The event became known as the Ultimate Silver Spangled Death Derby of Clover Creek Bend. A while later, the name was changed to the Penultimate Silver Spangled Death Derby of Clover Creek Bend and still later to the First Silver Spangled Death Derby of Clover Creek Bend. No event that followed was more rife with ramification. Family Alliances shifted. Indictments and recriminations cast a pall on family relations for years to come and ruined many a Thanksgiving meal. No two accounts of it were the same but one thing was agreed upon by all.

It was time to clean out that barn.

Buford, Rufus and Tennyson Jack set about this work while.

Casie Mel drove from Fissionbury to oversee this work. She and Wincey worked on the Praline Cottage, while Wes and the cousins scrubbed paint from the rear deck. Marnie was tasked with distracting Mosey while they burned the broken furniture and wallpaper.

“The boys are going to burn your antique furniture and expensive wallpaper,” she said to Mosey.

“What?” said Mosey. She sprang to her feet and made for the dor. “If they do, they'll be sorry.”

“Don't go now,” said Marnie. “If you do they'll get mad and leave without straighting the place up.”

“I don't care,” said Mosey. “I've not set foot in the barn for 10 years.”

“Yes, but if they tidy up, you'll have a place to store paper towels. Salvage Annie's is having a liquidation, there's a coupon in today's paper..”

“I guess I can wait till lunchtime” said Mosey, settling herself back to the couch. “Those boys do tend to get distracted.”

“If you want, I'll pitch a shiney object in with them. That should get you an extra couple of hours.” Marnie said.

Mosey laughed. “You'd think with eight able-bodied children, i'd have one who could keep a job.”

It was a common lamnet from Mosey, and this version of it indicated that Marnie was currently in Mosey's good graces. Otherwise, Mosey would have dropped the 'able bodied' qualifier and put the number of children at nine. Emboldened, Marnie turned to the subject she'd been thinking about.

“Seriously, why to you put up with it? Buford has been living in your house for months now and nothing good has come of it. He's not fixed anything around here and he's not done anything with the farm. Send him back to town.

“Well, here he can work at home and be there for Wes. Lord knows that boy needs attention and I really believe Buford is doing his best to give it to him.”

“Wes needs a stable dad to model work and responsiblility,” said Marnie. “You're only making it worse on him by enabling buford's laziness.

Indeed, Mosey had been disappointed in the progress Buford had made since her moved to the farm with Wes and Molly. Until then, Mosday had lived in the main farmhouse had occupied both the main house and the guest house, alternating between one and the other as dictated by the state of disrepair.

When the refrigerator went out in the main house, Mosey refused to call a repaiman, insisting that with six able-bodied and unemployed sons, she didn't have to. This, despite protests from each of the six that they didn't know how to repair a refrigerator and, indeed, they themselves would have no choise but to call a repairmen if their own refrrigerator stopped working.

But Mosey was resolute. She carried the contents of the refrigerator down to the Apple Cottage, which did have a working refrigerator, but a barely functioning kitchen otherwise, the gas range being configured for natural gas, while her home was serviced by propane.

Still, she got along well enoug, so long as she continued showering in the farmhouse, until the havac in the Praline Cottage went on the fritz. Mosey's six able-bodied sons came together and recommended a heating and air man.

“Highway robbery,” she retortorted. She packed a cooler with items from her refrigerator and, refusing the offfers of assistance from her six able-bodied sons, carried it to the farm house. She set it down by the couch and began wathcing reality courtroom dramas on tv.

She got along well enough with daily trips to and from the Paraline Cottage with her cooler and chldren bringing her ice every day, content in the knowldege that she was modeling frugality for her children, and so things went until the roof began to leak in the Praline Cottage and here she had an inssue that she could not be ignored without substation financiald consequences. She drove three of the four able-bodied sons up a ladder burdoned with shingles and tar. An afternoon's effort prduced a concussion and a fractured vertebre but made no difference in the leak in the roof.

“You've got to call a roofer,” Buford insisted over he writhing form of Tennyson Jack.

“But they'll come back and rob me!” Mosey responded, weeping.

A family meeting was convened and it was agreed that Buford and Wes should move into the farm house and Monsey would go to the praline cottage.

Buford was certain he could make a go of the farm. He had, for a number of years, supplemented his income from a family trust by truck farming – selling corn, tomatoes and melons from the bed of his pick up truck parked at a shouldter off Hwy 411. He was convinced the farm was a all set to explode itno money with a visonary like himelf at the help.

Buford remained unwavering in his certainty that the farm was waiting to explode into money with the right approach. Initially, he ahd been determined to fulfile \what he was sure was his fayther's vision by making a living off the hazelnut orchard.

Hippie farming. That was the future. Or

Ignoring their entreties, she packed a cooler with some items from the refrigerator and moved back to the farmhouse.

Mosey insisted that with 6 able-bodied sons, there should never be any need for her to call a repairman, and she was unmoved by protests from each of the six that they don't know how to repair things