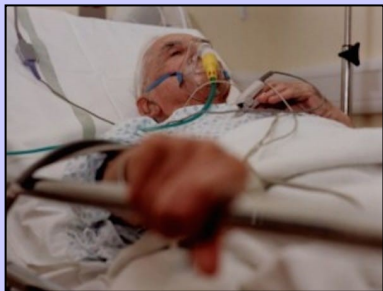


## Nuggets of Fun and Nostalgia for Treasure Valley Golden-Agers

### Night Watch

#### Introduction by Joe Bell, Esq.

As far back as 1924, President Calvin Coolidge recommended that “Father’s Day” become a national holiday. But it wasn’t until 1966 that President Lyndon B. Johnson, through an executive order, designated the third Sunday in June as the official day to celebrate fathers everywhere.



As with many of our holidays, Father’s Day has become highly commercialized with marketers pushing snappy ties, car accessories and grilling equipment. But the true spirit of Father’s Day – thankfully – is still alive and well in both American and foreign cultures.

What follows is an inspirational story about a young Marine who spends the night in a hospital comforting an elderly man who is close to death. It was originally written in 1964 by Roy Popkin and published under the title “Night Watch” in the September 1965 edition of Reader’s Digest.

Over the years, many people have modified the story to make it more topical and a bit more poignant; for example, in the version below, the Marine identifies himself as having served in Iraq, clearly not part of the 1964 story.

Many people regard this remarkable work of fiction as the embodiment of fatherhood and sacrifice.

#### “Night Watch” – by Roy Popkin

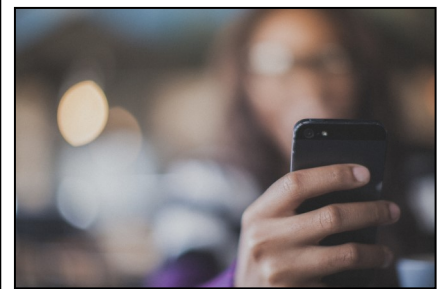
A nurse took the tired, anxious serviceman to the bedside. “Your son is here,” she said to the old man. She had to repeat the words several times before the patient’s eyes opened.

*(Continued on page 2)*

#### GOOD VIBRATIONS

by Nancy Perkins,  
St. Johns, Michigan

My dad died unexpectedly at age 78, leaving our family heartbroken.



During the funeral, my sister felt her phone vibrate in her purse. She was a little surprised that someone would be calling her, knowing she was at dad’s funeral.

Afterward, she found there was a message: “Hi, this is your dad,” said the male voice. “I wanted to let you know I made it home.”

The caller obviously had the wrong number, but the message was clear. My dad had completed his journey to heaven and wanted us to know. Thanks, Dad—until we meet again.



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ON HIS CHILDREN,  
SO THE LORD  
HAS COMPASSION  
ON THOSE WHO  
FEAR HIM.  
PSALM 103:13

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## God's Chair

A German Shepherd, a Doberman and a cat died. All three are faced with God who wants to know what they believe in.

The German shepherd says: "I believe in discipline training and loyalty to my master."

"Good," says God. "Then sit down on my right side.

Doberman, what do you believe in?"

The Doberman answers: "I believe in the love, care and protection of my master."

"Ah," said God. "You may sit to my left."



Then he looks at the cat and asks, "And what do you believe in?"

The cat answers: "I believe you're sitting in my seat."

## Night Watch *(Continued from page 1)*

Heavily sedated because of the pain of his heart attack, he dimly saw the young uniformed Marine standing outside the oxygen tent. He reached out his hand. The Marine wrapped his toughened fingers around the old man's limp ones, squeezing a message of love and encouragement.

The nurse brought a chair so that the Marine could sit beside the bed. All through the night the young Marine sat there in the poorly lighted ward, holding the old man's hand and offering him words of love and strength. Occasionally, the nurse suggested that the Marine move away and rest awhile. He refused.

Whenever the nurse came into the ward, the Marine was oblivious of her and of the night noises of the hospital – the clanking of the oxygen tank, the laughter of the night staff members exchanging greetings, the cries and moans of the other patients.


Now and then she heard him say a few gentle words. The dying man said nothing, only held tightly to his son all through the night.

Along towards dawn, the old man died. The Marine released the now lifeless hand he had been holding and went to tell the nurse. While she did what she had to do, he waited.



*(Continued on Page 3)*

*Malheur Memorial Health Clinic*



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### Night Watch *(Continued from page 2)*

Finally, she returned. She started to offer words of sympathy, but the Marine interrupted her, "Who was that man?" he asked.

The nurse was startled, "He was your father," she answered, almost incredulously.

"No, he wasn't," the Marine replied. "I never saw him before in my life."

"Then why didn't you say something when I took you to him?"

"I knew right away there had been a mistake, but I also knew he needed his son, and his son just wasn't here. When I realized that he was too sick to tell whether or not I was his son, I knew how much he needed me. I came here tonight to find a Mr. William Grey. His son was killed in Iraq today, and I was sent to inform him. What was this gentleman's name?"

The nurse with tears in her eyes answered, "Mr. William Grey ..."

The next time someone needs you ... just be there. Stay.

---

*Roy Popkin's story has brought tears to many eyes over the past 53 years. It helps us to grasp that it was our Dads who taught us to live responsibly, to face difficult situations with courage and dignity, and to make uncomfortable sacrifices if they can possibly help others.*

*On Sunday, June 16, let's honor our fathers – living and deceased – as role models, mentors, counselors, and the men who gave so much of themselves to make our own lives more fulfilled.*

### First-time Father

Out in a backwoods cabin, Billy's wife went into labor in the middle of the night. The country doctor was called out to assist in the delivery.

Since they had no electricity, the doctor handed a lantern to Billy, the first-time father-to-be and said, "Here, hold this high so I can see what I'm doing."

Soon a baby boy was brought into the world.

"Whoa, there," said the doctor. "Don't be in a rush to put the lantern down. I think there's another one in there!" cried the doctor.



Billy scratched his head in bewilderment and asked the doctor, "Do you think it's the light that's attractin' 'em?"



**Derek Jeter**

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Passing a fancy new restaurant that had just opened, his wife remarked, "Did you smell that food? It smells absolutely incredible!"



Not typically being very generous, the husband thought to himself, "Well, I guess just this once, I'll treat her."

So they walked past it again.

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Ron & Wanda Ford  
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New Plymouth

**Then followed that beautiful season...Summer...Filled was the air with a dreamy and magical light; and the landscape lay as if newly created in all the freshness of childhood.**

*- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*



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Jim Valvano