

Living in the Land of Lizards

by Donna Rhine

“Donna, we’re together now and that’s all that matters.”

I nodded, knowing my husband was right. Our plan to camp on the white beaches of Pensacola until we found a place to live sounded so romantic—until the sickness hit.

The first day of travel from Michigan had been wonderful. Unfortunately, the next two days were a nightmare. At first I thought I had the stomach flu, but it wasn’t going away. We suspected pregnancy. In truth, we really didn’t know.

We arrived in Pensacola and went straight to the college to check on available housing. The only place offered that would fit into our paltry budget was a very small trailer behind the teachers’ apartment buildings.

Stephen was acting strange as we walked down the covered sidewalk leading to our prospective new home. At first I let it slide. When he wrapped his arm around me and pulled me close, sirens went off in my head. The hair at the base of my neck stood on end. If only I had graciously accepted his protection and let it go at that. No! I just had to figure it out!

My frantic eyes scanned the area. When I saw movement on the posts—the ceiling—and the cement walk, my anxious heart raced out of control. If I could have crawled inside my husband I would have. Shinning up his back was out of the question; that would only bring me closer to the creatures over my head. I was terrified! There were lizards everywhere. Millions of them! I had no place to go!

“St-St-Stephen...li...” I gave up on coherent speech and pointed to the small four legged things with long tails. He tried not to laugh—but I could see the dickens in his eyes. That’s when he offered his feeble explanation.

“I guess I forgot to tell you about them. They won’t hurt you.”

My thoughts ran amuck. *How do you figure? My heart can only beat at this speed for so long! Forgot? This was no oversight mister. You may be five years my senior, but I’m not stupid. You were afraid I’d make you wait another six months to get married if I knew ahead of time what I’d have to face.*

I already doubted people’s sanity for choosing to live with the heat in Florida. Now I harbored no doubts, a sane individual would not choose to live in the land of ...lizards!

How we made it to the end of the walk, I did not know. Strange grass covered the distance to the old trailer and I knew those reptiles were hiding under every blade. In a moment of boldness, I latched onto Stephen’s arm, pinched my eyes closed and followed his lead. If I could just make it inside the trailer, I’d be safe—or so I thought!

After taking a quick peek inside, Stephen asked, “What do you think, Babe? Could you live here for a while?”

I convinced myself that if I could survive the great outdoors, I could survive anything. I offered a reluctant nod. "Get the frog out of the fridge and the lizard out of the bedroom. We'll make it work."

A smile lit his face as he gathered me to him and smothered me with kisses. He did have a way of making everything look brighter...still does!

~~~

For me, living in the land of lizards was not without its challenges. Those creepy crawly things that gave me the jitters had a way of appearing without warning. Sure they frightened me, but I refused to allow my fears to rob me of the joys I had yet to experience with my new husband in Florida.

**God's word is truth!  
I meditated on this verse often.**

*For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.*

II Timothy 1:7 (KJV)