

Excerpt from *Mountain Silver*

“You must be nuts,” Dr. Holly Cydney James declared. She threw her normally calm medical persona out her Gatlinburg office door. After all, her patient was Marsha Weathers, a friend she had known since the nineteen sixties.

“That’s your diagnosis?” Marsha asked wide-eyed. “Your medical opinion is that I’m certifiable?”

“No, that’s just your normal,” Cyd continued. “This is just plain crazy, not senility or dementia. You’d have to be to come in here asking me about sex when you’re almost seventy.”

“I am not! I’m barely sixty!” Marsha huffed, “and the sunny side of that, I might add.”

“Semantics, schematics. Your math is off by a decade, but that’s neither here nor there. Why risk trouble? That’s all men are.”

A bright glint shone in Marsha’s eyes. “They still come in handy. Have you seen John Weathers lately? You should try sex at seventy—uh I mean sixty—you might still like it.”

Cyd replied in a wry tone with a raised eyebrow. “A man would have to come to me—straight up to my front door and knock, and even then, I wouldn’t be interested. I’d probably be outside with my herb garden and miss the encounter altogether. Been there, done that.”

Marsha shook her head and smirked. “Now, whose age is showing? That remark alone proves you need to get laid as soon as possible.”

Cyd wasn’t shocked. “Didn’t you use protection?”

“Nope. Never have. That’s how come I have three girls ten months apart. I was a virgin before John. I didn’t use anything back at Woodstock, why would I now?” Marsha was quick to add, “and from what I remember you didn’t either.”

“Ah, the Woodstock days... Now those were the days, weren’t they?” Cyd remembered meeting Marsha in that legendary farmer’s field back in 1969. Marsha’s springy long locks were perfect for weaving wildflowers throughout. Love filled the air and music was literally everywhere.

Marsha laughed. “Free love didn’t come with condoms.”

“Thank God, pregnancy is a thing of the past for us.”

Cyd’s eyes twinkled with mirth. “Do you still go by the name, *Moonshine*?”

Marsha smirked. “It was Moonbeam. Nowadays, it’s Memaw as you well know. How come you don’t use Holly as your name anymore?”

“Too flowery for med school. I got tired of it. A woman with a stereotypical name got no respect in a male dominated medical system. I switched to Cyd because it was my middle name. It’s spelled *Sydney* after my father but I wanted to still be true to the sisterhood, so I changed the spelling by adding a *C* instead of an *S*.”

Cyd moved around the exam room and put the stethoscope up to Marsha’s heart when Marsha asked, “How are you enjoying Mr. McGregor’s Cabin at the Lodge?”

“Love it. Thanks for talking to the girls. Skye said I could do some gardening for my research. Now, hush, I’ve got work to do.”

“Cool. Skye, Storme and Sunny decided to name the cabins after children’s fairytales and nursery rhymes. Mr. McGregor comes from *Peter Rabbit*. Did you just shush me?”

Cyd laughed. "Apparently not."

"So, did John give me an STD or not?"