



PHOTO BY BILL FAVER

I Touched A Sunset

BY BILL FAVER

Most of us who observe the natural world are well aware of the seasons and cycles found there. We see the cycle of life in many ways and we know that we, too, will come to the end of our life on earth. Just like the birds, the flowers, and other mammals, we are born, we live out of lives, and we die. And yet, when it happens, we are saddened, we grieve, and we wonder why.



FAVER

A good friend of mine died recently. She was blind and her health had been bad for years. She had faced dying several times since we first met in 1964 and somehow lived on each time. Her bad heart and broken hips and many other problems were overcome by her will and determination to live.

She was an example to me and to many others of overcoming health problems and of facing life in a positive way. In spite of her health limitations and blindness, she was one of the most positive persons I have ever known. She loved people, kept up with people, and wanted the best for everyone she knew. She was one of the smartest, most cheerful, and caring persons you could ever meet.

She and her husband lived for a while at Holden Beach and left to move to Florida to be nearer her aging mother. She loved the beach and, although she could not see the beauty around her, she knew it was there. She enjoyed the birds, especially the painted buntings on her feeder and hummingbirds. She was a writer and could express her thoughts and feelings well. She wrote once of the sunsets she loved:

I touched a sunset

For most of my life, I have had a love affair with sunsets
They speak to me.
I collect sunsets.

Every day is a special day,
because we who live it are special beings.
Every day I live is a unique day,

just as each of us is unique.
Each morning we receive this gift to use,
to feel, to soak up its magic.
Then evening comes—the climax.
It brings us the final brilliant wrappings
in which to store that day away—the sunset.

Sunsets are collectibles, treasures.
I have such a collection in my head, my heart.

My sightless eyes have only to push a tiny
invisible button, and
Voila! there is my sunset.

When I could see, sunsets seemed very far away,
burning themselves out on distant horizons,
the "look but don't touch" idea
And then it happened!

As I so often do in the evening,
I said to my friend
"tell me the sunset"
He looked to the west,
then turned to me and said
"why, it's right there on your wall.
Reach out and touch it"
His hand guided mine
over this large patch of pure sunset.

All its glory was right beside me
he took my fingers
and we explored this masterpiece:
the colors, the subtle blendings,
little dancing prisms as it bends
itself to get through the windowpane
to visit me.

I lovingly and reverently felt its softness
I laughed with deep delight.

Very quickly it moved on
I did not try to stop it
or to hold it back.
I didn't need to.

I have it always on my fingertips
Because I touched a sunset.

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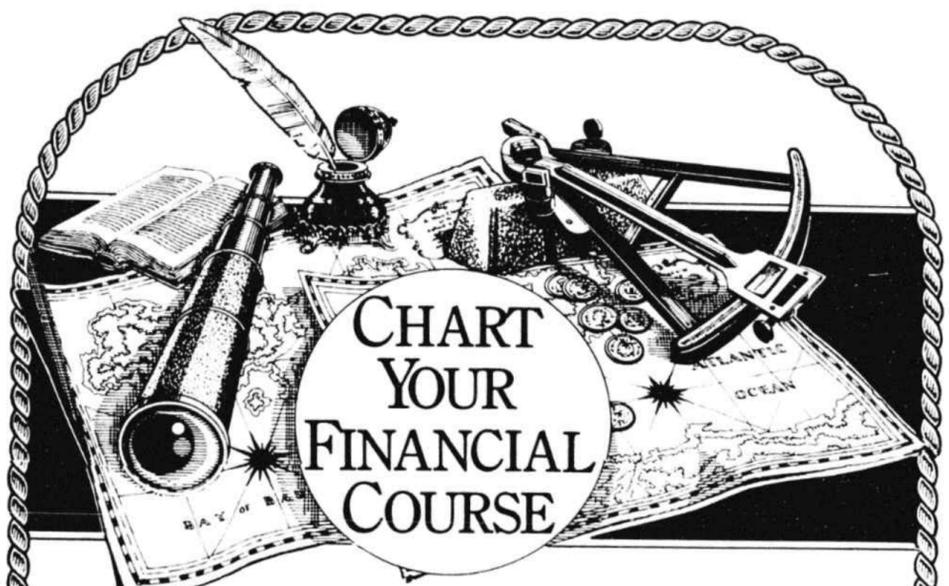
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