

# Testosterone

*by* Kitty Boots

Rhonda was walking Bear, her black German Shepherd when I passed her on the lane. I backed up, rolled the window down and said, "Hey, how ya doin'?" She looked good even though she didn't have her upper plate in and had lost some weight. I hadn't spoken to her or her husband Keith at length since Jonah had his massive heart attack and died in their living room while watching TV. Keith had tried to resuscitate him, but was gray and dead before he hit the floor. Jonah, a friend, had been living in a camper in their back yard while he searched online for a Chinese bride.

We passed small talk. "Can you believe Bear is twelve years old?" she asked. I couldn't. All I could remember was her youngest daughter running around the yard naked, except for a diaper and helping her carry the body of Max, their white German Shepherd out of the house in a blanket for burial years ago. He'd been so eaten up with mange she had been afraid to take him to the vet for fear she'd be arrested for animal abuse. I offered her the dog food and biscuits we still had after the death of our dog.

She's ready to move. The house is falling apart. It was moved to it's present location by oxcart in the 1800's. It sustained roof damage from a major hurricane. They moved the kitchen out to the back porch during repairs. Rhonda was out there cooking breakfast one morning when I came by for coffee, bundled up for the cold in boots and jacket. "This so fucking sucks," she said, but I thought it was kinda cool, in a way. She made some good ham and lima beans out there.

Keith's ankle is bothering him. He got drunk one night and crashed into a tree on Manifold Road. Years later he still feels the pain, it swells in bad weather. He refuses to see a doctor, even though they now have medical insurance.

Rhonda said, "I never thought the age difference between me and Keith (10 years) would matter, but he's turned into an old woman. She said her eldest daughter suggested hair curlers and makeup, (umm maybe not now, his ass-length black hair (thanks to his Nansemond Indian ancestry is gone...)"We've got the money and time now and I want to go places and do things, but all he wants to do is sit around and watch the Hallmark Channel...the fucking Hallmark Channel. Shit, he's producing more estrogen than me."

I suggested testosterone implants.

