

Root in a Bottle

by Jerry Schatz

...And to my grandson Quigley I leave my treasured Panangus root ...

He had expected more -- at least his grandfather's classic Packard touring car. But that had gone to his cousin Betty. Now home, he stared at the oddly-shaped root floating in a pale green liquid.

"Throw it away," his wife said. "That old fool lost his mind a long time ago."

Quigley wasn't as eager to dismiss his grandfather's bequest. "I thought he liked me. And look at it. Something like a three-humped camel with seven legs," he mused.

"Softness of the brain does run in your family, doesn't it!" She swept up the bottle, opened it, and poured the liquid into the kitchen sink, then switched on the garbage disposer and ground the root into nothingness.

Quigley rushed to the sink, but the watery mess was already deep in the pipes on its way to a sewer. "Vandal!" he shouted, knowing at that instant that their marriage was over.

Later he found an almost invisible note from his grandfather stuck to the inside bottom of the bottle. He pried it loose, barely able to read the wavy lines.

Is she gone yet, Quig? Good riddance!

