

THE COUPLES

By: Steve Burkett

They entered the park from the corner of "11"th and "I" streets, moving at a fast pace entering on the walking path crossing over to "10"th and "J" streets. It had been overcast that morning so they were both wearing their old jackets. He was wearing the old hand me down black leather jacket with all the zippers that his uncle had given him when he was still 14. She had that old Levi jacket with his name on it, that he had given her for her 17th birthday on the first night they met. She laughed at the idea that she would ever forget his name.

The young couple were holding hands, smiling, and moving at a swift pace. As they came upon the slower moving elderly couple, they slipped apart momentarily walking around the older couple on either side. The elderly couple had their arms wrapped around one another in a loving embrace, holding on for dear life as if one would be lost without the other. They were smiling knowingly into one another's eyes.. No longer in any hurry to get to wherever it is they were going.

As the young couple passed they gazed into the eyes of the elderly couple. The elderly couple didn't recognize the young couple but they remembered those jackets and the fast pace they once had. The elderly couple slowed down even more as they watched their youth fade away, down the path behind them.