

SMALL STORIES

— from the —

RIDGE

Quiet moments, gentle lessons,
and the little things that stay
with us the longest.

Notes from the Ridge

Some stories are too small to make noise. But they are the ones that root themselves deepst in the heart. ♡

PLANTS of the MOUNTAINS
FIELD NOTES
HERBAL REMEDIES
SEASONS & SIGNS

TINCT. YARROW

little things matter ♡

A COLLECTION FROM
June Carter
• THE APPALACHIAN ARCHIVES •

Small Stories from the Ridge

Silas & Lia: From *The Appalachian Archives*

Silas: The Sound Between the Trees

The first time Silas played the handpan on the ridge, the mountains seemed to listen.

It was early morning, and mist still clung to the trees. June had stepped outside quietly, expecting to gather herbs before the sun warmed the slopes.

Instead, she heard sound. Soft. Slow. Like water moving over stone.

Silas sat near the edge of the clearing, the handpan resting gently on his knees. His fingers moved lightly, never forcing the sound, only guiding it.

The notes drifted outward, through the trees, across the ridge, into the valley below.

June stood still.

After a moment, Lia appeared beside her, carrying a basket of dried herbs.

"He's playing for the mountain," she whispered.

June nodded.

"Or maybe," she said quietly, "the mountain is playing through him."

Silas didn't look up. He simply continued.

Later, he would say very little about it. Only that the air felt different that morning.

But both June and Lia noticed something. The birds returned sooner. The wind softened. Even the silence afterward felt fuller.

And from that day forward, Silas's music became part of the ridge; like wind, like rain, like breath.

Lia: The Quiet Hands

Lia worked quietly. She arrived before sunrise most mornings, lighting the small lamp near the apothecary shelves. The air still carried the coolness of night, and the herbs seemed to rest in the dim light. She moved gently. Sorting leaves. Grinding roots. Measuring tinctures. June watched her one morning from the doorway.

"You move like you've been here for years," she said.

Lia smiled softly. "My mother always said herbs respond to calm hands."

June nodded. "And do they?"

Lia reached for a jar of dried yarrow, carefully pouring it into a small cloth bag.

"I think they do," she said quietly.

Later that afternoon, a woman from the mountain came seeking help for a lingering cough. Lia listened carefully, her voice soft, her movements thoughtful.

Silas watched from the corner, leaning lightly against the wall.

After the woman left, he stepped closer. "You listen first," he said.

Lia nodded. "Plants listen too," she replied.

Silas smiled, just slightly.

From that day forward, their work began to overlap naturally. Silas with sound. Lia with herbs.

Together, they brought a quiet rhythm to the ridge.

And June often found herself standing in the doorway again, watching the two of them move through the apothecary, as though they had always belonged there.

The Lantern on the Ridge

It was one of those evenings when the fog came early.

The mountains disappeared slowly, one ridge at a time, until the world felt smaller and quieter. June stood on the porch, watching the mist roll in like a soft blanket settling over the valley.

She had lived on the ridge long enough to know that fog had a way of changing everything.

Sound softened.

Distance shortened.

And the quiet deepened.

She reached for the old lantern that sat beside her door, the same lantern she lit every evening when the fog settled in.

It wasn't a habit she had always kept. It began years ago.

One autumn evening, June had been walking back from the lower trail. The sun had dropped faster than she expected, and fog moved in thick and sudden.

The path became hard to see. The trees blurred into shadows. And for the first time, June felt unsure.

She walked slowly, carefully, listening to the sound of her own footsteps and the faint rustling of leaves beneath her boots.

Then, through the mist, she saw it. A small light. Soft and steady. She followed it.

As she moved closer, she saw an old cabin further up the ridge, and on its porch sat a single lantern glowing gently in the fog.

The light didn't guide her all the way, but it gave her enough direction to find her path again.

That night, when she finally reached her own small cabin, she set her lantern outside.

Not because she expected someone. But because she understood something new.

Sometimes people don't need a bright light. They only need enough light to know they are not alone.

Since then, June lit her lantern every foggy evening. Some nights, no one passed. Some nights, she heard footsteps on the trail. Once, a young hiker paused and waved.

Another time, an older neighbor stopped briefly, standing quietly near the light before continuing home.

Silas noticed it his first week on the ridge. He had come in late, after walking the upper trails, and saw the lantern glowing through the mist.

He paused, standing still for a moment, then nodded quietly as he passed.

Later, he told June, "In the mountains where I grew up, my grandmother used to do the same thing."

June smiled gently. "Some traditions belong to more than one place," she said.

Years later, June noticed something else. On foggy evenings, other lights began appearing along the ridge.

A lantern near the lower trail.

A porch light further down the valley.

A small window glowing in the distance.

No one had discussed it.

No one had planned it.

It simply happened.

One light became many.

That evening, standing on her porch again, June lit her lantern and watched as the glow settled into the fog. Moments later, she noticed another light flicker on down the ridge. Then another. And another.

The mountains, hidden in fog, now held small points of quiet brightness.

June wrapped her sweater a little tighter and sat in her chair, listening to the quiet. She thought about how often we believe we must do something large to make a difference.

But sometimes, all it takes is a small light. A quiet gesture. A simple act of kindness.

Because even the smallest lantern,
lit quietly in the fog,
can help someone find their way home.

June's Ridge Observation

Sometimes the most meaningful things we do are small.

But small things, done with care,
have a way of spreading quietly,
like lanterns appearing along a foggy ridge.