

*Come with me to a place of peace.*

Thurmond, WV 2007

I sit on the crumbling stone window sill of an abandoned dry goods store (built about a hundred years ago)



and look across the New River at a massive wall of stone and leafless trees. Those trees are beginning to thicken but still don't succeed in hiding the rocks around them. One sun-drenched outcrop plays sentry way at the top, just as it must have a thousand years ago, long before this building was even planned. Hawks, playing with thermals, soar above me, occasionally arguing among themselves. Don't you just know their ancestors did exactly the same thing in exactly the same spot.

Cottonball clouds leisurely drift over the tree-top lined mountain in the bluest-of-blue sky this morning. That sky is so clear; I think I could see heaven if I just looked hard enough.

From where I sit, my view of the New River is blocked but its continuous rushing symphony is hypnotic and soothing. Peace washes over me.

At my feet miniature purple flowers peek out from a carpet of wispy white almost-flowers. To my left a convention of bright yellow daffodils spring from a hillside of dried grass and leafless brush.



In my mind I can see a young bride planting those bulbs so many years ago in an effort to pretty-up an otherwise rough and tumble railroad town.

A jet's contrail slices between the poufy white clouds and I am jolted back to 2007. Our modern lifestyle is accelerated but it is so good to have a place like this in existence, if only to recharge our batteries once in a while. I am so very blessed!