



My Garden Castoffs

(OR being in the jet stream of my friends getting rid of stuff - isn't all bad)

Some gardens are full of flowers
Some gardens are full of vegetables
Some gardens are full of memories
Some gardens are full of love
Some gardens overflow with all of these
I am lucky enough to have one of those

I love that summer morning that is just mine...when I can just relax, meditate and just let my mind float to whatever it wants to. Some people say that this is a 24-7 thing that I do, but I guess this is the only time that I truly realize it...maybe because I have slowed down enough to listen to my own thoughts. I get that big cup of coffee, sit down and begin a journey that I've done a thousand times and will continue to do as long as possible. Letting my eyes just wander over the area I created with all of these memories ~ memories of such good friends. . I love perennials and love that splash of color that a flower garden provides. As I gaze out upon my yet undone masterpiece of "the yard" I understand with a deeper depth than ever that sentence I read years ago – When an old person dies it like losing an entire library – and when I go – no one will care that my precious friends provided me with such comfort and expressions of love as to hold onto my memories until I could get back home to them.

The Ornaments:

From my little neighbor, Cheyenne, the Lady Bug wind chime, to Ruthie and Jan's rain catcher frog, and don't forget Shelia's landscaping rocks for the big tree on the West side or Millie's trellises that used to belong to her Grandma Mildred.

The Flowers:

There are my 95 year old mothers Jackamini Clematis adorning the east end of the porch, the Black Lace Elderberry & the Red Hibiscus from my drinkin' and thinkin' friend Phyl - zinnias from my little friend Annie. The Coneflowers from Norma who says - "say while you're here for the flowers, you wouldn't be interested in these two chairs would ya?" (would I!!) - to Kim's hostas that sun scorched the first year, but everyone says will be ok next year to Pam's Cannas – to the 24 Clematis that I planted, using Blanche's Homemade Clematis food - to the Columbines which always make me think of Janice.

And my recycled gifts – When I left for KC I couldn't possibly store everything and so I decided to "loan" it to my friends, just in the hope that one day I would have a place for it.



The New Patio Set:

I had just purchased a new patio set and used it for one summer and decided to leave. Jody came and helped me box up and move everything out of my old building. She had admired it and after all her hard work, she deserved to have it. We loaded it up on her trailer and away she goes...and 2 years later, here she comes back with the patio set in excellent condition. "Had it on the back porch, saving it for when you got back to Pratt" She had never even used it.

The Iron Swing Set:

Setting the Scene: Pinki is a woman to be reckoned with...she babysat my grandchildren while my daughter was going to school and would not take a dime for babysitting (and I tried) - "Now that girl is trying to get ahead in life and it's just one of the things that I can do to help her - now put that darn money back in your pocket." I worship her for this act of kindness and I've tried to pay it forward.

We are at an auction and we are both eyeing two things...a roll top desk and this old iron swing set. We both knew it was just a matter of time before these two strong willed women met eye to eye over something...and the swing set was it. I wanted the roll top, but I really wanted the independent standing swing - rough wood and all.

Finally, the moment came and the auctioneer announced that it was time to sell the swing set..."How much would ya give me for it...how about \$20 - 20 - - 25 - - - 30 - and it just kept going up, until it was around \$70. Pinki and I locked eyes, and right there in front of the whole crowd I said "Pinki, I love you to pieces, but I'm going home with that swing. If you quit bidding on it, I won't bid against you on that roll top desk." That evening she had a new roll top desk and I was swinging in my swing. Of course, there was only person who might "pick up and babysit" my swing for me. She had that swing for two years and after I finally moved into my new home...she griped the whole time she was loading it up and unloading it onto my front porch, but if I ever need another swing babysitter, she'd be the first one to load it back it back upstill griping, but I know with love in her heart.

The Everything of Anything that was left:

Diana and Keith came and loaded up everything and anything that was left of my garden - that included plants, pots, trellises, chairs, - jeez they even took the tree... After I moved into my home - I look up one day and here is Miss Diana backing the pickup to unload various assortments of stuff...the flower mailbox that my sister Lee got me to the sundial that I got with my mom in Nebraska.

How do you say thanks to people who helped you save all those memories? If you're like me - I think of them every morning as I survey the golden treasures scattered among my garden...and I think of all of them with love.