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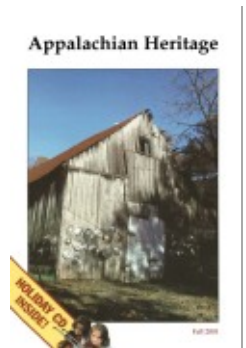
## The Old Time Words

Paula Wells

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Mama took some of her own makeup and restored a little color to Granny's cheeks. She handed the hairbrush to Caroline, and the soft bristles gently straightened the too-curly hair and brought it to a soft shine. Every action felt slow to Caroline, but as she brushed the strands of white hair, she felt the strength returning to her arms and her breathing came easier. Mama helped tuck the hair under Granny's head, so that it looked neat and smooth.

As they finished, Mrs. Pickett arrived with a macaroni casserole and a sympathy card in her hand. She put them on the kitchen table and came back to the living room. Peering into the casket, she commented to Mama, "Why, I just can't get over how natural she looks."

Caroline nodded slightly at Mama and went to put away the hair brush and cold cream.

## The Old Time Words

I wheeled the pickup down the holler,  
past the crick and past the nar'ers,  
went to Kee's to spend my dollar,  
and dickered for a new wheelbar'r.

I told the clerk, "I seed an angle spar'r  
this morning flying crost the fields."  
He said, "You saw a what?" his mouth ajar,  
and then he sold me a poke a' meal.

In the war the gov'mint sent me  
crost the waters, and I done my duty,  
shot them Japs and seed them flee,  
then rambled home and wed my Lutie.

I went to college on the G.I. Bill  
and learned English by the rules,  
but when I'm home, I sometimes will  
use the old time words and plow the mules.

—Paula Wells