



Late July and we are all in the interlocking web of life. Apples fall and rabbits come to nibble. I interrupt a daydream to find I am eye-to-eye with the future in the person of a very serious 8-year-old who asks me; *Did you ever trap a bear?*

Every other Friday afternoon, when we have a food pantry, I roll my wheelchair around our barn trying to look as if I am being helpful. What I am really doing is trying to process information about the

world in which I live. This girl, I will call her “Sofia”, I recognize as a third-grader at the local school. She is a good student from a hard working Latino family. Except that work of any kind is hard to find this summer. Sofia could have asked a much more difficult question — like why do some of her cousins go to bed hungry in this rich country. I read recently where some guy set the world record by eating 69 hot dogs and became a local hero. This afternoon we are running low on food to distribute what does that make us — losers?

Sofia did ask about the wheelchair and I said at the moment my legs were not working well. She said she had a cousin whose legs did not work but he did not have a chair with wheels. I said I was sorry. She said “That’s OK.”

There she stood, this girl who, if not prevented, will inherit the earth. She has a steady gaze and many more serious questions beginning to form behind those eyes. If we as a nation continue to be so timid in defining the human tribe, Sofia may well become a rebel helping society do what is right. As for now, she is a little girl and I am an old man. Tonight we will both have enough to eat.

Tomorrow, the apples will fall again and all the rabbits will nibble.

## ***Brother Toby***