



Acts of Kindness

Alchemy

Come October and it is Show Time in Geelong. My grown daughter happens to be home recuperating after a surgical procedure. This is her fourth week here. She remarked as we walked slowly around the big block – fast pace or lifting is still prohibited at this stage of her recovery – that she loves being in her family home at this time of the year. And since her early days, it has been synonymous in her mind with the Royal Geelong Show.

The ritual which we established with our two little girls, was that we would all stay up (8:45pm was late in those days!) for the fireworks! As the time neared this year, with the first explosion on the final night, Mum, Dad and youngest daughter rushed outside to the front fence. We happen to live close enough to the show grounds, that by standing at the end of our driveway, and looking between a convenient gap in the trees, we can see the glorious nocturnal display.

In yesteryear, Dad used to lift her onto the fence atop which she sat, with his protective arms around her. She would exclaim – as did he – as the aerial pyrotechnics started small and built to a multilayered, dazzlingly coloured crescendo. By its conclusion, the bigger, brighter spectacle was continuous, one explosion after the other. The oohs and ahs were protracted. The heavy sulphurous smell wrinkled all our nostrils.

This year she, as tall as her mother now, asked Dad to stand in front of her and Mum behind, creating a loving family sandwich! For fifteen minutes, thus we stood, adding another beautiful memory to the family folk lore.

What was the Act of Kindness? That our daughter, although grown now, wants to create this childhood memory with us? That we are still here and standing upright in our senior years and can take part? That we are playful enough and grateful enough, that we want to go along with this ritual?

In life, the small moments, of which the years are studded, are uplifting and hopeful. In a complex and often troubling world, these moments are gold, to be cherished. The alchemy – the transmutation of a base metal into gold – is available in the everyday, to all of us.