

Coalfire Story Number 12 Fear of Heights

This is a personal story, but since it happened in Coalfire it counts as a Coalfire Story. Uncle Dee had a barn up on the granddaddy Bonner's old place. I am not sure who owned the property at the time, neither here nor there, I just wanted you to know where it happened. The old barn there, two stories tall with tin roof, set on the top of the hill overlooking our place and Uncle Stillman's place and the bottom land behind our places. I wonderful view of that part of Coalfire. Well, to my story of my fear of heights. For Christmas I had recieved a bow and arrow. As I recalled it came with about six arrows. I had made it to summer with the bow in good shape but with only one remaining arrow. Cecil and I were playing on the hill near the barn. I shot my arrow toward the barn, hitting the tin roof and lodging under the first sheet of tin in the middle of the roof. It was a hot day and I was bare foot. I climbed into the hay loof and was able to make my way up on the roof from there. I went across the top of the tin and while it was hot I did not experience any fear of being up there. When I was directly above where my arrow was lodged, I started down toward the arrow. I started slipping just shortly after leaving the top of the barn. I was clawing with my fingers and trying to dig in my feet. Sweat on my hands and feet did not help at all. It was a very slow slip but there was nothing I could do to stop my downward decline. Fear overcame me about the time I approached my arrow and I was thinking a lot more about falling than I was arrow recovery at that time. When I was exactly even with my arrow, my big toe on my right foot caught one of the leaded headed nails they use to nail the tin to the barn. It was enough to stop me. I grabbed my arrow and threw it to the ground and used the nails to climb back up to the top. To this very day, heights scare me. I can't even watch people on TV that are in high places. My hands and feet will go to sweating and I change channels or close my eyes. Crazy huh, a 78 year old man still remembers so vividly how my fingers scratched that tin roof trying to stop from falling. I took my granddaughter to the Vulcan statue in Birmingham a few years ago. She too, was afraid of heights. I had not told her my story then, and she was having problems walking from the elevator over to the statue. I preached to her about not looking down all the while trying to appear strong. I walked over there finally, but it was heart wrenching. When we got down I told her my story....Well, maybe I will get my wings some day and will not have to worry about heights anymore...You reckon?