

Revenge

by Phillip W. Weiss

Carl was an old man now. He had lived a full life, married, had children, accomplished all he had set out to accomplish, was honored and loved by one and all. Yet, through the years Carl never forgot that older boy, Frank, who bullied him when they were kids growing up in the neighborhood. Frank was six years older than Carl. Frank used to make fun of Carl, calling Carl a geek and a clod. Not old enough to defend himself nor big and strong enough to confront Frank, Carl could only tolerate the abuse which went on for about two years. Then one day, the abuse stopped. Frank had disappeared. He never heard from or saw Frank again. Yet the memories remained, stored in the part of the brain that regulated the emotion known as resentment. One day, many decades later, Carl decided It was time to settle accounts with Frank. He went on line and entered Frank's name and to his amazement located Frank. Frank was living in another state. Carl was very excited. Now he had a chance to confront his tormentor. Better late than never, Carl thought, now driven by a feeling of self-righteous anger. Carl booked a flight to the city where Frank lived. Carl told his daughter that he would be leaving town for a few days, that he had something important to accomplish. His daughter was baffled but knew never to confront her father when he was set to do something. That was how Carl always lived and the chief reason

why he became a success. Carl went to the airport, flew to the city where Frank lived, rented a car and drove to the address obtained from his search. When Carl arrived, he discovered that the building was an adult home for frail senior citizens who were on welfare. Frank was one of the residents. Carl asked to speak with Frank. Carl told the staff that he was a friend of Frank's. Inside of Carl excitement was building. This moment was a long time coming. It would be time to settle accounts, to make things right, to put Frank in his place. Frank was still six years older than Carl but that age difference no longer mattered. Being younger, Now Carl had the advantage and he was going to use it to the fullest extent. Carl stood in the lobby, fists clenched, waiting for his nemesis to appear. The elevator door opened and from elevator emerged a feeble man who could barely walk. It was Frank. He was accompanied by an attendant upon whom Frank leaned for support. Frank approached Carl. When he reached Carl. Frank smiled, extended his arm to shake Carl's hand, and said, "Hey, you're the kid I used to make fun of! You're as goofy looking as ever but it's great seeing you again. You're the first visitor I have had in years!" Frank was genuinely happy and he told the staff that Carl was the best pal he ever had. Carl's anger immediately vanished, he shook Frank's hand, and what Carl thought would be a brawl became a reunion between two old friends, even if Frank still called Carl a knucklehead.