

Turning a New Leaf by MARGO BENNER S-1

As they turned down the bend in the road, he asked, "Aren't you at all concerned?" The evidence of dismay was apparent in his question. "You seem so calm and unflustered."

"I'm not calm," she responded. "I'm downright excited."

"But moving to a new place that we've never been to before, it's scary. I thought we had set down roots and were quite happy to stay put near family and friends."

"This is an adventure," she replied with definite elation. "It provides us opportunities that we never even dreamt possible. It will open a whole new world of experience for us."

"I never really thought of moving away. The view from our home on the hill was enviable. I loved standing there on the grassy knoll in the summer breeze, the skies blue and dusted with clouds, the sounds of birds in neighboring trees. It was peaceful. The distant towns held no appeal for me. I thought we'd stay forever."

"You shouldn't see moving as a bad thing. Don't think of it as leaving. Think of it as a new beginning, a move forward. I'm sure you realize that moving in any direction for us where we were was impossible. Up, yes, but forward no."

"We won't know anyone."

"Who knows whom we'll meet, what kind of neighbors we'll have. We'll quickly get to know the new terrain. With the proper preparation, it won't take us long to put down new roots. We'll secure ourselves firmly in our new environment and thrive. You're such a worrier."

"I just felt quite happy and grounded where we were."

"Remember watching the fireworks? I want to see them closer. Remember the children coming for a visit? This might be an opportunity to have children where we are going. What a joy it will be to watch them grow, to give them shelter, and hopefully provide them with inspiration."

"What you describe as our new environment, our new home, might just turn out to be hostile. Why leave a place where we know we were secure? We were uprooted from our home without any warning. Hardly given a chance to say our goodbyes. It all seemed so rushed."

"Don't you remember when we were younger, we would contemplate how life would be in other places, in the towns that we saw from the hill? This will give us a new lease on life, a chance to turn over a new leaf," she chuckled, "no pun intended."

"Maybe it was fun to contemplate and consider other circumstances, but I never thought we would really leave."

"You're barking up the wrong tree. If we are to move on, it must be now. Before long we'll be too old, too set in our ways. If we are ever to leave, now is the time. Afterall, the choice was not

ours. The decision was made for us. Don't worry, we'll adapt. We'll thrive. We will stand tall in the name of posterity. When roots are deep, there's no need to fear the wind."

Lying in the back of the truck, their floppy green heads bobbing lightly in the breeze, Birch and Aspen pondered about this new branch of life that they were embarking upon.