



Text Version of Audio Story: Napa

It's one of those little places with great possibilities. It's quaint, rustic and charming. And, for heaven's sakes, it's in the Napa Valley, of course, it has possibilities: a grouping of tourist cottages; a place to stay the night. The lady who owns the property lives on the premises. Her daughter left a few years back for bigger and better things — the bright lights of New York City. Of course, the mother remained behind to run the tourist cottage business.

The mother and daughter are a striking contrast in personalities. The mother, a little rough around the edges, not much time for people. A bit of a hard persona. The daughter, now in her 40s, pretty refined, gregarious, charming, there is a sense of finesse about her. On a trip back to the Napa Valley to see her mother, the daughter looked at her long-ago home and thought, *"Wow! Mom could do so much better, if she just had a little coaching."* The daughter thought that perhaps with some finesse and tender loving care, the tourist cottage business could increase its revenue and help the mother be more comfortable as she was entering her senior years.

The daughter set into action a plan for betterment. A little paint here and there, a general cleanup, flowers. The mother — who had been doing things the same way for so many years — thought that *"Well, if makes me more money, what the heck!"* For years and years she turned over the key and demanded forty dollars. There wasn't much in the way of a smile or a friendly customer service. The daughter decided that the real touch the place needed to make it extra special was a delightful morning basket of breakfast goodies, tastefully delivered to the door of each guest. With a light knock on the rustic wooden door and a quiet sweet cry of *"breakfast,"* the guest would know their promised basket of goodies would be waiting when they opened the door.

The daughter took such care in coaching the mother in creating the breakfast basket. Little wicker baskets with ribbons and lace, fresh muffins, butter, jam, assorted in-season berries and fruits — just delightful, delightful little baskets.

For the few weeks that the daughter was there, she and her mother would get up every morning, and together they would deliver the breakfast baskets with such grace and caring and sophistication. It was going so well that, surely, the daughter must have had second thoughts as to why she'd ever left this wonderful rural community for the big city lights. She surely must have thought about returning and living this serene calming life as an innkeeper in the Napa Valley.

But, alas, she would need to return to the life she had created for herself in New York. It was up to Mom now to carry on and make a go of it.

Of course, we know the daughter in New York, and we have met the mother. Some friends of ours were later vacationing in the Napa Valley and stayed at the little cottages. Just as promised, the breakfast basket showed up every morning. The mother would deliver one to each and every cottage bright and early.

(Background Audio – Three very hard pounds on a cottage door and a voice screaming “breakfast!”)

The mother recently sold the cottages and has decided to try her hand in another business, a little store where folks can stop by and get a cold drink, a pack of smokes, perhaps a newspaper. We hope it goes well for her.

From somewhere behind the radio with the music of Johnny X, I’m the American Storyteller.