

a big old toad that would come and bury itself in one of his flower boxes. For many years he used to feed the birds. They were not in the least afraid of him. Some would come and sit on his hand. The last time that I visited him at his house, just a few weeks before he passed away, he had made a count of the birds that came to his feeders. There were 94 of them. There were several different kinds of grosbeaks, chickadees, blue jays, moose birds and others. He knew how many of each.

It was that same day that he showed me, with great pleasure, a plain khaki coloured woollen scarf that a cousin in England had sent him, and a pair of woollen mitts that someone had knitted for him and given to him for Christmas. He liked things made of wool, just plain he told me, no fancy frills for him. It was that day too that he told me what a wonderful thing a good cup of tea was. His idea of a good cup of tea was one so strong that some people could hardly drink it. He derived such pleasure out of the little simple things of life.

I took leave of him that snowy February afternoon, and we will take our leave of him now, on his back door step, a dish of bread crumbs in his hand, his sweater pockets full of sunflower seeds, and surrounded by his birds.

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