

COMMENT

By the light of the silvery moon...

By Ted Brown
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A Ted Bit

I'm a 'veranda sitter.'

I like to pull up a chair on the veranda, and survey the world around me.

The Sidekick enjoys the veranda too, but only if the conditions are right— no bugs, not too cold, and if there's nothing on TV.

Sunday night, the 'super moon' eclipse stories were flying all over the media. We were promised a picture-perfect lunar eclipse, a rare 'Blood Moon.'

It was a prime reason for sitting outside.

Only problem— the moon was on the wrong side of the house— out of sight from the veranda.

Not to be deterred, I grabbed two lawn chairs and a patio table, along with my camera and tripod. The Sidekick fixed up a tray of goodies and refreshments, and we loaded the truck.

At 8 p.m., we parked the truck in the front field—a perfect view of the southeast sky. It was nearly dark and the moon stood out in the sky like a huge dime.

The soybean crop had been recently harvested, so by the light of the moon the field stretched out before us like a manicured golf course.

The moon was just over the treetops, and I set the camera and tripod in place, hoping to capture a sequence of the eclipse.

Even after darkness fully enveloped us, we could still see a good ways across the 12-acre field by the light of the moon.

We snacked on the goodies, chatting about this and that, as the moon took on a mysterious look, little wisps of cloud blowing across it.

Kicking back, in the back of the truck, I was reminded of decades ago when my friends and I would go to the Mustang Drive-in outside Guelph, arriving in a red International pickup truck. We'd drive into the parking spot in the back row (as opposed to backing into the spot.)

We'd set up some lawn chairs in the back of the truck, and made a party out of the trip to the drive-in.

Sunday night was a bit different. There were

no other vehicles with couples necking in the back seat parked beside us— just me and The Sidekick.

From time to time, a pack of coyotes shattered the silence, yipping and howling, as they chased some perspective dinner. Had they wandered our way, we probably could have seen them across the field, by the light of the moon.

Looking up, we watched far-off aircraft dart across the sky, imagining where they might be headed.

We enjoyed great conversation. I told my Drive-In truck story, or how my parents sometimes went for a walk out the lane, or the back fields, by the light of a full moon— sometimes on a crisp winter night.

From time to time, I took another shot of the moon, but as the shadow of the Earth started to advance across the face of the moon, the clouds began to drift in.

"Oh they'll pass," said The Sidekick (always the most annoying optimist.)

"Nope, I think it might be a bust," I said.

The Sidekick convinced me to stay longer— by then, the only evidence there was a moon up there was a light spot in the cloud cover. But she was determined we should stay 'a bit longer in case the clouds lift.'

I agreed, in spite of the fact I couldn't see any clear sky above me, behind, in front— no where in sight.

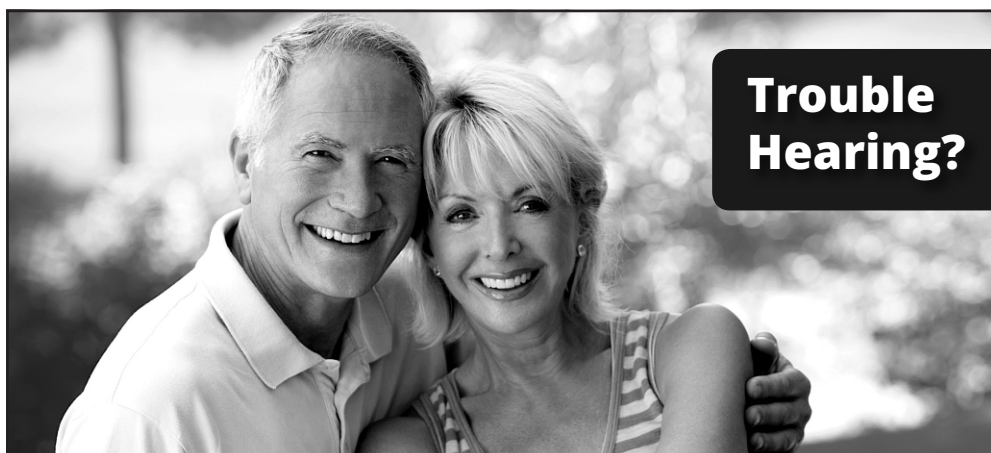
But we waited. We talked. We waited.

We talked about the future, the past, today, tomorrow...

At 10:30 p.m., the time the eclipse was supposed to be at its maximum— we gave up, returned to the house, unloaded the truck, and headed inside.

As we crawled into bed, we both agreed about one thing.

That was, by far, the best lunar eclipse we ever experienced.



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