

## Walking Along Tuscaloosa Road

I remember, when I was young, walking along an old, unpaved country road.  
Folks here were mostly farmers; some raised cattle, and others grew row crops.  
They tilled the fields, had orchards and planted large gardens that we all hoed.  
I'm much older now, perhaps a bit wiser, but I remember the falling raindrops  
On the dry, powdery dust on that old road, that we called the Tuscaloosa Road.

It wasn't much of a road then- unpaved, tree-shaded, packed hard with chert  
Taken from the tailings of an old coal mine, over the river, and down the road.  
It really doesn't matter whether the road was chert or ordinary old red dirt;  
It held all our lives together, and those times are all blurred and jumbled  
As I recall those times when we all walked along the old Tuscaloosa Road.

I remember the mud squishing between my toes, when rain fell on the road;  
Being passed by wagons filled with goods, ears of corn, cotton, and bales of hay,  
Going to or returning from a nearby town where the loads were bought and sold.  
Wondering where they went, and if I could go there some day, wherever that lay.  
Such was the times we shared as we took a walk along the old Tuscaloosa Road.

Those times are gone, as are the people who lived along that wandering trail.  
Those were the times when children listened and elders spoke of folks long gone.  
What happened to all the children who played on the road? Where did they go?  
What did they do, did they do well? Who did they marry, or are they all alone?  
And do they still remember when we all walked along the old Tuscaloosa Road?

It's only normal I suppose, but as I grow older I realize with a sense of wonder  
And of regret, that I did not take the time to stay in touch those friends and kin,  
To take time to ask of my elders questions whose answers I now can only ponder.  
Of the choices I made, opportunities taken - and lost - where I failed. Once again,  
I miss my childhood days, when we all walked so carefree on the Tuscaloosa Road.

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