

IN THIS HOUSE OF HOPE

By Peter Anthony

Peter Anthony is a local writer who's first book will be released nationally in 2008. In the following creative reflection, Anthony describes how he transformed his house into a beloved home, and how it, in turn, transformed him.

Windshield wipers battle the rain. Glaring car lights beam across the other side of the road causing me nervous tension as I blindly turn down an unfamiliar street in Wynnewood. Am I crazy for waking from a deep sleep, disturbing my newly rescued Lab who for the first time feels secure with his new surroundings? "Go down this street and turn left." The voice encourages me. "Now turn left and pass the curve." The voice echoes loudly in my ear. Pounding rain and a show of lightning showcase a greenbelt giving way to a deserted home that sits on a small hill. Roman brick stands firm unveiling a mid-century California Ranch. "Pull into the drive and. . ." The voice diminishes with the sudden halt of heavy rain. My wipers dance across my view allowing a feeling of awe as derelict windows and empty rooms call my name. "Come on Kody! Let's go take a look."

We jolt from the car and walk gently in the midnight air, staring at a rotted front porch and an un-attended front yard. Holly bushes overtake the 50-year-old windows and sludge slides down the bare yard meeting the raging waterway curb. Thunder warns of storms that lurk in





Photo by Lori Barwell

the distance but I continue my discovery. A chain-link fence once happy with small children playing games from years

gone by demands my entrance. Autumn leaves and mud sweep around Kody's paws as he circles the barren back yard. "What

are you doing?" I hear my own voice. "This house needs a lot of work. Go home!" A round of silent lightning illuminates my revelation as I note a loft-like formal dining room conjoined with a spacious living room. Flanked by windows and tattered double French doors, I feel the rain pouring. "Come on Kody." We drive away wondering. "Could this be our new haven?"

"Peter. I have found a great California Ranch home for you. It needs a

lot of work, but knowing you, I suspect you're up for the challenge. Have you heard of Wynnewood?" Debbie Sutton from David Griffin Realtors asks. "It is nestled on a green parkway. The living and dining formal area are amazing and the double French doors showcase a spacious back yard. This home would be a great place to write your book."

"Debbie, I know the home."

** Three years later **

My own inner wonder catches my attention. Neighbors and friends gather their belongings making their way to the front door. Exotic sounds reverberate off the creek across the green parkway



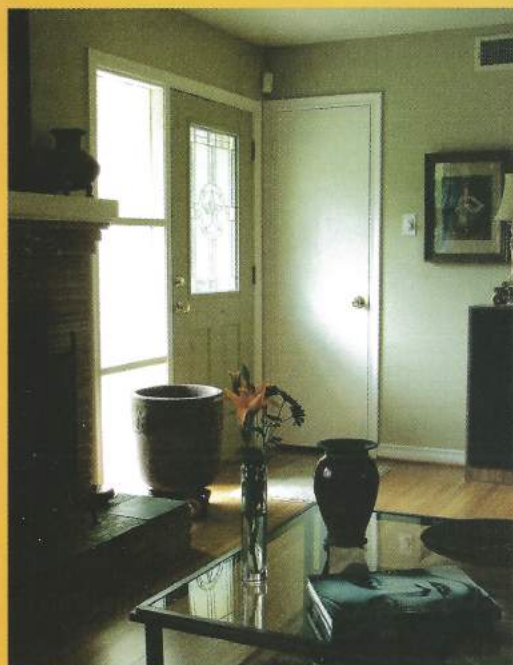
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reminding me that the clock chimes shortly past 11:00 p.m. this Saturday night. The Dallas Zoo's wild animals echo their praise as though to bid farewell to my dinner guests.

"Oh, my God. What are those sounds? It is eerie," one guest exclaims.

"Is it coming from across the creek?" Another friend stares at the wooded parkway with apprehension, securing his keys as though this object will ward off the nightly predators.

My loud chuckle eases their tension. "It's the elephants and monkeys from the zoo. Their cries serenade me on these humid summer nights. Apparently, I have become accustomed to their seasonal



chants. I find it wonderful. Don't you?"

"Has your home always looked so magnificent?" His gaze extends past the formal dining room, through the French doors and into a backyard rich with greenery. Zen chimes move majestically to the rhythm of the wind, adding flavor to an evening that has concluded.

Laughing with mysterious eyes, I unfold proudly a brief synopsis of this place I call spiritual heaven. "The room where we have dined was

at one occasion the third bedroom. The pickled crème wooden walls you admired earlier this evening were worn down brown paneling from the 1950s. The newly polished pencil wooden floors were covered with orange shag carpet and the remodeled designer bathrooms once screamed noisily with pink and purple ceramic floors. Doors, kitchen cabinets and granite countertops are seconds and surplus that my female contractors salvaged. However, my favorite excavation of this place I call home is my backyard. Every

hedge, flower or small tree is a rescue plant from friends or local Home and Garden retailers that were tossed out."

My guest's eyes lock with disbelief and mouths gape open, witnessing Kody sleeping with his squeaky toy under my bronze coffee table. "And, yes my dog is a rescue animal," I boldly state. "Like many things that are placed aside or forgotten, one must remember that love and kindness can restore anything to its former beauty. In this house of hope, I believe anything is possible. Would you like a copy of my first published book, 'Key Master'?" ☺

Peter Anthony, a native CliffDweller, has a varied background in the entertainment industry, from serving as an Image Consultant for CBS to conducting motivational workshops. He recently published his first book, "Key Master," available on Amazon.com. Anthony currently resides in California to conduct book tours and oversee a screenplay adaptation of his book.



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