

NORMA. When you reach 65, I've always heard you're supposed to live out the rest of your life in what's called "The Golden Years". I wonder who it was that thought that term up. Probably some young person who didn't want to be bothered by the numerous inconveniences that old age can deal out. Golden. Sounds like something a salesman would say. I often try to equate my life to the color of gold. . .but it just doesn't seem to fit. If these years are supposed to be the ones where you sit back and place a value on what you've learned and what you've experienced in a lifetime, does one color really do them justice? I mean, you only have to look at the sky to see the master plan for God's colors in action. Take for example a day. The Golden time of the day is certainly not at night. If that was the case, we'd all wake up blind in the morning. No, it's in the middle of the day when the sun is high and dreams can be seen just an arm's reach away. I suspect that most people's lives are like that. *(Pause)* Once the kids moved out and our career years were over, Erwin and I couldn't figure out how to spend an hour together, let alone the rest of our lives. The weeks stretched into months and then into years. I no longer had the companionship of the young man I'd married. My best friends became an overweight cat and a thirty year-old cuckoo clock. Every hour on the hour I couldn't tell if the cuckoo was telling me the time or telling me what I'd become for staying there. Hmm. Golden. Like the sun. I've come to the conclusion that life has a way of turning rather quickly from something sun-like to something more along the lines of a shooting star. . . a dying blast of a forgotten dream. . .a fiery end to the hopes and ambitions that brought us together in the first place. So, it begs the question...are our fading years really golden? Are they a happy time? Is it blissful when patience runs thin and first love has long departed? When life is left...tarnished? *(She pauses again, then looks the audience.)* But, then again, I suppose tarnish is just a dirtier form of gold.