

Sins of the Righteous

Stories by Gilbert Pelletier, Norman Fleury, and Joe and Norma Welsh and interview by Sherry Farrell Racette

Gilbert Pelletier (GP): Oh Yeah, well see, that was their intention to hear the stories, but apparently you didn't see them if you didn't have a nerve. They knew he was gonna kill you by looking at it by knowing what it was, it'd give you a fatal heart attack, then you would never see it. It took somebody with a braver heart to be able to, you know, to face it, to show himself; a person that has enough nerve to stand up to it.

Norman Fleury (NF): They'd say a good believer, or we used say a *boon Katalic*, a good Catholic. They would not be afraid.

GP: They would not be afraid of that.

NF: Because you're not supposed to be afraid of evil when you're well equipped.

GP: Strong Catholic shouldn't be.

NF: And that was the idea that they'd build you up so you wouldn't have fear for anything. So be cautious, this is what could happen.

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GP: They used to tell us stories about *Roogaroos* to scare us. Especially during Lent, you know. They'd want us to go to dances as teenagers. We'd go like an ordinary teenager. We like to go to a dance too. You know, we used to like going to dances. And if they didn't want us to go, well, they'd start telling us stories about the *Roogaroos*, and of course we'd get scared because we certainly didn't want to meet one.

NF: Well that could happen to you.

GP: Yeah, it could happen. The same thing could happen to us, if we went the bad way, if we didn't listen though. So we had to listen.

NF: You know it's to develop good behavioral patterns in life. Just your lifestyle and good behavior and listening and accepting...

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GP: But there was a different kind of courage as well. There was courage also from the Devil that these people weren't afraid of anything, you know. But that's a different kind of courage.

Sherry Farrell Racette (SFR): So there's good courage and bad courage?

GP: That's right.

NF: Yeah. My grandfather used to say there are only two roads. There's no such thing as a branch to a middle road, there's the good and the bad, follow the good. That's what he always said, "follow that good road..."

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GP: There were two cousins that weren't afraid of anything. That's the kind of courage I'm talking about. There are two cousins that used to gamble all the time until Lent. And they were warned never to gamble during Lent. You're not supposed to gamble during Lent. And they went out overnight. They weren't afraid of anything. They didn't believe in anything. So they weren't afraid, and they went. On the third night they were coming home, and they heard a horse coming behind 'em. The

horse stopped, you know. Being stupid and brave they just jumped on the horse, and the horse took them home. Two nights that happened, the horse took 'em home. And the second night they told their Grandpa that they weren't walking home. They got a ride home, and a horse was bringing them home. So the Grandpa told them that on the third night that "the horse is gonna take you all the way. He's not gonna drop you off anywhere, he's gonna take you all the way home. See that's the Devil. That's not a horse you guys were riding." That's what stopped them from going to gamble 'cause they knew what it was.

SFR: I think it was from Cross Lake...When someone slept with their fiddle under their pillow for three nights then the Devil would come, and then make you a good fiddle player. Did you hear any stories like that?

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NF: I know my Mom's cousin, he was a good fiddler. He could play the fiddle... Anyways, he told us the story about this guy that got caught for doing something wrong so he was judged, and he was sentenced to death. They came to him and they gave him a fiddle. They knew he was a good, you know. Well actually, this uncle of mine was saying that this guy didn't know how to play the fiddle. They challenged him and said, "if you could play us a tune, you're not gonna be hung. We won't kill you." So apparently he thought, "well what am I gonna do?" So he took this fiddle, and he played a real good tune, and I think that's what they call the "Devil's Reel," and that's where the tune comes up, "Devil's Dream," "Devil's Reel." And this person, that's the legend of this tune, was sentenced to death. He never could play anything. They gave him this fiddle and he played a tune. But you see again, he worked for the Devil. The Devil was involved you see, he had given his soul to the Devil.

GP: That's why he was able to play so well...Without any practice or not even learning how to play.

