

## **"HOUSE OF BROKEN DREAM'S"**

**By: Roland Janes  
Christmas 2011**

**In my younger day's I fancied myself to be a fine guitar player and singer. In fact I finally caught hold of the brass ring and had a pretty good career as an all around musician, singer, and songwriter. Although I never made it to the top, I enjoyed limited fame and fortune. I rubbed shoulders, and performed on the same stage with some of the greatest.**

**Of all the great memories of back in the day, my most treasured is the memory of my very first professional experiences. Along with another aspiring talented young steel guitar player, we rented a sleeping room upstairs over a pawnshop called "THE HOUSE OF BROKEN DREAM'S". The pawnshop owner was a kindly old gentleman named Mr. Oscar. Mr. Oscar catered to people of all descriptions, who were down on their luck. Some were self medicating drug addicts, some were musician's while others were simply having a run of bad luck due to various reasons, such as unemployment, under employment, broken relationships etc. My friend and I were barely surviving by performing in a run down bar for five dollars a night, plus tips and as an extra bonus, four drinks free.**

**Fortunately neither of us took advantage of the free drinks so we were able to garner a fairly good amount of tips. The real story and what created such a vivid and long lasting memory for me was the sadness I felt for the folk's who were forced to swallow their pride and come to "THE HOUSE OF BROKEN DREAMS" for some much needed relief.**

**I was amazed to learn from Mr. Oscar the number and description of the enormous quantity of valuable items he had in stock. A great many were musical instruments, plus televisions, typewriters, tools, jewelry including wedding rings, engagement rings and class rings. One unfortunate soul had even pawned his family bible which had been passed down from generation to generation and included his family history from many years back.**

**Being the wonderful man he was, Mr. Oscar held each pawned item well beyond the expiration date allowing each person every opportunity to reclaim their prized possession. Some did, while many did not. As time passed my friend and I moved on in separate directions while Mr. Oscar and his thousands of pawned items remained. As you might imagine, kindly old Mr. Oscar was well known and respected in the music community and had at one time or another been benefactor to many who had later attained stardom. His name came up quite often during conversation among his many music friends. It seemed that Mr. Oscar had no living relatives as most of his family had been victims of the holocaust of the 1930's and beyond. The many customers who patronized his "HOUSE OF BROKEN DREAM'S" were his adopted family. Therefore when he passed from this life on a**

snowy Christmas Eve, it came as no surprise to anyone when it was discovered that on each pawn ticket he had handwritten these words, paid in full, to be returned to their rightful owner's.

To no ones surprise the funeral procession stretched for miles as friends came from far and wide to pay their final respects to this gentle man.

On his tombstone were written these words; "DEAR MR. OSCAR HAS VACATED HIS " HOUSE OF BROKEN DREAM'S" FOR HIS BEAUTIFUL MANSION IN THE SKY.

What a wonderful gesture from this kindly old gentleman. Wouldn't it be nice if each of us could follow his lead and grant a kind deed, or forgive and forget a past wrong done to us, or ask for forgiveness for something we said or did to someone? I know that I'm going to do this, so won't you join me and from this day forward let's all do our best to follow this great mans lead and practice the teachings of the good book by doing unto others as we would have them do unto us.

In closing, let me wish a Merry Christmas to one and all and to all, A GREAT LIFE.

With much love and respect;

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Roland and Betty Janes". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Roland and Betty Janes