

COMING OUT!

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[Don Greywolf Ford](#)

**Publisher, Writer, Editor, Storyteller at Where Eagles Fly
(GREYWOLF)**

Today, if it feels good people Do IT! It's the personal climate change of our world that's pressing in on us. Folks will do whatever feels right in their own sight, and to heck what others think or do. The motto is 'everything goes'. LOL

Check out my turtle story here "Coming Out". [STORY OF THE MONTH - MAY 2012](#) A Chapter tale from Floyd The Dog Story Book Commemorative by Don Greywolf Ford



COMING OUT

“Today will be the day. I have hidden myself away from the world much too long. Others have come out of their shells. I will too. Maybe then I can find a friend just like myself. Everybody needs a companion. I want to be open and free. It’s important to me that I should be able to express fully who I am. There is a real me hidden inside. I have decided to be who I really am instead of hiding behind closed doors. All of my life has finally led me to this. Many will not like what they see. It’s not about them any more; it’s time that I pleased myself. I have to stop living for everyone else. I used to be too worried what others would say and think if I did come out.

"I never tell others how to live, and I am hoping they will treat me the same way. My mind is made up. The moment of truth has arrived. I am going to do what I know and FEEL will be right for me." The turtle then went behind the bushes. He emerged without his shell, having never shed it before. Would he even like what he saw of himself? The turtle rushed over to the pond to see his reflection. "I'm okay", he said. "I'm more than okay; I'm feeling special."

A spring of PRIDE welled up inside of him. He was a bit surprised by his new out-of-the-body experience, so to speak. For one thing, the heavy burden of the old shell had been lifted. He noticed, after leaving the 'old home', that he nearly floated along now. He was also able to swim more swiftly.

As our turtle walked on, he stumbled on a rock in his path and fell over onto his back. There were no words to describe the pain.

Then, when he decided to go back into the water of the pond, he was immediately stalked by both a deadly water snake and a large bass

that was looking rather hungry. The snake was gaining on him. What had he done? How could he have been so foolish? He had thought life would get easier without his shell, but it had become more complicated. Soon the large snake had almost caught up with him.

Out of the blue a bird came soaring, diving right toward him. “I give up,” the turtle muttered to himself as the bird claimed his prize. The snake was taken up over his head high into the sky. The turtle sighed, “I was sure that bird was after me.” Looking out over the great mountains before him, our turtle saw where this eagle landed. “So, that’s where he lives. Nice to know such help is close by.

However, the bass was now waiting for his turn. It was time for our turtle to say his prayers. Just as the great fish opened his mouth wide to get his first taste of ‘turtle soup’, so to speak, our eagle returned to finish his rescue job.

The turtle decided that he had had enough water fun for that day and headed towards the shore to collect his thoughts. After barely escaping his water foes, he found that he had other difficulties to

overcome, such as the briar patches surrounding the pond. The shell he had worn all of his life was now gone. He had tossed it off without any regard for the consequences. His close friend, and earlier covering, was no longer there.

Coming finally to his senses, he headed back to the place where he had discarded it. His old life and circumstances were beginning to appeal to him once more in a new way. He had once thought of his shell as a prison, but now he was seeing it in a new light as a haven of rest from the storms and briars of life.

While living in his shell, nothing of the outside world could hurt him. He once had little to fear. Snakes and fish had never been a bother before. His former life took on a new and satisfying appeal. Now he knew he wanted to re-unite with his old friend, and return to his home by the pond. The bush was just up ahead. The turtle went in and started thrashing around, but came up empty-handed.

“Looking for this?”

“Who said that?” The voice sounded as if it was above him.

“Look up, it’s me, Oliver.” There, on a branch of a tree, was a wise old owl.

“Why did you take my shell up there, Oliver? ”

“I felt I had to rescue it from a couple of field mice who had visions of using it for their new home.”

“But why would you even care?”

“You are not the first to come here and think they could easily discard their shell, hoping to start a new life. Most do return and decide to take up residence once more as before, when the life they thought would be so grand out there somewhere, proved to be fearful, painful, and not like they had hoped.”

“So you read my mind?”

“It was more like seeing clearly the handwriting scrolled across the wall. Most really do come to their senses in the end.”

“Being out there was quite painful.”

“I knew it would be, but most have to experience it for themselves. The voice of reason is not well attended to by youth these days.”

“What do I owe you for such good advice?” The turtle stared up into the eyes of this very intelligent bird.

“Let’s just say that the satisfied look on your face is payment enough!”

The shell then hit the ground close to the turtle. The two said their goodbyes and parted company. The protection that had been his in his youth would become his covering once more and remain with him into his old age. The turtle now was no longer afraid. "I rather

like the 'old' me and the friends I did not realize I had." ---

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[About the author](#)

Don is an internationally known professional author, artist and storyteller who lives in a small town near Syracuse, New York State, U.S.A. Floyd the Dog has donated €59.02 (equivalent to £48.39 or \$78.02) On behalf of Don Ford to: The Elephant Sanctuary, Tennessee, U.S.A.



Picture taken at Syracuse Zoo

<https://www.facebook.com/ElephantSanctuaryTN> The Elephant Sanctuary in Tennessee, founded in 1995, is the nation's largest natural habitat refuge developed specifically for endangered African and Asian elephants. The Sanctuary operates on 2,700 acres in Hohenwald, Tennessee, 85 miles southwest of Nashville. We exist to provide a haven for old, sick or needy elephants in a setting of green pastures, dense forests, spring-fed ponds, and heated barns for cold winter nights, and to provide education about the crisis facing these social, sensitive, passionately intense, playful, complex, exceedingly intelligent, and endangered creatures.