

The city of San Francisco was named after St. Francis of Assisi. It has a land area of 46.7 square miles. It is famous for the Golden Gate bridge, Alcatraz prison, street cars, and sourdough bread, among other things. It is also the home of Ghirardelli chocolate.

Giving a Gift of Time and Connection

He had been an actor, and an activist, a bus driver, and an ice cream delivery man. When we knew him, he was living alone, and he was dying of cancer. His stories were always fantastic but sooner or later they checked out because it was a small neighborhood and San Francisco is really a small city and everyone know everyone or at least they know the person who knows the person who knows.



His name was Jake and when he was seventeen, he had answered an ad in the newspaper and was hired to perform with a local theatre group. He needed a place to stay and someone gave him an address and there, right off of Haight Street, he found a big old Victorian house with the then, average rent of only seventy-five dollars a month.

If you couldn't raise seventy-five a month, he said, you weren't trying.

He got a room on the top floor and his first night there he met one of his roommates who was sitting in the empty living room, listening to classical music.

They became friends, Jake and the girl and later more than friends and one day, she asked if he would mind that her kid brother came up from Los Angeles and crashed on their couch.

I didn't mind at all, he said, and that's how we met.

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Jackson was just a scrawny kid who said he wanted to be a musician, and of course, back then, there, every kid you met said the same thing. They were all going to be musicians, but in his case, he could actually sing. He stopped and put on a record - yes, a record. The needle



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hissed on the disk, and there was the old familiar popping sounds and then the song started. The high soft voice was instantly recognizable and we listened.

Pick Me Up Bouquet



Spread a little sunshine to a friend or colleague feeling under the weather with our cheerful pick-me-up bouquet. We've packed a soup bowl with an assortment of herbal teas, chicken soup, Ritz crackers a smiley sucker, and get well balloon. Contains a total of 14-16 assorted items.

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It's about me, said Jake, rather forlornly, about us, and that summer in the house just before Jackson split to go back south.

My wife and I talked about it; about how we were not sure and then how we were certain it was all true.

We checked the newspapers and sure enough, he was playing a concert near the city and we bought tickets and surprised him and he was so happy.

He packed a small bag with a photo of the three of them together and when we got to the venue, we found a security guard and he asked, politely, if the guard would please pass on the note and the photo and the guard said yes.

Mid-way through the show, the lights low and the spotlight on him, he sat down at a small electric keyboard and told a story about his old home; his brief time at a big old Victorian off of Haight that he shared with his sister and a friend. Then he sang the song - about what he called, the fountain of sorrow, the fountain of life.

Jake cried, and so did we and the audience, who were just being entertained, clapped.

He cried on and off all the way home that night and finally, at the door to his apartment, he thanked us.

Walking home, my wife was quiet and then, she said: I don't know what ripples will come from this, but you've done the right thing - giving a gift of time and connection is worth more than every penny we spent on those tickets.

I knew she was right.