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Stanley Easter/Some Things Never Change

Donald Davis
Written/Performed by Donald Davis
August House Audio (Jan 25, 1996)
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“Hit them pines wildman, hit them pines,” Davis hollers as he creates a scene from Stanley Easter. A scene that is recreated in each listener’s brain, and is as vivid and individual as the person listening cares to allow. That’s what good storytelling does and Davis is a master of the craft. Born in a small town in North Carolina, Davis came of age in the early 1960s. His life experiences, dressed in a southern accent, dance through the listener’s mind portraying the color of equality. “Stanley Easter was the first person my age I stood close enough to touch whose skin was a different color than mine.”

Stanley Easter is a tale of young folks finding common ground, the aches and pains of growing up, and lessons gleaned along the way.

It is a hilarious, rip roaring yet smoothly related jaunt from age sixteen through Davis’ freshman year of college.

In the second story, “Some Things Never Change,” Davis chooses soft colors from his palette to paint an intricate picture. His pre-school memory strolls through small-town America 1950s style. “My favorite day of the week was always Thursday because on Thursdays we went to town.”

This trip was too special to ride in a car with his father; he, his brother, and mother, walked. The listening audience walks along with Davis breathing in the smells of life and living along the gravel road to Sulfur Springs, North Carolina. “We would cross the railroad track and then we were in town. Main Street ran about two blocks with stores on either side till it just ran into the courthouse and gave up.”

The story wanders down that street, into shops, and the innocent times spent there. Finally a grown-up, Davis drives his elderly father through the same streets. “Some Things Never Change” takes a tender journey through life, leaving the listener smiling through tears of recognition.

The genius of Davis’ storytelling probably won’t be appreciated until the listener has time to ponder the tale, well after Davis’ voice is silenced. This is a tribute to the author’s ability to paint memorable scenes with words. Listening to these stories a few times rewards with a deeper appreciation of his paintbrush.
VYVYAN LYNN (September / October 2000)

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