

Ode to Joyce
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It was a hot humid August in the year '83
when I came from Chicago to attend UNC.
Fresh from the North, I was green, I was young,
Unversed in the ways of the strange Tar Heel tongue.
What did it mean, all this "Hey'n" and "Yall'n"?
With no one to help me but a woman named Allen.

I knew next to nothing, but that didn't matter.
She told me what courses to put on my platter.
After signing me up, she did me apprise
Filling me in on the how's, where's, and why's.
If rules were like water, they'd fill forty gallon.
But she knew them all, that woman named Allen.

Each step of the process, we made it through well,
Though of 268 we'd rather not tell.
Past orals and finals and master's exams
She herded, steadfast, her predoctoral lambs.
The knight has his shield, the falcon her talon,
We made it through with the help of Joyce Allen.

If not for her, I might never have married:
My then-to-be-wife didn't like how I tarried.
"If you wish to be wed, you finish your schooling."
By the flash in her eye, I knew she weren't fooling.
The prospect of leaving was really quite gallin'.
Who held the door open? You guessed it, Joyce Allen.

When the best of the best are placed on a list,
There are several items upon which I insist.
With truffles, and brandy and Cuban cigars,
With Picasso and Shakespeare and fine caviars,
With Dom Perignon and cars by Rolls-Royce,
The list is complete with the addition of "Joyce."

Thanks for all your help and support over the years, and best wishes for an interesting and productive retirement.

