

Old Library

My old door creaked open and a child slipped inside. The creaking of the door was loud against the deadly and ever-present quiet. Where my interior was once loud and boisterous with many children — even for a library — now it was musty and painfully hushed. Where my rooms were once filled with books, laughter and learning, spider webs and dead flies occupied now.

She was a tiny thing, blond curls, wispy around her face. Delicate features and fingers. Mosquito bites bumped out on her arms and legs. She scratched at them and one bled. Poor thing.

She paused on the landing, letting the door squeak shut. She visibly shivered.

I could feel her spirit, her fire; it was strong for such a little one. as she tiptoed up the steps to my top level. She peeked around the pillar, hiding behind each one, until she reached the windows. Pushing against the top shelf of my lower bookcases, she leaned and stretched to see outside. She quietly slid from window to window, like a tiny mystical nymph.

Only she was real.

I could smell her fragrance of innocence.

When satisfied, she turned to the center of the room, feet constantly moving

to an inner melody, tapping here and there. She broke into a full swirl, a spin, her arms wide, her eyes sparkling with some unspoken, but real purpose. Her yellow sundress billowed out in time.

Finally, she bowed low, her right hand almost touching my old wooden floor in a graceful sweep.

She stood, now ready to explore my inner depths, my secrets.

Stopping, she listened, more to me than to any possible outside noises. Her eyes popped wide as she heard my voice, my yearning.

Bending low, she skimmed her fingers along my smooth oak floor, almost caressing me, soothing me.

I felt it. I felt her child-like grace and peace, her precious knowing who she was at such a tender age.

“Shhh.” She pursed her lips and held her finger to her mouth. “Shhh.”

She rose and her eyes followed my paneled walls up to the ceiling. There, she gazed at my broken chandelier, glinting the quiet reflections back at her.

She heard me. She heard my cries.

She heard my heart.

She broke into a spin again, her barefoot toes pushed her as high as her petite frame could go. Her hands reached high. Her heart soared and connected with

the One.

Right here in my central lobby.

I watched with interest. She had my complete attention.

Her eyes fell on my railing. She lifted each foot high like a little filly high-stepping toward my squared wooden newel post.

The warmth of her touch encouraged me; the magic in her essence flowed to every part of my structure. It sparked like lightning to each board, trim, post, panel. I felt her electric power course through me as clearly as I had felt the buzz of the saw when I was created.

I am not forgotten.

She pressed her pert nose against my railing and sniffed. She inhaled deeply, drawn to my fragrance. Her hand slid down as she descended. Her tiny feet hugged each step, every minute muscle tenderly grabbed to my surface, for balance, but in reverence. In worship of the One Who made my trees.

Each step accompanied by a light tap, a soft thump as she took her time descending to my lower level. Not a basement, as such, but a wide room, open for exploration.

Oh, visit me, young one. Make me feel new again. Help me to breathe new life from your soul. Excuse my dustiness, my dimness. Overlook, the cobwebs

and insect bodies. Please, Little One, see my soul from yours.

My cold concrete floor startled her, but she giggled, undaunted by my dampness. She seemed to soak up the cool temperature—to rest in my quiet peace.

Little One stretched her arms wide, seeming to embrace my emptiness, which warmed me. Touched me.

“Perfect.”

I gasped, for she spoke.

“This is perfect.”

Again.

She reached into the pocket of her dress and placed a purple flower on my floor.

A gift?

She dropped another. And another, until the floor was covered in purple delight. The flowers multiplied as she scattered them, like a radiant flower girl tossing flowers onto the floral runner. She reached in for more. And there were more. The petals fluttered to my floor.

She backed away and surveyed the arrangement, arms folded across her chest. Touching certain blossoms with her toes, she filled in a missed spot, and

stepped back. She bowed low again, stretching her arms and legs like a ballerina pausing, stretching deep within.

She stood, her fingers still pinching folds of her dress in a curtsy. “For you, Grandma. Mommy said you used to be Keeper of the books here. Li-brer-ian. And you like purple.”

She blinked her brown eyes, seeing each blossom and sighed. “Even though you are old and tired now, in your wheelchair.”

I gasp, drawing the flowers into the air, swirling them in a vortex. Patterning them after my heart.

Mrs. Rainwold! My Mrs. Rainwold? Oh yes. I remember these flowers. Their fragrance each day. The songs were the same as this child’s heart.

I lean closer.

I see her.

The same smile, but. The same almost imperceptible dot of a freckle behind her ear. The same.

Oh, my wood heart sings along.

No Little One. Don’t cry. I remember.

I’m alive.

I sing.

For you haven't forgotten.

I am new again.

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