

Pity Me Not

You pity me because I am an old brass andiron lying scratched and worn in a deserted pile of trash, I notice that as you passers-by look at me, you sigh. Perhaps I remind you that someday you, too, may be cast aside when you are old and worn. Of course, I cannot help thinking, sometimes, of better days when I had youth and beauty and was not alone. But, really, I am not unhappy now. I have within me a certain peace of mind for having used my life for others, and I have a knowledge of life. What is knowledge of life? It is the quiet understanding that grows within the heart of one who views and comprehends the pains of death, the toil and the cherished contentment of everyday life, the unforgettable sweetness of young love.

Years ago Death came to my dwelling place and invited a tiny child who was budding with youth to accompany him home. I watched each parent lovingly embrace the little one in farewell, and gaze helplessly after him with tear-polished eyes. That day Life taught me gentle and deep-felt sympathy.

The months and years slipped by; and as my shining coat became scratched from constant use, my heart became furrowed by the new knowledge that passed over it. Day after day as I silently sat and watched, I saw Life. The happy children played within the room; the mother, at the close of the day, sat and sewed, or simply looked upon her little ones and smiled; the tired father sank into his favorite chair each evening, and the steady blaze I carried on my back seemed to soothe and rest him. Those were the days when I tasted of rich contentment and felt the divine love that human beings can exercise toward one another.

Family love is sweet indeed, but the sight of young love is the thing which has kept my heart from growing old. What do I know of young affection? Listen. When others departed from the parlor many years ago, I was allowed to stay. I heard the secrets and felt

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By Emma Carol Gandy

the presence of the fresh and tender love of a maiden and a lad. They sat before me—sometimes silently, sometimes gaily — and watched the flames that sprouted from the glowing logs. Each new flame seemed to warm and set off a new spark of attraction in their young hearts. They taught me courage and fearless hope as they quietly gazed into the future.

No, my friends, do not sigh and pity me. I am useless now, it is true, but I am not unhappy. I have lived willingly and happily my years of service. Is that not life's real purpose, after all?

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