

I Once Lived in a House

By Anna Von Reitz



The house was a magnificent wreck, with a stairway going down to the basement straight out of a Boris Karloff movie, dark, creaking uneven stairs, dusty, festooned with cobwebs, the dry treads trembling with age, shadows reaching out deep into the uncertain faint light of the open doorway to the first floor above.

Simply retrieving a can of tomatoes from the similarly ancient shelves in the basement was like a lifetime adventure, requiring groping, placing each foot gingerly on each step, afraid that a rusty lawn rake, shovel, or other implement would dislodge from tenuous lodgings on the shadowed wall----and land with ghastly precision on my head. Indiana Jones ain't got nothing on me. This house was like the Temple of Doom and I lived in it.

There were, however, some respites. After we managed to find a chain long enough to reach the first floor and sturdy enough to clank around the perimeter of the 7-foot chimney hole and after that exercise dislodged a family of bats, two dead squirrels, a similarly dead pigeon, and approximately ten gallons-worth of creosote and ash, it was possible to have a warm fire on a cold night.

The roof, though perilous, stubbornly continued to shed rain.

The early century appliances in the kitchen, including a circa 1935 Waring Blender and a cast-iron Sears and Roebuck Stand Mixer, complete with fabric-wrapped electrical cords, still worked. And the plumbing, God helped us with that-- the plumbing was all copper pipe of an unknown age and unpopular dimension, but it transported water grudgingly from the basement to the Third Floor where the hot water service terminated. The garret, where I lived, got cold water only.

The original inhabitants built this house just after The American Civil War and they had no concept of modern heat systems at the time, so the dragon-like furnace was added afterward and lived under the first floor stairway.

Still, on an autumn afternoon, the house was a welcoming hulk backed up against the storm clouds and swirling leaves. It seemed to say, "I've shouldered the snow and had leaves in my gutters for over a hundred years! I'll make it a few years more!"

In the spring both the yard and the house gave rise to a continuance of wonders, as I and my odd cast of roommates plus cats and dogs dug through the attic and raked the grounds, finding such oddities as a wreath made out of human hair, and a form of Belladonna growing in the garden which everyone thought was extinct.

It was, all in all, not a cozy place, but a strangely secure one, and my rooms in the garret were open and airy, nicely plastered, adorned with fine baseboards and panelled doors. Thanks to the advent of electricity, I didn't have to rely on the two ancient cast-iron coal stoves for heat, though I kept them ready to light up, just in case.

The real glory of the house, in my mind, remained the built-in bookshelves lining every space, nook, and cranny. As I learned and as our ancestors surely knew, there's more to a bookshelf than books.

Gradually, over the course of time, The House came back to life, as if it had only been slumbering for several decades. When the venerable hot water heater installed in 1951 finally died in the middle of a blizzard, executive decisions were made, and within a week, both a new water heater and an extension of the hot water system to the garret were installed.

What next, I wondered? A bathtub?

Despite all the cleaning and raking and painting and hot water in the garret, the basement remained, all but untouched and avoided, the dark and gloomy nature of the place, not to mention the spiders, proved sufficient to repel most youthful invaders.

I remained the only one to venture there, besides the landlord and the various courageous repairmen.

So one day it happened that I was preparing to go downstairs and I looked up, instead of down for reasons I don't remember --- and there, far above me, I saw a light fixture and a light bulb and then, I looked for and found a light switch.

And again, once I looked, I saw another light fixture and light bulb on the landing where the stairway turned. Last, but not least, a third fixture and light bulb were discovered at the base of the stairway.

Half an hour later with the cobwebs and dust wiped away and new light bulbs installed, I flipped the switch and all three lights blazed on.

I stood there stunned, wondering what was the matter with me, that I had never noticed those light fixtures before? Why did I never look for them? How did I miss seeing the lonely switch on the wall? I felt like an utter fool.

Here I'd been creeping up and down that wretched dark stairwell with a flashlight and stumbling around for years, when there was no need for that at all.

At some point in the past the light bulbs had winked out and there was nobody left to replace them. So the seasons ran away and the dust collected and the spiders built their houses on top of mine.

In a way, it's the same story with our American Federation and the Federal Republic. They've been here all along, dormant yet still alive, waiting for us to turn the lights on and finish the job of Reconstruction.

It's true that we've had to overcome the treachery of False Friends acting in Breach of Trust. It's true that the work is considerably more daunting than simply changing a few light bulbs, but it's still oddly the same.

We were meant to have light and ease in our house on the hill, meant to enjoy the clean and secure home we are heir to, yet we have stumbled around all these years in the dark, not noticing the truth, not knowing who we are.

So now I've been saying, "Come home!" and that's the first message, but it's not just about coming home. It's about fixing up the old place and restoring it to its former glory. It's about flipping the light switches and seeing the lights blaze on as one after another the functions of our government roar back to life.

If you feel like a fool when you finally see what's been wrong all this while, see that your Employees have been running the show and abusing your credit during your purported absence, see that you, yourself, have been the missing element in your government --- join the crowd.

Stand with us in wonder as one after another the pillars of our government are restored and our history becomes our life again.

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