

She now sits alone by the side of the road watching passing cars.

She feels abandoned. Windows are darkened, hollow. Snores and giggles silently echo off of the two living room windows where curtains collected bacon smells, cigar flavors. Morning shades no longer hide each pajama clad boy and girl within this cozy home. Hardwood floors trampled with muddied feet await toy trucks and metal windup train cars to again scratch a circle where each put in a full days' work. Floors are made for spilled gravy, for muddy dog feet, for wheel chair marks.

The welcome mat on the front door porch sits at an angle as if kicked aside to allow for a boot fitted feet passageway. A family has moved on, leaving behind ghostly shouts of "Hurry, time to leave. We'll be late. Hurry". And "Get to bed, you have school in the morning".

The Little Yellow House is empty. She is cold during this holiday season. She is no longer keeping bare feet warm, no longer keeping a light in the windows. She is vacant. Painted walls sag awaiting pictures to be hung, awaiting designer crayon artwork to be applied. (If only walls could talk). Tree branches rub up against her once newly painted siding as the winds persuade the foliage to beckon life back into her. A house is no fun without quilts on the walls, without food on the table, without holiday lights to soften a dark corner. A house is no fun without the smell of cookies baking, without the angst of backed up kitchen plumbing.

A house is no fun without life inside. The Little Yellow House struggles to get comfortable with the idea of an empty holiday month. She sighs when the wind whips through the forgotten kitchen window open for kittens to seek warmth and for rain to drop in making puddles.

The two no-training-wheel bikes are gone. The four cars in the front yard are missing. How many people created this house into a home? How many people left her comforts every morning and returned for night time stories every evening? How many people will again fill this Little Yellow House with laughter, tears, with life?

The Little Yellow House is waiting and is hoping for a Merry Christmas.

Lana Russ

