

The fabric of our lives is dwindling.

The kitchen broom hanging on the peg in aisle 4 of the grocery store was lacking substance. Like the diminished quality cotton in towels for sale in department stores the number of quality bristles in a broom would heighten the anger in any Halloween witch. Brooms need to be sturdy and full of strength to hold up a witch during trick or treat.

Perhaps it is noticeable because I have lived long enough to know the difference. The brooms that I handled to sweep away all those cobwebs in the corners of my little world were strong. I liked the sound of each brush stroke as the broom pretended to be a big time broom in huge office building. The likes of these modern brooms cannot hold a stroke. With each pass of the broom in the kitchen parsley flakes left behind dance and sway as the broom swishes here and there. This modern broom will not sweep the nation with wonder nor will they capture dust bunnies.

The modern broom sweeper does not realize the difference between a soundly made broom of yesteryear and a floor sweeper of today's quality. And the modern broom sweeper probably does not care. Vacuums are the broom of choice, even though carpet in the modern home seems to have bit the dust.

The hair dresser sweeps up the cut hair after all those split ends fall to the floor. The hair left behind could be made into a "rug". Surprisingly, one hair dresser in a modern shop swept the multicolored particles into a trough, and then pushed a button and they were slurped into the wall. The vacuum eating sound was reminiscent of the eating plant in a theater production. I never returned.

The fabric of our lives is dwindling, becoming a woman of substance means having the use of a broom of substance. Somehow I feel diminished when I look for high quality and do not find it. Perhaps, our parents and grandparents thought the same as the world changed. Nothing now is as good as it was, they thought. We surely don't clean our homes the same way as great-aunt Violet. And the bathroom is now inside the same building as the beds, the stove, the television..wait. The what? Okay so we have it better than in "them thar days."

However, I still lament the quality of absorbent cotton towels, the sparsely made brooms and then the denim blue jeans that don't fit around a waistline anymore.

Modern is probably good. Many quilters like and purchase the fabric with extreme lines, circles, some interacting with each other. (Isn't this design the look of 1970's and 1980's era?) I may even make of modern quilt, soon. I don't want to be left behind.

I do worry about the lacking in the brooms substance. It's not nice to put all those trick or treaters in danger. Brooms need to be sturdy in order to sweep all the candy treats into a pile. No candy bar should be left behind, either.

Lana Russ