

I have a great lovely entryway to my home. Now I don't say this to boast or brag, but rather because it is of rather great importance to what I am about to tell you. You see, the entryway to my home is one of my favourite places, albeit rather small. The front door opens to a shiny lacquered wood floor. You can see that once the carpet likely extended a bit farther than it does today, although I am not the one who pulled it up.

What you wouldn't know is that I rarely polish that bit of floor. It is not for lack of want or laziness, but rather the fact that on previous occurrences of polishing great upheaval has happened on that small wooden floor.

The very first time I polished it I warned people that it was slick, and that it might be best to just simply admire the shine as opposed to walking upon it. Now, lest you think I'm foolish enough to polish something and anticipate that it will stay that way, I should include that the warnings were given to those who often slip on a clean kitchen floor merely because it is clean.

So it was that those young feet that trod upon the floor did so with careful apprehension lest they should land, suddenly, upon their backside. When a friend returned a box of books, they warned him to tread carefully noting that the floor was recently shined. His confusion was immediately evident upon his face, and a small chuckle escaped his throat, "I'll be fine," he told them, and he was.

Perhaps this is where things went a little askew? Perhaps this is the moment people were emboldened? After all, if a friend could walk across the small entryway with a heavy box of books and not so much as bat an eye, then surely they could! And so it began, that they did just that.

The first child to cross the threshold survived quite well as he boldly walked out the door to garner the mail, tracking back in a bit of dry grass and commenting that Mr Spider seemed to have vacated the mailbox. Thus, when the doorbell rang next, the second child, as equally emboldened, if not more, raced to the door.

We heard a loud thump, then an oof, followed by, "I can't get to the door." Coming upon the

child we found him sprawled like a turtle on its back across the wooden flooring. I hope, Reader, you will not think less of us when you read the next sentence for it is true even if odd.

The first child came along and dragged the second child off the floor by his feet, while I simply climbed over them and opened the door to intercept the package. It must be said that our parcel delivery people have seen and heard a great many of our escapades, even once receiving the wrath of my voice when I thought the aforementioned children were still playing Ding-Dong-Ditch. So it was not a grand surprise, I suppose, to him to find a child sprawled across the floor and another simply dragging him out of view. There were no cries for help, merely a growled, "Hurry up before they see me!"

The door was sooner closed than people on both sides of it burst into hysterics drowning the noise of the others out. The moment, on our side, was relived over and over again by each of us as we attempted to relay the story, but became so overwhelmed with laughter we found ourselves incapable of getting the words out. Perhaps this is where things went wrong again?

For, in our inability to spit out the entire story, it was that the father figure of our home, clad in socked feet and flannel pants, marched to the front of the home, took a single step upon the well polished floor and — WHAM! We heard him before we had so much as realised where he was.

It is difficult, I confess, to help someone up when you are overcome with laughter. It is equally difficult to help yourself up when you are sprawled across a well polished wooden entryway with no clue as to how you landed there. Yet, this did not stop the father figure, for he sat up, and then attempted to pull himself to his feet only to find himself face first on the floor. In total surprise at a second calamity he attempted to pull himself to his knees, but alas! The softness of those flannel pants upon the slickness of the floor resulted in a further fall.

We were all quite breathless in our laughter that we'd given up attempting to explain why he couldn't get a grip upon the floor, and this time, to the children's astonishment, it was I who was pulling the father figure, by a single leg, up the entryway, and onto the carpet. I suppose

it must have been quite the sight to see their parents behaving in such a childish manner, for they were quickly overcome with laughter yet again.

The only words emitted in that moment were, "Polished it then?" by the father figure still laying upon the carpet hall attempting to catch his breath. This simple question seemed to garner more laughter from the bystanders.

In the following evenings, others entered the entryway to turn off lights so that the sock clad Father wouldn't have the same issue again, and I refrained from using any form of polishing oil or wax and set myself to just dry polishing.



There are a few things I will miss about my current home when we officially move, and that lovely entry way truly is one of them. I once mentioned to a friend how much I loved that little entry way, and each time they visit me now they come to the front door! Of course, there will be other entryways and other wooden floors to polish, and hopefully not have anyone break a leg on.

Yet, there is a part of this entryway I have not shared in my above narrative. You see, there is a small hidden feature to this little entry way, and one of the only ways to see it is to get down upon your hands and knees. There is a small piece of the base board that has, for some strange reason but cut to fit a very small length of wall. It is not properly attached and can be slipped in and out of its location.

It is not big enough to hide anything more than perhaps a marble or a few scraps of paper behind. Its purpose is not known to anyone who currently resides inside the home. Yet, it lures me to it each time I vacuum or sweep that small entryway. I often wonder and imagine...

I've always intended to write a little story about what might live back there. Nothing scary, of

course. More down the line of *The Borrowers* or *The Littles*, but not human. More dust bunny or perhaps rodent in nature. I have not entirely thought out the story, only that I can see it being the doorway to a great world behind it, a snug home, a fitting hideaway for something, or someone small.

I've commented time and again that I must take full pictures of this little area so that I don't forget it and lose the small spark of an idea for a story, but the words are lost on my children whom apparently do not remember our adventures with *The Borrowers* or *The Littles*. I'm left in shock as I recount the stories of both families, how some were more human, and others were not.

Yet, my mind wanders in the telling as I recall *The Tale Of Despereaux* and the intricate world that was created behind the walls and floorboards of the cold dark castle. I'm taken back a million years in time, to late nights cuddled up on the sofa with the same children, but I daren't ask if they remember *Despereaux* tale. Or the time we all slept in the living room together to stay up and watch the movie with the same name. Instead I tell them to never mind, and to help me remember to take photos.

And the lone reply that floats up the hall to our ears is, "Just don't polish the floor again for a while, okay?"

*The Reluctant Author.*

