

## LEFTOVERS

“Finally, nighttime. I love this part of the day,” said the letter opener. “In the dark we don’t have to be embarrassed.”

“You got that right, Opener,” said the phone hanging on the wall. “My purpose has been reduced to obnoxious people selling useless crap. The lady of the house yells into my lower end, then slams my upper end into my hanger part. If I wasn’t plastic, I’d be one big bruise.”

“You two think you’re so special.” The tangerine in the fruit bowl chimed into this pity party conversation. “The lady squeezes me in the grocery store. I pass her silly test. She brings me home and dumps me into this ceramic bowl with last week’s Honey Crisp apple and Chiquita banana. They’re so glamorous . . . I can’t possibly compete.”

“She wants to look good. Why do you think I have a pearl handle?” Letter Opener chortled at Tangerine. “This lady of the house is all about looking good. Shame on her, we’re still useful.” Opener exposed her tarnished side.

“Yeah, but you get to stay in your coffee-mug holder—and you have lots of company. Not only Wallhanger Phone right by your side, you can get friendly with all those pencils, pens and markers.” Tangerine blushed with frustration. “I have to lay around for a few days, look healthy, pretend to be seasonal . . . then she throws me in the garbage. One day I’m fine, the next I’m discarded and moldy.”

“Whine, whine and more whine. Is that all you can do?” Wallhanger Phone rang with resentment. “That self-absorbed woman flaunts her bejeweled hot pink i-phone right here in front of me. Then she paces around the kitchen and parades into the other rooms; all the time chattering silliness with her friends—probably from her yoga class. That’s supposed to be my job. Just because I’m not mobile—I’m not good enough? Really?” Phone was beside herself.

“Hey, what about me?” said Letter Opener. “Do you know how long it’s been since I’ve seen the inside of an envelope? This techno-freak pays bills on the computer, e-mails acquaintances, texts everybody she wants to say anything to and doesn’t even bother to write cordial letters or send sappy greeting cards.” Letter Opener stood still with sadness. “If she cared enough to mail cards and letters, someone might respond in kind.”

“So what are we supposed to do?” Phone questions her future.

“Do? It’s obvious we can’t do anything except stay put and collect dust.” Letter Opener sneezed from her fuzzy coating.

“Well, at least you two have time on your hands. All I do is turn rotten and get tossed. That’s no fun. My existence stands for nothing. At least you artifacts served a purpose, even if it was some time ago.” Tangerine turned fuzzy green with envy.

“Oh my, yes,” reflected Phone. “Miss Prissy Pants would chat on me all day. She would even sit at the kitchen table, drink a cup of coffee and yammer on with her friends the better part of the day. Then, when the kids came home from school they would actually fight over me. Oh boy, what a time. Imagine? People making all that fuss about me. I was so popular.”

“And remember how the little woman would go to the mail box after she finished talking to her friends. She would have a hand full of envelopes, poke me under the flap and let it rip. Oh yes, those were the days. I get tickled just sorting through the memories.” Letter Opener shivered at the thought of rubbing all those envelopes. “I especially loved the holiday greeting cards with those fancy envelopes; different colors, gold lined . . . oh my.”

“Looks to me like time has not only left you two behind; it’s not done Ms. Health-nut-wanna-be any favors either. If you’ll notice her skin is rough and shriveled, her hair is the same color as mine when I switch to my moldy phase. And it seems to me, she sits around and collects dust herself. At least

I've heard the man of the house say something about that." Tangerine felt bad for Wallhanger Phone and Letter Opener. "I guess uselessness overcomes all of us eventually. We just gotta hope it's a fun ride until we get there."