

TABLE BY E.ALEXANDER

There is a glass table by the center of my living room window, with two small chairs to seat two friends for tea. These days tea is not served to friends often. In the place of a friend I have seated no one to fill my days. I sit in one of the chairs and stare at the cup of jasmine I have served for myself. I haven't seen a friendly face in awhile and these days I sit with people who prefer their tea bitter. My sugar bowl sits far on the other end of the table, I prefer to offer before taking some myself. No one to offer too.

The table is near double doors to let the occasional seasons breeze in, inviting. I change the tea cloth every so often. More often than not, because I anxiously await the arrival of anyone to chat with.

Once, I met a man who was so very interesting that I could have tea for hours and talk nothing but nonsense, though neither of us were sure if we could do much more but jest at ridiculous notions much like friends do. So then what? He had someone else to talk to, and grew tired as I listlessly gabbed on about my interests and he did his. I don't really think I was ever listening sadly. Only hoping that conversations of birds and songs and thoughts and silly little quips would keep us occupied. After this experience, I thought of all the friends I've served tea to, they too grew tired, I'm sure.

Outside, wind chimes play songs with the birds, and now I wonder if I should put the tea set away. Occasionally, late at night I open the doors, and I pour a meager glass of merlot. I don't like to drink, but it gives me the warm feeling I think I need before bed. Sometimes though, I just stay up after a few glasses and write gibberish poetry or ramblings or dance to whatever record, or tape I can get my hands on. I have my one woman show to entertain the idea that I'm not alone.

Last night, after more than a "meager" glass of "merlot" I knocked over the table and it shattered into a million pieces.

There was a glass table by the center of my living room window, and it usually had two chairs to seat two friends for tea, but these days tea is not served often. It's not because the table is broken, and it's not that the tea is stale. It's because I am, but next week, I'll hunt for a new table, and I'll switch to honey because it's spring.