

# Beauty

*by* AJ Lowell

I remember when I worked the circulation desk at the parish library. I was welcomed by the staff, made some friends. There was one woman in particular named, Emma Lou. She worked the research desk. Like most ladies before computers and cell-phones she lead a quiet conservative life. She wore dresses, spent time with family and friends...Emma also had been stricken as a child with terrible tremors. I never asked anyone, it would be rude to do so but I imagine it was some sort of palsy.

She was incredibly intelligent. She was a grad-student working on her doctorial in education. Despite her shaking she had this sharp wit about her. Some of her anecdotes would have you crying in laughter. She was really a funny lady...

Emma Lou had this morning ritual. Every day she would come in, sit down at her desk and remove a hair brush and mirror from the top drawer. For five minutes...She would sit there brushing her hair, smiling at herself in the mirror. I don't think she ever noticed it, but whenever she did this it was the only time her spasms ever slowed or stopped.

To this very day, whenever I see the word "Beauty," that image of Emma Lou brushing her hair and smiling back at herself...

It always comes to mind...

..."Beauty."

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