

## THE TEACUP STORY

There was a couple who frequently traveled to England to shop in its beautiful stores. They both liked antiques and pottery, especially vintage and lovely teacups. One trip was taken to celebrate their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary.

On a visit to a very lovely shop they discovered an especially beautiful cup. They asked the proprietor, "May we see that? We've never seen one quite so exquisite."

As the sales lady handed the cup to them, the cup began to speak... "You don't understand," it said.

"I haven't always

been a teacup. There was a time when I was a dull clump of clay. My master took me and rolled me and patted me over and over, and I yelled out, 'Let me alone,' but he only smiled, 'Not yet.'

"Then I was placed on a spinning wheel," the cup continued, "and suddenly I was spun around and around and around. 'Stop it! I'm getting dizzy! I screamed.' But the master only nodded and said, 'Not yet.'

"Then he put me in the oven. I never felt such heat!" the teacup said. "I wondered why he wanted to burn me; I yelled and knocked on the door. I could see him through the opening, and I could read his lips as He shook his head, 'Not yet.'

"Finally, the door opened, and he put me on a shelf; I began to cool down. 'There, that's better,' I said. Then he brushed and painted me all over. The fumes were horrible. I thought I would gag.

"Stop it, stop it!" I cried. He only nodded, 'Not yet.'

"Then suddenly he put me back into the oven; it was not like the first one. It was twice as hot! I feared I would suffocate. I begged. I pleaded. I screamed. I cried. All the time I could see him through the opening, nodding his head, saying,

'Not yet.' "I felt there wasn't any hope. I would never make it. I was ready to give up.

But then the door opened, and he took me out and placed me on another shelf.

"One hour later, he held me up to a mirror and said, 'Look at yourself.' And I did. I said, 'That's not me; that couldn't be me. It's so beautiful...I'm beautiful!'"

"I want you to remember this," he said. "I know it hurts to be rolled and patted, but if I had left you alone, you would have dried up into hard clay.

"I know it made you dizzy to spin around on the wheel, but if I had stopped, you would have crumbled. I knew it hurt and was hot and disagreeable in the oven, but if I hadn't put you there, you would have cracked.

I know the fumes were bad when I brushed and painted you all over, but if I hadn't done that, you never would have hardened; you would not have had any color or beauty in your life.

"And, if I hadn't put you into the hotter second oven, you would not have survived for very long because the hardness would not have held. Now you are a finished product. You are what I had in mind when I first began with you."

~ Author Unknown

