

## SEARCHING FOR THE HIDDEN TREASURE

I belong to the local yard sale group on Facebook and I love it! There is nothing like going to a yard/garage/porch/estate sale to see if you can find a great deal on something you don't even want or need. Yard sale-ing has become a business for many, a hobby for some and necessity for others who can't always afford new. Recycling and upcycling are great as well and hopefully it keeps a lot of stuff out of the landfills and oceans for a while longer.

But I remember when we used to go curb picking or dump picking to find treasures that people put out for trash. We didn't have yard sales in our town when I was a kid. People just threw their stuff out—they never thought to "sell" it to someone else. So on garbage night, we would drive up and down the streets looking for good stuff that people threw away. Or we would go to the local dump (every village had one back then) and see what was dumped off from the week's haul. I remember my Mom had found a lovely old sewing machine in the dump. We never brought home things like clothes or shoes, but things like bookcases, stands, household items, etc. that could be washed and used again.

Today everyone wants to make a few bucks on their used stuff (me included). I've spent weeks gathering my unwanted clothes and household items together and would finally pick a date for my sale. I lug tables to the front yard and load them with my saleable items. I've advertised and then I wait for the flocks of people to arrive to comb through my stuff.

Most people are respectful and reasonable, but there is always one or two who come along and are rude expecting everything for nothing and looking at your stuff with contempt. I often wonder if these people are just miserable in general. I've met some interesting people through my own yard sales and going to others' sales.

I really enjoy estate sales because you get a glimpse into someone's life. They often have items going back many years and you can walk down nostalgia lane remembering what you had as a kid or what your grandparents had in their home. The book collections, clothes and art often reveal the interests of that person.

If you hit a really good sale, there is an air of desperation among the buyers and a stiff competition to get in there and find the best items for the best price before someone else grabs it! I love beating someone else to the punch!

But it appears that inflation has also hit yard sales. So many people looking to make big money on their stuff instead of just being grateful someone is willing to buy your used stuff and you can get rid of it. I suspect some people are selling things just to make some money to make ends meet. Times are tough for many.

I think yard sales really show the amount of excess we have in this country and the amount of "stuff" we buy just for the sake of buying. Our economy thrives on consumer spending and spending is what we all do. We are constantly buying the latest, the greatest and the newest. We can't possibly keep things until they wear out. And of course the holiday season always pushes our buying to the extreme. And then we have too much! And so we resell it.

I haven't met anyone yet who doesn't like to go to a "good" sale though, because we all know someone's trash is someone else's treasure! And what if we find that one thing that truly is a hidden treasure and we strike it rich?!!

*Ember*