

# Circle of Life

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*By AbyssalEros*

I barely remember my first birth.

Everything I remember is blurred and lies behind a murky veil.

Under the cold glow of neon tubes, accompanied by the staccato-like drone of enormous machines, I was created in a place unknown to me.

Yes, I was created.

At that time, I did not know what I was or why I was, only that I was.

However, I was not yet really alive, was merely in a faint state of pre-existence.

The passing of time was not perceived by me, and thus memories were barely imprinted.

As I said, I hardly remember my first birth and the time that lay between this and my second, my true birth.

That one, however, I remember precisely!

Before my true birth, it became dark again for a while, and the sounds of the world around me only reached me muffled, as if the blackness that surrounded me somehow diminished them.

Melodious tones, from which I later learned that it was music, woke me from my dim state before the blackness was torn by small hands so that the glow of a world filled with warm light fell on me.

Through the ripped blackness, blue eyes looked at me in wonder.

A scream of joy, my birth cry, came forth from her mouth, pointed and full of glee, and thus I heard on that day for the first time her voice.

Then she reached out her hands to me and grabbed me. In an exhilarating movement, I was released from my loneliness and was immediately pressed lovingly very close to her little body. I felt her love filling me to awaken me finally.

Only then did I notice the other figures standing around us, much taller than me, or even the girl holding me in her arms. With kindly eyes, they looked down on us, and a young woman asked the little girl: "Well, Emma, someone seems to really like her teddy bear?"

Radiant with joy, Emma danced around with me: "Yes, Mama. I love Benny! He has such a cuddly belly and such friendly eyes!"

Benny!

That's my name. The name Emma gave me. My Emma!

Over the next few years, she taught me everything I know and made me who I am. We shared happiness and sorrow. I was always there for her, and she knew that. I saw her grow up, saw her

change from a little girl to a young woman. She always kept me close to her, even though at some point, she no longer took me everywhere. Since she taught me everything, I knew that it would not be fitting for her to continue dragging me around. So day in and day out, I waited patiently for her to return when she left her room to go to school or meet her friends.

I was with her when she experienced her first great love and also when he broke her heart. I was always with her, listening to her and comforting her when she needed it.

I was and am just a teddy bear, but I was happy. And I made Emma happy.

At some point, we left her parents' house because she moved to another city to study. Even then, I was her constant companion and continued to wait patiently in her room for her return.

During the time at university, she met her true love, and shortly afterward, Emma married her Charles. Even then, she did not give up on me and kept me with her. I also witnessed her wedding night. But a gentlebear keeps quiet.

The two of them had a daughter, Emely.

Emma was so happy with Charles and Emely; it was a pleasure to see the three together. As the years passed and Emma grew old together with Charles, Emely grew up to be a young woman who eventually left her parents' house, as Emma had once done.

The years passed and Emma became an older woman whose health was gradually dwindling until she finally passed peacefully away in her bed, while I was by her side giving her comfort. Her last thoughts were for her granddaughter, whom she would have liked to see so much, but unfortunately, her strength did not last until her birth.

Emma's death broke Charles' heart. He could no longer bear to remain in their former shared bedroom, knowing that Emma was no longer there.

And so I was forgotten.

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Since the day Charles locked the bedroom behind him, I have been alone. I cannot put into words how much I miss Emma.

For years I have been sitting quietly and mourning at the place where she had passed me out of her hands the night before she died, staring desolately into the abandoned room.

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In my grief, I am dozing away, resembling the state before my true birth.

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Recently, also Charles seems to have died - of a broken heart.

I hope for him that he will see our beloved Emma again, and I am happy for a moment.

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Then I revert back to half-sleep.

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Noises at the locked door snatch me out of my dozy state. A key is turned, the door opens, and someone comes in.

It is Emely, and a small child that fearfully hides behind her legs.

Emely immediately discovers me at my spot and points her finger at me: "There he is!"

She gently pushes the little girl out behind her and in my direction.

"Your grandma would have wanted you to take care of Benny for her from now on, Emma."

My heart leaps with excitement as the blue eyes of a child look at me with pure joy - and shortly afterward, Emma holds me tightly in her arms.

"You're not alone anymore, Benny," she whispers to me. Then she spoke into the room with a firm voice: "Grandma, I will take care of Benny for you from now on!"