

## Amy, by Horea

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Our story happened in a small mountain town where Amy lived with her parents in the most beautiful house around. Amy was a pretty girl, the pride of her parents, but she was lazy. She slept a lot and every morning, when the first sun beam caressed her face, she used to ignore the light, turn around and go back to sleep.

But that day was different. That morning the first beam of light didn't annoy her. She opened her eyes. Amy was happy. She was happy that it was finally morning and that she could get up. She jumped out of bed, ran down the stairs and jumped around her mother's neck kissing her good morning.

"Oh Mom, how long before the guests arrive?" she asked. "Did you bake the cake? Are the cookies ready? Did Daddy buy the balloons? Aw, I'm finally turning 8!" she shouted happily.

"Amy, why don't you help me a little and go clean your room. What will the guests say when they see that mess?" her mother replied.

"No, Mom, I can't! There's something I must do."

Yes, she had to do something that morning. She had to destroy the anthill in their backyard. "Ants are so evil, they always pinch me," she used to say.

The door slammed shut as Amy ran out. "Come on, pinch me now! Come on evil ants," she shouted as she was jumping all over the anthill. And she jumped until it was completely destroyed.

Amy felt so proud and happy that she had finally gotten rid of those evil ants.

The party was a success. All the kids had fun, especially Amy who laughed all day long. Of course, she was wearing the pink dress, a gift from her mother.

Finally, it was time to blow the candles out and eat the cake. This was the happiest moment for Amy. She could finally make her wish! She didn't feel any happiness or joy as she looked at the pinch marks on her

feet. She felt only hate. Amy was no longer as sweet and pretty as she thought: "I wish for all the ants in the world to die! All of them, all of them, especially those in my backyard!"

The evening came and it was time for bed. Her mother took her to bed and as Amy was lying down she whispered: "I hope your wish was to be kinder and more forgiving."

The sun beam didn't caress Amy's face the next morning. "Maybe the sun didn't get up yet," she thought as she lay in bed. While she was trying to go back to sleep a strange voice scared her.

"Who are you? What are you doing in my... Hey! Where am I?" exclaimed Amy.

She looked around the room and she couldn't believe her eyes. Instead of her home she was inside a smaller room made of earth. There was a bed, a chair, a table and a small bookcase in the room. No windows. No doors. Just a small opening on the front wall.

"Where am I?" she shouted desperately. "What do you mean where are you? You're in your room, what's wrong with you? Come on, hurry up, everybody has already eaten and they have all left for work," the voice replied.

"Work? WORK? What work? I don't have to do anything. Mom and Dad do everything," Amy said.

"What's wrong with you today? Every ant must work! We won't have anything to eat if we don't."

"ANT?! But I'm a..."

Amy turned to stone. She WAS an ant.

"Come on, hurry up and stop fooling around. We have to gather enough food before the monster comes."

"Monster? What monster?"

"A little girl. I don't know why she hates us; we never did anything to her. Not even the Wise Ants can understand. Every day she comes and destroys our home. We're so scared; we won't have enough food this

winter. Every day we must rebuild the anthill. The queen is desperate; she worries that many of us won't make it through the winter."

That day Amy lived like an ant. She ate and then she joined the other ants in their efforts to gather the necessary food: seeds, corn, and pollen. She was no longer scared. She learned to love the ants and she enjoyed living with them.

As everybody was working happily the laughter soon gave way to screaming. The sky turned dark and she could hear a loud boom. She couldn't believe her eyes. Two large feet were destroying the anthill and killing the other ants. She tried to pinch the feet, to stop them, but she was so small. She couldn't stop them. In a few seconds, everything was destroyed, all the work was useless.

"Nooooooooo," she screamed, "why are you doing this?"

"Amy. Amy! Calm down darling. You were just having a bad dream, that's all. Everything is OK now." Her mother was lying in bed, next to her.

"Oh Mom, I had the worst nightmare. I'm so happy you're here. Where's Dad?"

"He's downstairs, in the kitchen."

She rushed down the stairs. "Dad, Dad, you have to help me. We have to build a fence. Please Dad. Please! Let's go! Right now! There's no time" she said as she was dragging her father outside.

A few hours later the anthill in the backyard was surrounded by a beautiful little green fence.

"What did you dream? You scared me," her Mother said as Amy was cleaning her clothes.

"Oh, Mom, the poor ants."