

Daddy to the rescue

I'll never forget the day my husband did his first toy rescue operation.

My daughter Melise had a little rattle that came to us as a hand-me-down. It was a white plastic moon with a smiling face and a set of dangling celestial shapes. Being not-too-pretty, I probably would have overlooked it amongst the other hand-me-downs except that it had a button. I pushed the button and was very sorry I did after five minutes of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" played in tiny music. It just wouldn't stop!

I buried the rattle under some coats, but the darn thing played into the evening when I had to explain it to my husband Roy. Being a handy man, he unburied the toy and tried to fix it with various slaps and shakes. Finally, he decided it was a futile attempt and allowed me to bury it again with the belief that eventually it would die.

One thing I've learned since having a child is nothing in the house will remain stationary. Little hands will find anything and reorganize it for you. Melise seems to have the qualities of an electromagnet that turns on in the vicinity of a toy and doesn't let go until she has found a new residence for it. That is how the moon rattle resurfaced.

It was a quiet afternoon when I heard that moon singing again. Melise had her finger on the button and looked so impressed at the noise coming from it. I, on the other hand, was horrified. We both stared at the little rattle until it reached the end of its song. Silence.

Well, I was relieved and Melise seemed so happy with her newfound toy. I even added to the fun by singing along with it. Melise got a big kick out of making mommy sing. Sometimes she would make me breathless by hitting the button over and over and over!

Then, one day, it suddenly stopped. Melise picked it up, aimed her little finger at the button—I took a breath to prepare for singing—and nothing happened. Melise looked indignant. She

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passed it to her other hand so she could try a different finger (what a problem-solver!). Nothing again! Melise looked at me with bewilderment. I tried pushing the button myself with no luck, so I passed it on to Roy.

Roy pushed the button and tried the slaps and shakes again. He managed to get a sorrowful “twinkle, twinkle” sound that lost its pitch before trailing off into nothing. He said the battery was dead and gave it back to Melise. When she heard the strange sound, she looked disappointed. What parents can stand that look on their child’s face?

Roy said he could try to replace the battery, but he might just brake the toy permanently. I gave him permission to proceed. With a sickening crack, he opened the moon up to find the battery was corroded. After cleaning it off, the song played perfectly! But he couldn’t put it back together again.

We brainstormed ideas of putting the music device in another toy, but didn’t get very far. Then Roy disappeared off to another room. When he returned, the moon was all one piece again, thanks to the black electric tape wrapped around it in two places! It looked as if someone had put a blindfold and a gag on the poor moon’s face. But when Melise pushed that little red button and mommy sang along to the tiny music all was well in the world again!

And Daddy was our hero!