

Another Perspective

Written by Lori Pankonin, The Imperial Republican

Helplessly locked in a little room

It was an eventful morning with the grandchildren. I had arrived the prior evening so their parents could go to a holiday event. We pretended to go camping and finally crashed for the night in our basement campsite.

Morning started right off with sparks of enthusiasm. Never a dull moment! Mom and Dad had other places to be with errands to run, etc., so I took charge of mealtime and tried to help out with some house chores. Seems I'd take two steps forward and three steps back.

Austin, Tayvin and I were going to a production that afternoon and the clock emphasized that it was high time to get ready.

Preslin finally mastered the crawling mode so you could no longer count on her being where you left her. It's amazing how long she worked at getting mobile and then it happened. She definitely has a newly acquired freedom.

I grabbed her and propped her on the bed in the bedroom where my suitcase awaited me. Her sister joined us and then here came Austin to complete our dynamic foursome.

Austin shut the bedroom door and suddenly had a look of panic. There was no doorknob and the door couldn't be opened. We were all trapped in the bedroom.

It was broad daylight and at first I wasn't too concerned. I fiddled with the door and looked around for something I could stick in the hole. I tried to force the metal piece with a pencil but the pencil broke. A crayon or a bent hanger didn't do the trick either. There didn't happen to be any tools stored in a little girl's room. Imagine that.

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My daughter should be home soon, I thought, but we were facing a time crunch. I reached in my pocket for my phone to give her a call. To no avail. It was in the other room.

It then hit me. I was SO thankful that the 1-year-old was in the room with us. What a terrible thought to have her stranded on her own in other parts of the house. Despite the cloud in our progress, that was definitely a silver lining.

My mind also shifted to the miners who were trapped below ground in Chile for 69 days. Oh my. What a fright for them. I counted my blessings that our situation was so minor.

I changed clothes and started dabbing some makeup, meanwhile having conversations with the kids and brainstorming what to do next.

We were on the first floor with a slight drop from the window. Austin, 7, has numerous super hero costumes and I told him he had a chance to be our hero. I worked to get the window open and showed him how I was going to lift him out the window so he could go get my phone.

When I picked him up, he fought me. I was surprised, as it didn't seem that much of a dare devil act. Later he told me he thought I was pushing him out the window head first. No. No. No. I then lifted him out the window feet first and held on to his arms in order to lower him down to ground level.

Aha! He was free. He ran inside and immediately went to the other side of the door. Unfortunately he had no heroic magic powers to get the door open from that side either. I was telling him where to look for my phone when his mother drove up. Imagine her confusion when she saw me stick my head out of the window to call for her.

We're always building forts and doing crazy things but it was a bit strange, I'm sure, to see me motioning from the window on a cold day. She was able to call her husband and get some tips on how to release the latch. Whew!! Freedom.

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You never know what might suddenly find you stranded. It's a helpless feeling. Winter travel tips are amongst news articles again. That stranded feeling I experienced a month ago in a small room makes me more desirous of being prepared for winter driving.

Every vehicle should have an extra blanket. You should have a coat, gloves, a hat, socks and boots available even if you have no plans to be outside. Check the list of items suggested for winter travel: a flashlight, can, candle and matches in a waterproof container, snacks and water, a shovel and the list goes on.

Don't take a chance to feel totally helpless. Be prepared.