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CD711

Humorous Story

It's just a simple toilet repair...

I do my own simple home repairs. I was a carpenter's kid, just like Jesus. My dad taught me young how to fix stuff. This must have been about 20 years ago now. One day I was finally annoyed enough with the toilet handle not working right that I decided to fix it. Warning: is anyone familiar with the storybook "If You Give a Mouse a Cookie"? Yeah, this is my plumbing version.

I had one of those "jiggly" handles. It happens, especially with lots of kids using the same toilet. I started after lunch while most of the tribe was at school or napping. It was a simple solution. Remove the plastic nuts, take off the flapper chain, remove the handle. Then reverse the process and you're done. Not today. My plastic nuts were not moving. Well, I thought, no big deal. I'll just get a kit and replace all the stuff inside. It's been a long time and that flapper isn't sealing and the inflow hose has been running a lot. So I sent my husband to Home Depot to get the needed kit. "Grab some of those new flexible hoses while you're at it, these metal pipes have kinks in them."

By the time he got back it was supper time. I think he offered to get us pizza that night. I think he saw the handwriting on the wall. "She's got that look in her eye, we're not eating tonight." I got right to work. I turned off the wall water supply and drained the tank. As I began removing nuts and bolts from the various connection points, things started to go wrong –

even in my book. Everything was stuck, those great indestructible brass nuts and bolts they like to use with toilets...corroded tight, no amount of WD-40 was getting these things loose.

No problem! Get me a hacksaw blade please. I'll just cut them free and replace them. The kit came with new ones after all. Somehow, and I'm not quite sure of the order of events, but because everything was corroded and kinked, and now quite slick with WD-40...I cracked the tank... really cracked it, like broken cracked. "Back to Home Depot, before they close please, get one of those new toilets that are pre-loaded with all the parts" I hollered out to my husband as he came through the door with pizza. I keep working on this and have the space ready before you get back.

I thought to myself, I better go turn off the water at the main downstairs in the basement, just in case...

I made my way back to the disaster zone. As I checked the wall water inlet faucet (you know the one down low in that awkward place to reach)... the handle popped off into my hand! The little screw holding it in place had disintegrated! Not a problem, I have a gadget to remove headless screws, I got this! Nope!

Now this is pre-cell phone days in my house. There is no way he is going to make another trip back to Home Depot before it closes. It was pushing 10pm now. We have lots of home repair supplies around the property, I'll just go find a replacement before he gets home and have it all solved. Success! It's screw on one...go figure, even better. So he gets back, I explain the newest situation. That's ok he says, "we'll just hacksaw off the old faucet/handle piece and put the new one on!" So he sets about hacksawing his way through the pipe. Success! "Hey, what about the thread part?" I ask. "Oh, don't worry, I've got a hammer" he says. Water off?

Check! Hammer? Check! So he proceeded to pound that faucet head onto the pipe sticking out of the wall! Success! Let's check for leaks! We were happy, it was 1am, this infernal job was almost done. I sent him downstairs to turn the water main back on and I would sit there (I'm exhausted by this point) and "check for leaks".

Ready?

Ready!

In the instant he turned on the water, that faucet came flying off, hit me square in the chest, and I was being soaked with the full force of the cold water! Soaking me from head to toe! I was trying to stick my finger in it to stop the flow! That only made it spray the whole room! Turn it off!! Turn it off! Turn it off!

I went to bed dirty, disgusted, wet, and thirsty because now we have no water in the house at all until a plumber can arrive the next day!