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Adventures of Babysitting

If you have ever seen the movie *Adventures in Babysitting* you know that the babysitter encounters some scary situations; some of which include blowing a tire on the side of the freeway, encountering some creepy men at a bar, and a close confrontation with the parents of the kids being babysat at a party. Fortunately, after all of her “adventures” she manages to get home just in time before the parents come home. My first babysitting job wasn’t as adventure-packed as the one in the movie just described, but it was a babysitting job that I certainly will never forget. It was many years ago when I was about eight years old that I experienced my first babysitting job. I was in charge of babysitting my two younger siblings, Grant age five and Janell age two, while my mom ran to pick up groceries from the neighborhood grocery store about ten minutes away. I felt so grown up. The fact that my Mom would trust me to watch my siblings all by myself was a huge deal to me, and I was determined to prove that I was responsible enough to do so. I couldn’t wait for my mom to leave on her way. After many reminders of not to answer the door, not to answer the phone unless it was her or Dad, and not to go outside, I felt like I could handle anything. Mom walked out to the garage and without any hesitation, I made sure all of the windows and doors in my house were tightly locked including the garage door.

“All clear. Everything is locked and latched,” I said aloud as I headed up the stairs to play games with my siblings in my room. About twenty minutes had passed and I realized that Grant, Janell, and I should probably go downstairs and watch a movie. We were walking down the stairs when I realized I heard a banging sound coming from the garage door.

“Thud! Thud! THUD!” The noise continued to echo against the garage door. My body immediately turned rigid as I considered what I had heard. I listened intently for a repeat of the banging sound I had just heard, but I was unsuccessful as only the pulsing of my heart rang in my ears.

“Stay up stairs you guys I am going to see what that noise is ok?”

“Ok,” my siblings solemnly replied in unison. I rushed downstairs as quietly as was humanly possible to make sure what I was hearing was real and not some figment of my imagination as a result of babysitter paranoia. I listened closely. After a few brief moments, I heard the banging at the garage door again. “Thud! Thud! THUD!” The sound grew louder with every bang. It was then that I truly panicked and the adrenaline in my body kicked in. My hairs began to stand at the back of my neck and I knew that this could only mean one thing; someone was trying to break into my house. Having watched the movie *Home Alone* multiple times I began to feel like little Kevin McAllister. I tried to think of some creative plan that would scare the burglar away or keep him from entering my home, but there wasn't enough time for that now. The burglar would break into my home any moment now. Having no other option I decided that in this time of crisis that the best thing I could do would be to gather my siblings and go hide underneath my parent's bed and pray that somehow the burglar wouldn't hear us and find us. Using extra precautions with the last couple minutes I had, I grabbed the phone, a steak knife, and a fork.

“What that’s for?” my brother asked as I rushed upstairs with the fork phone and knife in hand. For a five year old my brother sure asked a lot of questions.

“Well uh-h-h you see someone is trying to break into our house and we u-h-h need these things to protect us. We need to hurry as fast as we can and hide under Mom and Dad’s bed so the burglar won’t find us,” I tried to explain to my brother as calmly as I could when I knew at any moment I might have an emotional breakdown. Grant seemed to understand what I was saying and immediately obeyed what I asked him to do. I hurried and grabbed Janell and ran into my parent’s bedroom. Once positioned under the bed I gave Grant the fork as a form of protection, not wanting to have him cut himself with the knife. Because Grant understood what was going on he stayed perfectly quiet, but Janell, being only two at the time, refused to follow any of my instructions. She cried and tried to sneak out from under the bed in response to me constantly reminding her that we needed to be silent and stay underneath the bed or the “monsters” would get us. *Great the burglar will definitely find us with Janell crying or even worse, he might actually kill my siblings and I,* I thought to myself as panic mode really set in. I was prepared to fight I kept telling myself. I had confidence in my abilities because I was one of the best dodge ball players in my gym class. If it meant saving my family, I could fight off a burglar. With a knife in one hand I looked at the phone in the other. *Should I call 911?* That question ran through my mind over and over again. Every time I went to do it my gut feeling told me not to. Janell continued to cry and it was then that I made the decision to go check if the burglar had made it into the house. He would find us anyway with Janell crying so it was only best to find him first. I finally got up the courage to go downstairs.

“Stay here alright? I will be back really quick and I will bring you back a treat if you stay here until I come back.” At the word treat my two year old sister decided to stay put.

“Tweat?” my sister replied. She would do anything for a treat.

“Yes I will get you a treat, but you have to stay here.” That seemed to do the trick. I crept slowly down the stairs watching for any slight movement or sound. I heard the banging still coming from the door again and felt some relief that the burglar hadn’t been able to get in yet. I moved closer to the door still listening. “Deanna open the door!” is what I heard next. *Great, the burglar knows my name now*, I thought. After listening some more I realized that the voice coming through the garage door was a voice I clearly recognized. It was my mom’s voice but could she be back so soon? I inched closer to the garage door resting my ear against it. I heard my mother’s voice again and I knew that I would have to take my chances of opening the door. There were only two options; open the door and check if it was my mom or call the police and have them come check. With a steak knife in one hand the phone in the other I managed to turn both locks and open the door. Slowly the garage door creaked open and to my great surprise there my mom stood with a confused look on her face as she saw the steak knife in my hand.

“What are you doing Deanna!” my mom replied in frustration.

With tears starting to slide down my cheeks I flew to my mom’s arms and began to cry. I couldn’t stop hyperventilating. I was overcome with extreme relief and a sense of happiness. After calming down for a bit I revealed to my mom all that had happened. To lighten the mood my mom laughed at the whole situation and explained to me that she was stuck in the garage and couldn’t leave because she had forgotten her keys and the garage door was jammed shut. When I had locked the door after she walked out, she had no way of getting back inside and that is why she began calling me through the door to unlock the latch. The situation became even more comical when my mom noticed Janell and Grant at the foot of the stairs.

“Mom can we come down now?” Grant asked with the fork in hand. We all laughed. I still remember this moment and my siblings standing at the top of the stairs with the worn down fork. It is from this experience I have learned to not jump to conclusions and assume the worst, but to learn the facts before I get ahead of myself. This lesson has proved very useful in other situations I have run into, but luckily none of them left me as traumatized and scared as this experience.