

# IN THE HEAT OF THE NIGHT!! (Censored)

Autumn falls, Winter comes, Spring springs and Summer, in the Robb household at least, arrives at 3.00 a.m. on Monday morning as the temperature in the bedroom reached that “stuffy” level and it was time for the air conditioning, or the ceiling fan. It was a no-contest hands-down decision that the ceiling fan would be the winner. Trouble was that it had not been used for almost 12 months and, when I tried to subtly switch it on without waking Irene, I succeeded in bathing the room in 300 watts of three bulb searchlight power (having pulled the wrong chain). To my amazement she slept on or at least gave that impression. I managed to eliminate the ‘searchlights’ with a swift pull of the chain and then, half blinded, groped around for the right chain to pull. Finally I found it and tugged.....NOTHING. So I tugged a bit harder....STILL NOTHING. By now I was feeling somewhat cooler anyway and began to wonder if I really needed the thing in the first place. But my dogged Scottish nature persuaded me to continue with my efforts not to be outdone by a ceiling fan .....and I gave one last great tug.

**WHOOSH!!!!!!**.....I was almost blown off my feet as this large four bladed propeller reached ‘take-off’ speed in the blink of an eye, making a cloud of propeller dust in the process, and the whole thing shook as if to say: ‘Take the brakes off and let me go.’ It would not be an exaggeration to say that panic was now beginning to set in. Was I dreaming this whole event? But the downdraft of air which would give a Boeing 737 a good run for its money was pummeling my somewhat unclothed body mercilessly leaving no option but to continue my futile efforts to cool the bedroom. By now of course I was thoroughly cool but it was poor Irene, still serenely sleeping on, who concerned me. Another few seconds of this and she would be sure to waken and I was not prepared for the consequences. Three more violent tugs on the chain (thank goodness I was the one who secured it to the ceiling with 4” screws) and the speed dropped to that of cruising altitude, albeit a bit noisily. The early hours of Monday morning began to return to normal and I slipped quietly back into bed, now glad of the warmth it provided.

**AH Ha !**, not so quick Pastor Ian! An hour passed and I was immersed in that lovely level of sleep in what was by now a cool bedroom, thanks to my earlier efforts, when an intermittent (((((SHRIEK)))))) began to come from the hallway outside our bedroom. Every 30 seconds this **shriek** would sound and then as quickly as it

began it ceased as the battery of I thought, a smoke detector, wailed out its death throes at 4.30am. And Irene slept on.....

I tried, I really did, suffering this 30 second assault on my ears for almost an hour by which time the need for a ‘pit stop’ had crept up on me. I decided that now was the time to put an end to all this ‘first day of summer’ nonsense and end the problem. I quietly dressed and slunk silently out of the room, in between **shrieks** and made my way to the rogue smoke detector that had so rudely spoiled what might have been a great night’s sleep. Standing on tiptoes I pulled open the cover and triumphantly yanked out the 9 volt battery. “Got you,” I muttered to myself and (fire chief please note) almost in the same breath thinking “and I’ll leave the cover open to remind me to replace the battery.”

The somewhat satisfied smirk of accomplishment had barely formed on my face when (((((SHRIEK)))))) .....it happened again. A few seconds later I was once again fumbling....this time with a CO2 detector which I yanked from its socket in the wall. It didn’t like that and told me so by changing the intermittent 30 second SHRIEK to a fast one second (((((SHRIEKING)))))) that just would not give up.

Where do you find a screwdriver at 5.30 a.m. with that special ‘head’ to fit the screws that held the battery compartment safe from little children’s prying fingers. The MacGyver in me quickly produced a wicked looking kitchen knife (my ‘shop teacher’ all those years ago would have been mortified) and the sinful battery was unceremoniously removed from its hiding place and dumped on the table beside the other one. Silence, broken only by the sounds of the birds I had by now wakened, once again returned to the Robb home.....

AND IRENE SLEPT ON

Pastor Ian.

p.s. Can anyone tell me how to separate a ‘dud’ 9 volt battery from a ‘live’ one!!!

Pastor Ian Robb