

The Soapless Soap Dish

And Other Tales of Domestic Bliss

I am an idiot.

I willfully, with as much knowledge and forethought as I thought the subject merited, did place a slightly used bar of soap in the soap dish. As I said, I'm an idiot, a point brought forcefully home by a person we shall "Doris," in order not to fan the flames of domestic discord. Doris declaimed, using a logic exclusive to her gender, that only the feeble-minded could fail to see that putting soap in the soap dish not only defiled the soap dish to the point where it's recovery was and remains in serious doubt, but it also allowed the soap to degrade as rapidly and hideously as the Nazi who drank from the wrong Grail at the end of *Indy Jones 3*. My failure to register these obvious facts goes well beyond mere myopia, Doris's tone suggests, intimating that I was up to something, like plotting to have Doris committed to one of those asylums where countless fetid beds line the halls and the stench of urine is omnipresent. Well, I'm not.

But such protests on my part mean little to Doris, who is already off scouting for other Transgressions Only the Demented Would Commit. Everywhere she probes she finds further evidence of my perfidy. She discovers a lemon I only recently had cut into, to perk up my ice water, as Doris prefers I drink water during the day instead of my preferred alternative, methadone. My crime was that deep in the bowels of the crisper, near a stalk of ginger hosting a mold party, was a lemon **ALREADY CUT INTO!** This was a transgression at least as pernicious as the Gulf oil spill, a reckless squandering of resources, never mind that we have about 3,000 lemons and if I don't consume them as fast as Kobayashi their fungus will soon be competing with the ginger mold for back-of-the-crisper supremacy.

My campaign to drive Doris to dementia was rendered utterly transparent by my careless use of a towel to dry my hands. It would be obvious to anyone smarter than a yam that hand towels hung in the bathroom are **NEVER** to be used. They are **DECORATION**, intones Doris, who finds it necessary to raise her voice in order to underscore the depravity that festers deep in my soul. **NOW THEY'RE RUINED.** I'm sure Doris would have made me pay for their funeral, caskets and all, but probably demurred for fear such an assignment would give me ideas about leading a Doris-free existence.

Another habit of mine that I clearly adopted in order to make Doris loopy is that whenever I need a spoon, or bowl or hammer or what have you, I take it from where it is supposed to be (by Doris's lights) and, in the process of using it, I **LEAVE IT OUT**, exposing it to immediate loss or theft, which obliges Doris to whisk it away, ideally when I'm not looking, and secrete in a new hiding place where I will never find it again. This is why I am no longer able to cook or bathe or dress, which helps explain why I so infrequently leave the house.

Oops, I have to run now, literally. I can hear Doris rummaging under her sink for her curling iron, her favorite tool for extracting confessions. It may take her some time to find it, for I put it away in keeping with her system. I hope to get at least a five-minute head start. You see, I vaguely recall recently having using a hand towel.

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