

NOT a Knight in Shining Armor...

By Gary Jordan

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I admired the new piece of furniture my boyfriend had bought me while I prepared for a bath. A lovely piece, one of those things that's half-drawers, half closet. He'd picked it up at a movie lot auction. It had an impressive history. "Best Little Whorehouse", "Shakespeare in Love" (though that scene was cut) - it had even been used in a Jack Nicholson horror movie.

I thought of Billy when I looked at it. A strange piece of furniture from a strange, if thoughtful, beau. Someone needed to rescue him from his impulse purchases, and more and more, that looked like me. I smiled as I removed my panties.

I carried all the soiled clothes to the hamper, and checked the tub. Plenty of hot, bubbly water. I closed the faucets and eased myself in and down.

The woman who invented the bubble bath should be immortalized in song and story. Nothing on this earth beats the caress of the hot water, the silky feel of the bubbles... Billy's tongue is a close second, maybe even a tie (and now I have the mental image of Billy and I in the tub together - shivers.)

Wait, those weren't my shivers -

Earthquake!

My mind leapt into high gear. Wasn't the bathtub a good place to be during earthquakes or tornadoes? Fuck! Only if it was a cast-iron tub, not a flimsy fiberglass job like mine. Cracks were already appearing in my sixth-floor walls. I needed to move!

Climbing from a tub full of soapy water during an earthquake is best described as Charlie Chaplin and the Three Stooges meet the Marx Brothers. Pure slapstick and pratfalls. but somehow I managed it and made it to the doorway as the exterior wall, including my tub, disappeared in a deafening roar. As if that wasn' t bad enough, the doorway began to distort and more cracks appeared in my bedroom floor. I feared I was on the wrong side of the fault line and dashed into the bedroom.

The ground-driven tremors had stopped, but the building continued to disgorge enormous chunks. I freely admit to terror as most of my corner apartment fell away. I found myself standing wobbly-kneed on a narrow jagged ledge abutting an interior wall. All that survived of my apartment was a reproduction of a Robert Wood painting, Billy' s dresser thingy, and me.

Straitening the painting may not have been the sanest thing to do under the circumstances, but it helped to calm me. Looking out through the settling dust, I could see the tenants of adjacent apartment buildings rubbernecking through their windows and sliding glass doors. Some of the bolder (or stupider) ones came out on balconies. I waved at them frantically.

I finally got someone' s attention. She held up a cell phone (or maybe a cordless), put it to one ear and yelled and waved back. Thank God someone knew I was here. From what I could see, I doubt that any of the tenants above or below me survived, unless they weren' t home.

My neighbor disappeared briefly, to return with a large drawing tablet and a magic marker. She wrote, "HELP ON WAY," in large bold letters. Then she flipped the page, scribbled and held it up again. "Y U NAKED?" it said.

I looked down. Oh, Shit! A girl tries to relax in the tub and ends up showing her goodies to the whole world. Who' d believe this? And pretty soon, every camera, camcorder and telescope in the facing buildings would be trained my way. When help arrived, they' d be accompanied by television crews.

There was only one thing to do, and I signaled my intentions to the Samaritan across the way, and she wrote back, "I TELL 911 WHERE YOU ARE."

And that' s the story of my night in "Shining" armoire.

The End