

The Possum Predicament

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The Possum Predicament

“G ail! Wake up! There’s something alive in my room!” The terrified voice of my roommate carried easily from her room to mine in the middle of the night.

“It’s probably a cat,” I shouted back, only half awake. We had four cats living with us.

“No, no, it’s got a white face. It’s right here by my bed!”

Groaning, I climbed out of bed and padded through the dark kitchen to her room.

“Maybe it’s a spider,” I quipped. This wasn’t the first time I’d been shocked out of a deep sleep to come to Leanne’s aid. Spiders were often the culprit. However, one night a huge shaggy dog had wiggled through the cat door and started jumping up and down in the laundry room. And once a small raccoon kit almost got stuck in the cat door going out (after we raised a ruckus) because its tiny legs didn’t reach the ground. Poor little guy. These thoughts played scenes through my mind as I reached her doorway.

“See!” Leanne exclaimed, pointing to the chair beside her bed. She had scooted to the other end of the bed and clutched her blankets around herself.

Neither of us could see very well because neither had her glasses on. However, I could discern a white, triangular face with two little wide eyes. And a long, naked tail. . . surely it wasn’t a rat! That big? Ick! No. . .

“It’s a possum, I think,” I decided.

“Well, get it out!”

“How?”

“Use the broom.”

“Good idea.” I was the homeowner, so I guess it fell to me to deal with pest control. I took the opportunity to get my glasses before the broom and to open both doors going out of the house. Who knew where the cats were, but they weren’t helping.

That possum wasn’t very smart, we both agreed a half hour later. We had tried sweeping it out the door, but it would run in the opposite direction. Down the hall and into my bookcase (no, I don’t know how it squished in between the books). Into the bathroom. Cowering back behind the toilet, it stayed put, frozen in fear. However, deciding to take up residence in our house was just not an option, however young and scared it might be. Resolutely, Leanne armed herself with a spray bottle of water and I wielded the broom.

"Maybe we should call someone," I panted, leaning against the door frame.

"Who?"

"Maybe the cops? We could call my nephew. He's with the sheriff's department," I threw my arms in the air.

"Hello, is that Gail's nephew? Could you please come out in your cruiser and shoot a possum that's stuck behind our toilet?"

While we were arguing, the possum finally shot past us out of the bathroom and down the hall. Through the living room it waddled, ignoring the open back door, as well as the open front door. Next, it ran behind a chair and wedged itself into another bookcase. We moved the chair aside and it finally went running into the front entryway. Out the open door? Oh, no; behind it.

"Help me barricade the entryway," I gasped. Leanne and I moved the living room chairs across the opening.

"You'll have to go in there and sweep it out," Leanne declared. Like that had worked before.

"Not in my bare feet!" I squeaked.

Quickly stuffing my feet into my running shoes, I climbed over the big green chair.

The possum still didn't get the idea. The open door, the spray bottle, and my broom were incentives to go out, but all it seemed to think was that it would become invisible if it huddled into the smallest space possible. This was not true. However, at last, it made one more dash for safety back toward the chairs, and I could sweep it to freedom instead—out the door.

I slammed the front door shut, *and* we quickly shut the back door, as well as the cat door where it had come in. Leanne and I looked at each other in silence for a moment.

"I think the cat door is overrated," Leanne said.