

(Don't you dare show this outside the family)

THE CLOROX BOTTLE DOLL

I was shopping at the local supermarket one day when I happened to come across a small boy of about four years standing beside a display of gallon and one-half gallon Clorox bottles. Tears were running down his cheeks, and he was obviously distressed. I assumed he was lost.

"What's the matter, Sonny?" I asked him.

"I've lost my dolly," he quavered as he fingered the Clorox bottles.

"Let me see if I can help you find it," I said, looking around, on top of, and among the bottles, not really knowing what I was looking for.

At that moment a young woman appeared around the counter. She wore a white apron which identified her as a store employee. "Well, hello there," she said to the child. I haven't seen you for a while--what seems to be the trouble?"

"He's lost a doll," I ventured, "but I'm not sure just what I'm supposed to be helping him find."

She noted the Clorox display. "Is it the Clorox bottle doll I made for you last time I saw you?" she asked.

The young fellow nodded. "I can't find him," he sobbed. "I thought maybe he cummed back here."

"Wait here," the girl said "I'll be right back." And she disappeared back around the corner of the display. She soon reappeared, carrying an empty, two-liter pop bottle.

"I can't find your Clorox bottle doll," she said, "but I think your doll needs a pet to keep him company. Would you rather have a kitty or a doggie?"

"A doggie," said the boy, looking somewhat more cheerful.

With a few deft strokes of a marking pen, she turned the bottle into a whimsical puppy which she then handed to our small friend.

Just then a woman with a half-filled cart came barrelling towards us.

"Christopher!" she exclaimed in an agitated voice. "Where have you been? I've been looking all over for you!"

"Apparently," I said, "he's looking for a bottle-doll of some kind."

"Oh, that old thing!" said his mother. "I got tired of picking it off the floor and tossed it." She grabbed Christopher's hand and started down the aisle, as Christopher frantically clutched his new plastic pet with his other arm.

That was several years ago. I now have three children of my own-- a boy, six, and two girls, aged four and two. I married a woman who makes toys out of anything: a baby in a cradle from a folded handkerchief, dancing cutouts from folded and clipped paper, whimsical stuffed toys from old socks--and, yes, Clorox bottle dolls!

When these ^{toys} ~~toys~~ start to clutter our home, I remember an unhappy four year old whose mother threw away his favorite toy, and I count my blessings!

Ida-Rose L. Hall
20 February 1991 (70th Birthday)