

Mary Prudhomme
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THE ROSARY

It was a dark and rainy night. The thunder was rolling! The lights were blinking off and on. I knew at any moment we would lose power and it would be midmorning tomorrow before the electricity would be back on again—we were usually last on the list.

It was after 11:00 p.m. My husband was in his recliner in the living room, very much awake, but instead of watching sports on TV as usual, he was watching a blank screen. He had turned the TV off, afraid that it would be struck by lightning, never to receive ESPN again.

I went into the bedroom, picked up the little flashlight I kept beside the bed on the night stand, and put it in the pocket of my robe. I was prepared—I would not spend another minute longer than I had to in the pitch dark in our home.

I noticed our two little dogs were already in bed. Doo-Doo, our little peek-a-poo, was lying on top of the bed spread, unaware of the sound and light show going on around her.

Lucy, the little stray Min Pin who adopted us three years ago, was buried beneath the sheets and blanket. She is terrified of thunder, having more than likely spent a few nights out in the bad weather when she was lost or thrown away, as the case may be. Our vet figured she was about three months old then. She weighed less than two pounds and was in very bad condition. With lots of loving care, and visits to the vet, she now

weighs nine pounds—she’s healthy and very active.

I went into the bedroom not only to get the flashlight, but also to get the little pink plastic rosary I keep under my pillow. Praying the rosary gives me comfort and peace, and that’s what I needed more than anything else right then. I am not afraid of bad weather, but I do not take delight in it either.

That rosary is one of my favorites of the many beautiful and more expensive ones I have. It is a child’s rosary, given to one of our daughters for a special occasion, a gift from “Daddy.” He was the person those two little girls loved more than anyone else in the world.

You would have been their favorite, too, if, when I was getting ready for church, they would have heard you say, “Just let them stay. I’ll take them with me to ‘T-Willies’ and they can sit at the bar and have a Coke.” Christine, the oldest, came home more than once with a black eye as a result of her sister, Suzanne, twirling her off of the bar stool.

If anything ever happened where they had to make a choice between me and their father, he would have won hands down.

I searched under the pillows for the rosary—nothing. I looked through both night stands—again nothing. I could not find the rosary. It was gone, it had disappeared without a trace. Obviously, it had no monetary value, as far as I knew, but the sentimental value was priceless. I knew it had to be somewhere in the house, and I decided I would look for it again in the morning. I was determined to find it. The suspense and

mystery of the disappearing rosary was getting to me. I could hardly wait for daylight.

When the storm abated and everything was calm once again, my husband and I went to bed in anticipation of a good night's sleep. Lucy had gotten over her fright, but was still under the covers. Doo Doo never stirred from her position at the foot of the bed.

They had had a really rough day. Both had been to the vet's office that morning for their six-month exams, and shots, and whatever else the vet needed to do to bring them up to date. They were both worn out.

The next morning, Doo Doo was her normal self again, and bounded out of bed, headed for the kitchen and her food bowl. Lucy was still "ca goo" and did not want to eat. She just wanted to get up on the sofa and go back to sleep.

I searched our bedroom again for the little rosary. I looked underneath the bed, in the dresser drawers, in the pockets of my jackets hanging in the closet—everywhere. I found nothing.

Later in the morning, I changed the bed sheets, bundled the used ones, and brought them to the laundry room. I shook the sheets out to put them in the washing machine and—low and behold—what was left of the rosary fell to the floor. There were many little beads missing. I knew exactly where they were.

I picked Lucy up, put her in her carrier, and headed out to the vet's office. My husband called to let them know we were coming, and what

the problem was. Doc was waiting for us. When I told her that Lucy had swallowed 40 Hail Marys and 5 Our Fathers, she wanted to laugh, but composed herself and asked what type of material the rosary was made of. I told her it was plastic and a big smile crossed her face. She said if it would have been glass beads and metal chains, those would have torn her insides and she probably would not have survived. God is good.

When the office staff heard the good news, Lucy was handed from one to the other, with hugs and lots of laughter. It is a good feeling to know that our animals are loved by the people who are in charge of their health and well being.

Lucy was given medication to assist with the disposition of the little beads. We were told to watch her closely when she went outside to see that the deed was done.

My husband was walking in the yard with her the next morning to make sure she “did her business.”

A few minutes later, I heard him exclaim, looking down at the little pile with the pink beads in it, “Now *that’s* some Holy shit!”

Mission accomplished—the suspense was over, the mystery solved.

Word Count: 1029