

DOMESTIC BLISS AND OTHER CATASTROPHES

By Joan Francis

Who the heck was it who wanted all this domestic bliss anyway? Certainly it couldn't have been me! I was going to be an actress or first woman President or a tragic mysterious woman of the world, or at the very least, a journalist.

Take today for instance. My daughter (the bright one), was told never to ride her pony in among the trees. She started my day by taking all the skin off one side of her face . . . riding among the pines.

Then, my son, (the one who's been told a hundred times not to climb on the kitchen counter), climbed on the kitchen counter and knocked off my brand new, extra large economy size jar of instant coffee. Some economy. While I was sweeping up the coffee and glass, the little girl next door, (the one I tell 12 times a day to shut the door because the air conditioner is on) left the door open. In double anger, I shut the door with the broom. I shut it just a little hard. The window broke. Must have been cracked. Trying to prevent one of the kids from going out the door and jarring loose shard of glass into their head, I tried to find tape to tape the glass . . . any kind of tape. I know for a fact that there are at least three rolls of masking tape somewhere on our half acre.

Have you ever noticed that there are certain things that cannot exist in the same house with children? Things like tape, pencils, pens, rubber hands, glue, scissors and paper. It's as if the presence of children casts an automatic disappearing spell on them. Desperate, I climbed over the three-foot-high pile of junk that sits in the garage where my car should be, and swiped my husband's duct tape.

Window taped, glass and coffee up, I reached for the mop bucket. Of course, that couldn't be used until I washed out the brushes and roller which were soaking in it. (The two week remodeling job we started at Christmas was not quite finished. In fact, when guests come we don't offer them a chair, just a hard hat.) Naturally I got paint and water on my husband's watch. (Mine is in Glendale with a watchmaker who never knows what time it is and is never in.) Back to the floor. I found that one dark spot on the floor wasn't coffee but a bit of crushed crayon, and mopping spread it around. (Think I like the color better than the tile. Wonder if you can crayon a kitchen floor.)

A scream from the bathroom halted the mopping. The toilet had overflowed and kept running. There were two inches of water over the entire bathroom floor.

I was wrong. This domestic bliss isn't for a lesser woman than I. It would take at least two of me to keep up with this three ring circus. What I need is a quiet job in an aircraft factory.