

:: Dana's Weekly Insight :: 03.03.08 – What A Man's Gotta Do



Sometimes you just have to go there...

A person can only be pushed—but so far! Maybe you have never been there so it might be hard for you to relate. But for those who have been faced with having to endure the kind of injustice that just doesn't make any sense, this one is definitely for you.

If you've ever found yourself in the unenviable position of having to take the kind of stand that could severely compromise your personal well being, then we're definitely on the same page. But, if you cringe at the prospect of confronting the establishment in a noble attempt to take back what is rightfully yours, then we probably aren't riding the same wavelength.

Either way ...

It was a rare and exceptional moment when the perfect opportunity met with my gnawing obsession to finally dispense justice. I remember it like it was yesterday.

Sitting there on the sofa, Denise and I eagerly watch as she closes the door behind her, and then we carefully wait just long enough to ensure that she is completely next door. Mrs. White, a neighbor who frequently asks my mother to borrow one thing or another, is out of sugar this time (or maybe it could be milk), and according to the usual pattern, this means that I have roughly five minutes to execute on my plan. Thank God for Mrs. White!

Denise is a little bit nervous which I can totally understand because she is, after all, only four. And even though I am, for the most part, fearless at five, I'm sort of shaking in my boots at the thought of the possible consequences and yet I am completely committed to my cause, feeling entirely justified about what I know I have every right to do...

It had been two days earlier that our grandparents had dropped off the Easter basket that the Easter Bunny had left at their house just for us. As soon as they kissed us goodbye, my mother decided that she would take all of the chocolate candy eggs out of the baskets that belonged to me and Denise, and divide those eggs up into two categories - those offensive marshmallow Easter eggs in one bowl and the good milk-chocolate-creamy-melt-in-your-mouth eggs in a separate container with

a lid.

She authoritatively set aside the bowl with the marshmallow eggs, smugly put the container with the lid just out of my reach, and then declared without explanation, that we were not allowed to eat the eggs in that container, reducing us to having to eat the offensive marshmallow eggs with the chocolate that tasted like cardboard and crumbled when you tried to take your first bite.

Would my grandparents have appreciated this behavior from her? I imagined that she knew they would not.

I was annoyed but Denise looked—in shock. She had been counting on those Easter baskets just because she loved those creamy eggs so much. As I watched her fade away into the distance, defeated and heading to our room for a nap, I knew that something had to be done. This was, for me, an undeniable call to action. Somebody had to stand up for the little guy and that somebody was going to have to be me.

Two long days ago, affording my righteous indignation plenty of time to ferment, I'm kind of nervous but feeling equal to the task. I direct Denise to take up her position as "look out" at the front door, and then I grab the kitchen stool and climb up on the counter. When I open the cupboard and finally retrieve our creamy chocolate eggs, the smile on Denise's face makes me feel like a hero in one of our books. We gobble up those Easter eggs, enjoying every smooth and chocolaty bite as if there is no tomorrow and when we hear the keys in the door, signaling my mother's return, we fear that we may have just eaten our very last meal.

Imagine.

I wasn't totally defeated, however, that day because ultimately I did learn a few lessons:

I learned that day, the hard way, that my parents were definitely not running a democratic household and I learned that my mother's no fool. And, in hindsight I suppose that I could have picked a more direct, honest and responsible way to "stand up for my rights." But I also learned that—

If you really believe in your cause, there will be times when you've just got to be willing to go there; to a place where you're scared and not at all certain about the way things will work out.

I appreciate that I can laugh out loud every time I remember that Easter egg drama, and even though I question to this day, the appropriateness of my disobedience, I would likely do it all over again. In my world at five years old, those Easter eggs were a very big deal and to me, they were rightfully mine. And although I would later realize that my mother had good reason and that she was rightfully being a mom, I admire the kid that I was - that kid who would not be denied and I pray that I will never back down from a fight.

I hope that I won't ever live life afraid.

And you?

Is there something for which you'd be willing to fight—or not—because you're scared you might pay with your hide?

With reverence for the possible consequences, yet in full deference to your personal cause, would you be willing to arm yourself with the courage of your convictions? Would you be willing to stand for what you believe?

Maybe you have never been there so it might be hard for you to relate, but consider that you could give yourself permission to "go there", that your courage might speak for someone else who has yet to find their voice; that your resolve might wax heroic in someone else's eyes or perhaps you'll only simply discover something about yourself that will absolutely blow your mind and cause you to reconsider—just how powerful you really are!

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