

THE INTRUDER

of Idletime Island



ANOTHER TRUE COTTAGE STORY • BY JOY KITCHEN



*A news flash to the GTA married kids
from mom at Idletime Island, Georgian Bay*

As you are no doubt aware, the weather has been abominable and last night (Friday) was no exception. A fierce gale was howling around the house, docks were being pitched on end from the big waves and rain cascaded down the windows -- you get the picture!

We felt totally isolated from the rest of the world, so put a few big logs on the fire, kicked off our shoes and settled in to watch the news, Antique Road Show and the earlier-taped Y & R (The Young and the Restless soap opera).

During this, we heard a banging noise near the bathroom window and assumed the wind was catching a loose shutter. A few minutes later, we could hear a loud commotion outside the basement door and wondered if a big bear or bull moose had stumbled over the wheelbarrow. When there was more banging on the wall next to the balcony, we again assumed that the shutters had become loosened in the storm.

I got out of my chair and leaned close to the balcony doors so I could pinpoint the cause of the noise. Suddenly the outside balcony door began to slide sideways. I was dumbfounded. Could the wind be that strong? Then another balcony door slid over. I felt like someone in a horror movie who was transfixed with terror of the unknown.

Only then did I perceive a dark shadow at the screen. I shrieked and stumbled back while yelling to Mid that a bear was about to enter the room. Mid leaped from his chair and I ran into the bedroom to get the gun out of the closet. While I was doing this, I heard a strange man's voice and then Mid telling him to come in out of the storm. I literally 'freaked out', thinking he must be out of his mind, grabbed the gun, shut the bedroom door -- leaving only a crack so I could see and hear what was about to transpire -- (expecting a robbery) and prepared to rush out with the gun to tell them to get the h---- out or I would blast them. The thought occurred to me that there were no shells in the gun and even if there were, I wouldn't know what to do with all the bolts and levers, but figured I could bluff them with it or at least use it as a club if that didn't work. Who else but a burglar would manage to climb up a pole and try to enter a second floor balcony -- right? Then I heard the man tell Mid that his girlfriend was standing outside in the storm at the back door and would we please let her in.

I was still suspicious. Finally, I heard the three voices in the living room and Mid calling me to come out and make hot coffee for these people. I didn't budge, so he threw the door open, took the gun from me and said that they were shipwrecked on our island. The noise at the bathroom window was them getting down the extension ladder which Mid had left there, so they could climb up onto the balcony. Apparently they had pounded on every door but with the storm raging and the TV going, we had not heard them. I came out reluctantly. My heart was pounding and I was shaking all over. Anyway, I managed to make some hot chocolate and put out some of the cookies and muffins I had baked that day. The 'young' people were drenched and probably as frightened as I was. They had been headed for a friend's cottage on the Long Sault. She had spent her life at a cottage not far from Amanda and had come up with her 'significant other' to close it for the season.

By the time they arrived at the marina, had problems with their own boat, rented another, stowed their gear and supplies, and headed down the channel, darkness had settled in. When they hit our part of the bay, they were lost, their boat was filling with water and the engine was faltering. So, seeing lights on at Idletime and Blueberry Hill, they headed for our place, and after a number of tries, managed to land at our front dock and tie up. Later, Mid supplied flashlights and they all went down and pumped out their boat and secured it tightly to the dock. Secretly he was afraid that the waves would take away both the boat and the dock.

Our visitors carried all their canvas bags of supplies up to the basement, changed all their wet clothes and called their friend to let him know where they were. He set out in his big boat to pick them up, but after a long wait, the telephone rang here and their friend said he couldn't make it through the waves and had had to turn back.

So, we had our snack and at 10:30 p.m., Mid and I announced that it was past our bedtime. Since the storm showed no signs of letting up, we asked if they would like to sleep in the little cabin and they gratefully accepted.

Mid and the young woman were up at 6:30 a.m. checking the boat, etc. and all was well. I made a hot breakfast, had them sign the guest book and they left around 10 a.m. for their friend's cottage. I gathered that she was an architect, but he gave no clue except for the fact that he had a little goatee, wore a black tam and obviously had an "arty" disposition. He was not a "Bay" boy and wasn't in control of the situation the way she was. I had to laugh when much later I saw his signature in the guest book. Beside his thanks, he had written "Don't shoot!"

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Joy and Mid Kitchen retired in the mid-80s, sold their Newmarket home and moved to Idletime Island (across the channel from Coney and Ansley Island) to a new, modern home they had built on a hill just up from what was the big, old family cottage in the the family since the 1890s. Now, having given up their island life, they still enjoy living close to Georgian Bay on Prospect Street. 🌿