

Clean, fresh American nightmare

The other day I walked into my bedroom and heard an infectious little giggle.

I stopped, heard nothing else, and then took another step.

The giggle rang out again. "Who is that," I thought nervously. "There are no little kids here. This is my bedroom!"

This time it didn't stop. "Who are you!" I shouted.

"Why are you in here!"

I glanced around the room but didn't see anything. Then I heard a rustle in my basket of freshly laundered clothes.

"It's so soft and fresh!" the little voice giggled, and I saw one furry paw sneak out from between two neatly folded blouses.

"It smells so clean!" the pink, fuzzy bear shouted as it began to leap and flip above the now tumbled laundry.

"Oh no-o-o-o, it's... it's... it's the Snuggles Bear!" I wailed. "It's taking over my laundry!"

I remembered, with regret, pouring the Snuggles Fabric Softener into the two washing machines at the laundromat.

"I knew I shouldn't use that stuff!" I thought. "I was afraid this would happen!"

Snuggles was a brand I always shied away from because I didn't want the fuzzy pink bear to invade my home, but it was offered to me by a kind gentleman, and I didn't have the heart to refuse his help.

"Wheee!" The bear shouted gleefully as it sprang above the basket tossing socks and T-shirts, pillow cases and sheets gleefully about the room.

I whipped myself around, ran out the door, and slammed it behind me.

"Chris! Chris! Hurry," I screamed to one of my roommates. "The Snuggles Bear is here! I don't know what to do! He's taken over my laundry and we can't let him get into the rest of the house!"

Chris strolled calmly out of her room.

"What's the matter?" she asked, puzzled.

"The Snuggles Bear!" I cried.

"He's in my room. Look, quick!" I pulled the door open a crack to let her peek in, then I slammed it shut and pressed my body against it so it couldn't get out.

Chris looked at me in disbelief. She'd never understood my fear of the Snuggles Bear before, but I think light was beginning to dawn.

"It's so cute!" she gasped breathlessly. "It might be catching. Don't giggle, whatever you do. We've got to call somebody or lure him out of the house!"

"Who will we call!" I cried. "There are no organizations interested in preserving Snuggles Bears, and I don't think this is a job for an exterminator! This is

only one creature! We have to handle this ourselves!

"Do you have any fresh laundry not washed with fabric softener!" I shouted above the cuddly bear's loud giggling.

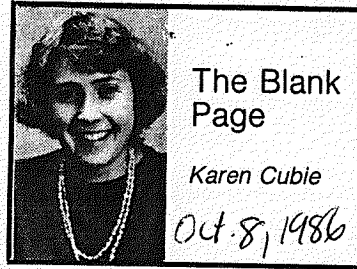
Chris nodded. "Good! Tie it all together, and then we'll open the door and lure him out of the room. The static will get him, and when it knocks him we out can wrap him in Saran wrap and flush the vermin down the toilet!"

Chris ran into her room and came back out with clingy socks and nylon blouses tied firmly together.

We opened the door, and threw the static rope into the room.

"Here, Snuggles Bear," we cooed. "Here's some more fresh laundry for you."

It peeked gleefully out at us, and



"Ooooh!" it gasped, and finally it leaped into the air, landing heavily on the clothing.

"Aaagggghhh! You got me!" it moaned as the static electricity crackled loudly through the room.

"Quick, the Saran wrap! Finish him off, Karen!" Chris shouted, and I peeled a layer of clinging plastic from the roll, ripped it out of the box, and wrapped it hastily around the bear.

stared greedily at the static chain.

A pink paw stretched out cautiously to grab the first stocking.

"Don't let him touch it until he pounces," I whispered, and Chris pulled the sock teasingly away.

The bear came forward, reached out again, and started to lumber anxiously towards the door.

"Run to the bathroom!" Chris yelled.

I dashed down the hall, pushed open the door, and hastily threw open the toilet lid.

"Hello there," a pleasant, fatherly, middle-class American voice said.

I looked down, and there stood the Tidy-Bowl Man staring up at me from his little row boat.

IS IT POSSIBLE THAT PEACE COULD BREAK OUT?



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