

## Night & Day

by Marilyn Reeves

The cold and the pain woke her. Oh, such pain! Her head was a deep throbbing ache and her shoulder – what was wrong with her shoulder? It felt like a knife blade cutting through to the bone, and her left arm hung suspended like a dead thing – needles and pins reminding her that it was still very much alive. But where was she? It was so cold and so dark!

Her hand struck against something hard and smooth. It felt like the side of the bathtub. The bathtub! Of course! Now she remembered ... pulling on the steel bar to lift herself up, lifting ... then slipping and falling. A hard bang to the head and then nothing. Nothing at all until now. “Oh my Lord, I must have knocked myself out in that fall!”

“Oh, I hurt all over!” she cried. “My head hurts! My shoulder hurts! My back – everything hurts. And I’m so cold! Well, I must get out of this tub. Thank goodness I released the water earlier or I might have drowned. Drowning in my own bathtub. Now there’s a thought.”

She reached up for the steel bar again, forgetting momentarily that her left arm and shoulder weren’t working properly, and the effort sent a sharp reminder coursing through her body.

“Oooooow ow, ow!” she wailed. “Help me somebody, please! Help me. Help, HELP” she shouted, but of course there was no one to hear her in the middle of the night. After calling out in vain for several more minutes, she finally decided there was nothing to do but wait until morning.

She groped around in the dark for a bath towel and covered herself the best she could, and slept to the accompaniment of throbbing pain until daybreak. “I must get out of this tub!” she said. She reached across with her right hand to grasp the bar, but her legs were too numb to obey her commands, and she slid back down again, sobbing in frustration. “Help, help!” she cried out again, but nobody came. No one could hear her.

Well, what to do? Her eyes fell upon the nail clippers she’d left on the edge of the tub and an idea began to form in her mind. First she pried loose the plastic cap that concealed the screw in the shower handle. Then she spent the next hour working at the screw itself with the blunt end of the clippers until she was able to remove the handle. She banged the heavy plastic object again and again against the tile of her prison wall in a rhythmic drum-beat, until she finally heard a muffled voice on the other side. “Help, help!” she cried out again, and this time got a response. Ten minutes later, the Security Officer arrived. Embarrassed as she was to be caught in this state, she was never so happy to see anybody in her whole life! It had been a night and day she would never forget.