

Safety First!

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Toras Avigdor

Adapted from the teachings of Rav Avigdor Miller z"l

Junior

“Shimmy,” said Mommy reproachfully. “Is that your 600,000 piece Yetzias Mitzrayim puzzle all over the floor in the hall **again???** Please put it away right now. Totty and I are going to the Holtzbacher chasuna tonight and I would like the house to be completely clean before we leave.”

“Okay,” said Shimmy, as he began picking up the puzzle pieces.

An hour and a half later, Mommy came out of her room, ready to leave for the chasuna with Totty.

“Shimmy!” Mommy exclaimed in shock, looking at the now even-bigger mess on the floor. “I thought you were cleaning up! Why does it look like every single toy from our toy cabinet is strewn across the hallway?”

“I’m sorry, Mommy,” said Shimmy apologetically. “But when I started cleaning up the puzzle I remembered that some of the pieces were in a bag on the top shelf and I wanted to put it back in the box and I emptied the closet to find the bag but then I got distracted and forgot!”

“Either way,” said Mommy. “Totty and I are leaving now. Please make sure the younger children are in bed and then clean up every single toy before going to sleep. I don’t want to see a single toy on the floor when we come home.”



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“Sure Mommy,” said Shimmy. “Enjoy the chasuna!”

Shimmy dutifully helped his younger siblings get to bed before going to sleep himself. As he crawled under the covers himself he felt so proud that he was such a good older sibling, but he could not help but think that there was something he forgot...

BOOM! CRASH! ZING! POW!

Shimmy awoke with a start, his heart pounding, as a terrible ruckus was heard from the hallway. With a sinking feeling he remembered that he had completely forgotten to put away the toys. Was Totty or Mommy chas vesholom tripping on the mess in the hallway?

Shimmy ran to his door and peeked into the hallway to the most incredible site. A ganev, with a leichter in one hand and a wad of cash from Totty’s drawer in the other, was slipping on the marbles that had been left on the floor. Half in horror, half in amusement, Shimmy watched open-mouthed as the ganev banged his knee on a wooden stool, hit his head on the wall, fell backwards on a roller skate, and slid down the hall headfirst, before slamming his head into a pile of wooden blocks.

The ganev came to a halt, his eyes closed. It looked like he was unconscious. Shimmy frantically thought about what he should do. Should he call Totty and Mommy? The neighbor? The police?

Fortunately, Shimmy was saved from having to make this decision, for just then Totty and Mommy walked in the door. Totty immediately saw the ganev and called the police and within a minute sirens sounded as police and paramedics arrived to take the ganev away.

After the situation calmed down, Shimmy looked at Mommy and Totty and said “Wow - it was mamesh a good thing that I forgot to clean up

- otherwise the ganev would have stolen all of our stuff!”

Totty looked at Shimmy for a minute before answering. “No, Shimmy, I don’t think that it was a good thing that you forgot to clean up.”

“But Totty!” Shimmy protested. “If I had cleaned up, the police wouldn’t have caught the ganev.”

“Shimmy,” Totty said. “You know in this week’s parsha we learn about someone who kills by accident. Do you know what happens to him?”

“Yeah,” said Shimmy. “He has to go into golus.”

“That’s right,” said Totty. “Even though he didn’t mean to do it, he still gets punished. In fact, the Torah calls him a rotzeiach - a murderer!”

“I don’t want to chas vesholom use such a strong language against you, but by leaving those toys out, an innocent person could have gotten very badly hurt. Do you understand the responsibility that you have when it comes to cleaning up? You must be aware that by you leaving even one toy out, or even a little plastic bag on the stairs in a building, you are chas vesholom causing someone to potentially get hurt!”

“Rav Avigdor Miller zt”l used to say that any person who created a situation where someone could chas vesholom get killed, that person is called a rotzeiach - a murderer, even though nobody even got hurt! Do you see how important it is to make sure that you always clean up and never leave things on the floor?”

“I never thought about it like that,” said Shimmy softly. “I don’t want to be a murderer! From now on, I will always make sure to put my things away so nobody will get hurt because of me.”

And with that, Shimmy gave Totty a big hug and went back to bed.

Have A Wonderful Shabbos!



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