

Thursday, September 16, 2010

WITH LEGS DANGLING, THE HEART IS FULL

I just had a very odd, yet fulfilling moment...and yes, it can be considered gross depending on how you look at it.

Days of being unable to go to the bathroom finally just caught up with me and I made my way to the bathroom across the hall. I ran into my normal "Number 2" stall, but someone else had left their previous present behind. In disgust at the lack of flushing, I raced to the handicapped stall across from it. I typically avoid handicapped stalls, as I once witnessed a girl go in one at a rest area even though all the others were open, and wouldn't you know it, lo and behold in comes a woman wheeling in her frail old mother in a wheelchair. The girl took FOREVER to finish up, leaving the woman and her daughter quite upset. So yes, I tend not to use the handicapped stalls if at all possible. However, I felt the need to be far from the door and so I gave in to my usual rule of thumb.

As I sat on the toilet and did my business, I noticed that my feet were dangling above the ground since I was too short and the toilet was too high for me to touch the floor. And yes, I sit on toilet seats. Call me gross, but they've done studies to show that the toilet seats are MUCH cleaner than the nasty things you will encounter upon the sink faucet. Sometimes I'm working hard enough in that stall...I don't need to add squats to my bathroom repertoire.

So back to dangling feet. I was sitting there doing my business and was extremely aware of my feet dangling. I felt small not being able to touch the ground. And with feeling small, I started to remember what it felt like as a kid to be too small for the toilet; legs dangling, hands gripping onto the edge of the seat so your bum didn't fall through into the water. It made me smile...a full body smile.

I know you are thinking, "Well that's because you just love talking about toilet stuff." Now, while I do enjoy the amusing incidents that can occur in the bathroom, that's not what this was. It was instead this sudden rush of youth and innocence that I felt in that moment. I felt this lightness and sense of freedom recalling those days when something as simple as sitting on the toilet took some effort and was sometimes the worst of your problems that day. There was no worrying about money, relationships or lack of, lack of sleep, wondering how you were going to get through the next year, where you would settle down, whether or not to panic you don't have a retirement fund anymore, how you're going to make time to take care of yourself, how you can't get over certain stumbling blocks, etc. While my childhood had some rough bouts that stick with me (as we all have), I also had a lot of fun and a lot of love. And while I still have a lot of love and have fun when I can actually make time to do so, it's different. It's not as effortless or maybe accepted as it is when you're a kid. Nowadays I feel like I have to be an adult, but instead just come across as an inappropriate, odd girl. As an adult I'm "weird" or "crazy" as opposed to brushing off my same behavior at six as, "Oh who cares, she's a kid!"

I sat there on the toilet, smiling as I thought of being a bizarre little girl full of stories who was full of hope for what could someday be ahead of me in my life. Then as quickly as it came on, the reality of life all came flooding right back. Ebb and flow. Nostalgia and dreams wash out to sea, reality floods back onto the sand. Quite poetic for a bowel movement on a handicapped toilet seat, huh?

I finished up my business and went to flush. The water started to rise faster and faster. "Oh shit...it's about to overflow," I thought. I stood there in horror as the water settled near the seat that had just brought me nostalgia for childhood.

And then I ran like hell out of there before I got busted for plugging the toilet. And as I ran, I giggled and felt the rush of nostalgia come back. I may be old, but I can flee like a kid.

Posted by Heather Duffin in The Chronicles at 11:04