

Am I Welcome at Walmart?

By Carol Penhorwood

Out of everything, we just had to get to the store. So we packed up our family of six and headed to Walmart. Patrick took Madison, 8, and Eli, 3, and headed for the Electronics Department. I placed 18 month old Noah in the cart but Olivia, ever helpful at the age of 6, insisted on pushing the cart down those grocery aisles.

Knowing Noah's hands would be reaching for everything in sight, I felt it would be best to instruct Olivia to roll the cart down the center of each aisle. That worked for awhile. But there wasn't much excitement in that, I guess, and soon Olivia was jerking the cart back and forth hitting as many other carts as she could.

As we were turning the aisle, another cart was coming at us with a tall skinny box, and, sure enough, Olivia was right on target. Whack! The skinny box went flying and hit goods on the top shelves causing a domino effect with boxes tumbling everywhere for which we had to get help, apologizing as I went.

On to the next aisle, still fuming. But I put the cart in the middle of the aisle so Noah couldn't reach anything. But along came another customer, so I had to move the cart off to the side so the customer could pass, not noticing that Noah had reached for three or four tuna cans, and suddenly they were on the floor as fast as he could throw them. I picked them up, ready to blow a gasket with both children.

In the next aisle, moving the cart to the side for yet another customer, trying to watch Noah out of the corner of my eye, I saw him pick up a glass jar of applesauce and, I swear, in slow motion that jar of applesauce hit the floor and shattered.

"Can I get you some help?" offered a sympathetic customer. "But I don't know where anyone is."

I knew where someone was. They were two aisles over cleaning up from the LAST mess my kids made. But I wasn't about to tell her that.

By this time, I'm on my cell phone calling my husband out of Electronics to come and help me. He took the kids to the car. I got just the very basics we needed and scurried out of that store.

"Phew!"

Home at last.

I'm not going back to Walmart ever again...well, at least not until next week.

"Blessed by pain." That's how Carol would describe her journey with the Lord. Her ongoing battle with fibromyalgia, a condition known for widespread pain and fatigue, was the result of a 1990 auto accident. But Carol discovered limitations and pain have put her more in touch with her heavenly Father. During her frequent periods of inactivity, she has found words coming to mind that begged to be written. Carol wants to use them as an outlet to encourage, support, and inspire others.

Carol is also a regular contributor to christianpoetspen.blogspot.com and a member of the Palace of Poets on the Christian daily online newspaper, The Cypress Times. Her devotions have been published in the Covenant Home Altar.

Carol and her husband, Martin, have been married 43 years, have three grown daughters, and ten grandchildren. She enjoys reading, cross-stitching, music, sudoku, and Bible Study Fellowship.

One can find more about her writing and awards at the website:

<http://www.faithwriters.com/member-profile.php?id=45576>