



Charlie's Messy Bedroom

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When Charlie and his friend Eddie wanted to explore the wilderness area of their park to look for new adventures, Charlie simply could not find his compass.

"Mom, where's my compass?"

"I don't know, Charlie. Check your room."

"But, Mom, I'll never be able to find it there," protested Charlie.

The problem was Charlie's bedroom. It was a mess. Now, it's not that Charlie was a sloppy person or that he intended to have a messy room. That was not the case at all. For Charlie, the world was such a wonderfully exciting place, he wanted to bring home as much of it as he could, which meant it ended up in his room.

Charlie never knew when he might come across something interesting while on his travels. There were sea shells and rocks; bottle caps; marbles, pencils, and fossil parts; coins from around the world; dinosaurs (plastic); model airplanes; books, books and more books; many, many of Charlie's drawings; and Charlie's hat collection. But that's a different story.

"Charlie, I think it's time to clean your room."

Oh, dear. Not that. Anything but that. Charlie slowly walked down the hall, bracing himself for what lay ahead of him.

In the past when Charlie would clean his room, this is how it would typically go: Charlie would start with a pile of his papers. Soon he'd get lost in his drawings, thinking back to when he'd originally created them. Then he'd re-read his comic that he drew featuring

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the class bully and how he learned his lesson about picking on others in a most comical way.

Oh, and there were his projects. Shoeboxes with pieces of string taped to screws, nuts and bolts. There was the time machine that he'd built one summer day. There were inventions and gadgets, gizmos and innovations that Charlie had come up with over the years. And he wanted to keep them. Every last thing. He couldn't bear to part with any of it.

When Charlie was deep in thought, with a stack of papers in front of him and even more spread out before him, his mom would peek in the door. This is when Mom would come in, assess the situation, sigh, roll up her sleeves, look up to the sky for inspiration, then get started. Mom would stack and organize, tuck action figures here and rubber ducks there.

"How are you doing, Charlie?"

"Oh, I'm fine, Mom."

At this point, Charlie would be in the same spot in front of his papers, lost in his remembrances, while Mom would continue to work away. This process would go on like this for two more hours, at which time Charlie's room would have turned from a disorganized jumble to fairly reasonable.

"Well, Charlie, I guess you can go to the park with Eddie."

"Gee, thanks, Mom. Didn't we do a great job on my room?"

"Why, yes, Charlie. I -- I mean 'we' did."

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