

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

(Even trivial things can get a home inspector in hot water)

By

Bob Mulloy

I was born in a foundry along with the rest of my siblings. Sounds like a strange place for a newcomer, but then that's where those of my kind magically appear. You see, I began my humble life as a superheated soup of liquid metal, no DNA; just a conglomeration of elements. I was poured in a mold, allowed to dry, buffed into a high gloss and given the name "Doorknob." I have two brothers named "Lever and "Crash Bar." We were born as triplets.

Having a name like "Doorknob" presented all kinds of peer problems; but fortunately I have only a vague memory of my early years. I do remember comfortable packaging, kind of like a security blanket; and sitting in a warehouse for some indeterminate period. There I sat contemplating the meaning of life, when one day a strange looking stork with a big boxy shape and numerous wheels arrived to transport my entire family and many others to our new home. We were jammed inside the beast and hauled across the country while suffering from sweltering heat and oxygen deprivation. Just as we were gasping our last breath and starting to tarnish, the belly of the beast opened, allowing fresh air to revive our spirits.

With the first taste of daylight, great expectations were shared by all, only to be smashed by the rough handling that followed. We were jostled, moved, and carried into a nearly completed home and then unceremoniously dumped in a pile. Rough hands grabbed us by the packaging and hauled us around the house. Suddenly I was separated from the others, tossed in the air and allowed to crash on a hardwood floor up against a new door. Bruised and battered but otherwise in one piece, I took stock of my new surroundings. I could see that my siblings had all suffered similar fates – time to ponder the meaning of life again.

The next morning, some human arrived and tore off my packaging. Before I even knew what was happening, I was naked and disassembled while someone named Bubba whistled: "If You're Happy and You Know It Clap Your Hands." My head was shoved in a hole in the door, while my rear end left for parts unknown. I know my rear end was back there somewhere for it felt as if a colonoscopy was performed to make me a permanent fixture.

A happy family moved into the home and began a daily routine of trying to twist my head off and doing unmentionable things to my rear end. I recall that on one occasion, I was disassembled again by a small human and carried to school for "show & tell." I was mortified as the lad held my pieces up in front of the class and called me a "simple

machine” named a “wheel & axle.” Labeling me as a simple machine was an insult to my family tree; after all, my name was “Doorknob” and I was proud of it!

They reassembled me back into my door where I rested forlorn and forgotten for years, wishing for a little respect. Instead, abuse and rough handling were the only recognition I ever received. No one ever gave me a little drink of oil or tightened my loose joints. All I ever received was extra layers of paint to clog my parts and a frequent slam that rattled my brain. Once I was even flung backwards so hard that my backside crashed through something beyond my sight. My buddy “Stopper” had long since died.

In later years the home went up for sale and a host of people were grabbing at me to open the door. Someone called a “home inspector” walked right by me one day, totally ignoring my broken parts and loose axle. I remember one day hearing the new owner cursing: “That damn home inspector never told me about that hole in the wall!” That curse was one I heard more and more as time went by.

I was looking down the hallway and saw one human grab my brother “Lever.” Suddenly, Lever’s head was torn from the door and thrown backwards striking a toddler in the face. Even from a distance and above the noisy crying, I could hear the owner cursing: “That damn home inspector never told me about that!”

As for my brother “Crash Bar,” he was mounted on the exterior door in the common hallway beyond my sight. I never did see him again, but I certainly learned to appreciate his name as I always knew he was around by the sounds he made. I’m sure that if this were his autobiography, he would also have an interesting history to share. I even heard the owner greet “Crash Bar” with the curse once in a while – I guess it’s a human thing.

The ending to this story is a sad one indeed but at least my years of abuse came to a screeching halt. It happened during the night. One of my cousins named “Arc-Fault” went on strike without informing a sole. My door was closed, so I had a ring side seat for all the tragedy that followed. A fire erupted in the bedroom and quickly spread. Yes, the smoke alarms sounded, but my now elderly owner was hard of hearing. Luckily he awoke in time to attempt an escape from the smoke filled room. Crawling blindly in the general direction of the door and choking with effort, he grabbed me in panic and pulled my head off my axle. I heard him curse as he fell to the floor: “That damn home inspector never told me about that!” Sadly, we both went to that great factory in the sky.

Now as for Lever and Crash Bar, they were saved by the fire department. The firemen put out the flames and found the charred body of my master still clutching my head in his hands. Looking down, one of the firemen said: “Poor bastard, I bet that home inspector never told him about that loose doorknob!”