



Fickle Finger

Today's little story is a 'double' ... that might perhaps become a 'triple'? I kind of hope not!

While chatting with my parents this morning via Skype they told me about a quite scary episode that had happened to them a few days ago. They had gone out in the morning for their daily constitutional, heading off on one of their usual routes towards downtown Vancouver. At some point along the way, they decided for some reason to vary the route, and walked along a beach path instead of the sidewalk they normally use.

All well and fine, but when they were watching the TV news that evening, they learned that there had been an industrial accident that morning. A large and very heavy window had fallen 36 floors from a skyscraper under construction, crashing to the sidewalk in front of the building, right on their usual route. Luckily nobody was hurt, but a couple of nearby vehicles were apparently heavily damaged.

Now I don't want to exaggerate this - "I'm sure they would have been *right* at that very spot *right* at that very minute!" - because nobody knows that, but in any case, this was close enough, and I suspect that from now on they'll perhaps be taking that beach route more frequently!

This incident would perhaps have passed without mention except that it turned out to be not an isolated case. My daughter Himi and her family have their own similar story to not only match it, but top it!

Just a few weeks ago her husband Ian was the first one to arrive home one afternoon, and when he entered their room (which is on the ground floor of an apartment complex), found an astonishing mess. The patio windows had been smashed to bits, and when he stepped outside into the garden to investigate, found that the entire outer wall of the building had been riddled with projectiles - breaking many of the windows, and leaving the siding dented and smashed in many places. It looked as though the entire building had been blasted with some kind of giant buckshot gun.

And actually, that's pretty much exactly what had happened. A building across the lane was under construction, and the crews had been using a large pumper truck to lift wet concrete up to the higher levels. Something had gone wrong, a very high pressure had built up, and the thing had completely exploded, throwing the wet concrete mix splashing across my daughter's building with tremendous force. All the stones and gravel in the mix had become bullets, smashing everything they hit.

The insurance companies have promised to take care of all the damage, but if the family had been home, and if the two young boys had been playing in the garden at the time ... Well, none of us wants to even *think* about what might have happened in that case.

Now we all know the old superstition - events of this sort will happen in 'threes' - so we are all currently looking over our shoulders pretty carefully. Although now that I think about it, I guess there is actually nothing to worry about. If the third episode follows the same pattern as the first two, we'll be celebrating another lucky escape!

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