

Our Terror Closet

by Con Chapman

There's a nip in the air in New England--fall is here, so I ventured into the storage closet yesterday to get out the wool coats and suits. I was bending over to get my L.L. Bean high-top hunting shoes--which I use to track wayward clients through snowy forests primeval--when a shiny metallic object caught my eye. I picked it out of the junk on the floor--a can of Spam?



"Honey," I called out to my wife. "Why do we have Spam in the closet?"



"You mean unsolicited bulk messages sent electronically?"

"No--the canned, precooked meat product made by the Hormel Corporation."

"Don't you remember," she said. "We set up a terror closet after 9/11."

Of course--how could I forget! We take terrorism very seriously here in the suburbs of Boston. The 9/11 hijackers flew out of Logan Airport and spent the night in a motel not far from our home where we'd had dinner many times with our kids. And not too long ago they arrested a Pakistani teenager one town over who was plotting a Mumbai-style assault on a popular mall in bankruptcy proceedings that our kids patronize for over-priced branded sportswear.



"Now I remember," I said. "We were advised to stock a secure room that could be locked from the inside with staples in the event of an attempted takeover by Islamofacists. But why Spam?" I asked. "You hate the stuff."

"I know, but if al Qaeda is going to establish a world-wide caliphate based on *sharia* law . . ."

"Which they've sworn to do . . ."

" . . . one of the first things to go will be Spam. It's got pork in it!"

I hadn't thought of that, but she was right. "What else did we . . ."

"You mean me . . ." Okay, so I'm not the most conscientious anti-terrorist in the world, but I've got a job to go to every day. After this brief stream-of-consciousness interlude, I returned to our conversation.

" . . . put in there?"

"Well, the boxed set of seasons one through six of *Sex and the City*."

"Good call," I said, even though I have never been able to sit through a single episode. "You know when the *mullahs* reach Route 128, the first thing to go will be an HBO series that glorifies female promiscuity in what Jesse Jackson . . ."

"Ahem--I think you mean the *Reverend* Jesse Jackson."

"I stand corrected--fondly refers to as 'Hymietown.'"

"That's what I thought. 'Rob and Big' may survive, but I have to think that *Sex and the City* would be done for."

"So we'll be eating Spam and watching Sarah Jessica what's-her-name. What else?"



"Well, I stocked up on vodka--liquor will be banned under *sharia*. I figured it packs more alcohol per square inch than white wine."

"Right--we've got to conserve space. How about money? We may have to pay ransom for the kids if the destruction of the American Way of Life comes at a time when they're at lacrosse or baseball practice."

"Not to worry," she said. "I stuffed \$200 . . ."

"Do you really think that will be enough?"



"It should be plenty. I can't spend more than a few hours with them, and I'm their mother. The Taliban will let them go for a bargain price."

I felt comforted, reassured. She'd thought of everything. Still, we can't let the terrorists rule our lives--if they do, they really have won.

"Is that envelope still in here?" I asked. "I'm a little short of cash, and I need some red wine."

She came in and rummaged around for a bit, and finally produced the envelope from behind a box of Pappagallo pumps.

"Here's \$10, that's all that's left."
"What happened to the rest of it?"



"I dipped into it a couple of times when the pizza guy showed up
and I didn't have any money."

