

Senior Citizen 2: (Continuation from Senior Citizen 1)

Woman 1: One month after we had moved in to a house in London, another family moved from their old house to the floor below ours. Since the floors in London are hardwood, residents on the ground floors always hear a lot of noise coming from above. However, the woman living below us would think that my sons would intentionally make all the noises. At that time, the house we lived in was infested by rats. Dozens of rats!

Woman 2: Over there?

Woman 1: Yes, in London. We rented that house. So at night, we would run around to catch the rats. In order to get rid of them, we would run this way and that way and collide into each other. The woman on the ground floor thought that we ran around to irritate and annoy her. So the next morning, she complained to the landlady and told her, "You know the family you rented out your house to stay up all night and play football. They do all that so that I cannot sleep at night." After that incident, the landlady came up to me and said, "Mrs Taher, the woman in the ground floor cannot sleep at night because all of you apparently play football all night. That is not right." Then I said, "Do you think I look like I can play football?" Then she said, "I told her myself that there is no one like you. Your family is so respectable. Mrs Taher, especially, is such a good person and her sons are even better: polite, gentle and kind. There is no way they can do this. But the lady on the ground floor insisted that I do not know anything, and that you start playing indoors after midnight." Then I told her that that was not true and because the rats move about in all directions at night, we try to stop them but the woman above thinks otherwise. No matter how many times the landlady would tell her that we were trying to catch rats, the woman would not believe her but would insist that we played football, and footsteps made during the hat-trick would interfere with her sleep. Then one morning, I accidentally happened to meet her on the staircase. She did not know that I was living on the floor above her. Then she asked, "Do you live here?" and I replied, "Yes, I live here." Then she asked, "Who else lives with you?" I replied, "My two sons live with me." Then she said, "Oh, your two sons live here." I said, "Yes, but why are you asking?" Then she said, "No reason." And then she walked away. After some time, she returned with several gifts and cards in her hand and said, "Here, these are for you." Then I said, "Oh, you live right below me. I heard that you complained about me, that we play football at night." And she said, "No, no, I did not! I did not do so. Never, never!" Then I said, "The landlady told me that the woman on the ground floor complained that the people living above her play football at night." Then she kept insisting that she did not complain and that my sons were very gentle. Right at that instant, Shuvon (the son) was walking down the stairs and seeing him, she exclaimed, "This is your son. Very good. Very good." However, two days ago she saw Shuvon on the street and she gave him quite a scolding.

Woman 2: The old woman?

Woman 1: Yes, she had screamed at him and told him that he intentionally bothered her at night. But when she saw him at the staircase she kept asking whether that was my son. When I told her that this was my youngest son and that I have an elder son she said, “Very good boys. Lovely! Lovely! Darling! Darling!” Shuvon was surprised. He said, “Mother, what just happened? Two days ago she was screaming at me in the street and now she is being so sweet. I exclaimed, “Listen to me!” There is a funny story behind this. This is the same woman I helped out, but she did not understand that I lived in the same house, right above her. She thought I lived somewhere else. And I thought she lived in the house next to this. I was also not aware that she had shifted to this house. Then I told her, “We did not intend to disturb you, but there are many rats in our house and at night when they run around we try our best to catch them. The medicine to kill the rats is also not working.” Then she seemed to be more understanding. From that point onwards, whenever we saw each other, she was very nice and kept going, like, “Darling, Darling!”

This time when I went back to London, I did not see her. Perhaps she has passed away.

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