

An umbrella for the rain

Getting home from work in time to relieve our sitter every day can be a challenge, and this night during my drive home it was pouring. So, of course, the traffic was dreadful, and I was late.

When I pulled up at home, I parked our car, grabbed my purse and umbrella, and hurried to the front door.

Our sitter was ready to go, and we exchanged a quick update as she turned to leave.

But our younger son tugged at my arm and started whispering. I leaned down to hear what he was saying. I thought he'd tell me he had found an old piece of candy to eat or that his brother had had more screen time or maybe that he found another praying mantis in the yard.

Instead, I was surprised to hear him breathe into my ear, "She doesn't have an umbrella."

I glanced at our sitter, who was walking out into the rain, and I realized he was absolutely right.

I stopped her, handed her my damp, somewhat misshapen umbrella, and she headed out into the downpour—but at least she had something to protect her just a little.



Now, I should have seen that our sitter didn't have an umbrella. And I should have known she wouldn't have one today since it was a beautiful, sunny morning when

she arrived—though thunderstorms arrived in the afternoon. But in the whirl of excitement and the hurry to complete our daily changing of the guard, I failed to notice.

But our 7-year-old did. And he didn't want our sitter to get soaked on her way to the car.

It was such a simple act of kindness, just a small moment of thoughtfulness. But witnessing that spark of compassion in our child gave me such hope and joy.

It also reminds me that I need to be more observant and attentive to the needs of others around me. Sometimes those needs are so significant I might not feel I can do anything. But sometimes the smallest action makes a difference.

And I can certainly share my umbrella.