

# Water, water everywhere, so grab a bucket!

The thunder was already rumbling when I put a pot of water on the stove and slipped some leftover stuffed peppers into the oven for dinner.

As I worked in the kitchen, the storm was getting fiercer and closer. Then the power went out and the boys were scared. Dinner didn't matter anymore. We grabbed a flashlight and some books and huddled together on the couch to read.

When John made it home, his first thought was the electric pump that keeps water from flooding into the exterior stairwell to our basement. He was right to be worried. Minutes later, he and I had become a bucket brigade, working furiously to empty the stairwell as muddy water started coming over the threshold into the basement.

Even though we wanted the boys out of the way, they were too scared to be anywhere else. So we sent them running for towels and then made them sit on the carpeted steps inside the basement where they could shine flashlights on us and ask a string of questions—some of which we answered and some of which I missed while lugging buckets of water to the utility tub.

I did pause for long enough to explain that the whole house was not going to end up underwater, that we were all safe, that we were lucky Baba was home, and to ask them to say a prayer.

"I already did, Mama." Of course he did. A child who prays before each game on the iPad probably prays when his house is flooding.

Eventually the torrential rain subsided and we were able to stop. The power was still out, though, and John's idea of dinner after all that excitement was not sitting in a dark kitchen with a plate of bananas, cheese, and crackers.

And the storm was over. So we locked the door, climbed into the car, and headed to a restaurant.



We were sharing our war stories as our waitress arrived with our food, and Leo said to me, “Mama, why didn’t we make lasagna for dinner?”

I started to explain about the leftover peppers in the oven and stopped. I suddenly realized I had left the stovetop on. If the power came on while we were out, all the water could boil away, and it could start a fire.

I grabbed my purse and ran, leaving my family behind.

I raced home—luckily not far. As I turned onto our street, I could see that the power was back on. In the kitchen the water was boiling, but there was still plenty of water. I made it in time.

I turned everything off and headed back to the restaurant, where our boys happily ate my shrimp scampi since I was still shaky at the idea of what might have happened.

This was last night. Since then we have lost power two more times (so far?), John has mountains of dirty towels to wash, and we are debating what to do to prevent future flooding, but we know we are very fortunate. We have friends nearby who sustained much worse damage from huge pieces of hail and the deluge of rain. We are all safe. That’s what really matters.

And now you know why we didn’t make lasagna for dinner.

