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## Moths

by Sue Hitchcock

I've been very busy this week. Yesterday I spent hours up a stepladder cleaning the picture rails, where the clothes moths had taken up residence in the dust. It's no joke for someone of my age to climb ladders, what with feeling giddy, but my husband is even wobblier.

Let me start from the beginning. Once upon a time, many years ago, my husband bought a suit. Was it for my older daughter's wedding? He looked splendid, being tall and slim. The suit came out for a few excursions - a nephew's wedding, his mother's funeral - but it had hung unused, like many formal suits, unrequited for events, which were cancelled during the Pandemic lockdown.

Last June our younger daughter finally agreed to marry her long-time partner and at last the suit might fulfill its duty. The suit's sleeping-bag-like cover was unzipped, but the suit was not asleep. It was a dead suit. How could a tiny moth eat so much? Whole chunks of the shoulder were gone, so it was dispatched to the rubbish bin. However it was too late to stop the moth's offspring. I vacuumed and shampooed the carpet, but the larvae had already nibbled the edge of it.

We did notice the occasional creature fluttering by, but when they started drowning in our nighttime glasses of water, we needed to take action. Jumpers were washed, holey jackets disposed of and undamaged jackets having lavender deterrent sachets added to the pockets.

The second installment in this story is the request by my granddaughter that I should make her a jacket for next year in the sixth form. It should have all the pockets of a blazer, but in different material.

I made a beautiful jacket, but hadn't noticed that no seam allowances were included in the pattern. Hence it was too small. Online fabric shopping is rather odd. Although the colour and fibre are described, the weight of the fabric can only be experienced by touch. The replacement fabric, the original being sold out, was only suitable for a heavy coat, so I made one for myself and looked for a suiting fabric. So after making two jackets in two weeks, I started a third. This had to be right. In order to construct a jacket an awful lot of snipping and trimming of internal seams and interfacing takes place and I have to admit that the whole house was strewn with snips and threads. What lovely moth food!

At last after three jackets in three weeks, the clean up had to start. There seemed to be even more moths after the floor was perfected and they seemed to like the ceiling. That was when I found their new home, the picture rail.

As for eavesdropping, chance would be a fine thing! Nevertheless, last week was half term and the boy next door was at home, in the room next to my sewing activities. He is a fine young man, now fifteen, but still a child in one thing - his love of computer games. So between the growling of my sewing machine, I could hear his voice shouting to an online friend in excited battles. Still what he said was a mystery.