

# Down Home: POP! BOOM! and asking for help

March 22, 2013

Near the end of a long day, I parked my car, punched the garage-door control, crawled out of the car, grabbed my backpack, closed the car door. And then just about jumped out of my skin.

I planned to do everything but the skin-jumping-out part. That occurred a nanosecond after the humongous POP! and about 13 nanoseconds before the ominous BOOM!

Normally, I remain inside my skin when I get home at the end of a long day. Furthermore, POP! and BOOM! have not bombarded my daily sonic senses since the old Batman TV show went off the air.

But between the time I closed my car door and crossed the threshold of the door into our den, the mainspring on our garage door exploded. I'm certain doorologists know the name for what happens when a mainspring explodes. ("Bursts"? "Ruptures"? "Shatters"? ) All I know is the POP! nearly made me jump out of my skin, and the BOOM! slammed me back in.

## **Crashing to the floor**

The POP! happened when the spring blew up. And the BOOM! sounded when the garage door crashed to the floor.

All this proceeded according to Murphy's Law #347, Section A, Paragraph 17, Subparagraph iii — "The mainspring of a garage door will not explode (producing POP! and BOOM!) unless both automobiles possessed by the garage-owner are parked inside said garage."

The veritable reality of that law occurred to me even before POP! and

BOOM! stopped echoing in our garage and ringing in my ears.

“Joanna and I both have appointments in the morning,” I recalled. “And both cars are trapped in our garage.”

The first thing I did was what any self-respecting guy with a garage with a broken door would do. I tried to open it.

### **Technical details**

Every other garage door I’ve ever owned featured some sort of latch on the door or on the track where the wheels on the side of the door roll when you lift or lower it.

Not this garage door. I disengaged the door from the door-opener chain, which theoretically freed the door to go up and down. Then, I grabbed hold of the garage door and lifted.

Well, that’s not exactly right. I tried to lift. But the door didn’t budge.

Joanna sympathetically listened to me grunt and growl and watched veins pop out on my forehead.

“Maybe you should call Larry,” Jo suggested.

### **Larry to the rescue**

Larry is the most important citizen of Coppell, the small bedroom community in northwest Dallas County, where we live. Larry owns a home-repair company. Larry knows how to fix practically everything. And if he doesn’t know how to fix it, he knows the person who knows.

So, I pulled my phone out of my pocket and called Larry. He listened as I explained my predicament.

“I can be there in about 40 minutes,” Larry said, explaining 40 minutes

would give him time to get in touch with one of his workers, who would meet him at our house, so they could lift our door, and we could move our cars to the driveway, and then he could see to fixing our door the next morning.

Here's the rest of our conversation:

### **The burliness factor**

Me: "Larry, you don't have to bother him. I'll help you lift the door."

Larry: "You don't understand. Two burly men can lift your garage door. ... Uh, that's not you."

Larry was onto something. I've been called plenty of things in my lifetime. "Burly" isn't among them.

So, later that evening, burly Larry and one of his crew, a burly guy whose name I never caught, showed up at our house. They lifted the garage door while Jo and I removed our cars.

And the next morning, another worker—a really burly guy, who lifted the garage door all by himself—showed up to make the repairs. Soon, Larry came around to check on me and on my garage.

That evening, almost exactly 24 hours after POP! and BOOM!, I arrived back home. Inside the garage, I ran the door up and down several times, just to watch and listen. Smooth. Almost silent. Reliable.

Like I said, Larry is the most important citizen of Coppell.

### **Asking for help**

Our garage-door episode reminded me of a spiritual lesson I learn, forget and relearn, over and over again—kind of like a garage door sliding up and

down.

We're made in God's image, but one of our defining human characteristics is our inherent finitude. We can't do everything. Sometimes, we need help, whether it's physical help, emotional help or spiritual help.

One aspect of grace is realizing others can help us. An even more important aspect of grace is asking for—and receiving—that help.