

The Housecleaner does clean often, in some places. The bathrooms are up to snuff, and she keeps a clean kitchen. "WOW," says the installer of a new range in the home. "This is a spotless appliance. Are you sure it does not work?"

It doesn't work just like my memory doesn't work," she thinks.

"Could the Christmas presents be hiding under the beds?" asks her husband. Since the gifts are for him, he stays away while she takes a quick gander in each room housing a bed. With flashlight in hand she slips into room number one. "Aw, "Found it," she thinks. The painted fabric has been in it's resting place for a couple of years. Numerous dust bunnies as if on parade surround the pinks, oranges and blue green artwork. They have done a great job guarding the works of art from the burglar as well as from the artist herself. Now, what pattern can she unearth to make this special stash earn a ribbon or two? A voice from below interrupts her thoughts. "Did you find them?"

"Ah, no, no", she shouts. There is only the dining room table board and the picture album from a 45-year-old wedding.

She drops the fabric and dances into room #2. Holiday wrapping paper, seven more picture albums with the kids take up most of the storage. No gifts, though. "How did we get the folded high chair for visiting grandchildren put under this bed?" she thinks. The wooden drum, the box of vintage valentines and something out of her reach are the only other items underneath bed.

Now a dust bunny herself, the Housecleaner again bends down, folds up the dust ruffle shines her little light on treasures hidden underneath bed number three. Nothing here, she says to herself. Except, there is the game of Clue, forgotten roller blades size 7, and an extremely large size color book with most of the pages filled in with primary crayon colors.

No gifts!

They are eventually found after the holidays on top of quilt covered bed number two, underneath a pillow. A clever hiding place. The painted fabric is a find though, so the search is not a lost cause.

Good housecleaning always pays.

Lana Russ

