

Automatic Door – Keep Moving

4/01/07

For my sister Joanne, who turns like a hundred years old today. Not a hundred, but it's a great many years no matter how you slice it. ☺

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As I was leaving the supermarket today I saw that sticker that seems to be at the center of every supermarket door window, as if to abide by some kind of supermarket law. It says “Automatic Door” and “Keep Moving” in black letters, and there’s a bold black arrow pointing up and circled in green. You know the one.

This particular store’s exit door is delayed, though ... so I determined that if I were to actually keep moving as the sign instructs, I’d probably walk right into it. So there’s a required pause, at least if you’re walking at any reasonable speed.

As I passed through that door, feeling clever for not blindly following directions without question and thereby avoiding a collision, I saw that there was an upcoming, identical door. The true exit of the supermarket, not like that lesser pre-exit that I nearly assaulted. In just a few strides I crossed this metallic-brown no man’s land of a room, stepping into the range of the motion sensor to this second automatic door.

It was identical except that its sticker had been vandalized by none other than that same store’s seafood department ... someone from seafood had put a sticker that read “The Seafood Shop” directly over the words “Keep Moving”, blocking that part out and leaving me free to choose whether I stop moving or not. Maybe this seafood character agrees with my thinking, walks at my pace.

I nodded to myself as I stepped out into the cool night air and headed for the car. “Right on, seafood guy,” I thought.