

## Vigilance and Serendipity

By Kathy Hudson

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My husband is ever vigilant. He checks our house doors, the car doors, the back gate and garage regularly, like a sentinel. He has to. He has a wife whose "mentalpausal" tendencies often leave all doors open to the world.

Not this weekend. I was in Virginia. He was home alone, so everything stayed battened down at the hatches for more than 24 hours, at least until I phoned late Saturday night. I called to say that I was almost back. I had not taken my house keys, so I wanted him to know that my sister and I were en route. It makes me nervous standing outside late on a Saturday night. Things happen in the city on Saturday nights.

Sure enough, when my husband was watching out the window for me, he saw someone walk down the nearby alley. At first he thought it was a friend of one of the many teenage boys on our street. Then he saw the fellow check the car door handles. Lots of mischief has taken place on this street and throughout the 'hood this spring. First, tires were slashed, then all of the unlocked cars had GPS systems and other loose items taken. No matter how leafy the neighborhood, it's not a good idea to leave cars unlocked.

When my sister and I drove up in the wee hours of Sunday morning, my husband was standing in the street with a telephone. How attentive, I thought. Indeed. He was out there waiting for me and also the police, whom he'd called after seeing the car doors tested. I unloaded the car quickly, and my sister pulled away minutes before four police cars responded.

An officer said he'd come back and let us know if they apprehended anyone, but my husband said he wouldn't be able to identify anyone. It had been too dark to see anything but a form.

Less than 24 hours later a neighbor, who'd had his car robbed early Sunday, sent out a neighborhood e-mail saying a suspect had been caught on Falls Road with a bag of change labeled with the family name.

Let's hear it for timing, vigilance and the Baltimore City police.

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## Kathy Hudson

Kathy Hudson is a freelance writer who lives in in Roland Park. Her interests include gardening, literature and city life. She's a terrible cook, so she's always on the lookout for a decent meal, carryout or otherwise. She's written for "The Baltimore Messenger" since 1995 and has had a bi-weekly column, "Hudson's Corner," since 1998. For "Style" magazine she writes spotlights on people and regular garden features.