



Once I was old enough to understand that the Bogeyman probably didn't live under my single-pine-framed bed in a cud-le-de-sac in a small town in South Wales, I realised it was my "safe place". A place to keep things away from prying parents, annoying younger siblings and – as I got older – partners, the occasional cleaner and then offspring.

In the early years, within the wooden drawers (that my lovely dad Pete made) under my bed, some treasures included my WWII collection of gas masks, the one and only Valentine's Day card I received, plus a giant Toblerone from Duty Free that I could make last at least a month. I also remember stashing my well-worn copy of Judy Blume's coming-of-age book *Forever* under there, with the pages that featured Ralph (Katherine's boyfriend's name for his penis) folded over for quick reference.

Fast forward to a bit later in life, to the magical years in shared terraces with best mates and divvying up the landline phone bill. With little to no storage, everything except the kitchen sink got shoved under your double bed, unless you had a futon; then you were screwed. I also kept the odd animal under the bed: a rabbit or two, and a dolphin at one stage. Don't worry. These were "batteries not included" types. I think everyone I knew bought a Rabbit after we were introduced to the popular vibrator with the cute bunny ears in the first season of *Sex And The City*.

But once married, you only had half the bed to keep your secrets stashed. In my case: online shopping packaging evidence, ear plugs, a tonne of dust and Mylanta bottles from pregnancy heartburn hell. One upside of divorcing was getting full custody of the entire undercarriage of the bed. A downside is multiple house moves. Just when I thought I'd nailed the perfect pack-up, the removalist walked past me as I was vacuuming the lounge carpet to say I'd left a few things under the bed. Once you remove the bed, you also remove the safety of what the bed covered. There, languishing in the middle of where my bedframe was, lay a twice-used pink yoga mat, lots of dust and an adult toy I lovingly named Keith. The rest of the experience with the removalists and me took on a deathly-silent blushed-cheek vibe.

“The undercarriage of my bed has always been a safe place for my secrets”

What lies beneath? **Cathrine Mahoney** isn't referring to the horror movie featuring the magnificent Michelle Pfeiffer and the “bangable back then” Harrison Ford, but rather what you keep below your bed. In her latest column for *Body+Soul*, the podcaster and author overshares on why the undercarriage of your queen is the best place to keep your “toys” and your Toblerones – away from the inquisitive eyes of teenage sons and removalists



Lockdown provided a perfect time to get under my present queen set-up and give it a good sort out, as again I found my safe place bursting at the seams. One thing I did get rid of was a second or third generation Keith. It had sadly broken, due to a dodgy charging cable, not overuse, I hasten to add. I'd made mention on the *Not Another Parenting Podcast* I co-host with Sarah McGilvray that I had found myself currently between vibrators. We have the loveliest podcast listeners and a few weeks later were sent a replacement couple's kit full of a variety of toys. Again, I shoved the whole lot into the depths.

A few weeks later, as I lay on my bed reading, in came my teenage son who was badgering me to take him for sushi. While trying to wear me down, he began kicking under the bed and out popped the tip of a plastic purple phallus. We both clocked it. I screamed, and my son scarpered.

We didn't mention the incident as the plates piled up at the local Sushi Train, but I did find time the next day to get things sorted under the bed... leaving me with no choice but to go back to Googling pics of Harrison Ford in his prime as Han Solo. • **Cathrine Mahoney's book *Currently Between Husbands* (Simon & Schuster, \$34.99) is out now. Mahoney also hosts the podcasts *So, I Quit My Day Job* and *Not Another Parenting Podcast*.**