Playing pranks is just a part of growing up. I think they should be played on people more often. One afternoon my childhood friend and I decided that we would try just about every prank we could think of on my grandparents.

My friend Kay lived down the road, and her mother gave her permission to come play with me until the sun went down. We had all afternoon to pull some of what we believed would be the greatest pranks ever.

We started off kind of simple. But they didn't work out as planned.

We put a sticky gum-like slime onto Paw Paw's smoking pipe. Thank goodness the slime wasn't flammable because he fired his pipe right up like nothing happened. He just shook his head.

We replaced the sugar inside the sugar jar with salt. Maw Maw took a sip of her coffee, quickly spitting it out in the sink. Dipping her finger in the sugar bowl, realizing it was salt, she blamed herself.

"Well, I'll be," she said, pouring the salt out. "Why on earth did I do that?"

Kay and I thought long and hard about what we could do to really get them good.

Maw Maw was in the bedroom, folding towels, when we decided we had to do something to her.

I knew Maw Maw hated bugs. She couldn't stand them. She poured gasoline on every ant pile she saw. She sprayed every wasp, bee, hornet, even a helpless moth with bug spray when they came under the carport. The blue light machine that fried mosquitos stayed on 24 hours a day, seven days a week. She would even nail our dog Roho with a swatter if a fly landed on him. Maw Maw didn't discriminate. She hated all bugs.

Digging around in my toy chest, I discovered a rubber spider toy that came out of a gumball machine.

Grabbing a kitchen chair, Kay and I quietly placed the fake spider on the edge of the hall door. When she was done folding towels, she would come out of the hallway from the bedroom. Opening the door, the rubber bug would fall right onto her.

We were so excited about our prank that Kay thought of another good one we could play. She said her big brother did it to her Momma, and it was priceless.

We took a rubber band and tied it around the water sprayer on the kitchen sink. Whoever turned the sink knob would be greeted by a splash of water from the sprayer hose.

Kay and I almost couldn't contain ourselves with excitement. We sat at the dining room table

with our soft drinks and waited on Maw Maw.
We weren't expecting Paw Paw to come in from outside so soon. Being restricted to a wheelchair, he rolled over to the sink to wash his hands.
Being at eye level to the sprayer because of his wheelchair, he turned the sink knob.
The water sprayed him directly in the face. Paw Paw immediately turned the water off before shouting a few choice words. He couldn't wipe his face with his hands because he had dirt on them.
Kay and I weren't laughing at all like we thought we would. In fact, we sat there in silence. I felt bad for the water hitting Paw Paw. He wasn't the intended victim. I admit, we both kind of froze up.
"Earlene," he shouted, with water dripping down his face. "Bring me a dish rag. The sink is broke. I got water all in my face."
Maw Maw made her way down the hall. I heard her house shoes slapping against the floor. And then the door opened.
The rubber bug did what it was supposed to do. It actually slid down Maw Maw's face and landed on top of her folded towels in the laundry basket.
Throwing the entire basket in the air, she hollered so loud that the dog started howling too. The basket went flying into the living room, landing upside down.
Flapping her hands through her hair, she continued to holler. Thinking something was wrong, Paw Paw spun around in his wheelchair to see what he could do. Water still dripped all over his face.
And the whole time Kay and I just sat there, too scared to move.
Our prank session didn't go as planned.
Kay got sent, more like ordered actually, to go back home. I had to go outside and pick my own switch.
I had to refold all the towels and rags that Maw Maw had folded earlier. And I couldn't have "company" over for he rest of the week.
I still think that pranks are a part of growing up and should be practiced in every childhood. But I hope I can remind myself of that when James leaves a fake snake in the fridge or when Elsie unscrews my salt shaker.
I probably need to really stay on my toes though over the next few years.