

Silence and Storms

Written by Laura Packard

Tuesday, 23 January 2018 14:50



I hit my head on the rear tailgate door. Hard. I saw stars and a Carl's burger. Not sure what that meant but I managed to keep consciousness.

Next, my grocery bag, slightly wet with who knows what, ripped, the contents spilled all over the floor and then rolled under the car, refusing to come out.

And every single blessed thing I stuck in the freezer, pantry or cabinet gasped, pouted then did the dramatic Lipton Tea drop to the kitchen tile, no doubt exasperated at all the unending piles of crap in there.

I get it. I really do. I am exasperated, too.

It seems, as my mother used to say when I was growing up, right hand approximately 6 inches above her frosted tips, "□□ I have just about had it up to here."□□

And I'm not the only one. You should have seen my husband's face when he walked in whistling only to see me drop kick an unruly Udi's gluten free pizza across the room. He quickly walked right back out, no longer whistling.

Anyone that knows me, knows I hate January. Can't stand it. If it were a food instead of a month, I would rate it right up there with boiled cabbage sans salt. If January was a movie on Rotten Tomatoes, it would score a negative 10% on the green splatted Tomatometer. I could go on and on, but I think you get my point by now.

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It's inevitable; you finally paid last year's health insurance deductible, the ball drops and someone needs 72 stitches.

Warranties run out. The ice maker not only stops working, but also starts dripping hard earned cash.

And it gets cold. And I hate cold more than I hate January, so that's saying something.

We did manage to make it through the 'historic bomb cyclone,' Winter Storm Grayson or the Blizzard of 2018, whatever you choose to call it, though.

I chose to call it the 'sound of silence' because powder on the streets is cool and all, but power in the house is where it's at. And we had none. Yes, flurries and light dustings are nice but when the interior temperature is 42 the FIRST night, I am no longer into the white stuff.

And it's so eerie when there is no sound whatsoever in the house. It's romantic and all when you talk about powering down and turning off . . . in theory. In real life, it's a terrible idea. People start to get twitchy.

It's like Poe's tell-tale heart beating loudly under the floor boards, "And have I not told you that what you mistake for madness is but over-acuteness of sense? now, I say, there came to my ears a low, dull, quick sound, such as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton. I knew that sound well, too. It was the beating of the old man's heart."

I knew when I kept flipping on and off all the light switches in every single room I went into, no light would come on. But I found myself doing it anyway, laughing nervously at my stupidity and cringing slightly at the sharp sound it would make like a finger snap. I would startle easily as my husband would slam the toilet seat down making my head throb, when it was only the day before I'd thanked the almighty for having someone in my life so thoughtful. I could hear every dog's breath, every footstep, cough and snuffle, every tree limb that cracked before falling to earth. It was enough to make anyone mad.

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Poe believed the secret to understanding irrational thinking is the belief in rationality. A rational mind is only fooling itself. Rationality is . . . well, neither here nor there.

So, I guess what I despise about January is it's supposed to be about silencing the voices and listening to our bodies and inner selves and tuning in and improving and being . . . better. That's a lot of stuff going on all at once. And there isn't one bit of rationality that can disperse that kind of pressure cooker.

Me, I say 2018 come on bring the noise. I'll do my best to sort it out as it comes. Maybe I will make something special and gorgeous sounding out of sharp notes, missing beats and flat overtures.

One thing I know for certain as I start this year anew is that I am not playing the game anymore, the always trying to be a 'better' version of myself. It's like my beloved dog, Atlas, chasing his godforsaken tail all the time. He never gets anywhere new. He just gets dizzy, frustrated and sleeps all the time.

Let's just embrace the crazy, the lack of basic organization, the cluttered fridge, and enjoy the almighty ride. Happy 2018, y'all! And January, don't let the back door hit ya.