

Bad Day

by Kate Gallant

Some days are just not good. I'm not talking about those *lost-my-job-the cat-died* days. I'm talking about the ones where everything is a bit off, you're up two pounds, your *ok-I'll-splurge-pants* get puddled drenched. A day where your washing machine quits in the rinse cycle, and the dog pees on the rug twice, and the "*we'll get right back to you guy*" doesn't, but the GST guy does ... and your mother calls because you haven't.

Not an earth shattering day. Not life altering. Just not good. A day where you have a flax seed between your front teeth all morning and nobody tells you. Or where you realize too late the bread machine yeast was past due, or that the leaf filled bags in the back yard have rotted at the bottom. A day when the window cleaner forgot the skylight, or the "*Leon's Don't Pay A Cent Event*" has passed the grace period, ... and your mother phones and tells you that you don't respect her.

It's nothing you can't deal with. It's not open a vein time. It's just a day when the morning paper doesn't arrive, when your favorite TV show is preempted by baseball, when you find moth holes in your favorite sweater. A day where the hair dryer smells funny and dies when you're getting ready for a party, or your manicure smudges unlocking the front door ... and your mother calls and asks whether you've been away.

It's not Alanis Morissette time. There's really nothing ironic about it. It's just a pain. A bummer. A drag. A day when the basement leaks, your car stalls on a left turn, the bank machine is down, or the movie you've schlepped miles north to see is sold out. ... It's a day when your mother calls to tell you that the results of all her medical tests that you forgot to ask about are MOSTLY fine.

It's just a day where your throat hurts a little, the coffee machine quits, you've misplaced the house keys, your toilet backs up, you lose a filling, your printer runs out of

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ink, the elevator is out of service, or you're in a meeting and realize that dog poo smell is you. ... It's a day when your mother is coming to dinner.

It's a bad hair day. Or a day where you lose a new glove, or the street car takes forever, or you're late for yoga class. A day when you have a big blister from your new boots, and a little headache over your left eye. A day when you burn the cookies. A day when you didn't speak up, or you spoke out of turn. A day where an explanation just didn't cut it. ... But your mother cut to the bone.

I guess it's just reassuring to know that the not so good days are universal. Everybody has 'em. And someone can say: "Oh yeah you think THAT's a bad day? Well try this on for size my friend"! And then they start telling you about THEIR bad day, and you think poor bastard, poor miserable bastard, my bad day was NOTHING compared to his bad day. And it's kind of empowering, you know, in a twisted sort of way. Because you start to feel better at someone else's expense. Which is not very nice, granted, but is sometimes necessary in order to move forward. Besides the poor poor miserable bastard enjoys the wallowing right? He needs that. To complete the cycle. So really, it benefits everyone. So, as you unlock your door at day's end your personal little black cloud lifts a bit, your step lightens, and you realize it was just an off day and ... maybe you'll give your mother a call. Then you turn on the living room light and realize the cat's not moving.

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