

Exhale

by Deborah Oster Pannell

It's as if the house knew I was relinquishing my hold on it. The night before the closing, it began to let go. A new water stain emerged on the bedroom ceiling, the bugs came out, the faucet started to drip, and I knew it would not release me easily...

It's like when you've pushed yourself beyond measure, for an extended period of time producing a show, or working on a long-term project. You finally complete it, and then your body just collapses with the flu or some strange stomach virus, as though it can barely keep itself together anymore.

That's how it is after a prolonged push. The atoms of your person, the figments of your imagination, the force that holds them in place gives way and they simply begin to spread apart, leaving room for disease and new ideas. The yin and yang of recovery.

Letting go of the illusion of safety, shelter, predictability ... it's terrifying and exhilarating. I yearn for the freedom of collapse - like a sharp outtake of breath after a near miss, and the adrenaline rush, and the color flooding my face with relief.

