

Mother's Day

by Johnsienoel

At breakfast:

I hear Hurricane Hattie, a Category 5 tossing over pillows, and bunnies, and bears, and book-bags and elephants, as she tracks counter clockwise from her bedroom. Pulling in bystanders the eye of the storm settles over the kitchen island in a dizzying rotation of *Mommy, I don't wanna go to school.*

MOM! I don't wanna have that in my lunch.

Mommy, I don't feel so good.

Yo ma, I don't have any clean underwear.

Mother, I -

By lunch:

The dryer is an F-5 dervish of mismatched socks, blue jeans and your yellowing college T's, lovingly held onto. For a moment there is a comforting warmth and softness to their smell. In the debris strewn landscape of the living room a carcass of clothes awaits proper burial, an over-turned sippy cup needs righting, dust bunnies cower in corners, books crushed on all corners need re-shelving, and blocks stacked into towers

over,

and over,

and over

and over,

and over

again, are tumbled once more.

By mid-afternoon.:

I feel time trembling near magnitude five on the Richter Scale as I navigate fault lines ripping through the center of my agenda in four cardinal directions. Someone has ballet but we can't find a slipper, the car is running on fumes, there are basketball try-outs, haircuts, and - Where's my phone?

By 5p.m.:

I see a wave train flooding the kitchen. Billy has punched one of the twins, 'Sissy' is missing her homework assignments and you are not walking in late asking 'Where's dinner?'

I contemplate:

1. chasing you down to skewer you with a kitchen knife
2. trolling the Internet for information on mammals that eat their young
3. why I never stitched my vagina shut
4. balling up on the floor, sobbing and sucking my thumb, underneath the table
5. what's for dinner

At Bedtime:

I taste exhaustion on the furry sweaters wrapped around my teeth as I crash, spread-eagle across my undressed mattress. I wonder if I look like a starfish with each ray arranged roughly in equal pieces around a central axis seventy-two degrees apart and how much room there is without you beside me.

I think about the kids. Five; a *good* prime number and wonder what makes one *bad*.

I tally up the five senses and ask myself how intuition gets added in and why the eyes in the back of my head didn't see this one coming.

And -

I wish that like the starfish which has an appendage ripped from its core and tossed into the sea, I too could grow into a whole new being, or two, as my left arm moves a little bit higher and extends a little bit wider, trying to get the angles - right.

