

## And Now, Comes the Basement....



By Anna Von Reitz

Every housewife in the world knows what that means.

It might be the "Junk Drawer" or the "Man Cave" or the "Basement"--- however you put it or wherever it is, it is the usual domicile of stuff collected and left to run amok. Imagine "the Basement" after a 7.0 Earthquake?

It has been a month since the Big Quake of 2018. We recently had two aftershocks that were big enough to count as notable events, but thanks to everything being ruined once already, nobody I know has reported additional damage.

So in all my spare time, such as it is, I am in the basement, sorting, cleaning, picking up, cocking my head to one side wondering what it is --- or what it was.

In our case, the basement is literally a basement. It's normally a nice, clean, orderly space---- not so much now, but being set to rights.. It's dry and its large and open and well-lit, not the dank and dark basements I recall in the Midwest as a child, but an optional working space for doing oddball projects and for storing stuff. Lots of stuff.

This is, therefore, an ongoing exercise in organization and re-organization of stuff that is either damaged or not damaged, and picking up the mess in between.

I have a few shelves of canned goods and that sort of thing in the basement, as you would expect from a Tin Hat who chooses not to be dependent on the grocery store opening every day of the year. And as an Alaskan, I have my fair share of camping gear: tents, fishing poles, gun lockers, outdoor camp stoves, tackle boxes, snarled nets, and all.

This is the moment when I sigh and say, "It would be cheaper and easier just to buy fish!"

And everyone else says, "But, Mom!....." as if I had just cursed the dog or kicked the family cat.

So the arduous business of cleaning and sorting and oiling and unsnarling fishing rods and reels and lines must be done ---- slowly, because that is the only way it can be done.

I say softly to myself, "There must be a better way....." and shake my head and go on. If anyone knows a good way to store a dozen or so different kinds of rods and reels, women all over the world are waiting to hear about it.

The salmon and halibut rods are thick and short and have massive reels. The trout rods are just as determinedly long and slim with light, fast reels that hardly seem to be reels in comparison to the saltwater gear. And none of it seems to fit naturally anywhere.

I weigh my options grimly: separate the reels from the rods or leave them attached? Divide and conquer, I say. But then, I have to deal with the screws and fittings.... ah, individual plastic gallon bags.....but where in all this mess are the gallon bags?

You see how this goes. It is what Pat McManus defined as a "sequential vortex" where you start out with a seeming practical goal --- in this case, to unsnarl and store fishing gear --- and step by step, in logical enough sequence, wind up in another corner of the basement wading through boxes of other "stuff" entirely, looking for plastic bags.

Only God knows where the trail leads from here. For all I know it could go from plastic bags to the machine shop, looking for reel oil in a mess nearly as bad as this one is.

Why the reel oil is never stored with the reels, but instead wanders about with all the other oils --- "Three in One" and Mineral and "Amsol" and "WD-40" and "Grinder's Friend" as well as every kind of Motor Oil known to man --- is a mystery known only to my husband and other men.

These considerations are in part why recovering from an earthquake is such a slow process. It's existential. And sometimes a crisis.

The slow slog through re-ordering one's life forces us to ask all sorts of questions and find answers that we were never looking for before.

I am a stubborn woman, battle-hardened in the fight against chaos. The gear will get sorted, the reels will get oiled, the lines will be tied back, and everything will find a safe place to hang or lean until next season when the Fish Hunters come mess it all up again.

So I stop and consider whether or not the damage and mess created by the earthquake is the same as, or similar to, the mess and damage created by tired fishermen leaving their poles all more-or-less jumbled together in a heap?

I admit I don't know--- and will probably never know--- and slog onward at a slow and dogged pace.

One of the odd things about an earthquake disaster is what gets damaged and what doesn't. I lost my China, karate-chopped by compression waves as it sat innocently in my kitchen cupboards, but somehow kept a very large glass case full of crystal ware --- all untouched, standing inviolate in the midst of the dust and rubble. Go figure?

God decided it was time for new China, but liked my crystal pattern?

Christmas dinner (and New Years and all the holidays to come after, we hope) was saved by friends who sent me Service for Sixteen?????---- in a beautiful new Mikasa pattern, "Parchment". Opening the boxes was a giddy experience. I felt like I was twenty again, and signed up for a bridal registry.

How did they know that the set I lost was also Mikasa---albeit, from thirty years ago and now considered antique? (It used to take 100 years to become "antique"--- now, only 30.....go figure, eh?)

You can't plan for a gift like that. You just have to rock back on your heels and wonder. Here I am, setting sail into my old age, with a brand new set of China, made by the same company I chose so many years ago.... ? Even my husband's jaw dropped.

God is good, and so are those who are His hands and feet on Earth.

The women who sent me this precious gift couldn't know that the set I lost was Mikasa, but He did. And so, as unlikely as it seems, I am totally restored, right down to having China made by the same company----and more place settings, too. The set I lost was service for twelve, not sixteen.

Those who sought to do evil were totally countermanded by those who sought to do good.

I have oftentimes suspected that that is what life is all about ---- a testing ground to see what we will choose, either good or evil? And I have observed that those who choose good, reap goodness in return, while those who choose evil receive it back in full measure.

There's a time delay involved, sometimes more time, sometimes less --- but what goes around, does come around---- for men and for nations.

Those who cheated and defrauded our country and our people back in the Nineteenth Century and through the Twentieth Century are about to get their harvest via the nationalization of all their ill-gotten gains, the breaking of their monopolistic strangle-holds, and the end of their crime syndicates and interlocking trust directorates.

Even the mechanisms of their operations --- their DOG LATIN spoofs and "secret languages" and "codes" are broken and revealed so that they can do nothing, their trademarks and false copyrights, too. The foot soldiers of all this evil--- the attorneys and the soldiers and bureaucrats, are all being informed and separated as the sheep from the goats.

Each one will make their choice and be accounted for what they have chosen. And it will all get sorted out, just like my basement.

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