

I cannot believe that it is just 5 o'clock in the evening and almost dark. I find that to be a little depressing. I don't know why I reject this idea of putting an end to daylight savings time, but I do. I really do not believe I suffer from seasonal adjustment disorder. Who discovered this scientific breakthrough? The Natural Law Party? I would gladly trade in an extra hour of sleep each Autumn if it meant a little more light at the end of the day. Don't think for a moment that you have a one-hour bonus in your life, for that hour is seized from you each spring. That is just my small protest against the workings of the world. I do try to be optimistic, but just when I think everything is nearing the brink of perfection, one diminutive little occurrence forces its way into the day, and everything falls to pieces.

My sudden despair that is seemingly finding its way onto the pages of the innocent X-Press is not unfounded. I have a reason for my anguish, and if anyone remembers my battle last year with one particular Export 'A' smoking inhabitant of the utility building, then you

trials & tribulations of a twentysomething

by S. Livingstone

will realize that I suffer. I know the pain. Now, back to my torment. The house in which I claim residence status has a new furnace. What fun, you say! Well, cancel the party favours, because this home heating unit is the root of all evil. Please read on.

A new furnace was installed at the end of September, and the house was filled with a warm and cosy feeling which emanated from the century-old rads. That is the memory I hold onto to maintain the small bit of sanity I possess. The old furnace (it was acquired by the Smithsonian) had ceased to operate at the end of the summer, and it took a considerable amount of time for the new one to be installed. The shiny new furnace added a certain glow to the, otherwise murky and sometimes scary

basement which I venture into as little as possible.

This wonderful new furnace, which was the source of endless conversation as though the house had just given birth, became a source of outrage on the weekend. It may seem strange to you that someone nearing the completion of a university degree could hold such hostility towards a furnace, but as an English major I have simply personified the monstrosity lurking in the shadowy depths of the basement to human status. I hate the furnace, but I have yet to tell you why. The furnace, you see, had an accident the other night while everyone was asleep. It leaked some oil on the basement floor. That might not seem so insufferable, but you must understand that the house was built in the late 1800's and the basement has a clay floor. You cannot just bring in the ShopVac from the garage and end the catastrophe in a few short hours. To top it all off, the night of the spill, there was also a raging rain storm in Charlottetown and water found its way to the basement. This makes the cleanup effort all the more difficult. I would not hesitate to declare a state of emergency if I held a high political office, but I do not, so I can just complain in a free weekly instead. The house is situated quite close to Fanningbank, though. I wonder if the Lieutenant Governor has a statement.

I discovered later that not much oil had actually escaped the furnace, not enough to demand an environmental review of the neighbourhood anyway. Sadly enough though, the entire house smells as though an Exxon tanker ran a-ground on West Street. The windows have been open for the past few days and the enchanting aroma is dissipating. I am slowly washing every stitch of clothing I own, but it takes time, so if you notice a distinct Irving-like scent in class it is probably just me sitting there, hoping the prof refrains from lighting a cigarette.

I am in therapy, of course, and hope to come out of this experience with a better understanding for home heating, but that is too far in the distance at the moment to tell. I just heard the spin cycle end, back to my laundry. My lamentations for this week are over.