

I'm proud to say that I made it to the middle of January before those old January blues kicked in. In my world, that's progress! I don't plan on letting my moodiness carry me to the end of the month either. We had too many gray skies this past week, and I think that contributed to my being melancholy these past few days.

Because of the holidays, I've had the boys at home every day until they started going back to school last week. Along with most parents and caregivers of teenage boys, there always seems to be some sort of battle going on. One minute I'm begging them to clean their rooms, and the next, it's as simple as asking them to address their issues with hygiene.

The truth is, I feel exhausted. I'm pretty sure I am one of the many who suffer from seasonal adjustment disorder, or the appropriate acronym, SAD. This past holiday season was full of the usual festivities that take place, but then we had my Samuel's wedding and all the many details that go with that. It was a wonderful time, and I will always cherish it. But now we have slowed down significantly, and I just feel whooped.

When I become very tired, I also tend to start feeling sorry for myself. Specifically, right now I'm experiencing a great deal of loneliness. The responsibility of raising my grandsons tends to make me feel lonely anyway. Raising my own three children was hard enough, but I had help since I was still married. But now, doing this by myself can be a little overwhelming and daunting. As I write this, I've removed their computers from their rooms for a variety of reasons, and I'm dreading when they walk in the door today after school.

I was feeling under the weather Saturday night, and it carried over into Sunday, so I didn't go to church. I told myself that no one would really miss me anyway, so it didn't matter if I showed up or not. I know that is a pitiful way to look at it, but that's how I was feeling. I really did try to listen to the sermon online and read scripture while lying in my favorite chair at home. I was absolutely void of energy, and so very tired.

I ended up tossing and turning all night long, which was frustrating after feeling so exhausted. Eventually I fell asleep but woke up to the strangest dream. I was actually getting married! We were standing there waiting to take our vows, waiting for the right people to show up to officiate. You know how strange dreams can be... You're in a strange setting, your clothes are ridiculous, and everything is just weird all around.

But in this dream, even though I didn't know any of the people around me, I held on fast to my groom. I can't even tell you what his face looked like, but he was a big guy, very strong, and I felt so completely safe and protected as long as I could feel his arms around me. We were about to take our vows when one of the older gentlemen started speaking to my groom. "Marriage is a serious step, and at twenty-two years old, you need to make absolutely sure you're ready for this commitment."

My groom was about to respond when I looked at him and the rest of the crowd. "Whoa! We need to get some facts straight! I'm going to be sixty-three years old this year! I can't marry him!" As you can imagine, the dream turned into pandemonium. I just stepped backward slowly as I watched the insanity unfold. My

alarm started going off, bringing me back to my present reality. It was time to wake the boys to get ready for school.

It feels a bit silly to share this dream with you, but I have a point to make. I don't ever remember feeling as safe and secure as I did while 'that man's' arms were wrapped around me. I haven't felt that kind of closeness with another human being for a very long time, and it left me feeling a bit incomplete this morning. I can only feel the absence of that comfort now, and I'm not sure I have ever felt that safe in my life. I miss it.

So, here I am. Pouring my heart out in words, simply because I am compelled to do so. I can't help but wonder if I will ever be able to experience that feeling again. I hope so. I also wonder if those arms weren't the arms of Jesus, because he is the only one who has ever made me feel that safe.

My January blues will pass, as they always do, and I know I am never truly alone. But for today, I'm just going to stay in my feelings and work through them. Sometimes that's all we can do.

Blessings,

Lisa Jo