



Bring Your Own Weather

THOUGH I'M NOT SURE WHAT I LOOKED LIKE ON the outside, I was definitely sporting a scowl on the inside, and it wasn't pretty. Tugging the edge of the beach towel tighter around my shoulders and crossing my arms, partially to stay warm, but mainly because I was screaming, "I'm mad! I've been wronged!" in body language that was very clearly translated for anyone who dared to glance my way, I was looking anything but pleasant.

"I'm so irritated!" I muttered for the fifth time in half an hour. I was sitting on one of the pool chairs surrounding the infinity pool at the Coeur d'Alene Resort, looking out over lake. What should have been glistening water, blue skies and gorgeous mountains in my line of vision was replaced with choppy waters, dark grey skies, strong winds and sporadic sharp pelts of passing rain.

This was my one summer getaway – a chance to relax, live the resort life, forget about the stresses I was under and enjoy the lake for one weekend of the year. My college suitemates and I, who all live in different states, get together once a year, every year, for a reunion, converging on a different city each year. We've done it for 16 years. This year the gathering was planned for Coeur d'Alene, and the trip was pushed from May to July. The move deeper into summer meant great weather was a given. "Oh, it will be perfect! The weather in July is always so gorgeous," a friend of mine had said when I told her of the plans. I nodded in agreement. Ah, yes, summer in the Northwest!

So we plotted and planned. An early morning hike around Tubbs Hill was planned before spending the morning in the spa. Then to the water taxi, which would whisk us to the lakefront infinity-edge swimming pool for an afternoon of sunning, swimming, dining and drinking. It had been the proverbial dangling carrot that I had been chasing as I worked ahead, late into the evenings and through the weekends of the weeks leading up to the visit, knowing that it would be worth it to work ahead and clear my to-do list, with the promise of

such a relaxing getaway in front of me.

The weather changed though, and the warm temperatures and sunshine that had been with us all summer cleared out as plunging temperatures, rainstorms and thunder pushed in. The picture perfect getaway I had been waiting for was suddenly not so picture perfect. The beauty of the gorgeous lake-and-blue-skies scenery I had been longing for were clouded out by gray clouds, rain and most of all, my bad attitude. The on-the-water activities, the hike around Tubbs Hill and the lounging by the pool were all canceled. Of all the weekends, and all the days, why did it have to rain and be horrible weather on this one weekend that had been planned and looked forward to for months?

"Why me? Why now? This is so unfair!" rattled around over and over in my mind Sunday evening, as I contemplated my frustration with the unplanned outcome. Then, I woke up on Monday morning and turned on the radio to hear Dave and Molly, of Dave, Ken and Molly, on 92.9 ZZU, sharing the news of Ken Hopkins' recent bicycle accident, which has left him without movement or feeling in his legs. Ken is one of Spokane's most beloved, respected and popular radio personalities. He, along with Dave and Molly, have won the Gold award for Best Radio Personality in *Spokane Coeur d'Alene Living's* readers survey, for nearly every year the survey has been in existence. Ken, who is now facing trials much greater and more frustrating than a rained-out vacation, is such an important and valued member of our community, and he deserves our support, love and prayers throughout his recovery and beyond. How can any of us complain of the inconveniences in life when another is facing such a challenge?

As I listened to the news, my blinders came off, the self-pity was shed and reality set in: I have nothing, repeat, *nothing*, to complain about. All of the things in life that I consider to be irritating, unfair and strikes against me are nothing more than inconveniences. My life is blessed. All of our lives our blessed, but to see it requires the right attitude.

So let me tell you, again, about my weekend.

I was blessed that some of my dearest and oldest friends were able to afford, both financially and with their time, the chance to fly to my little neck of the woods. We were blessed to spend the weekend at a luxury resort, something not everyone gets to do. It was too wet and cold for us to go outside, so we got to stay inside, having great fun drinking wine and laughing together in the lounge. Because it was too cold and wet to get up early and hike around Tubbs Hill, we got to sleep in, a luxury not often afforded to us in our day-to-day lives. I was waited on in restaurants, and someone else made my bed in the morning and my dinner at night. I didn't have to lift a finger. Most important though, I spent time with people who mean so much to me, which is the greatest gift of all. I have *nothing* to complain about. It was a great weekend, even better than I deserved.

Often in life, the weather turns and is not what we hoped for, but that is when we have to bring our own weather, and to make it simply beautiful!

Blythe

P.S. To remind Ken how much he matters to us and is in our hearts and prayers, letters and cards of support and encouragement may be sent to: Ken Hopkins' Troops, c/o KZZU-FM, 500 West Boone Avenue, Spokane, WA 99201