

## Mrs. Tidy

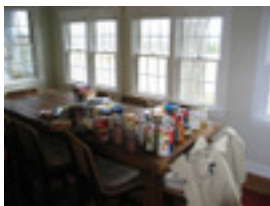
Posted on Dec 18, Posted by [Lois Lowry](#) Category [Uncategorized](#)

Well, I am back in Maine, me and Alfie. Martin will come up Friday and then my son Ben and his wife and kids on Saturday. But it is nice to have a little solitude and to get some work done.

However this morning's work what not the kind I anticipated.

I had had the usual onslaught of field-mice-coming-indoors when Fall began. It always happens in the country, especially in an old house (this one dates to 1768) which is not as tightly buttoned up (bad metaphor) as newer ones. So last month the exterminator came and did his magic. And then I went away.

But I arrived here late yesterday to find 21 dead mice in various stages of decomposition, plus a mess in the pantry ... food torn open and eaten (this time, a box of prunes. Go figure).



Here are a couple of photos taken this morning: Alfie looking at the half-emptied pantry, the broom, the dust-buster (great for mouse droppings); and then the array on the table, waiting to be examined and sorted and mostly thrown away. The exterminator..having been called...came back while I was still sorting and cleaning. I told him about the prunes, thinking he'd be amazed, or else amused. But no. He said they use prunes as bait, often! Great. Little did I know that I was populating my pantry with mouse attractant. Like setting out a freshly-killed impala to ward

off lions.

Then there is a third photo, taken a little while ago: stuff replaced, newly organized; and it makes me chuckle because just two days ago I had more-or-less the following email conversation with my older daughter:

She (lamenting her disorganized study/workroom)....Was I always this messy? I don't remember my childhood bedroom being this messy.

Me...It wasn't. Because you had a mom who tidied things up.

She..That's right! Murderously tidy!

Now I look at my pantry, with three Paul Newmans smiling in a row, and think: *murderously tidy*.



Oh dear.

It is 4:30 PM and already dark, and it was dark when I got up with Alfie and took him out at 6:30 AM. Although he is well-trained to an underground fence and respects the borders very well, I

don't like to let him run loose in the dark. Too many nighttime predators here. We've seen both bear and coyote on this property. Alfie weighs 21 pounds and would make a hearty meal. But it would be, ah, murderously messy. So I just called him in, knowing he wouldn't want to come, and using my sneaky method...jingling my car keys. *A ride! A ride! Where? To the dump? I love the dump!*

Heh heh, no ride at all. That was mean. But he is inside now, and safe.

I DID spend a little time this afternoon working on my current book-in-progress...now up to page 74, Chapter 11. Lots to go still.

Tags: Untagged