

## Let There be Light

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I got home (to Cambridge) Monday night from New York and yesterday drove to Maine to find that Highland Road....which I usually drive across to get to my own road...was closed because a huge thunderstorm ("monsoon" someone called it) the previous night had taken some wires down.

No surprise, really, then, to find, when I reached my house by a different route, that I had neither cable nor telephone.

Well, I thought, I can live without phone or internet for a while. In fact, I remembered, I had some Netflix movies piled up; and though I couldn't watch TV from this rural hillside without cable, I could still watch a rented movie tonight. And in the meantime, I could still work on my computer, though I would not be able to e-mail off the piece of work (foreword to an anthology) that I had almost completed. But surely by tomorrow, I thought, all would be working again.

I sat down on my porch with a glass of iced tea and did the NY Times crossword puzzle. It began to get windy and dark. Uh-oh. Another thunderstorm. And indeed it was. HUGE thunder, which made me remember how terrified Bandit, our dog, would have been. He would have scuttled into the nearest hiding place.

Zap. All the electricity suddenly went off.

The storm came and went, and now it was maybe 6 PM...still light...but still no phone, no cable, and now no electricity. Well, I thought, lucky me, I have a gas stove; I'll warm up a bowl of soup for supper. I'll sit here on the porch with my book and my soup and enjoy the quiet.

Nope. My big extravagance, my Viking stove, has an electric ignition. Okay: forget the soup.

I found some cheese in the ominously dark refrigerator and made a cheese sandwich. Sat on the porch reading and enjoying the quiet. Decided to charge my cell phone, which had a low battery...couldn't plug it into an outlet, of course (no electricity)...but could run the engine of my car and charge the phone in the car...

EXCEPT. The car was in the garage and though I could enter the garage from the house, I couldn't open the garage door without electricity, and obviously I couldn't run the car engine in a closed garage..

Okay. I went back and sat again on the porch and began to think, as I often have before, what life was like on this farm 200 years ago. THEY didn't have electricity or phones or TV or cable or computers. (They didn't have a porch, either! I built this porch) I wondered if they had books. Certainly not books of the sort I was reading....Joanna Trollope....though perhaps one by her great great grandfather, Anthony? Doubt it. Not a Maine farmer in the 1700s).

Ooops. I got mustard on my fingers from my sandwich. Went in to wash my hands. BUT: the water pump runs on electricity. I forgot that.

Okay, now I had no water, no car, no light, no phone.

Neither did they. They probably fed their animals and went to bed when it got dark. I began to feel sorry for myself that in addition to no water, no light, no car, no phone, I also had no animal.

Then I looked across the meadow and saw the rainbow.

Tags: Untagged