

A reading from Anne Lamott

(adapted from her Facebook post of *July 27, 2014*)

Many mornings I check out the news as soon as I wake up, because if it turns out that the world is coming to an end that day, I am going to eat the frosting off an entire carrot cake; just for a start.... Then I will max out both my credit cards....

The last [few] weeks have been about as grim and hopeless as any of us can remember, and yet, I have not gotten out the lobster bib and fork. The drunken Russian separatists in Ukraine with their refrigerated train cars? I mean, come on. Vonnegut could not have thought this up. [So many dead] in the holy land?? Stop.

...And let's not bog down on the stuff that was already true, before Ukraine, [Syria, and] Gaza, like the heartbreaking scenes of young refugees at our border.... The people in ruins in our own families. Or the tiny problem that we have essentially destroyed the earth — I know, pick pick pick.

Hasn't your mind just been blown lately, even if you try not to watch the news? Does it surprise you that a pretty girl's mind turns to thoughts of entire carrot cakes, and credit cards?

My friend said recently, "It's all just too Lify. No wonder we all love TV."...

I have long since weeded out people who might respond to my condition by saying cheerfully, "God's got a perfect plan." Really? ... There is no one left in my circle who would dare say, brightly, "Let Go and Let God," because they know I would come after them with a fork....

I'm not depressed. I'm overwhelmed by It All. I don't think I'm a drag. I kind of know what to do. I know that if I want to have loving feelings, I need to do loving things. It begins by putting your own oxygen mask on first: I try to keep the patient comfortable. I do the next right thing....

I think Jesus had a handle on times like these: get thirsty people water. Feed the hungry. Try not to kill anyone today. Pick up some litter in your neighborhood.... I pray. I meditate. I rest, as a spiritual act. I spring for organic cherries. I return phone calls.

I remember the poor. I remember an image of Koko the sign-language gorilla, with the caption, "Law of the American Jungle: remain calm. Share your bananas." I remember Hushpuppy at the end of [the film] *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, just trying to take some food home to her daddy Wink, finally turning to face the hideous beast on the bridge, facing it down and saying, "I take care care of my own."

I take care of my own. You are my own, and I am yours.... We are each other's.