

Sandy: Into the Heart of Darkness

by Barry Drogin © 2012

Sunday, October 28, 2012: Pre-Sandy

Good preparation - getting prescription refills a week early and removing air conditioners from windows to preserve heat. Bad preparation - not having spare batteries for flashlights and confirming location of transistor radio.

Children left early to return to ex-wife's apartment, which is on border of Zone A and should have been evacuated. All MTA subway and bus service announced to cease at 7pm. My apartment is on border of Zone B.

Logged on remotely to company server and read e-mail announcement that work was officially cancelled for Monday. Set up out-of-office assistant to auto-reply info to clients.

"Last" words to children (spoken half-seriously): "Don't go. Please don't go."



Monday, October 29, 2012: Blackout

The day starts calm, with little rain or wind, but in the evening the fury of the wind can be seen and the rain heard. A *Jurassic Park* moment when toilet water is observed to be swaying slightly.

Night-time television is pre-empted by news coverage. Company server announces business will be closed on Tuesday, changed out-of-office assistant message.

At 8:15pm, lights dim and then there is a brief power-outage which resets the computer and cable box. Five minutes later, the dim lights return, this time followed by a complete power outage at 8:20pm. Total darkness.

I know where my flashlight is, but it takes some very careful maneuvering to get to it safely and turn it on. I go out to hallway, where idiot neighbors have returned after walking their dog in the post-tropical storm, and other neighbors are showing photographs of Hudson River waves. When will people learn to take disasters seriously?

Called my son - they are okay but also in blackout, going to turn their cellphones off to preserve charge, realize this is a great idea and do the same.

Light first of many Shabbas candles, search for transistor radio (never found). Eat ice cream before it turns to soup.

Emergency lights are on in stairwell, venture downstairs, super has put up sign saying that water pumps have no power. I return upstairs and fill up a bucket, but water appears to be working and toilet still flushes.

Tinkle out a few notes on my piano to calm my nerves, crawl into bed and try to sleep with sounds of wind and rain at window.

Tuesday, October 30, 2012: Shopping in the Dark

Sunrise brings light into the apartment. Trees outside of window look intact. Emergency lights in stairwell have died, need flashlight to go down five flights of stairs.

Neighbors are gathered in lobby, Sunday night doorman couldn't get home and has stayed until Tuesday.

Venture outside (very light drizzle) to see that building has lost two trees at south side of building (not visible from my north side view).



There are leaves and small branches littering the sidewalks and streets, but Hudson Street trees are standing and little visible damage.

A Hudson Street deli is open but you need a flashlight to shop the shelves. Buy muffins and croissants for breakfast, since milk will not be available for cereal. Buy OJ, two boiled eggs, and a box of fig newtons. Deli appears to be mainly full of French tourists. Batteries are sold out. Word is that local police precinct has power generator and you can charge cellphones there, but that isn't my concern.

While I have light, spend day doing crossword puzzles. Call Max again, they are alright but are **playing "bored" games**.

Hang out in lobby with neighbors. Families with young children pack bags and leave. First floor neighbors make hot chocolate and distribute cups to lobby. Our ovens are gas with pilot lights, so you can cook if you want to in the dark.

Venture out again, deli on Washington Street is also open, buy tuna fish salad and scallion cream cheese and more muffins. Local bar is open with candles. Felaful place appears to be open, pizzeria is open, buy slice even though I am not that hungry. Buy two more boxes of fig newtons, some fresh fruit, and bag of veggie chips. Local stationary store is selling batteries (four D's for \$14), I figure people aren't buying many cards or other paper supplies, this is only instance of modest price gouging, they've been in neighborhood as long as I have, they could use the cash. All supermarkets and chain stores are closed.

I call rabbi on his cell and tell him situation, other synagogue members in Penn South have power from their own generator, and members above 31st Street on west side have power as well. He says he'll be on vacation for Shabbas but will see if others are available if I need help.

Neighbor suggests that doorman needs a break and we should volunteer to cover security in dark. Super gets board approval, but turns out she means midnight to 8am (we normally don't have 24-hour coverage)! I volunteer for 2am to 4am shift, go up to sleep and set alarm for 1:45am, cover shift with neighbor but totally unnecessary as streets are dark and deserted and no one coming in or out. No burglars or looters.

Wednesday, October 31, 2012: Quest for Internet

Head is itchy, I could use a hot shower. I call a few synagogue members but no one picks up. I go to police precinct but they no longer have power, they tell me about shelter at 58th Street. Neighbors say that sports centers uptown are honoring members but no guests allowed.

I head uptown. Rumor about downed tree in newly-renovated Bleecker Street Park is true.

I wait for M20 uptown bus, but see that M11 bus runs on Greenwich Street, not Hudson Street. Run after it but it doesn't stop for me. End up walking uptown to synagogue. Shabbos guy can't get Internet connection.

B&H store has Internet but restricts all external access. They suggest Starbucks or Library. Also, they're sold out of battery-operated radios. No mail delivery, downtown stores not getting delivery of *The New York Times*, midtown stores are all sold out. Downtown ATMs have no power, I go to Citibank near Macy's for cash. Walk to Mid-Manhattan Library on 5th Avenue and 40th Street, they are closed!

Buy pasta lunch at 42nd Street tourist joint. Walk across and find Burger King across from Port Authority with Internet access, \$5 for 30 minutes. Company server does not respond. 50 e-mails in Inbox, 20 in Junk Mail, delete most, no important messages, Internet connection is worst I have ever experienced, takes full 30 minutes to delete (not view!) 50 e-mails.

Find street vendor with a *New York Times*! Wander to Manhattan Plaza to catch bus because my ankle is hurting, useless crosstown M42s keep coming, almost give up but M11 finally arrives, pretty packed but people pull open back door and cram in. After sundown, I decide to try cooking by candlelight, make omelette, hard to wash dishes effectively in dark. That night I read *New York Times* cover-to-cover by flashlight. I can't use a heating pad or soak my ankle in a hot bath.

I have trouble getting to sleep because I am accustomed to using my air purifier as a white noise generator. There is no sound at all - no street noise, nothing.



Thursday, November 1, 2012: Do-It-Yourself Info Gathering

Wall Street is open but calls to my workplace still result in busy signal. I move into activist mode, take out *Villager* Community Handbook, only local government official listed is Christine Quinn, call office and leave voice message. I call *The Villager*, find out their office is flooded and they've moved uptown. Provide what info I have to Editor-in-Chief. He says paper won't be printed until Friday afternoon, and distributed to newsstands on Saturday morning. I call synagogue member early before they go to work and they offer to let me take shower at their apartment in Penn South. I rush out door.

Second attempt to use uptown M20 bus is useless.

I walk to Penn South (25th Street), pass bodega that is selling *New York Times*. I take elevator to member's apartment. I take first hot shower! They have window in bathroom, but realize **I can turn on light!** This is first taste of normalcy since Monday night - turning on a bathroom light (it will turn out to be my only taste of normalcy all week).

They let me use their Internet but their service is also atrocious. This time I have a few important messages, I write to friend in Amsterdam.

After I leave, I sit in Penn South park and call Quinn's office again. Get Jose on line, West Village rep Nudelman is trapped in outer borough. I tell him I know we can't get power but we can get things that power provides. He tells me that NY Sports Clubs are providing free showers to non-members. He tells me that he knows that Con Ed was passing out free dry ice at Union Square yesterday but doesn't know if they are doing it again, gives me Con Ed number to call. Turns out this will be **first instance of government agencies and news outlets providing useless information** - number is generic Con Ed number to report downed power lines and the like, no info on dry ice program.

I walk downtown and eat lunch at 8th Avenue and 14th Street, which amazingly enough has hot salad bar. M14 crosstown buses are running, decide to check out Union Square. Pass by my barber shop and they are open! Jump off bus, they have generator and no customers, indulge myself in haircut and **old-fashioned shave with hot shaving cream and straight razor**. This will be my one treat of the week.

Con Ed is distributing dry ice in Union Square.

Line is long but moves very quickly. They place plastic bags in paper bags with printed instructions.

Catch M14 bus back across town. Driver abandons bus at turn, no replacement driver in sight, walk back down Hudson Street. Stationary store is selling AM/FM radios at reasonable price (no more price gouging)!

Bring dry ice upstairs and put in freezer. Post info in lobby about NY Sports Clubs and Con Ed dry ice, along with Quinn telephone number and extension for West Village. My cellphone is losing charge, so go out. Police station has lights on and power, but signs on both doors saying "No Power." This is a lie!! Officers at door verbally repeat the lie.

Pass by local drugstore, they say that Peruvian restaurant has generator for charging cellphone. Walk to Peruvian restaurant but they have locked doors and man in window signals to go away!

End up walking all the way back up to 14th Street to barbershop, where their generator has power outlets. Manage to plug my cellphone in for a few minutes before their generator sputters out of gas. They lie to me and tell me NY Sports Club on Eighth and 16th St has cellphone charger outlets. Walk over there and they are closed.



Customer at barbershop mentioned something about Yoga food outlet, walk there and they are selling food. Buy soup, juice, whole wheat pasta, and can of ginger ale, which I drink at bench outside their store.

On way back home, stop and sit at Bleecker Street Park and listen to radio. They keep repeating a FEMA telephone number, this will be **second instance of useless information**.

At the lobby, my flashlight looks weak, so I put in fresh batteries and head back up the dark stairwell. In my apartment I eat the bag of veggie chips while reading the metro section of *The Times*. I decide to cook the soup - vegetables and lentils. For some reason this is a mistake, my stomach will be hurting for hours after (the expiration date on the can was 2015). Go back to listening to radio, it is now about 6pm, NPR has a story about 16 FEMA distribution centers, including one in Chinatown which was supposed to have National Guard handing out water and meals, but line of people is waiting and, at 6pm, the troops haven't arrived yet and people are leaving and getting frustrated. The story also talks about how Sheldon Silver is driving around town with a charging truck, it is unclear to me whether distribution centers have generators for cellphone charging.

At some time I had tried to call 311 and got put on hold, I decide to try again to find the location of the nearest distribution center. Sundown is at 4:30pm, it is one Shabbas candle and one flashlight if I need it. I decide to time how long it will take to get a 311 operator.

While I am on hold I get messages about how I can use "Click311" on line, visit NYC.gov, etc. With 800,000 Con Ed customers without power (according to *The Times*), you'd think **someone** would realize that leaving up the old messages about on-line information would be really annoying to people without smartphones, Wi-Fi laptops, computer power, etc. It's Thursday night and in three days no one has realized how cruel and thoughtless this is.

It takes 5 minutes to get a representative - not bad. I tell her my address and ask her about the 16 distribution centers. I am two blocks from Hudson River, she tells me a center two blocks from the East River. I ask, "Don't you have a map, can't you tell me which one is closest to me?" She insists on reading me the list - apparently this is her instructions. I complain I don't want to hear a list of 16 sites, she says only 6 are in Manhattan. The last on the list is at 27th Street between 9th and 10th Avenue. From what I can tell from the list, this is the closest one to me, but its location is absurd - uptown, four blocks from the blackout border, near Penn South.

I tell her I want to confirm the location with FEMA, I ask her for the 1-800 FEMA number, and she gives it to me. I call FEMA, three choices - file a claim, status of a claim, and speak to an operator. I choose option three, I am put on hold and told it may take 10 minutes or more. Turns out it takes exactly 10 minutes, and at 3 minutes they count you down. Very reassuring.

I get a very nice FEMA operator, based in Texas, who has no idea where the distribution centers are. She only has a single address for a FEMA recovery center. She has Internet access and tries to find information about the distribution centers. She is very nice - she has been very well trained in how not to make people in a disaster situation feel frustrated - so her search is amusing, instead. While I am on the phone with FEMA, my flashlight suddenly goes out. Although I know it is very bad not to have a flashlight, the absurdity of losing use of a flashlight while on the line with FEMA overwhelms my worry.

The clueless FEMA lady asks me which radio station I heard the info from, and she tries to call them. She finds out that attempting to call WNYC for info about a news story is absurd, but she gives me the telephone number anyway. We try a few Google searches, but it is fruitless. She says she is going to talk to her supervisor, she takes down my home phone number (with no answering machine) and my cellphone number (with voicemail) and promises to get back to me with the information. That never happens.

Off the phone with FEMA, I focus in on my flashlight. The batteries are good, I must have used up the bulb reading *The Times* the night before. I have no spare bulbs (didn't think of that!). I had passed people selling flashlights on 14th Street and Eighth Avenue, I decide to go out to buy one.

You may try to imagine how difficult it is to put two keys into two locks with a flashlight, without a flashlight it is exceedingly difficult. I open the door to get a little candlelight and pick the right keys, and try again in pitch dark blackness. After I lock the door, I wonder if this is a good plan.

In complete darkness, I inch my way over to the stairwell door. I am telling myself I am going to fall down the stairs and kill myself. I also tell myself that blind people have to deal with this all of the time. I figure out which way is down and very, very slowly descend two flights. By now I have figured out the pattern but it doesn't matter - someone else is coming down from above with a flashlight and leads me down the next three flights.

There are no street lights, some people are not carrying flashlights, walking up to 14th Street isn't totally safe, either. The people who were selling flashlights are now gone. I continue north. A Halloween store, only strobe lights and black lights. A few bodegas, no flashlights. A Duane Reade, no flashlights. I ask the clerk if they have bulbs, he sends me to a part of the store selling 120VAC light bulbs. Not what I meant.

Finally, at 29th Street, a grocery store with some little LED flashlights in stock. LED bulbs have a much longer life. I buy the flashlight, batteries, and a spare set of batteries. I try the flashlight out in the store and it works. I walk west to Ninth Avenue using the flashlight.

I'm considering walking to 27th Street to check out the Distribution Center story but the bus comes and I can get on. The bus travels four blocks to 23rd Street and everyone is told to get off. This bus normally goes all the way down to Abingdon Square, the bus driver tells me it's not just him, after sundown all buses are told not to go below 23rd Street. In other words, all of downtown gets no subway service AND no bus service after sundown. You see, all of the street lights and traffic lights are out. Funny how none of the media outlets tell the 220,000 of us about this little MTA tidbit. I get off the bus and walk downtown **into the heart of darkness**. At least I have a flashlight.

At 14th Street I buy a ginger ale from a street cart because my stomach still hurts.

Now I am back home and I have a radio for the first time, and I want to relax by candlelight and listen to some music on the radio. John Schaefer at WNYC SoundCheck is doing a special two hour show called "After the Storm" that is supposed to be devoted to listener suggestions of what music they have been listening to to get them through the storm, but is actually 90% talk and 10% snippets from listener suggestions - not even playing the whole song. I get through to the switchboard and beg them to play anything by Amy X Neuburg, but they thank me and hang up on me, I know it's not going to happen. Of course, I can also request songs on-line! At 11pm they switch to BBC news, which is useless.

Once, during the incessant "go to our website" promos, do I hear a broadcaster acknowledge that listeners may not be able to do that. **Once**.

Friday, November 2, 2012: Heat and False Hope

The thermal mass of my building is starting to lose its heat capacity. It is not only colder outside but colder inside. My goal for the day is to spend the entire day uptown in warm spaces. The sunrise is no longer an enticement to enjoy the light. I am cold. I put on my winter coat. The radio confirms the Distribution Center story, so I make a second information sign, with additional info about 311, the FEMA number, and a local charging station. At the lobby, there is delivery of *The New York Times*, and the doorman gives away a few copies from people who have been gone for days. With *Times* in hand, I head for the M11 bus.

The bus takes me to within a block of my synagogue. I spend the morning in the synagogue reception hall, reading *The Times*. I bring my charger and charge my phone and my camera battery. Some Chasidic men wander in and out of the reception hall to say their prayers, I keep an eye on my cellphone and camera. I complete half of the Friday crossword puzzle and the easy Ken-Ken. It is a pleasant morning.

I walk toward the Mid-Manhattan Library again (the newspaper says they are open), realize I have spent a lot of cash on the radio and pick up some more at an ATM. The library is open and I ask the information desk where the Internet access is. She says on the 4th floor, but she doesn't know about availability.

It is 20 minutes after the hour. This is the availability: 100 minutes later. I do not feel like taking a slip of paper and hanging around the library for over an hour. I leave and find a hotel around the corner. On the second floor they have a business center with free Internet. For the first time in four days, I have high-speed Internet access. Unlimited, untimed, high-speed Internet access.

My company server is still down. My Inbox has filled up a bit more, and I delete the unimportant stuff, and skim through the somewhat interesting stuff. I get a LinkedIn update, and realize I am connected to people at work. I send a LinkedIn message to my boss, with instructions on how to contact me.

My bank is offering to reimburse me for any fees I may incur at out-of-network ATMs. Nice. Other communications tell me to contact them by e-mail or by calling the number on the back of my cards. Communications people who get it.

I write again to my friend in Amsterdam. I make a single posting to Facebook. I get an e-mail from the Manhattan Chamber of Commerce with a link to a Con Ed website with a map with information about power outages. This is the **third piece of useless information**. The map has a single flag in Lower Manhattan saying that a single customer had requested assistance. This is the *Manhattan* Chamber of Commerce?

I visit *The Villager* website, and they have some news stories and a video of the collapsed facade on Eighth Avenue that I am sure a million tourists have



posted pictures of. The editorial, letters to the editor, and other features are still from the previous issue. I read the new stuff. My local newspaper.

I decide to go again for the pasta on 42nd Street. I finish the Friday puzzle and the harder Ken-Ken. I rip the address label off of the newspaper. There is a slightly older gentleman sitting across from me and he asks whether I am going to throw out the newspaper. I was going to bring it to the synagogue for others to read on Shabbas, but I say he is welcome to have it. He is also dressed in a heavy winter coat like me, turns out he is also enjoying the warmth, he lives on 10th and Avenue C, two blocks from where I used to live on 12th and C. He moved there from Brooklyn about the same time that I lived there. I ask him whether the supermarket is still there - it is. He gives me a card - he is retired but he has made up a card - and I give him mine. Turns out he attends Orthodox services as well, we talk about local synagogues. I invite him to join me for Shabbas dinner at my synagogue as my guest, but it is getting late in the afternoon and he wants to get back to Avenue C before sundown. I understand.

I walk past Bryant Park and decide to sit and listen to the radio. They are talking about the marathon "controversy". They are interviewing two first-time marathoners who are raising money for charities. One woman is saying she should just take the money she raised and give it to the charity without running the marathon. The other is saying she is doing this for a good cause, and, rather than be cheered by the crowd, she wants to cheer the crowd. The moderator believes that the woman who is reluctant to run is still going to do it. There is much information about all of the charitable things that the RoadRunner club is doing to raise money for the relief effort. My son is co-captain of his cross-country team and loves volunteering to help the marathon.

I walk across 42nd Street to Eighth Avenue and decide to take the subway the one stop down to 34th Street. The train operator is yelling at people about what shuttle buses to take at 42nd Street as opposed to 34th Street. He doesn't speak so loudly when he has to announce that they are delayed. One stop later we all get off the train and I see him on the platform. I tell him he should enunciate and speak loudly, but he doesn't have to yell at us. He says, "You heard me, didn't you?" He thinks it's funny.

For some reason the synagogue is locked and no one is answering the doorbell, so I walk a block to a synagogue member's apartment house. He is on his way home and the doorman of his building allows me to sit in the warm lobby. I call the doorman of my building - power is still out.

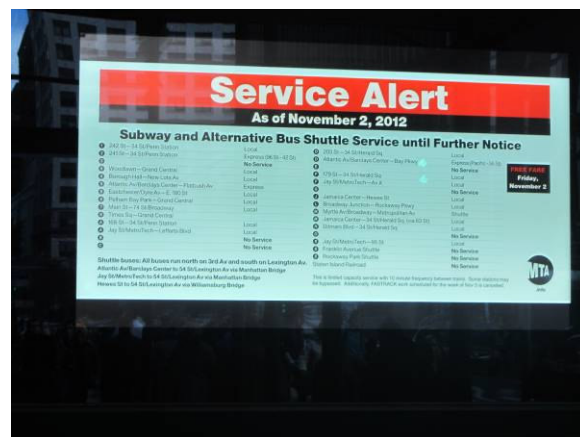
The synagogue member arrives home but does not invite me up to his apartment (which I have visited a few times). He says he is going to head back out, but that he passed by the synagogue and he thinks it is open now. I thank the doorman for letting me sit and walk to the synagogue.

It is very early but the reception hall is being set up for Shabbas dinner. My legs are cold and feeling sore, but I go to the kitchen and offer to help. There is nothing for me to do but they offer me some kugel. I want to save room for dinner, but you never say no to a Jewish mother, so I eat a little piece.

I don't want to go into a lot of detail about the six hours or so I spent at synagogue that Shabbas. There are only two important details. One is that a member told me that he heard there was power downtown, and that he had gotten tweets from two of his friends prior to Shabbas telling him they had power. The other is that some marathoners showed up and said they had passed by a CNN display announcing that the marathon had been cancelled.

As you can tell, the theme of this story has been receiving bad or wrong information. I had been considering asking some members of the synagogue whether they had a spare warm bed, because I knew that this last Friday night would be even colder, and would involve another long walk into the heart of darkness to get home. Like an idiot, I decided there was a chance I had power, and figured if this was true at 5pm, there would be plenty of time for me to have heat restored before going to sleep. I doubted the marathon story, but they convinced me their information was solid. It didn't make sense to me, and at Shabbas dinner some fools spouted wrong information about why the event was cancelled. More opinion and conjecture masquerading as fact.

It was getting late and I wanted to get home. As I got to the corner of Ninth Avenue the bus appeared, so I ran across the street to catch it. They announced they were going to 14th Street. Street lights and traffic signals were working below 31st Street, and below 23rd Street, as far as the eye could see. Out loud, to no one in particular, I asked if there was power downtown, and the old lady sitting next to me said that power would be restored to downtown by Friday or Saturday. I told her it was useless to me for her to quote a news story from yesterday morning. She apologized. Someone remarked that it looked like the lights were on, and it did. The M11 bus normally terminates at Abindgon Square in the West Village, someone asked where I lived, and I said in the Far West Village. The man told me the West Village did not have power.



The bus turned on 14th Street to let people off, and there it was again: the heart of darkness. I was undescritably upset. For those who don't know the Far West Village, there are a lot more than four blocks between 14th Street and 11th Street. By the time I got to my building lobby, I had lost my mind. I asked what time it was and I thought I was told it was 8:30pm, which made no sense, but I accepted it. It was actually about 11:30pm. A neighbor came out and told me he was going to take a smoke on the roof, and did I want to walk up the stairs with him. Perhaps he had no idea that I had no idea how late it was. We walked up to the 10th floor, and I told him about the FEMA lady. When I got home, BBC was on the radio. They had a story about Irish people putting rich people in jail. They talked about how rich people strode into courtrooms like they owned the place, but didn't stride into prison that way. Fines didn't matter, jail time was the only way to shame the rich. I couldn't sleep. I finally realized I hadn't taken my night time medications, which I did.

There had been a radio story about people's mental health, and about how they should worry about things they could do something about, not about things they had no control over. They gave a 1-800 number. I had gone insane, but I wasn't about to check myself into Bellevue (which had been evacuated anyway). I called the 1-800 number. I did NOT want a referral at midnight. Turns out they had shut down for the night and transferred all calls to a suicide help-line. I explained to the gentleman that I was not suicidal. But at midnight, in the dark, in the cold, with just a candle, he let me vent for a while about how we had been fed so much bad information that we didn't believe in facts anymore. I started to believe that, like the Roman Empire, if we had become this corrupt, we really did deserve our downfall. Or something like that. Like I said, I was very upset and I had lost it. He was a pretty good listener and I finally ran out of steam and wished him good night.

Saturday, November 3, 2012: First Light

At 4:25am, the Far West Village had its power restored. The refrigerator turned on, the Internet box eventually connected to Roadrunner, the Cable Box powered up and NY1 television is available. I start to create this page.

Four hours later still no heat or hot water, so I turn on all of the lights to act as a heat source. I dress warmly and head back to synagogue to meet my youngest son, who is going to be bar mitzvah in March. The elevator is not working, but the lights are on in the hallways and stairwell. I walk to the M11 bus, but a cab drives by so I take it.

I am very glad to see my son, but he is coughing a lot and doesn't look very well. His voice is weak and scratchy.

For five days I have been trying to hold it together and patiently wait for the light at the end of the tunnel. The light has come, and now I can feel all of the frustration and anger and exhaustion and sadness. I am in a delicate state at synagogue. There are members who have had power the entire time, and members who have not. The members who have had power don't get it. They are making jokes and laughing and talking politics and I feel like a mourner at a funeral, I want some quiet compassion and understanding. I am simultaneously telling them to shut up and apologizing for doing so. This is Shabbas, take a break. I want to go home. Now, the bus runs all the way down to Abingdon Square. I drop by the supermarket, which is restocking its shelves, and buy fresh milk and orange juice. I go to two different newsstands, but they have not received the newly-published copy of *The Villager*. It will not arrive.

The elevator is working. On the way up, I tell the elevator, "I love you. I miss you." We have a mail delivery. There is heat and hot water in the apartment. I sit down to finish writing this story.

It is now 8pm. The first draft is done. I am going to take a very long hot bath. And then like after 9/11, I will deal with the transition from acute traumatic stress disorder to post-traumatic stress disorder. Music will help.

Useful Info:

- <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/mhdpr/em-cope-stress-events.pdf> - Department of Health on Coping With Disasters
- <http://www.thejewishweek.com/editorial-opinion/opinion/between-light-and-darkness-lessons-hurricane-sandy> - A Jewish psychiatrist describes the experience of transitioning from darkness to light and back
- <http://www.notnicemusic.com/sandy2.html> - Compilation of intelligent thinking on Sandy response, experience, and cause
- <http://ww4report.com/node/11657> - Political theory on why lower and middle class residents were provided with inadequate response on the East side

Background Info:

- *The Villager* is my primary news source. I read it cover to cover every week. I never read *The New York Times*. I also do not listen to WNYC regularly. I also get news from NY1, and from my cable provider, RoadRunner. I recently have been watching a little PBS NewsHour and Bill Moyers, but I'm not a regular WNET watcher, either.
- My boys were 12 and 15 during this time period.
- My synagogue is Modern Orthodox/Open Orthodox, and I keep a kosher home. There are minor kashrut violations and several shabbas violations in this piece. Sorry if that offends anyone.

My two cents:

- Okay, I finally agree with my doorman from Staten Island. With bodies floating in the water and millions of people without power, access to food, water, transportation, how could Bloomberg ring the bell to open the New York Stock Exchange in downtown Manhattan!... No, wait, it was an athletic event, with corporate sponsors selling sneakers and beer and cars... No, wait, that's the Knicks game! Let me try once more... How dare a not-for-profit institution raise millions of dollars for disaster relief and for other not-for-profit institutions throughout the city and the country... it's insensitive to people's feelings! Right. :)