

Everyday Life: While it Rains...

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Plenty of "rains" we've had these days in the western and center side of the island. But not everyone wastes bad weather.

While drops of water fall in her window, Nely can barely fall asleep. It's a habit she has had all her life, and at age 80 odds, little can change.

If there are not thunders, or lightning, she is happy. "There are many things to put in order at home", she says in clear antagonism against those who simply do nothing just because "the rain doesn't allow them."

Even when she prefers not switching up the dining room light, "because you have to save and electricity is very expensive", she orders the medicine drawer, throws to the garbage those past due and the rest she puts them back in orderly by priority which is the same as according to her illnesses.

She also takes advantage of those moments to "upgrade" her personal notes and remember if in a given year, and a given day, her uncle Juan died, or the puppies of her dog Negrita were born, Negrita died of canine distemper.

That is one of the stories I have listened to in these days in which rain - mainly those of us living in the Western side of the country - has hit us hard.

Mercedes, on the other hand, has another "modus operandi". She has country and Creole roots, she assured that she takes advantage of bad weather to check windows and drawers, where she can barely remember what she has stored there.

"I searched and found a few sheets I no hardly use, they were yellow with stains, and then I sank them in a bowl of rain water and left them outdoors, because we cannot speak of the sun around these days. Where she lived as a young girl, sheets were left hanging outdoors, and the more rain water fell on them the whiter they looked when we

collected them".

For Irene, on the other hand, rain drives her to knit and sew. Sitting on a rocking chair of her house, without moving because her back hurts, the old lady just thinks of the "knots" she will do to finish the tablecloth pretty and then sell it in Cuban currency to the first buyer who knocks at her door.

She also sews what anyone brings her to fix, whether a zipper, a hemline, a cushion, or making buttonholes to a blouse. Her thing is listening the buzzing of the Singer sewing machine that reminds her of her mother with every passing day for what she once said: "My daughter, if you learn how to sew you will never be alone or moneyless". Prophetic words she still feels as near as the first day.

When it rains endlessly and I have no other choice but keep fighting back humidity and the pain in my bones. My thing is not checking through drawers, neither set medicines in order, neither to whiten sheets with rain water, not even to stitch the hole on my house robe. I write - at least I try to do it -, and here go these lines while the rain also hits my window.

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