

Honey Do List

Jim Reese

Shirtless, the men in the neighborhood put down the remotes, sit upright in their recliners and come out of hibernation. It's time to wage war with noxious weeds in their yards, drag dead branches and trash cans full of god-knows-what to the curb, think about initiating workout routines, stroll around the perimeters of their houses inventorying all their stuff and remembering their honey-do lists—take the holiday lights down, recycle the beer cans, replant the garden, repair the leaky faucet, replace the window, do something with their no-shave November beards which are old and itchy. They are acutely aware of the smell of grill smoke and Roundup weed killer in the air, the feeling of fertilizer pellets in the soles of their shoes. The neighborhood is green again.

The men buy new razors and take hedge clippers and chainsaws from the top shelves of their garages. Running out of things to cut down is a pressing dilemma for the American male. They stretch out their favorite t-shirts, pulling them down over their stomachs as they bend for a few air squats. They floss teeth, brush grill grates. The windows open, the Harleys humming. It's spring in suburbia, women run out in sunglasses and Spandex showing off the first skin of spring, the men pacing and ready to clear paths, sucking in their guts, taking deep breaths, already lying to themselves.