



Jan. 8, 2018

The mercury hasn't clawed above freezing in weeks and your Irish wolfhounds haven't had a decent walk since the snow plow went belly-up at the bottom of your hill. The wind is howling, the ice is cracking and their food bag is getting ominously light. And you wonder, whatever happened to Amazon's plan to make deliveries by drone? Drones can fly in a snow storm, right?

We've all been there, eh? Some of us are there right *now*. The hounds are alternating between advanced narcolepsy and running laps around the living room like crackheads on holiday.

Like so many, you may not only be stuck in snow, maybe you have the flu, too. As you fade in and out of delirium, odd thoughts may float through your mind, like, "How many more snowflakes can that roof take before collapsing and burying us all in white death?" Or, "If I die, will my dogs eat me?"

The answer to that last one, by the way, is yes, if you go by [incident reports](#). Best not think about it. Better yet, just don't die. It's only 80 days or so until spring. You can tough it out. Knock back another can of Red Bull. Oh, and try not to jitter. The hounds are bored to tears. They're deviling anything that moves. Toes are a favorite.

So, forget rushing out to buy milk and bread at the first sign of snow on the weather radar. Lug home dog food. Lots of dog food... *Extra* food in case yours are prone to anxiety eating. Anxiety? What's your dog have to be *anxious* about? Well, he hasn't checked his pee mail on the neighborhood tree in days. He hasn't barked at the neighbor's dogs in so long they *could* be over that fence and cavorting in his very own yard at this very moment. Maybe he's trying to guess when the cat will zip though the room again, causing at least one dog to do a complete flip. The guy's just got a lot on his mind.

This may explain why you can't budge on the couch. All the dogs are piled on top of you, their comfort toy. If you have two wolfhounds,

that's 300 pounds of neediness. If you have three wolfhounds, you're going to need a crane for bathroom breaks. Firing off a flare gun would just overexcite them.

Speaking of the cat, cats don't subscribe to the conventional wisdom of letting sleeping dogs lie. The moment the last hound *finally* settles down and drifts off is the instant the cat will come out. She may simply want out. Maybe she'll only knock three books and a vase off the shelf on the dogs' heads on the way by. Maybe she's concerned about *her* food supply. One look in her eyes and you know that if you die, she'll eat you too. So you stagger out from under the pile of dogs and refill the cat's bowl so she won't jump the gun to beat the dogs in line.

At 3 in the afternoon, the temperature flickers above 32 and you rush to get the hounds out in the snow drifts. But by the time you creak up and climb into long johns, three pair of pants, snow boots, three sweaters and your parka...it's 4:30 and the sun is setting. It's back to 25, the wind's blowing sideways and, listen, sounds like the wolves are back. And your *wolfhounds*? They're too stuporous to care. Maybe the chihuahua next door will go take one for the team.

So you slump back on the couch, the dogs pile on and that's the sound of hope whooshing out of all of you.

The key to surviving all this? Sleep. Keep the food bowls full and when the hounds go crazy every hour or so, jog along with them to keep some semblance of muscle tone. It's already early January! How much longer could winter possibly keep this up....?