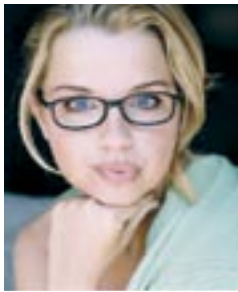


the worst day of the year

BY KERRI POMAROLLI



I HAVE A CONFESSION to make: I think New Year's Eve is the worst day of the year. Forget the streamers, bad cheese dip and sequined dresses that are always too expensive for that amount of material.

I remember three years ago I was sitting alone in my old room at my parents' house after some short-lived phone call from a guy I was dating

whom I really didn't even miss. I started crying ... really crying ... like midlife-crisis crying. What was going on with me? I didn't even have any wine or cocktails. All I had was some extra cherries in my Shirley Temple!

I lay there on my bed staring at the ceiling and looking around the room at the collection of memorabilia—everything from sorority pledge pins to picture frames made of gummy bears featuring photos from high-school dances of yesteryear. I knew tomorrow I would get on a plane back to my “just fine” apartment and work my day job pursuing this seemingly unattainable “pipe dream” called an acting career. I had been on a few shows and gotten enough attention from casting directors not to quit, but this certainly wasn't where I thought I'd be by now.

I guess I was having some sort of breakdown. I could not stop crying and thinking of all the reasons my life hadn't turned out the way I had so carefully planned it.

I should have been married to Matt Damon with 2.4 kids, living on the beach and starring in my own sitcom by now. Instead I was shopping at the dollar store for essentials and working at a job I hated, which gave me ulcers, praying for something to happen that might change everything. I was always comparing my life with all my friends and even people I didn't know!

New Year's is always the time when people take stock of the

year behind them and make big plans for the future. What future? Who knew what was going on with me? Did anyone care? I tried to talk to my dad about it, but he didn't know what to tell me. He said, “Kerri, you're out there pursuing what you love, and most people don't have the guts to even try. You know God has a plan for you.”

“But when is God going to do something for me? Something wonderful where I feel I'm doing His will or making a difference? What if that never happens?” I asked. All my friends back home were married, driving nice cars, buying condos and talking about “crown molding.” I just didn't measure up.

And even though my life has changed a lot in the past few years—and believe me, it's not because I got to quit that day job (prayer works) and God gave me the ministry of stand-up comedy and writing, I still fight the urge to compare my life with everyone else's all the time.

Will it ever stop? Do I have it within me to be at peace with myself and where I am in this life? Will I continue on that hamster wheel in my brain that never seems to stop running even when I'm sleeping?

I got the chance to pray for a friend with cancer the other day. I felt God telling me to just drop what I was doing and go over to her house and pray. It was an exhilarating experience to take part in a miracle. I don't know what her personal outcome will be, but I know I was part of something wonderful that God wanted me to do while on this earth. Opportunities like that are what I'm trying to strive for more than the perfect body, prize husband and “crown molding.” But if I happen to lose 10 pounds before New Year's Eve, I'm not complaining. I've got this little sequined outfit ... *r*

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