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The Hard Part Is Getting Around To It

Richard Potter
THE HARD PART IS GETTING AROUND TO IT

I didn’t put up the storm windows this winter. I took a year to get to fixing the toilet. My showerhead trickles four streamlets. It is all I can do to water the houseplants, replace burned-out lightbulbs and trim my toenails.

Half our vegetables were left in the garden. The yard grew and grew slick with rotten apples. Squirrels ate all the walnuts. The leaves drifted eventually into neat piles. One trashcan rolled into the drive a month ago. I steer around it.

This house bulges with uncompleted projects: Furniture in stages of refinishing, woodwork half-stripped, a bird feeder I’ve been going to build, blocks for the baby that need the final varnish—I needn’t go on.

Peanut butter sandwiches are very little trouble. The dishes pile up slowly. I bathe rarely and shave one a week, change my socks when my wife complains. There are plenty of things half-read and half-written. It is doubtful I shall ever finish this poem.