

Kelvin

Adam, Bella, Charlie, Davina, Edmund, Fiona, Graham, Helga, Ian, Jacinta and Kelvin. I count on my fingers A to K. Ten storms so far this season and Kelvin's imminent. Aren't these severe climatological goings-on supposed to be, one in a hundred-year events? And it's not even October.

Kelvin? What sort of name is that for a storm? Feisty Katrina, I get. Demon Dennis wrecked our garden room roof earlier in the year. But Kelvin? Give me a break.

I laugh. It's Michael Fish territory all over again. Someone asked him in 1987 if there was a hurricane on the way?

His reply, 'don't worry; there definitely isn't.'

Tell that to Oneoaks, grieving its half-dozen storm felled sisters.

You see 1987's storm, was the worst since 1703. That's three-hundred-ish-years, in the waiting. Now, only thirty-five years later, climate-change driven gales arrive like the monthly hikes in our utility bills.

I shiver. The season has changed; turned. Autumn is full on, not that there are many leaves left to fall. The drought in the summer saw to that. We're so extreme. Remain or Brexit. Cut or increase tax. Forty-two degrees plus in the shade or tonight's below zero.

I pull the curtains tight, kick the draft excluder snake tighter against the front door. I dare not turn on the heating. My pension can't stretch that far. I waddle over to the sideboard and fix myself, two fingers of single malt.

The whisky warms. In all the right places. Time to head up the hill to Bedfordshire. This is, after all, a storm in a teacup.

I skip to the bedroom and dive under the duvet. Thirteen-point-five Tog, you can't get any warmer. No one else to share the bed with these days, so I've stacked two duvets, plump eiderdowns as my late wife used to call them, on the bed. Toasty.

I listen to my phone under the covers. No longer a schoolboy eavesdropping Caroline's tinny echoes; but a grownup, laughing at the Evil Genius podcast, that features zany Russel Kane. I fall asleep to his high-pitched carry-ons, as he digs the dirt on the eminent and righteous.

The podcast helps me attain a deep sleep. But then in the early hours, I dream that I am back in the merchant marine. My ship is being mercilessly toyed with by the ocean. As I toss and turn, I feel crushed by a substantial weight on my chest. Blurry-eyed stars rush past. Moonlit clouds pull faces. Everyone and everything these days is in such a hurry.

Rain chills my cheek. I'm not alone. Another face climbs aboard. Scares me fartless.

'Hello Kelvin,' a firefighter calls out. 'Sorry mate, you've lost your roof to the tempest. We need to get you out, before we are all blown away.'

She is joined by others, who lift beams and pantiles. I can breathe again.

I thank profusely. Was always bought up to be a proper Mr polite, never Stormy Kelvin.

He's just my evil-twin meteorological doppelganger.