

The World of Things

It is Saturday morning, May 2010, and I am doing the bills. Electricity, gas, phone, water. I still do them by hand, with a blue Bic ballpoint pen. I write the check. I note the debit in the register. I place the check and bill in the envelope, making sure the address shows through the cellophane window. My checkbook is the same kind of blue nubby faux-leather wallet-like thing my mother used when I was seven. The only difference between the way I do the bills and the way Mom did them is that now the stamps are self-adhesive.

I like signing my name on the bills. It's the only time I ever write in cursive. The letters that aren't in my name I'm not sure I even remember how to connect up anymore.

The phone rings.

"Hi Jonah," says Jessaca. "It's me. I haven't made it to the supermarket yet. I stopped by the World of Things antique mall, and I found this piece. I think it might be just right to put my grandmother's tea service in. You know, like we've been talking about? In the downstairs hallway? I'm going to send you a picture."

Rustling from her end of the line. A pause. Then, muffled and distant, the faint sound of my cell receiving a message.

"What do you think?"

"I don't have my cell with me," I tell her. "It's in the house somewhere, but I'm not sure where. I'll go find it and look at the picture and call you back."

"Okay, call me right back."

I look aimlessly around for my cell phone. It's not in plain sight. I look in my backpack. Not there. I go into the bedroom and check the bedside table. Not there. Not in the cushions of the couch.

I use the landline to call my cell. I follow the ring. It's coming from the closet by the front door. Oh yeah. It's in the pocket of the jacket I wore to dinner last night.

I touch my code into the phone and open the photo Jessaca has sent. It's of a cabinet, five feet high and two feet wide. The cabinet has three glass doors, a horizontally rectangular one on the top third and two vertically rectangular ones on the bottom two-thirds. A price tag dangles from the knob on the upper glass door, but it's turned around so the price isn't visible. In the glass door on top I can see the reflection of Jessaca taking the picture. The cabinet is painted very green.

I call Jessaca back. "Okay, I see it now. So. You like it?"

"I just think it would work as a place to put my grandmother's tea service in. We have to put the tea service somewhere, and I think it would look good in this because you could see it through the glass. And it would fit in the hallway. We can also put in it the china from your grandmother."

Jessaca acquired her grandmother's tea service last month after visiting her mother. She brought it home in bubble wrap in a box that now waits by the front door. My grandmother's cups and saucers we've had for years. Once every six months, maybe, we bring them out to lend some occasion a Victorian tea party-vibe. The rest of the time they collect dust stacked in a jumble atop a bookshelf, fussy clutter, waiting for the day our son breaks them with a wayward soccer ball.

"So what do you think?" Jessaca asks.

What I'm thinking is that while Jessaca's statement "we have to put the tea service somewhere" is literally true it does not necessarily follow that we have to display the service in a manner that necessitates buying a new piece of furniture.

I say, "It's really green."

"Yeah, I thought that was a good thing. Or at least it's good it's not wood-colored. We have so many things that are wood already, we don't want any more."

"You are right. We do have a preponderance of furniture that's wood."

"If we decide the color isn't right, we can always paint it."

Would we really paint it? It's a job I wouldn't want to do. I say, "The glass doors are like in a barrister's bookcase. I can't tell for sure from the photo, but it looks like they're rolled rather than plate glass."

"Yeah, I think they are. I know you like that."

"Are the shelves inside well-located?"

"They are. There are three shelves. The tea service will fit in the top two. Your grandmother's cups and saucers will fit in the bottom one. I think it will work perfectly."

"So," with what I hope is breeziness, "how much are they asking for it?"

"Well, the price is six hundred dollars, but we can probably get them to come down on that. It's common practice in an antique mall to automatically get ten percent off if you bargain."

"Do you think it's worth that much?"

"It's not *that much*."

Had my emphasis been placed on those last two words, I would have understood why the question might rankle. With that emphasis, the question would have sounded skeptical, like a challenge. But I don't think I emphasized the last two words. I was consciously trying for an inflection that from word to word was utterly neutral. Perhaps my phrasing too easily lent itself to a contentious interpretation. At the same time, I find it hard to think of a way of phrasing the question—which does in fact ask for relevant information—from which contentious interpretation could be completely precluded.

Jessaca goes on, "It's actually pretty inexpensive. I doubt we're going to find anything decent for less than that."

"If you really like it," I say, "and if you really think it's a good price, then maybe you should just go ahead and buy it."

"I don't want to buy it just like that. I want you to see it first and for us to decide together. Can you meet me here at the antique mall?"

I look at the checkbook and the unfinished bills on the dining room table. I look toward the back door where I've left the sneakers I was going to change into to go to the gym after I finish the bills. "Okay. Sure. I can do that. I just have to finish something up quickly first. I'll leave in like five minutes."

"Thanks. If you play your cards right, I'll make it worth your while."

"*That* sounds promising."

"Where's your mind at, mister? It's ten-thirty in the am! I was talking about treating you to a complicated cup of coffee."

"I'll take what I can get."

"So you shall."

"So I shall."

"See you soon."

When I was younger I had a problem with procrastination. I cured myself of it by developing the determination to completely finish tasks I've started rather than leave even a small part of them undone. I return to the bills.

The bill I save for last is my credit card. It's for forty-five hundred dollars. After all the other bills are paid we have three thousand left in the bank. You could therefore make

the case that we don't have any money to spare—for a cabinet to display china or anything else. We're in the red, not merely in that we have a mortgage and car payments but because we're carrying credit card debt.

There's another salient feature of our situation, however. We receive "help" from my father, who once or twice a year "gifts" us a clear ten thousand dollars. I don't know in advance when he's going to send it, because the decision depends on his financial circumstances, which are opaque to me. Nor do I ask about the timing, because I don't want to imply that there is any expectation or entitlement on my part. (If you believe someone is planning to send you a gift, you don't ask him when he's going to get around to doing it.) So while I am pretty confident that some time in the next two-to-ten months I will be able to pay off the credit card bill, I don't know exactly when that will be.

But counting on Dad's gift to pay off my credit card does not sit well with me. It's one thing to rely on parental funds to enable your lifestyle when you're in your early twenties. It's another thing to do it when you're forty-five. What I would like to do with my father's gifts is save one half in an account for our kids, for when they need money for a car or the like, and donate the other half to a worthwhile cause. Allocating the money to our children's future cars and the improvement of the planet—rather than using it as a transfusion into our daily checking account—is what fits with my vision of where I should be at this stage in my life.

I write a check to the credit card company for two thousand dollars. I place the check and the bill in the envelope provided by the billing department, making sure their address is visible through the window. I adhere to the envelope a stamp and a sticker with my return address.

I locate my keys and wallet, pick up the stack of bills, and exit the house, locking the door behind me. I put the stack of bills in our mailbox at the end of the drive, lift the metal flag on the mailbox to let the postman know there are letters there to pick up. I get in the car and drive to the antique mall.

There are four cars in the parking lot. I park next to Jessaca's car.

It's a sunny Saturday morning, but going through the belled doors of the antique mall feels like entering an overcast Tuesday afternoon. It's not an unpleasant transition.

Behind the counter is a lady wearing a jean jacket. Based on the creases in her face I'd say she's sixty, although I could be off by fifteen years in either direction. She says good morning to me in a gravelly smoker's voice, and I say good morning to her. In front of the counter is a youngish bearded man who could be the lady's son. He is looking back and forth through a stack of three-by-five cards, his brow furrowed. Milling about are a tattooed man and woman who look to me to be about twenty-five, and a man wearing cowboy boots who's at least seventy and probably closer to eighty. I can't tell which ones work there, which ones are looking to buy something, and which ones are just hanging out. Sitting on the counter is an AM radio that is playing Dire Straits. The air in the antique mall is still and musty and reminds me of a basement used bookshop my brother worked in in nineteen seventy-nine.

Jessaca and I didn't communicate about where in the antique mall she would be, so I head down the aisle nearest the front door. I pass a booth of lamps, some hanging from above with Edison bulbs, some standing on the floor with smoked glass funnel-shaped shades, some sitting on a desktop with adjustable arms. Another booth has old tools: wooden planes, awls, axes that look more than a hundred years old. There's a booth of gadgets and kitchen applications, many of them avocado-colored.

I get to the end of the aisle without finding Jessaca. I turn and head up the next aisle to the right.

In the first booth I come to in the second aisle is a typewriter. An Underwood, I'm pretty sure from the 1930s. It's tall, constructed of heavy black metal, with serified writing — "UNDERWOOD STANDARD TYPEWRITER"—and gold decorative stenciling. There's a piece of onion-skin paper scrolled onto the roller, with some random letters and punctuation marks on it. I type: "The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog." Several keys stick or fail to strike with enough force to make legible letters. I press the space bar repeatedly so that the carriage trips the bell, and then I engage with aplomb the carriage return and line space lever.

I'm about to leave the booth when I notice on a lower shelf another typewriter, with a low-slung gray body and green rounded-square keys. This is a machine I know well. It's a Royal Quiet DeLuxe: the exact model my mom had when I was growing up.

Our Royal was stored in a hard tweed carrying case in the closet by the front door. You opened the case by pressing on both ends of a metal clasp at the front. You could use the machine while it was still in the case, with the case's large top flipped back, or you could undo the clamps at the bottom corners, lift the typewriter out, and use it case-free. I usually took it out of its case and placed it on the living room carpet and typed while I was lying on my stomach. My aim was not so much to write anything in particular as to use as many of the typewriter's features as I could: the "Magic Margin" key, the ribbon color change toggle (black to red), the tabulators, the line space selector, the ribbon reverse button, the touch control knob. I'd lift off the cover plate and then snap it back into place. I'd unfold the articulated, antenna-like paper supports.

I pull the paper from the old Underwood, whose carriage clackets as the paper spins out. I set the paper behind the roller of the Quiet DeLuxe, release the automatic paper lock by pulling forward with my index finger, spin the cylinder smoothly until the paper comes up under the automatic paper lock, and then flip the lock back into place with my thumb. Scrolling now involves more friction, the engaged lock parceling out the turning of the cylinder in increments. When a quarter of the piece of paper has come up, I push the small rubber nubs on the paper scale bar onto the surface of the paper. I'm about to type "Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of the party" and am wondering if the A-key on this Quiet DeLuxe will like ours strike a smidge higher than the other keys when my cell phone sounds.

"Where are you?"

"Um. I'm in the store. I'm towards the back. On the north end."

"Okay, I'm walking that way. Wait, okay. I see you now." I look around and see Jessaca walking past the booths of old tools.

She gives me a kiss. "Ensnared by a typewriter," with a smile. "I should have known. Come on. It's this way."

We walk to the other side of the antique mall, stopping when we get to a booth chockablock with old wood furniture painted new bright colors. A yellow desk. A blue table. A set of orange chairs. "And," says Jessaca with a flourish, "here she is!" A very green cabinet.

I open and close the three doors of the cabinet. The top door is stiff, and the two bottom doors need to be closed together, just so, or the right one stays swinging open. The glass of the top door has a small wrinkle, which produces from certain angles a slight funhouse mirror effect.

"What do you think," Jessaca asks.

“I think it is rolled glass, like in an old barrister’s bookcase. Do you think this is the entire original piece? It looks to me like it used to rest on a base that isn’t here.”

“Yes, maybe. But we don’t need any more storage than this has. We probably don’t even want something bigger, given the space we’re going to put it in. I think it’s just the right size for what we need.” Jessaca is enthusiastic. She wishes for me to be enthusiastic.

“When we take it to Antiques Roadshow they’ll tell us how much more it *would* have been worth if it hadn’t been painted and if it still had its original base.”

The hardening of Jessaca’s expression is subtle enough that someone who hasn’t been studying her face for two decades probably wouldn’t notice it. I delivered the Antiques Roadshow comment as a joke. I consciously intended it as a joke. But Jessaca has perceived that beneath the jokey surface is the point that the cabinet is far from a fine item—that I have insinuated into the conversation a reason not to buy it. This forces on her a choice. Option one is to maintain a cheery, enthusiastic tone and ignore the subterranean point. Option two is to drop the tone and push back on the point. Both options have unpalatable aspects. Option one may lead to a weakening of the case for buying the cabinet. Option one may also do nothing to block the implication that there is some weakness in Jessaca’s judgment about the value of furniture in antique malls. Option two will turn a cheery chat into a contest of reasons on opposite sides of an issue—it will, that is, relocate our interaction to the realm of argument. And option two may cast Jessaca as the party responsible for initiating the argument, since I cloaked my initial argumentative move in the guise of a joke.

“We wouldn’t be buying it as an investment for appraisal.” Her tone is flat. She has chosen option two. “We’d be buying it as something to use, because we need it.”

I consider again this idea of need. If we are going to display the tea service, then we do indeed need to buy something to display it in. But do we need to display it? I also consider, however, whether this is something that’s worth considering. Jessaca very much wants to buy something to display the tea service in. It’s a powerful desire of hers right now. And I’m not actually *strongly* opposed to the general idea of buying something to display the tea service in. I’m certainly not so strongly opposed that I think it’s worth a medium-term grudge.

I decide to proceed on the assumption that we are going to buy something to display the tea service in. The question now is whether the thing we’re going to buy is this cabinet or something else.

I say, “Do you think maybe we might be able to find something better if we keep looking? If we don’t find anything better, we can always come back and get this. But maybe there’ll be something better elsewhere. In better shape, maybe, or with different paint.” I mean what I say. If we buy this cabinet, it will occupy our home for the next twenty years. We might be able to find something better. But I’m also deploying a tactic. Consistently pushing for a one-month delay of purchases is a way to save money—partly because it puts more space between the purchases we make, and partly because delaying a purchase sometimes slips into our not making the purchase after all.

“Well, I have been looking. I’ve looked at Craig’s List the last two weeks. Everything else I’ve seen that’s halfway acceptable has been much more expensive. More than we’d want to pay. And if this is what we’re going to buy anyway, I really don’t want to wait. We do that so often: put off buying something we want, live for months without the thing, and then eventually buy the thing anyway, having succeeded only in spending a bunch of time without something we want. I’d rather buy the cabinet and move the tea service into it today rather than live for months with that packing crate by the front door cluttering up our

hallway and then finally going ahead and buying the cabinet anyway the day before Thanksgiving.”

I run my hand over the top of the cabinet. I open and close the top door again. I shrug. “I don’t love it. But it’s okay. It’ll work. If you think it’s the right thing, let’s buy it.”

Jessaca frowns to herself. I have given my okay to buying the cabinet, but it’s not the okay she wants. She wants us both to want to buy the cabinet, which is not the same as my being willing to buy it because she wants it. She pushes in the top door, which I didn’t succeed in fully closing. “Well, if you *don’t love it*,” she says, “I guess we shouldn’t get it.” She crosses her arms. She’s thinking about money, but in a different way than I had been thinking about it.

I have always said that we should consider any money that comes to either of us as belonging equally to both of us. When making purchasing decisions we should thus be on a perfectly level playing field. If one of us has a very strong preference in favor of or opposed to something, and the other has only a weak preference in the other direction, we should go with the very strong preference, irrespective of which one of us is on which side. Jessaca, however, cannot completely disregard the fact that I make twice as much money as she does, and that the cash infusions that periodically pay off our credit cards come from my father. And she wonders whether I, despite my statements to the contrary, really completely disregard those facts. This makes her very reluctant to push forward with purchases about which I have expressed any reluctance, which unbalances the playing field of our decision-making by giving to any preference of mine not to make a purchase an outsized influence. The result nettles. Jessaca resents the imbalance, but feels that her lesser financial contribution blocks her from making any explicit claim of grievance. So she resents in silence. The silent resentment is something I do not relish. So I try to placate. But my placation often blurs into apology, and then I grow resentful (silently) of the suggestion (which my own apology seems to imply) that I am to blame for something (the imbalance) that I have explicitly repudiated.

All of which could be avoided if Jessaca comes to believe that I *really want* to buy the cabinet.

A man in an electric wheelchair appears at the other end of the aisle we’re standing in. Rather than travel in a straight line down the aisle, he tacks rapidly back and forth from booth to booth. We know it’s impolite to stare, but the precision of his joystick-guided movements overwhelms our etiquette. We stop talking to watch his approach. The wheelchair makes a thin whizzing sound that changes keys at each zig and zag. The man is wearing a porkpie hat. When he reaches our booth, he meets our gaze, lifts the hat, and briefly bows his head. Then, without slowing, he places the hat back on his head and continues on. We listen to the diminishing whizz of the wheelchair as he turns the corner and tacks up the next aisle.

I say, “You know I guess you’re right, we can always paint it if we decide we want a different color.”

“Do you really think we’ll get around to painting it?”

“Well, we’ve painted things before.”

“But don’t you think we should wait and keep looking until we find something that we don’t have to paint?”

We’ve swapped sides of the argument. Now it’s an argument I can easily win.

I say, “It’s inexpensive enough that we can’t really go wrong. If we find something else better down the line, we can always put this in the guestroom. We won’t regret that.”

“What would we use it for in the guestroom?”

“Books. We have all those books overflowing in the family room. We could move some of them into this thing if we decided to put it in the guestroom.”

Jessaca uncrosses her arms and puts both hands on the top of the cabinet, pressing down as though testing its strength. “That’s a point. We do have way too many books for the bookshelves we have. I find trying the dishevelment of our books.” She nods at the cabinet.

“You know,” turning to me, “we won’t even have to pay the full amount. I can bargain with them.”

“Sure.”

“What do you think is a fair price?”

“How about four hundred and fifty.”

“Four hundred and fifty. Perfect. I’ll offer them four fifty.”

“Okay.”

“So if they agree to that, should we just buy it?”

“Why not? I mean: sure, yes.”

“Okay then. That’s the plan.” Jessaca unloops the string that’s holding the price tag from the knob on the top door. She carries the price tag in her right hand and hitches her purse over her shoulder with her left. “I’m going in.”

“Good luck in there.” I give her a thumbs up.

She raises her left thumb, touches it to mine, says, “I got this,” and heads to the front counter.

I drift toward the front of the store while staying far enough away to be out of earshot of the bargaining. I don’t bargain, and I feel uncomfortable when I’m with Jessaca and she bargains, although I’m willing to accept the lower prices for which she bargains. I wander into a booth of military memorabilia. I pick up a rusty canteen from World War II, shake it, put it back down. I stroke the dark green wool of a World War I corporal’s uniform. I knock on a camouflaged helmet. All the while keeping an eye on the conversation at the front counter.

When the body language of Jessaca and the lady behind the counter indicates a resolution, I sidle forward. Jessaca strides toward me. “The deal is done,” she declares. “We’re paying four hundred and seventy-five, not four fifty. But they’ve agreed to deliver it to our house for free. They’ll bring it this afternoon on a truck. That’s okay, isn’t it?”

“Sure. Great. Yes. I’ll pay, shall I?”

I approach the front counter and catch the lady’s eye. “I’m with her,” gesturing toward Jessaca, who is inspecting items in booth filled with small porcelain figurines. “Can I pay for the cabinet?” I tap my index finger on the price tag on the counter. “This one. For four seventy-five.”

Jessaca and I step out of the antique mall into the disorienting brightness of the day. It’s like exiting the dark of a movie theater and finding yourself in the middle of a sunshiney afternoon. We walk toward the cars.

“Hey,” says Jessaca, “I promised you a complex coffee, didn’t I?”

“That is true.”

“I’ll get it now and meet you at home. What do you want?”

“Double-tall-nonfat-latte.” I used to feel ridiculous ordering such a thing, but I now enjoy saying it fast, with bullet-like emphasis.

“Douba what?”

“Double-tall-nonfat-latte.”

“Bubble ball?”

“Double-tall-non—”

“I know, I know. I’ve heard you order it before. I’m just joshing ya.”

“Just make sure you get the order right,” say I.

“Yes sir,” says she, saluting.

We kiss.

“See you at home.”

“See you at home.”

As a matter of habit after starting the engine I turn the radio to a news station. While I’m waiting for a break in traffic to exit the parking lot I turn it off again. The decision to buy the cabinet hasn’t gone down entirely smoothly with me. There’s still some slight friction, a splinter, a tickle in the throat. To prevent it from infiltrating my ensuing time with Jessaca I have two options: smooth the friction over within myself, or pretend I don’t feel it. The former option is obviously preferable, but to accomplish that requires some mental work that radio news would interfere with.

I join the flow of traffic, I switch into the middle lane, and I bring to mind how I will feel about all of this in the future. Spending four hundred and seventy-five dollars today will make no difference to my state of mind a year from now; nothing about how my life is going then will be worse as a result of having spent the money today. The same is true of my state of mind six months from now. It’s possible that when I do the bills over the next two months I’ll feel pangs about the purchase, but they will be mild and they will be temporary. At the same time, the cabinet will make Jessaca happy today and happy tomorrow. The cabinet may actually make Jessaca happiness for days on end. That will make me happy. If we didn’t buy the cabinet, in contrast, I could be facing an extended period of grudge-negotiation.

Slowing down to stop at a light, I turn the radio on and switch to the college station. They’re playing Nick Drake. I turn right. Half a mile later I turn left. I’m on my own street. Two blocks to home.

And then, completely unbidden, without my conscious mind’s playing any role at all, a memory arrives. It’s of an event I haven’t thought about in thirty-five years.

On my eighth birthday, just before my parents got divorced, my mom told me they were going to re-decorate my room and that I could choose the color to paint the walls. A week later, on a Saturday morning, the two of us went to the paint shop. We looked together at the cards with squares of gradually changing shades of colors. After a while I narrowed it down to a card of greens. I eventually chose a square called Shocking Green. “You sure that’s what you want?” Mom asked. I was sure. “Okay, then, if that’s what you want. But let’s try out a sample first. That’s what I always do. You can never be perfectly sure from a swatch what a color will look like on a wall. We’ll paint a part of your wall, wait for it to dry, and then you can look at it and make a final decision.”

Mom told the paint man behind the counter what color we wanted. The man looked through a big notebook and then went to a back room. He returned with a can of paint. He placed the can in the vise-like arms of a small machine, he flipped a switch, and the machine shook the can. The can shook very fast and became blurred, as though it were in multiple locations at once. The shaking was loud enough so that when the man finally turned the machine off the shop felt heavily quiet. The man loosened the arms of the machine, took the can out, and brought it to us to inspect. He pried open the lid with a metal thing that looked like a bottle opener. The paint smelled wet and clay-y. Scooping with a wooden paddle, he

lifted some of the paint out of the can and then let it fall down in a glistening line. It was luscious. I knew it was paint and you couldn't eat it, but at the moment I still felt like dipping my finger in as though it were cake batter. Mom told the paint man that the color looked right. He nodded, dropped the wooden paddle into a trashcan, placed the lid back on the can, and pounded the lid tight in a circle with a rubber mallet.

We drove home.

"You get some newspaper from the family room," Mom said. "I'll go down to the basement to get the brushes. We'll meet up in your room to do a test square on one of your walls."

When we were both in the room, I put the newspaper on the floor and Mom pried open the paint. She held upright a brand new paintbrush and presented it to me. "Would you like to do the honors?"

At that moment the front door slammed. Dad had just come home from his morning golf. We heard him bound up the stairs. He swung open the door to my room. "So you got the paint? What'd you get? Let's see." He looked at the color. His head pulled back as though the paint smelled bad. "Are you kidding? You can't seriously think we're going to paint the room that color."

"That's what Jonah picked out."

"But why'd you let him pick that? You know that'll be awful."

"We're going to do a test first. We're going to paint a square right here, let it dry and then see if he likes it."

"What's the point? We're not going to paint the wall that color, and then we'll just have to paint over it. And to cover that color up with something neutral will require five or six coats."

Dad turned to me. "You don't really need to test it out, do you Jonah? Can't you tell it won't be right? You don't think it's necessary, do you?"

Mom narrowed her eyes. Dad's name escaped through her clenched teeth. She said to me, "This is the color you chose, Jonah," and once again held out the paintbrush. "Go ahead and do a test on the wall."

I had been anticipating the feeling of lowering the brand-new paintbrush into the smooth fresh paint, of applying the paint from brush to wall, of watching the color emerge. But now I wasn't thinking about the paint or the brush or the wall or the world of things at all. I was thinking about the effect on Mom and Dad of what I was going to say—that saying one thing would make her angry at him and saying the other thing would make him angry at her. If my parents had asked me at that moment to state what I wanted independently of how it might affect them, it would have been literally impossible for me to answer. I would have racked my brains trying to figure out what the effect on them would be of various responses to *that* question. I said, "I'll paint a square on the wall, but I'll make it small, and I won't put it on thick, so we can paint over it easily when we pick another color."

Jessaca is already at the house, waiting outside the front door with a cup in her hand. How did she go to the coffee shop, place the order, pick up the order, and still beat me home? Sometimes, I swear, she has magical powers.

"How are you feeling about the cabinet now?" holding the coffee out to me.

"Good" I receive the coffee from her and take a sip. "Good. I'm feeling good about finally having something in my house that is Shocking Green."