

BEING PREPARED

'I'm nearly there' I thought. A few final tweaks, or even perhaps another packet of orange hobnobs then I should be able to rest. Poised above the shiny plastic buttons that seemed to mirror the anxious sweat crawling down my forehead, I was ready. Ten thousand words felt like nothing at this juncture, because the essay was there, on the page, in the file and in the machine. Nothing could ruin my work.

That was until I attempted to turn on the computer later that night. At first there was nothing. For a minute I stared into the darkness, which was shortly followed by a flutter of vivid symbols and squirming jargon clambering around the screen, trying to find some order in the chaos. It had happened, the computer had 'checked-out' (died). I continued to stare away, unable to shut my mouth which felt like it was being prized open by the jaws of life. Suddenly my illogical mind began to line up questions that I had to ask myself: -Why did this happen? -Why would this happen to me? -How could this happen to me two days before the dissertation was due in?



Thinking back, these questions took their form because I was actually just angry at myself. Things break and fall-apart, or they get turned into other things and serve a different purpose. The first and only question that I should have asked myself that evening was: -Why on earth did I not back up my work today of all days? The point I'm making here is that things happen, some things can be attached to reason and others appear to occur for the sake of occurring. If I would have backed up my work that day the crisis wouldn't have been as devastating. However it was too late to dwell on this fact, and with the help of my parents and friends I remained calm enough to make up for lost time and planned to finish the work on another computer.

That was until the following night...where life, with the help of the Greenford power grid had a second go at destroying my work in a huge power cut. I panicked, but somehow still managed (after a lot of cursing) to get back on track, wait-out the blackout and finish proof reading. Being prepared for catastrophe in some situations has certainly aided me, but don't get me wrong, I can still love life and be as positive as I have always been. Having a back-up plan does not have to entail negativity either, for to be even remotely prepared for something turning out differently to the way you've it planned is often valuable. Perhaps by life keeping us on our toes it adds so much more charm and wonder to those rare occasions when things do fall into place?

Alex Kingshott

(N.B - To the editor- things turned out fine in the end and I got a 2:1 so alls well that ends well.)