

**Ep #4: Millennial Prepper Tips
from the Texas Snowpocalypse:
A Conversation with Lisandra Rickards**



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Kaneisha Grayson

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You are listening to *Scale Your Joy* with Kaneisha Grayson episode four, icepocalypse edition.

Welcome to *Scale Your Joy*, the only podcast that teaches high achievers with heart how to craft a life and build a business focused on freedom, joy, self-expression, and social impact. I'm your host Kaneisha Grayson, a Harvard Business School and Harvard Kennedy School grad, author, essayist, and self-made entrepreneur. I did it and you can do it too. Let's get started.

Hey, everyone, I am recording this episode on Thursday, February 18 2021. And I am in the middle of a FEMA declared disaster. I'm in Austin, Texas and I do not have running water. I do have electricity and heat, and I am so fortunate to have that.

But ever since Monday morning, so I think that's February 15, we've basically been living an apocalyptic style existence with inconsistent and unpredictable electricity. Now a lack of running water. And I don't want to say rationed food, that sounds a little more exaggerated or a little more dire than it, but go into a rationing food mindset. Maybe we are actually rationing food.

So what happened? Valentine's Day was Sunday, February 14th, we woke up in the morning and it had not yet snowed, it was just really cold and icy out. So one thing that happens in Texas is we'll have precipitation, we'll have rain, and then it will get really cold and then we'll have sleet on the ground. And so it's really hard to drive or even walk because the road is like an ice rink.

So even by Sunday afternoon, things had already started to close, services were already starting to be canceled. And it was like okay, "Well, the storm

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is coming. It's dangerous to be out driving today. And then the storm is coming tomorrow. But like, we'll just have to stay inside for a day.”

But what ended up happening, at least in my experience, is we stayed in, Tyler and I. We made a lemon cake together. And I have to say, we made a boxed lemon cake, but we made it Paula Dean style, which is where we switch out a lot of the ingredients for more rich, decadent, luxurious ingredients. So I can talk more about the lemon cake later because that's not the point. But we made a lemon cake, stayed in cozy. And I don't know if it was that same night or the next day, we made some more cute food.

The next day we woke up and my dad told me, “You should boil water and put it in some thermoses so that you can have some hot water in case the power goes out.” And I was very dismissive and just like, “Whatever dad, we don't need to do that. We still have power, it's all good.”

And within minutes our power had gone out. And then our power stayed out for many hours. We now have power again. And it has been holding steady for what I believe is the last 48 hours. Everything's kind of blending together for me. And it's been a wild adventure.

So some of the things that have happened so far is that it has gotten so, so cold inside of people's apartments. I'm here in Austin, Texas and I'm living in an apartment. We all lost power for some number of hours. But then some apartments in my building, their power got restored. And I was one of the fortunate ones whose apartment power did get restored. And so we were able to like reheat the apartment up.

But there are other people whose power didn't get restored for much longer and their apartments got extremely cold. I think my apartment got down to about 55 degrees before our power got restored. But other people's apartments you know are as cold as 40 degrees or even lower. At 32 degrees is freezing, that's where water freezes.

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So anyway, other things that have happened is my beloved Tyler, he lives in a different apartment complex. We're not even sure what has happened because we haven't received really any communication from his apartment building to know what has happened. But he has a lot of cameras in his place. He's like a tech guy, and he has a lot of cameras all over his apartment. And he could see on the apartment that his apartment was flooding.

So what likely happened is a pipe burst and water just flowed all through his living room and his bedroom. Last night he was watching some of the footage and saw two men come into his house. They look like maintenance men, I'm sure they're maintenance men. And they took pictures and used some sort of vacuum to vacuum up the water.

But still no communication, or very little communication from his apartment complex to actually know what happened. But he's super worried about basically having all of his earthly possessions ruined by either water damage or mold, mildew damage.

Other things that have happened is I haven't left the house. I haven't left the apartment since Sunday afternoon when Tyler and I tried to walk across the street to the grocery store. And the ground was slippery, ice rink slippery and I just don't have snow shoes, snow boots, hiking boots, whatever, the things you should wear in the snow and ice. I've only gone downstairs very, very slowly because the stairwell is icy to take Zadie to the dog park.

Let's see, we have been living without running water at this point for 24 hours. My apartment is full of the water that we did have the foresight to save. So we filled up the bathtub when the power first went out. So we have a bathtub full of water. We have every pot in the house is full of water.

And I have a prepper mentality, so when the pandemic began, I bought a large Berkey water filter, which is like a high-quality water filter. And so that

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was full so we have drinking water in the large Berkey filter. I had stocked up on a lot of water during the beginning of the pandemic and I still had those big jugs of water. So, you know, we are now drinking that water. That is our water to drink, is the water in the Berkey, the water that's randomly in pots around the house.

Then we went under a boil water notice in some parts of Austin. And I'm not sure that it had been declared for my part of Austin. But I knew deep inside that might mean that the water that I even have access to is no good without boiling. So we also have a lot of vessels all over the apartment full of water that says do not drink, that we can use for flushing toilets.

So for those of you listening, you may be like this is a really long introduction to the episode. But it is a really long introduction to the episode, but this is basically the episode.

So we're not going to have a listener spotlight for today. It just seems incongruous to have some like really enthusiastic endorsement of the podcast alongside a FEMA declared disaster where people are dying. As far as I can see, it looks like 31 people have died so far in the US because of this storm.

I'm in Texas where things are the absolute worst, but other states have been affected as well. Just to give you an idea of the scope of this disaster, on Wednesday, more than two and a half million people were still without power in Texas. Two and a half million people. So yeah, I know I'm kind of rambling here, but I just wanted to give you all a sense of what's going on.

And the point of today's podcast episode is for you to listen to a conversation between myself and my bestie from Harvard Business School, Lisandra Rickards, talk a little bit about my experience in this disaster so far.

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So I think of the disaster as starting Sunday at, let's say 10am. So Valentine's Day 10am Central Time, I think of that as the disaster start date, that's when it started being difficult to get to food. Like we couldn't walk to the grocery store safely. And I am recording this now, Thursday February 18.

So it's been all day Sunday, we still had power and water. Monday, we had water but no power. Tuesday, we had power and running water. So that was our best day, but we were very scared that day that we would lose it. And then Wednesday we had power but we lost our water in the morning, but we have saved a lot of water already thankfully.

And now it's Thursday morning and we have power and we have heat, but we don't have running water. And of course, we have less and less water as we use water to drink, as we use dirty-ish water or the boil water notice to flush. And y'all we have done things like harvest snow and bank snow so that if it gets that desperate, we can you know melt that and use that to wash ourselves with or flush the toilet. And hopefully it wouldn't get to this, but like boil that water, put it through the Berkey and drink the snow.

So one thing I just want to say on this podcast episode is you'll hear me speaking to Lisandra and giving some what I call millennial prepper tips. But please understand that like, I don't have any authority, or education, formal education in this area. I'm not certified, I don't know if you need to be certified to give out disaster preparedness advice.

So please understand that whatever I share is just me sharing my personal experience and what I would advise, encourage people to think about doing, not during a disaster, but before a disaster hits. Because once a disaster hits, everything is 10 times harder, if not impossible to do.

So I hope that you enjoy this conversation between me and Lisandra. To give you a little bit of context on who Lisandra is, she lives in her home country of Jamaica. She's currently located in Kingston, Jamaica. And she

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is the founder of Soul Career. Which is an amazing coaching and executive coaching company for people transitioning between careers, people who want to transition out of their job into being an entrepreneur. For people who want to stay at the same job but find more fulfillment in their job.

So she's the founder of Soul Career. And she's the former chief entrepreneurship officer of the Branson Center of Entrepreneurship in Jamaica. And she's just a general badass. And she is one of my very closest best friends from my time at Harvard Business School.

Lisandra and I are super close. We talk basically every weekday, Monday through Friday. And I asked her if we could turn today's morning call into a recorded call. I wasn't even sure how I would use it. I thought, "Oh, maybe this will go in my documentary I'm going to make." But it became very clear that this was going to be a podcast episode.

So this is just this morning, just had this conversation with Lisandra. Our morning call, icepocalypse edition. I hope you enjoy and A, I hope that you are actually safe and warm. I know that a lot of you, Texas is a very populous state and the other states affected have people in them.

So if you are affected by this storm, you are probably listening to this week's after the storm has happened. And hopefully things are much better and not still in such a place of disarray. But I hope that you will listen to this episode and strongly consider researching how to be prepared in a disaster and actually take steps to be prepared. Listen to the advice that Lisandra and I give based on our experiences.

Lisandra has lived through many hurricanes. I've lived through in Cuba, hurricanes, as well as in Ghana power and water outages. And now this FEMA declared disaster in Texas, which is still ongoing. I really hope that you will learn from our experiences, from what we did well, from what we wish we'd done better, as well as do some of your own independent research. And make sure that you and your household, even if your

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household is just you and your dog, just you and your cat, or you and your partner, or you and your plants, you and your books, whatever your household is. And make sure that your household is prepared for a disaster.

Meaning that if you are unable to leave your home for two weeks, and you have no power and no running water that you would be able to survive. And you'll hear in the interview how important food is to me when it comes to weathering a disaster.

I know I have introduced this interview about three times at this point. But now I'm really serious. Go ahead and listen to Lisandra and I have our morning call this morning. And please take action to keep yourself and your loved ones safe. Enjoy the interview and I will talk to you next week. Hopefully.

Kaneisha: Oh wait, we had some weird audio going on. Let me see.

Lisandra: Okay.

Kaneisha: I'm having some feedback. I wonder if it's my phone, going to move my phone far away. I don't hear anything else now. Say something.

Lisandra: Test, test, test.

Kaneisha: Yeah.

Lisandra: You sound great.

Kaneisha: Awesome. Just for the record, I'm recording with Lisandra's permission.

Lisandra: Yeah, so usually we start by just saying what's top of mind? What are you thinking about?

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Kaneisha: Yeah, today what's top of mind, well, like I feel like I'm out of red light thinking, where I'm just like constantly scanning the environment looking for like what could go wrong? This is the question me and Tyler ask each other. Well, that I ask us and then we start asking each other whenever we start kind of relaxing, is like what can we do now that we'll wish we would have done when we had power.

And that's just basically how I spent the last 48 hours. Well, besides being asleep is just like every single time I was like, okay, let's sit down and relax. I'll be like, "No, what else can we do now that we'll wish we would have done when we had power?" And I don't feel that I'm in that level of hyper vigilance anymore. Tyler's still asleep, Zadie is here chilling. It's like, this is our new post-apocalyptic life.

So let me just tell you about my day and how I have a new life. So in the morning it's 8, and around 9am my neighbor Alex is going to come by and take Zadie out to the dog park. She has a dog too, named Syrup. So I think she's in her, I don't know, mid 20s, late 20s or something.

And she lives alone, and I just kept checking up on her. And she sounded like, you know, in good spirits. But I could tell like, wait, she's alone with no power. And she said that she was, you know, "I'm eating but like..." I don't know what she said but it was like, "I'm eating but not that much." Like, "I'm okay." And I'm like, "No." So I made her like a little care package of food and she really enjoyed it.

And I think I told you this via voice memo, but she melted, boiled snow, she harvested snow, boiled it so she could wash the dishes that I gave her and return them. And then she gave me some extra dishes. And then we turned into a soup kitchen.

Lashonda: How could she boil the snow? Did she have power to do that?

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Kaneisha: Oh yeah, so she didn't have power when I gave her the food. But then she ate some food, and I think she went back to sleep being like I'm cold. And then the power in her part of the building, like Lisandra she lives in the same building as me just literally a different part of the building. And that power came on in that part of the building. And she's like, "Yay." And yeah, so then she was able to boil snow.

Lashonda: Okay.

Kaneisha: Yeah. So she asked me for my list of things I wanted to see what she might have. And I asked for like cilantro, black pepper, tomatoes, tomato sauce, anything tomato-y because I have pasta. And I also like salsa and I wanted to make some salsa. Anyway, she ended up sending over like crushed fire roasted tomatoes, and her black pepper. She sent over some dried cilantro, which I'm like, "Oh, I should always have that from now on." And then also sent over this unopened jar of like gourmet, bruschetta topping.

And it's so interesting how we, you know, millennials we don't keep a lot of staples. We have like gourmet deluxe stuff. So my soup kitchen is a mix of like, home cooking mama food, but also like really high-end gourmet, random ingredients that we need to eat before they go bad, or eat while we have power.

Lashonda: Yeah, well, as you know, I rarely have anything stocked because I just don't like... Everything spoils if I keep it too long, because I don't cook that much. You know, I mostly order. So it's hard, it feels like a waste to me to stock up. But you are always telling me what if there is an apocalypse?

Kaneisha: Yeah. Or even, I mean, what if there's a hurricane?

Lashonda: Well, we have time for that. You know, we have time to prepare for that.

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Kaneisha: Yeah, and I mean, honestly, Lisandra we had time to prepare.

Lisandra: Yeah.

Kaneisha: We had time to prepare for there being a storm and being trapped inside for like, let's say a day. Nobody, no regular person who's not affiliated with the utilities companies or the government anticipated, or I don't want to say nobody, nobody I know anticipated we could be trapped inside for days on end.

I did actually tell Tyler. He came over on Friday night, and I was looking at the weather. And I told him on Saturday morning I said, "Hey Tyler, that storms coming, you're not going to be able to drive home. You're going to get trapped here on Monday. It's going to snow. Like should you go home?" I think I said Saturday night, it would have still been okay to go home. And he was like, "What? No, I'm not. It's Valentine's Day, we're having our Valentine's Day."

And then Sunday was Valentine's Day. And I remember we got into an argument because he wanted to drive to go pick up our food, like our Valentine's Day dinner from Central Market. And I was like, "It is not safe enough to drive." And he's like, "Oh, it's safe enough to drive." And I'm like, "Well if it's safe enough to drive, in your logic, then it's safe enough for us to order, not order but ask somebody to go get it, like on Favor or something." We're arguing and he wants to go, I don't want him to go. He opens up the Favor app and Favor has stopped delivery because it's not safe to drive.

That was already Sunday at 12:30pm. But yeah, then by Monday morning, it was the beginning of the end.

Lisandra: So what do you think are the basics that every millennial should have in their pantry in case of, you know, a blizzard or a hurricane? Like, what do you think you need to have? I know rice is a must.

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Kaneisha: Well, rice isn't even the number one thing. But that's funny that you said every millennial because that's like such a cool question. Because it's not about... Okay, let's say every millennial who doesn't have kids, because when you have kids that makes everything more complex and more high risk.

So, this advice is, I would say, for millennials living alone, or with a partner, or with roommates who don't have kids and maybe have pets. You know, I know this sounds silly, and it's like a super millennial thing to say, but like, pet food. Make sure you have, I would say a month of pet food at all times. So like, dogs, cats, lizards, snakes, whatever creatures you have that you love, you need to have a month's worth of their food stocked at all times.

And, you know, obviously people have money challenges and pet food is not cheap. Especially, a lot of people feed their pets, I don't, but a lot of people feed their pets nicer food than they eat. Zadie eats like bougie dog food, but it's something I can easily afford. And so because I am a millennial prepper, I already had a ton of dog food for Zadie. That was less about prepping and more about those bags are heavy and I don't want to keep going to the pet store to pick them up.

So that's the number one thing, not number one, clearly you need to live. But like that's one of the things people don't think about is they kind of do just in time with their pet food. And you do not want to be scrambling around and scared for your pet, that your pet is cold, scared, stressed, and they don't have their regular food or enough food. So that's a big one.

Obviously, water. So this is where I was super prepared. When the pandemic started, I went into full on prepper mode. I joined like a prepper online community and just started trying to do as many of the things they said to do that I could do in an apartment. Like I can't buy a generator, right, and use it in an apartment. But I can stock up on water.

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So I started sheltering in place March 13, what year did we even start? Was it 2020? I'm so confused. Yeah, I started sheltering in place March 13, 2020 and I stocked up on water big time. So I got big jugs of water and stored them and I've had them since March. Two of my huge jugs spoiled.

And that's where I messed up, is not replacing those two huge jugs. But I still have four huge jugs of water. And then I also bought a really large high-quality water filter called a Berkey. My understanding is I can put pretty low-quality water in there and the Berkey will filter it out to safe drinking standards. Ideally, even if it was "low quality" water I would still boil it if I had power and put it in there.

So we still had running water for Monday, and we had running water on Tuesday. And then our running water went out around 10am on Wednesday. But by then my Berkey water was full. I bet that's like, I don't even know, 10 gallons of water. I had like four big jugs of water, which I think probably represented another 10 gallons of water. I had filled my bathtub up on Monday, I believe we did, with water. I had also filled all my biggest pots with water as well.

And so humans can live weeks without food. But we will die in a matter of days, is my understanding, without water. So even more than pet food you need water. I mentioned the pet food though first because that's the thing people don't think about.

And so for you, Lisandra, I guess there's a warning, but what if it's not a hurricane? What if, I don't know, can Jamaica get earthquakes? Like what if it's something sudden like an earthquake? And I've lived through very minor earthquakes. I believe three in California and then one in Baltimore in 2011. Very, very light minor ones that, you know, you barely even feel and you're like, "Was that an earthquake?" But like earthquakes can happen in places where they don't usually happen.

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Lisandra: Yeah, definitely, we're on a fault line for earthquakes. But before we even talk about earthquakes I wanted to just -

Kaneisha: The rest of the list?

Lisandra: Yeah. No, no, no, I wanted to say that, you know, in a hurricane the water system gets completely trashed and polluted with dirt and debris, and so on. So, water is like very standard. And in fact, we have jugs and jugs of five-gallon water. Everybody that I know in Jamaica has water at all times. We get water lock-offs during drought. We get water lock-offs during heavy rains.

But to answer your question around the earthquakes, yeah, we do. We are on a fault line. We definitely have, like I've already been through three tremors this year.

Kaneisha: No.

Lisandra: It's always shaking. It's not, I mean, you know, you get used to it. It's like if you're in California, you get used to wildfires. If you're in Jamaica, hurricanes and earthquakes. Or the Caribbean, a lot of those countries are on the same fault line. We're on the same fault line as Haiti, and Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico. And we're all in the same hurricane zone.

But in terms of disaster preparedness, and what to stock. Like for me rice and canned meats is like key in a disaster situation. So what are your thoughts on that?

Kaneisha: For sure. So those are the things that I stocked up on. And we actually haven't even started on the canned meats because I had a good amount of frozen meat. And then also, I know how to cook meat in a way that you feel like you're eating meat but you're not eating a lot of meat so it can spread really far and feed you for many meals, or feed other people.

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So I agree. Basically, I think you should think of your pantry as food I can cook if I have power. Food I can eat, it might taste better if it's cooked, but food I can eat safely if I don't have power. Food I can cook if I have power and if it sits out in room temperature for a few hours is not going to make me really sick.

For example, so yes, rice goes into that category of food. You know, uncooked rice millennials y'all, not that frozen rice that's already cooked. But uncooked rice is great. We've been eating a lot of rice. So uncooked rice, uncooked dry beans. And get a variety of beans and get a variety of rice so that you can have some variety. So like if you like a lot of takeout, you know like get basmati rice get jasmine rice.

We haven't been eating basmati or jasmine rice, but I did get parboiled rice, which is that rice that's real separated, because I like that. And now I'm so glad that like I get a treat of parboiled rice. But get a variety of dried beans, pinto beans, black eyed peas, kidney beans.

And then canned, like you said Lisandra, canned meat. So I have canned salmon, canned sardines, canned chicken.

Lisandra: Tuna.

Kaneisha: Canned tuna. I didn't buy too much tuna because I'm like, it's important for millennial preppers to buy stuff that you actually want to eat. So I don't really like canned tuna, so I probably bought some. But I focused more on like canned chicken and like canned salmon. Because I'm like, "Oh, I took a class a cooking class once and we use canned salmon to make like a cute salmon salad." So I had like one thing I was willing to eat with the canned salmon.

But I had already cooked that canned chicken a few times during shelter in place, so I knew that I liked it. I didn't restock that the stuff, the canned

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chicken, fish, whatever that I have is from March 2020, and now we're in February 2021.

I would also say a lot of spices. A lot of oregano, your heaviest hitter is going to be kosher salt, fresh ground black pepper that you can crack out through like a little pepper grinder, garlic powder. Not garlic salt, because that gives you too much sodium. But just garlic powder, onion powder, like I have used that so much in every meal I've made. It makes things tasty and it makes you feel like, I don't know, like it just tastes good. It makes things taste good.

Lisandra: Yeah, I just want to jump in here because it reminds me of it. So the biggest hurricane I've ever lived through actually happened when I was four years old. 1988. September 1988 in Jamaica. Hurricane Gilbert that hit Jamaica as a category four. We haven't been hit by anything stronger than that since then. And so, you know, the other hurricanes that we've been hit by have been very mild. Like category one, category two, which for us is like a storm, you know, tropical storm.

But I remember, and there are so many stories from that year where we ate canned, you know, bully beef what you call it in the US bully beef?

Kaneisha: Maybe like shredded beef?

Lisandra: No, it's like -

Kaneisha: I'll Google it.

Lisandra: Yeah. We ate bully beef and rice for months. I think Jamaica was without power for three months in 1988. And no running water for three months. So I have people who were here who were adults at the time, because I was four, I don't remember much except I got sick of like, I cannot eat, it's corned beef. Corned beef. I can't eat corned beef now at all.

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Kaneisha: Because you ate so much of it.

Lisandra: Right, when I was four you know. And then people would have to go to the river to shower because there was no running water for months and so on. And the way that we cooked with no electricity for three months was like a coal stove. You know, like a grill and you put coal in it and you just had to do everything via coal on the fire. Which is crazy, because it wasn't that long ago.

But recently my team in the British Virgin Islands got hit by Hurricane Irma, which was a category five, very powerful. It was a very strong category five, like if there was a category six it would have been a category six. And they had no power in the British Virgin Islands for six months in 2017.

And that is a very like a barter situation, rationing food, joining very long lines for gas, kerosene, and diesel. Because you have to live via, if you could get your hands on a generator, that was the biggest thing. And getting diesel for the generator. You waited four hours in a line to get diesel for your generator to have power two hours a day so you could charge stuff and connect with the world.

And I remember that after it hit there was no communications with BVI for three or four days. I had no idea what happened to my entrepreneurs, my team there, for days because every cell tower was down. Richard Branson had a satellite phone, so he called Virgin using a satellite phone and only people who had satellite phones could get any word out at all. It was total communications backup.

And that is something that in this day and age, it's so hard to prepare for that. Because they were stocked on food, they were stocked up on water. Some people had bought generators in anticipation of the storm. But no comms at all. Complete blackout for days. That was like a shock to all of us who were trying to get in touch with people.

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Kaneisha: That's some super relevant sharing. Yeah, thank you for sharing that, this is super interesting. I didn't know the numbers of category storms. So when you said category five, I'm just like, "Okay, five out of what 10?" And, yeah, no, it was five out of five. Okay, wow.

Lisandra: Like 200 mile per hour winds.

Kaneisha: Yeah, no, that's crazy.

Lisandra: Yeah.

Kaneisha: Yeah, so variety, right? Like you want to both in and after disaster as a millennial you want to survive, but you also want to, I don't know, still enjoy eating. So yeah, a variety of dried rice, dried beans, canned meat, canned fish. But if it's in your budget by stuff you could see yourself wanting to actually eat.

Lisandra: Definitely.

Kaneisha: Don't buy the cheapest, cheapest stuff. Don't buy a bunch of stuff that you won't want to eat. Be like, "Oh, you know, I'm curious about Spam, let me get four cans of it." Not like 22. Like get a variety of things. Also canned beans.

So canned beans are great because you don't need power to cook them. You can just literally open them with a can opener. So you need to have a manual can opener and I would suggest having two. I went like berserk at the beginning of the pandemic and now I have like four openers. Like I just couldn't stop buying them.

But like canned beans. I have canned vegetables and I have not started thinking about eating them, and they don't seem appealing to me. So I bought like canned colored greens, canned cabbage, like jarred beets. Like real bougie, like organic cooked jarred beets. Like those could be nice on a

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salad or made into some sort of cold salad with walnuts and like oil drizzled over it.

Also oil, buying a good amount of olive oil. And if you use it while you're living your regular life, make sure you replenish it. So making sure you have a big bottle of olive oil. Because olive oil can be used for cooking but also used as a topping over food, as a salad dressing.

If you have produce instead of just watching your produce rot because you just like were a better person when you bought the produce than the person who's cooking. That's what happens to me, is I'm like, "Who is this vegetarian who bought all this produce? I don't want to eat this." Freeze your produce, like cut it up and put it in freezer bags and put it in the freezer. Some produce that people don't think about but that makes a big difference is dicing onions, bell peppers, and celery. You can dice it and keep it separate or dice it and keep it all together. And that makes a beautiful soup base with water.

Lisandra: Yeah. Well, I wanted to kind of move on from the food question.

Kaneisha: Yeah, for sure. This is my favorite part of prepping is the food and being like, "I'm going to be able to eat."

Lisandra: Because you talk about freezing stuff. And with no power you are telling me the cool, really cool things you guys are doing to keep things cold in a blizzard with no power. So what are some of those things?

Kaneisha: Yeah, for sure. So first, I just want to say that me and my close friends, my neighbors in this building, those of us who have had power more consistently, we are the fortunate ones in this disaster. And I just want to acknowledge that there's a lot of people who have spent three full days without power who have ice -

Lisandra: Including Dan Rather, he's tweeting up a storm.

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Kaneisha: Right, our beloved Dan Rather. Yeah, he is like, "People need to be held accountable, but first let's keep people safe." But yeah, he's doing the good work. Yeah, but there's people with icicles hanging from their ceiling fan. There's people with their fish tanks freezing over.

So when we didn't have power, and my understanding is we didn't have power for about 24 hours. The apartment got down, it didn't actually get extremely cold. It was uncomfortably cold, but it was nothing like what people are dealing with. So the apartment got down to about, at the very lowest, maybe 55 degrees.

Lisandra: That's horrible, I can't imagine that.

Kaneisha: It may have been lower, it was 55 degrees when we... I don't know, I think it was around 55 degrees. And so things that we did, I saw online that on Reddit, I think someone mentioned putting snow in a plastic bag to keep your food cold versus putting your food out in the snow.

So in my sister's neighborhood, she lives in a neighborhood full of families, people started putting their food, you know, in containers out in the snow. Which is okay, but I had seen a headline, you know, Millennials don't read the full article we just look at the headline. And I saw a headline saying, "Don't just put your food out in the snow." You know, I didn't know why but you're not supposed to just put it out in the snow. So instead, I brought the snow inside.

So first I went out and got snow and put it in plastic bags and put some of it in the freezer to help the freezer stay cold. And then my guy friend and his boyfriend came to stay with us because they didn't have power. So that's AJ from HBS and his boyfriend. And so then I sent them out on a snow harvesting mission.

So we had snow on our balcony, but I'm like, "That snow is easy to get to. We need to go get snow that's hard to get to in case later we can't get to

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snow and this is our emergency snow.” Can you imagine having emergency snow?

So they went out and filled every bag we had, plastic bag, including my dog's old dog food bag. Like we don't throw bags away anymore Lisandra. If I make beans, they come in a plastic bag. I cut it across the top and we keep the bag, because we don't know when we're going to need that bag to give somebody two Oreos.

Lisandra: No, I get that, because Jamaica banned plastic bags in January 2019. Because of the environment and the oceans and so on. Which is good, we banned plastic bags and straws. But finding a plastic bag to preserve things or to share things, it's so hard. So we save, like every plastic bag we come across we have to save now.

Kaneisha: For sure, yeah. So I had already been one of those plastic bag savers, because in Austin, we don't have plastic bags. You don't get them for free, you get them and they're reusable. And that's good, but at this point we're now saving the bags that food come in, especially if they have a zipper top. So my dog's dog food bag is like a really big bag with a zipper top. And so we filled that with snow. So that helped keep our freezer and refrigerator at a good temperature while we didn't have power.

I also found a Styrofoam cooler from when we were going to the beach. Once we got power, I cooked hot food and put it in there. That didn't end up being like the best idea because then it gives you a false sense of security and some of our food went bad. Because you can't just leave hot food out for 24 hours and think it's going to be okay.

I had made this really beautiful turkey soup before all this happened. Just being like, “Oh, it's going to be cold this weekend, let's have turkey soup and chili.” So we had turkey soup and chili that we were preserving in thermoses. And we were able to eat all the chili when we had no power. We just ate it room temperature over rice. Me, Tyler, and then we had a

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couple friends staying with us, different couple at that time. Megan of the couple ate some chili over rice.

We weren't dangerously cold so we just like sat around or walked around being like, "We're cold." Sitting on the couch laughing about it. My apartment has all south facing windows, which is really fortunate because that means we get all day sun. So even without power, that little tiny bit of heat that you can get from just facing the sun all day. But those were some of the things. Like I can't remember what else we did.

Lisandra: Well, I was listening to the New York Times, the daily podcast. And they interviewed someone in Austin, or Houston, I forget. He said his apartment got to 20 or 19 degrees and he had to wear every piece of clothing he had, plus his Arctic Circle jacket that he had gotten for a hiking trip in the Arctic. And how cold he was.

Kaneisha: That's crazy.

Lisandra: Which I was worried about that for you. That was my first thought because first of all, cold and me, we're not friends. You know, I like to be hot or warm. So my first thought when I saw the power was out during a blizzard is, "Oh my God, is everybody cold?" And that was the first question I actually asked you, it wasn't even about food. Like I cannot even function if I get too cold.

Kaneisha: Yeah, Tyler is the exact same way. And we had a real empathy gap there because he's like you and really can't function below 60 degrees. And I was just like, "Get it together. We got to survive." And he's like, "But I can't. I can't function in this cold." I apparently have a much higher tolerance for cold than he does and than you do.

But yeah, that level of cold is a tropical vacation to people like the interviewee whose apartments are getting down to... I'd say anything below

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50 is really starting to get uncomfortable, it's starting to get uncomfortable. Below 40 is -

Lisandra: Unbearable.

Kaneisha: Yeah, for pets, you know, the guideline for pets is pets should not sleep outside if it's 40 or below. Little pets, because Zadie likes to sleep outside sometimes and we always check the temperature to make sure it's not going to get below 40.

Lisandra: Yeah.

Kaneisha: Am I understanding that, freezing, 32 degrees?

Lisandra: Yeah. And then people were going in their cars to try to get warm. That's how the guy that was interviewed by the New York Times did his interview, in his car to get power to his phone.

Kaneisha: A lot of people are doing that.

Lisandra: Right, but then some people left the car running in a garage to get warm and died of carbon monoxide poisoning. Which is crazy

Kaneisha: Everybody listening, yeah, do not sit in your car in an unvented place to get warm. You cannot smell carbon monoxide. One minute you're nice and warm, the next minute you're dead. Like so it's very, very dangerous.

I actually saw, in my apartment garage there was two people, a male and a female in their 20s, sitting in the garage with their car on. And I walked past them and I saw them watching me. I was wandering the garage looking for my friends who were coming to stay with us, AJ and George. And I tried to approach the vehicle but they look scared of me. Not kind of, they looked really scared of me. And, you know, as a black person, I always have to be like, "Okay, you know, some white people going to be scared of you." And

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then also because there were reports of people experiencing homelessness getting into the building. Maybe they thought I was homeless, I don't know.

I decided not to approach them. I wanted to approach them and be like, "Y'all need to get out, don't die." But I was like, I don't know how to get that message to them. I guess I could have pantomimed it, but I would have just look so crazy. And they would have just thought I was crazy. They didn't die, because we would have heard about it. But that's very dangerous.

And what Tyler told me was like, "Kaneisha, you're trying to warn them, you were in danger if they had been sitting there."

Lisandra: Yeah.

Kaneisha: I'm like, "Oh, I'm over here trying to warn them and I'm in danger."

Lisandra: Yeah. Well, and then the other thing, it's not just about getting warm but about getting power, charging stuff. So that's the thing that was, as I mentioned in the British Virgin Islands story after Hurricane Irma, the lack of power for days and months, and not being able to connect and communicate with the outside world. Were you worried about that when you lost power? That your phone would die and you would lose all entertainment and all communication during this really hard time?

Kaneisha: Not very worried about it. I come from a family of battery loving people. So if the cell phone towers are gone, it became harder to make calls and send text messages, but it never became impossible. So I never got to that level of concern. I was at first concerned about, "Oh, I need to not be using my phone because it'll die. And I got to really be conservative with my power usage." But then Tyler reminded me that I had a power core, like a charging brick or whatever they're called.

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So, millennial preppers, what I have is a \$46 charging thing. It's called Anker A-N-K-E-R PowerCore 20. It's 100, I don't even know what these letters mean, mah. Megawatt hours? I don't know, that's not what that means. Portable charger, ultra-high-capacity power bank. Tyler told me that it could charge my phone for about 10 days.

So I figured within 10 days, I can get to some electricity to recharge that.

Lisandra: That's great.

Kaneisha: So you should have one of those. \$46 to not be worried about your phone. Super easy. It's like a phone in that it has little, you know, just little USB-C or USB ports and you just plug it into your phone and it charges your phone. So you got to charge the thing in the first place and keep it charged. And then charge your phone. So just having that was big, and then it being charged. And then Tyler also had his and just has his on him all the time.

Also light, I have a lot of candles, I have a lighter stick. I also have spaghetti noodles, which can be lit and used as matches. And I had those spaghetti noodles for eating and specifically to serve as emergency matches. And then Tyler had bought me like a real fancy like high capacity, like \$100 flashlight. I don't remember what it's called, but like it's a rechargeable flashlight that I always keep, as much as possible, on its charging port.

So when our power went out, it wasn't on its charging port because Tyler had used it that night before to take Zadie out. And it's fine because it's not like it was dying overnight. But like that was, you know, that 10 minutes he was using it is 10 minutes less of power that we could have had if we never restored power.

But Tyler also always carries a lot of like, LED flashlights. He had two on him just in his backpack when he came over to my house, just being like

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that's just the way I live my life. I give myself a demerit because my dad always tells me to have flashlights and batteries. And if I didn't have the flashlight Tyler gave me for my prepper Christmas present, I wouldn't have had any flashlights, I would have only had candles. And we've used those flashlights a lot.

Lisandra: Yeah, that's really important for hurricane prep too. Having a source of light and having the LED lanterns, LED flashlights. Back in the day when I was younger, we had those kerosene oil lamps, you know, home sweet home lamps. And we had rolling blackouts a lot in Jamaica in the 90s when I was like a kid in school. And so every night from six to 10pm the light would go out for load shedding of the electrical grid, because our grid was very unstable at that time. And so I remember just studying and reading by these home sweet home kerosene lamps.

A few other things before I have to go. One is, you know, the other way this reminds me of a hurricane, or the thing that I remember from 2017 with Hurricane Irma hitting BVI and hurricane Maria hitting Puerto Rico. My friend in Puerto Rico, all the roads were blocked by debris, downed trees, downed power lines. And he was trying to get out to Miami because he owned an apartment in Miami. And he just couldn't exist in the conditions that existed in Puerto Rico after Maria.

So he's an avid cyclist. So he got on his bicycle, and cycled 20, 30 miles to the airport with a machete to chop through the trees to clear his path to get to the airport and try to get on a plane. So that is an extreme version of your friends who were staying with you going to Target in the snowstorm. But tell us that story.

Kaneisha: Yeah, so it's not that anyone has had to go anywhere while it's actually storming. And when I say storm, this amount of snow, Lisandra, would have been a random Tuesday in Boston for us when we were living there. The problem is not that snow happened. The problem is that our

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infrastructure is not at all equipped for this and we're experiencing a severe lack of good governance.

So this isn't like, oh, Texans are freaking out because of four inches of snow." It's like Texas are freaking out because we don't have power, running water, and we're not able to leave our home safely even on foot. Because most of the roads are not salted, gritted, shoveled, whatever.

AJ and George have, I believe a Subaru, I guess that has four-wheel drive, all-wheel drive, whatever. So they more confidently can drive to places. So they drove to Target and picked up stuff for themselves and for us. We actually live in walking distance to Target. And on Sunday, before the storm Tyler really wanted to walk to Sprouts and I did too.

We took about 10 steps, and it was like walking on an ice rink. And I was wearing Nikes and Tyler was wearing New Balance, and those are not, or at least the Nikes and New Balances we were wearing are not for walking on ice, no grip. And so we were slipping and sliding. And I'm like, I do not want to fall and break a bone during this disaster. So I made us not go and Tyler wasn't happy about that, we wanted to go to the grocery store. But the next day AJ and George were able to go to Target and get some more stuff for us.

But I just want to emphasize that at the level of preparedness I was, nothing I've received from a neighbor, nothing and nothing that I've received from AJ and George's very generous Target run for us has been something we needed, that we absolutely needed. It's all been luxury items, like more of something we already had. More candles, more matches, whatever.

And so I just would really urge people to know that a disaster like this can happen. It could be an earthquake; it doesn't even matter necessarily what the nature of the disaster is. The end game is can you survive inside your home without running water or electricity for two consecutive weeks? Like

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whether that's an earthquake, a snowstorm, heavy rain, flooding, whatever it is, and you cannot leave your house.

So that means not waiting until your medicines are down to the very last pill, which is a really bad habit that Tyler and I both have. Like not doing just in time food for yourself or your pets. Making sure you have lots of water, candles. My biggest thing I wish we'd had was a camping stove and the fuel to, like a little cute camping stove, and like the fuel to operate it. Because we have a balcony so we could have cooked out on our balcony.

The first day we had no power, our couple friends who were staying with us from the building, Megan and Ethan, who didn't have power, nor south facing windows so their apartment was super cold. They came over and Ethan brought the camper stove to heat up water. So we all had like hot coffee, hot oatmeal. It was very millennial prepper.

Lisandra: Yeah. I mean, that's a really important point. Because I guess my question was around getting around when the roads are impassable. And trying to get somewhere to get help if you need it. Where my friend in Puerto Rico went through a lot to get to the airport to get out. And then I remembered your story of your friend AJ and his partner driving after the blizzard in the snow that was down the road to Target. And waiting for an hour just to get inside Target just because of how overrun it was.

So it's more like the logistics. Because a lot of people don't prep because they think, "Well, I'll be able to get out and get food and so on if something happens.

Kaneisha: Yeah, thank you for clarifying. That's not how it works, no. You do not want to be one of the people who is desperately trying to get to some sort of grocery store because who works at grocery stores? People.

So if you are having trouble leaving your house, so are the people who work at those stores. Not just essential workers, they are actual heroes.

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The people who, I know some of them don't like to be called that, but who put their lives at risk in order to make sure people have access to food and water. That means a lot. And I just want to thank Target and HEB because we've relied on them during this time. And HEB is FEMA in Texas basically. So that's our grocery store chain, our beloved grocery store chain.

But I wish that I had proper snow boots, like hiking boots or boots that have good grip. Of course, we had them when we lived in Boston but I don't know where mine are. I wish I had them so I could at least walk to the grocery store. Lisandra, a real plan, a possible plan was to walk four miles in the snow and ice to my dad's house because he has power, and had running water up until last night. But you really can't do that safely in tennis shoes.

Tyler has chains for his car. Chains are kind of, think of them as like a chain net that goes around your tire that allows you to grind through ice so you can drive on it. But his chains were up at the house he owns in Pflugerville. But he doesn't live there, his tenant lives there. So we didn't have chains, we could have put those chains on his tires and we would have been able to get around. You know, they weigh a lot, like 100 pounds.

But having chains for your car, or just having a car with all-wheel drive or four-wheel drive, and knowing how to properly use and drive the all-wheel drive and four-wheel drive, this is one of the bougieist things I'm going to say today, you know, I've been saying bougie things. But after this I believe I'm going to buy myself a car that has four-wheel drive or all-wheel drive and learn to drive it. Because I'm just like, "Okay, I am fortunate enough to be able to spend 30, \$40,000 on a second car. And you can live in that car if you need to. Well, not if it's cold.

Whatever, it's just I don't feel desperate, because I'm so well prepared in my home. But some of my neighbors who are in a similar situation transportation wise as me are not prepared water wise or food wise. So at

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least with AJ and George, they didn't have a lot of food and water, but they had that good car that they could easily get to food and water.

But you should never assume you'll just be able to pop over to the store because it might be dangerous to get out due to flooding, due to torrential rain, hurricane, whatever. But don't assume you'll be able to get out. And don't assume that once you get to the store, you'll be able to get in. The line may get cut off or the store might close while you're still waiting in line. And also, don't assume that once you get in that what you need will be there.

From AJ and George, they said that Target did an amazing job of only letting in a few people at a time so it didn't feel frenzied. And so that people could socially distance while they were shopping. And just think about how complex this is also happening during a pandemic. And they also said everyone was really friendly and helpful. They were so impressed with the target in our neighborhood.

So yeah, I just wish I'd had boots and I wished I had a different car. I love my Honda Fit, but I wish I also had a car like a Subaru. Maybe a Honda CRV that could drive in these conditions. And, yeah, these conditions don't happen often but when they happen it feels really important, or sometimes even dire.

Lisandra: Yeah, definitely. I think in a hurricane prone region or earthquake prone region, you know, gosh, when I think back to the hurricanes, et cetera and making roads passable with downed trees and all of that, sometimes it's just not possible. I think my team member in the BVI, it took her days to be able to clear a path to leave her house, you know, which is crazy. So, yeah, it's just thinking about how do you get out in a disaster situation.

And I was thinking about your comment about the during a pandemic and really preparing for hurricane season coming up in the Caribbean, I think

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the disaster trumps the pandemic, you know, in that situation. Survival would trump the pandemic. So yeah, I think all memory of distancing would flee everyone's minds if it's like a survival question.

Kaneisha: Yeah, it doesn't 100% flee your mind, but definitely the barrier gets way lowered. So, for example, AJ is one of my closest friends in life and one of my closest friends in Austin. He lives, Lisandra, in the building complex, not the same complex, but the complex next door to me. He had never been in my apartment, and I've been here for over a year.

He'd never been here because of social distancing, and the pandemic, and because I shelter in place very strictly. And when he lost power in his place, I was like, "Come on over, just wear a mask." So he had never even been in my apartment. So him and George came over and they stayed in masks the whole time and me and Tyler stayed in masks the whole time.

And then for my little mini soup kitchen that I'm running with Tyler -

Lisandra: Well wait, before you get there, actually my last question is around the sense of community that a disaster creates, you know? And how important, because I think Americans are very unique in their self-reliance, and individuality, and self-made.

Whereas in the Caribbean, community support and relying on neighbors and so on is really important. Because we live in scarcity. We have had decades of scarcity. And we can't depend on the government to save us. Like no one expects the government to save you in a disaster in a region where government resources are very scarce. So it's really the community that comes together and saves each other. You know?

Kaneisha: Yeah.

Lisandra: And you created a community coming out of the storm in Austin. So let's end on that. How did you do that? Yeah.

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Kaneisha: Awesome, yeah. Well, I can't take credit for creating the community actually. So Alex, who I mentioned earlier, who was weathering this basically alone, she started a dog park fam WhatsApp group of all of us who have dogs and hang out at the dog park in the building. And she asked if I wanted to be added to it. And I said no.

I was kind of like, I need to keep my tribe pretty small. My survival tribe is me, Tyler, AJ, and George. And then I'll also, you know, I didn't invite her at first to join us. I was just more like, I want to make sure Alex has food. And then also down the hall, Sarah, Zadie's dog sitter. I want to make sure Sarah has food. But as far as anyone else coming into the unit, like no, no, no.

So she actually created it, asked if I wanted to join. I was like, no. So they were all helping each other out before I entered the picture. But then, you know, I just was feeding Alex and just looking at all this food. And like, we have all this food and people are hungry.

So I posted last night in the WhatsApp group that I could spare three servings of black-eyed peas and rice. And I explained what black-eyed peas taste like and described what they taste like, just in case people hadn't had them before. And I'm glad I did because many people had not had them before.

And Lisandra, within five minutes there was someone at my door without a mask on, a young man, like in his 20s. And I'm like, "Hello." And he's like, "Hey, is Ashley here?" And I'm like, "No." And he like steps forward as if he's trying to come in. And I'm like, "What is happening?" And he's like, "Oh, I'm here for some food." And I'm like, "Who are you?" And he's like, "I live in the building, I'm Ashley's friend." And Ashley is one of my neighbors. And he's like, "She said you had food." And like, he was smiling, I was smiling.

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But like I felt a little bit of that like desperation of like, “Oh my gosh, people are like hungry.” He turned out to be Vinny, and very friendly and very happy to share whatever he had in exchange. And it didn't need to be an exchange, but I think people really want it to be an exchange.

So now it's turned into like a little mini soup kitchen. I don't mean to use that word as if to say like, “Oh, they'd be starving without us.” But more like because we're making soup in the kitchen.

So yeah, last night, it was black eyed peas, and we gave out three servings to people. And then last night, I made a casserole of pasta, like a no boil casserole. So I just put like, penne pasta that we had already, and then I had leftover mozzarella cheese. Cheese, shredded cheese, or cheese freezes really well. So that's the thing to know millennial preppers. So then I just used some mozzarella cheese and topped it. Used all my little herbs and spices and it came out really lovely. So that is about 20 servings, and I'll probably give out, I don't know, maybe a third of that. So like seven, I'll probably give out seven servings today.

And then I have the ingredients to make pancakes and Ashley donated syrup. I already had the pancake mix, just add water. And so we will use that, and then I'll use Ashley's syrup. And then I have blueberries myself and then also Chiquita said that she could donate blueberries. So I think this morning, we're gonna have blueberry pancakes.

So I didn't think I wanted to be a cafeteria lady when I grew up, but I'm actually having a blast with this part of it.

Lisandra: Right. So it comes back to, I love how you go into so much detail about the food because I asked a question about community and it turns back into the food. But to bring it back to the community aspect of it. So from what you're saying, the community is centered around the food is what you're saying.

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Kaneisha: My experience of the community is centered around the food. I'd say other experiences of the community are also, we have an online app that we use, that the building has us use. I was really resistant to joining it just being like, "This looks silly. Social media for the building? That's dumb."

I did join it and I'm really glad I'm on there. And I see how valuable it is. And I've seen the membership of it grow from about 100 residents to over 200 even just in the last 24 hours. And so it's a great, it's just a continuous kind of Facebook stream. It's just like Facebook, where you can write a status and then people can react to it. Interestingly enough, they only give you positive reaction emojis, and then people can comment below your status.

So people are posting things like, "Hey, be careful. Make sure your doors are locked, somebody experiencing homelessness was in my apartment squatting when I came back to my apartment." People just asking questions like, "Is there power in this part of the building?" Because some people have left the building to go to places with power. Does anyone have this? Does anyone have that?

So I actually have not been posting my food available in the big group, I feel like I would get overwhelmed. I've been posting it in the 14-member dog park group. But Vinny is an example of a person who, you know, was in need of food. I don't know that he was like starving or anything like that, maybe he just wanted a hot meal. He's not in the dog park group, but he just heard about it through the grapevine and came by. He was the first person to come by for food.

So my experience of the community has been definitely around food, feeding AJ and George. They could eat, themselves, but just making sure that we have hot food, keeping my beloved Tyler, you know, full of hot food. And comforting myself with little treats. Like Tyler and I made a lemon cake as our Valentine's night since we were iced in. And we ate the last two

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slices of lemon cake last night. being like, it's a snowpocalypse and a pandemic, and we're eating lemon cake. And we're like, yep.

And, you know, a cute note to end on, Lisandra, is I kept all the crumbs from the lemon cake. Like, I probably have about one eighth a cup of crumbs, not from our plates, but from the pan. And then I'm going to keep those in order to sprinkle on top of the blueberry pancakes.

Lisandra: Yeah, that's really cute. And I think this whole podcast?

Kaneisha: Yeah, I think it's going to end up as a podcast. This is going to end up as a podcast episode for sure.

Lisandra: Yeah, this whole episode has been me trying to pull you away from talking about the food and you going back to the food. And that just shows, you know, it's very interesting for me to think about it. Because in disasters that I've been in, the food is just for survival. You know, it's an afterthought. So you just eat whatever is available, and really your thought is on communication, community, you know, being with people. And getting electricity is a bigger thought than food, or the quality of the food, or the pleasure in the food. You know, so just rice and tuna every day for weeks is fine. It's very interesting that you have a completely different view on that.

Kaneisha: For sure, I think it helps to keep morale up. You know, that people are able to be like, "Oh, I get black eyed peas and rice and I get two Oreo Thins. You know, it's just like, I don't know, I lived in Cuba for four months and arrived days after Hurricane Charley and weathered Hurricane Ivan. I lived in Ghana for a year where we went days and days without running water or electricity.

And those little treats, they really helped to keep your spirits up because I know I'm going to survive this. I know the temperatures for me are not to that kind of freezing level. And if it does get to that freezing level, I know I can get to a warming center.

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So one thing the city has done well, I think the city is doing it, maybe it's actually just individual organizations, is there are warming centers all over the city. So they're like big places where you can just come and get warm and sit down or stand up and try and be socially distanced.

So yeah, the people part matters to me, but we really can't have that many people in our home. So now it's just me and Tyler again. And we wear masks when people come to the door and hand food through the door. And it lets in so much cold air and like messes up our heat seal. But that's our sacrifice or whatever that we've decided to make, which is a tiny sacrifice compared to the people trying to survive inside their own homes and frozen.

[Inaudible] So yeah, the community aspect matters a lot to me, communicating all that. The reason I haven't talked about it much is I just haven't had that much trouble; I've been in constant contact with you in another country, you know, via WhatsApp every day. I've been able to be in contact with my college girlfriends via WhatsApp. I've been able to talk to my dad and my sister via text messaging.

So the fact that that infrastructure hasn't gone down makes me kind of take it for granted so that I'm able to worry about higher order Maslow's hierarchy of needs like food, like deluxe delicious food. And I think some of the people who are going to eat out of Kaneisha's Kitchen will be eating better than they would be eating even if it wasn't a disaster.

Lisandra: I'm sure that's true. Okay, Kaneisha, well I have got to go, I have a call. So yeah, it was good.

Kaneisha: Thank you.

Lisandra: Turn this into podcast episode.

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Kaneisha: Yeah, I'm going to totally turn this into a pocket episode. And thanks for letting me ambush you with a... Just for everyone listening me and Lisandra talk basically every morning, every weekday morning for about an hour. And I was like, "Lisandra, I want to make a documentary or do something and tell people's story and tell my story. Can we record the call?" And she was like, "Okay." So just thank you for letting us turn our morning call into a podcast episode. Even if I do nothing else with the storytelling, I'm really happy that we did this.

Lisandra: Yeah, this was really fun. And now I really have a greater appreciation for how much you think about and love food.

Kaneisha: I do.

Lisandra: Okay, Kaneisha, bye.

Kaneisha: All right, Bye Lisandra.

To celebrate the launch of the show I'm giving away a Scale Your Joy audiobook ebook bundle. These are five hand-picked books that I have read and I love. They're about life, joy, and entrepreneurship. And five lucky listeners will be chosen to win.

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