

## Black Sunday

Nearly Every Year since 1985 when I moved to Memphis...there has been some kind of weather event that has never before been seen in the Memphis Area or in 100 or so years.

There was the Sudden freeze in Nov.? of 1993? When it was a normal fall with temps from 60 -85 when suddenly it dropped to 17 degrees.

I was working at Trees by Touliatos. EVERYTHING died. Exploded. Millions of dollars worth of stock. Every Fig tree in Memphis that was huge and 30 years old. Dead. Every Holly, 15-25' tall, huge trunks. Dead. Mush. Japanese Maples. Pulverized. Every Crepe Myrtle...Until then Fabulous Trees 30 ft. Tall with 5" trunks. Gone.....Except for one. "Sarah's Favorite". A Seedling in One Gallon Pots, On the Cement, Uncovered, Unprotected. In the Parking Lot of Trees By Touliatos. She was at the time known as "5570". A seedling Tom Dodd, a great plantsman, and friend of Plato Touliatos's, had sent him to try. A Star Was Born. She is Hardy to Chicago, fast growing, great bark and a slightly weeping canopy.

Then there was "The Ice Storm" two years later. I heard Shotgun's in the night and cursed my Redneck Neighbors for shooting off their guns at such an hour. It was trees breaking. From Pine Trees to Ancient Oaks. Snapping like firecrackers. A gorgeous sparkling disaster.

The city was locked in for weeks. (Those same rednecks cleared our streets in two days with their chain saws.) I thought the Delta would never regain it's former glory. But it did.

Drouths, Biblical Rains, Winds, and Then ...Hurricane Elvis. I did not go into the city...I did not want to see...

My own personal holocaust has been developers. Changing a small town of 600 to a city of strangers of 10,000. Burning acres of forest. Leveling hills, filling in valleys. All beauty gone.

And now this. Black Sunday. An event never before seen in the Memphis Area. Driest Winter in 117 years. Warmest and Earliest Spring since 1985. Followed by deep frost. This is a new one folks. My Hydrangea buds are toast. I managed to save a few and I'm sure some of the lower blossoms will recover. Annabelle don't care and the Panicle Hydrangeas did not blush. But the Macrophyllas may lose all of their wood and flowers and even my Seratta's have some bud damage. Oy. GARDENS OY VEY!!! OY!!! VEY!!!

I will drag myself out to the nursery today. **I suggest you water and water well.**  
Me. I am studying desert plants. Heat, Cold, Drouth.

The truth is as Felder Rushing said this week, "Folks this ain't armageddon...it's just a freeze."

My heart IS broken. But I and the plants Will Recover.

Love. Diane Meucci

## Better Monday

By the Way y'all. It was not as bad as I thought. Some Hydrangeas lost Some Buds. Location, location, location.

Thanks for all of your incredible words of encouragement. I am saving them.

Diane