

Help, there's a psychopath in my head...

And maybe a sociopath too.

I wish I was psychic. It would make my experiences of the menopause a lot easier if I could predict when things were going to go what I can only term as "wonky".

I've been fairly easy-going all my life. Even as a parent I only dished out discipline when it was necessary (although my kids might think otherwise). But the menopause has changed all that.

I now have a temper. On a flick switch. On or off. A sleeping beast which rouses at a moment's notice and transforms me into a screaming, swearing, potentially violent person.

The psychopath.

Because, as I know it's down to hormones, it's not under my control. I never know when it's going to rear its head and cause an awkward scene. I get about two seconds before it unleashes, and there's no putting it back into the box until it's done.

It's scary. And, somehow, glorious.

I marvel at how different I am when the temper is in effect. I hurt feelings. I could easily cause injury or even death to whoever is within my reach. Luckily my family have all learned that it's not the real me, but it's not so easy to explain to people at work. I've only been in this job a few months, and maybe for not much longer anyway. For their safety.

I have been two seconds from punching a work colleague in the face... and it was a woman. I have been two seconds from breaking all computer equipment within my reach, yet knowing if I did I would have to pay to replace it. I have been two seconds from calling my entire office of co-workers, including the managers, the four-letter word in the English language that probably most of us consider as the biggest taboo word.

So where's the sociopathic bit of all this? Simple. I don't care. If the temper gets out, to hell with the consequences. Especially if you've been warned – and sometimes I do get to warn people before it goes off. Other times there's no lead time, and I have to leave the room immediately. A stick of dynamite with a half-inch fuse. There's no regret afterwards. If anything, I find it funny.

Thankfully, it hasn't been the case the whole way through my menopause journey so far. I'm nearly three years in, courtesy of my doctor. He thought it would be a good idea to change my contraception from a combined pill to a mini pill when I was going to live abroad for six months, because of my age and other increased risk factors. Mini pill = no oestrogen. My body doesn't seem to produce its own, so menopause started pretty much straight away. But my symptoms have ramped up this year, starting with hot flushes – or rather, warm ones, as I already feel the cold a ridiculous amount and I don't have to strip off just to cool down. More trouble sleeping. No periods this year at all. And, of course, the temper.

I very much hope that the increase in symptoms means I'm already halfway through the change. I don't really know what else my body might throw at me as it makes the transition from Mother to Crone, but the next symptom could be just around the corner.

Or maybe jail time, for GBH.