

Dreams Come True in Boston: Cancer Stories From the Stage

As I morphed into a cancer storyteller, I didn't have to center whiteness or overanalyze myself. What a relief.

March 2, 2023 By [Megan-Claire Chase](#)

Ever since I was eight years old, I have dreamed of being on stage, behind a microphone, on TV, and with my name in lights. Little me experienced a dream come true earlier this week in Boston. Only this time, I'm hella grown in a much bigger body, but I felt that anxious confidence washing over me. I never imagined my face would be on a digital billboard. It was like I had finally arrived at my long-awaited purpose.

A billboard for the GBH cancer storytellers event

Thanks to the nonprofit research initiative [Count Me In](#), I was selected to participate in a night of storytelling in collaboration with [Stellar Story Company](#) and [World Channel for Stories from the Stage](#), recorded in front of a live audience at [GBH](#) studios on February 15th. There were seven other cancer patients/survivors with me as we told an element of our cancer stories. More importantly, this event was a way to spotlight the health disparities we faced from diagnosis to post-treatment as either Black, Hispanic, and/or Asian.

I have been working with a story coach, the Executive Producer of Stellar Story Company on World Channel. I instantly connected with Cheryl from the first Zoom meeting and knew I was in excellent hands.

Morphing into a storyteller was thrilling, challenging, emotional, and impactful. My first draft went from sounding like a blog to a final compelling story. Breathing life into the words by memorizing was difficult due to working long hours in my 9-5 job, doctor appointments, residual chemo brain, and unpredictable chronic pain sucking my energy and brainpower. Crafting a compelling story within seven minutes was excellent preparation for eventually writing my one-woman show.

When I walked into the GBH studio in my beautiful dress and stood on stage for a mic and wardrobe check, I nearly burst out of my skin from nerves and excitement! Not only was this happening, but I realized it was a full-circle moment because my story was about losing my fertility and now performing on the sixth anniversary of my hysterectomy and bilateral oophorectomy.

I had a lovely time bonding with the other fabulous cancer storytellers and hearing about their struggles, resilience, and hope. Colleen and Tania from Count Me In were super supportive, organized, and ensured we knew what was happening.

None of us had to center whiteness. It was a relief not to overanalyze and worry if I sounded too bold, cocky, or angry. I didn't have to activate my cloak of resilience and control and could be unapologetically me.



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A post shared by Megsie Chase (@warriormegsie)

The last image in this video surprised me because I actually looked as beautiful and confident as I felt at that moment. I made this montage with some Lizzo playing leading up to performance night. This GA girl even had friends show up — thank you, Danielle, her parents, and Noel! Knowing they were in the audience added to this magical night. I'm humbled that some of the audience spoke to me afterward.

We also received a private tour of the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard and its beautifully curated museum. In true Megsie fashion, I made another video to capture the second half of my Boston trip. Oh, the fire alarm went off at the hotel, and we were evacuated for 15 minutes. Once

we walked back into the hotel, my fellow cancer survivor and storyteller friend Erinn B. noticed that Shawn from Boyz II Men was in the courtyard. They had a Boston show. A fantastic end to a fabulous and impactful trip.

Now I am back home with Baby Natey on my lap as I type this wishing I could make performing like this financially sustainable. I never thought my cancer experience would lead to fulfilling a MAJOR dream of mine. I've been able to be creative in unique ways that I could've never foreseen.

The episodes will air on PBS and [World Channel](#) in June for National Cancer Survivors Day, leading up to Juneteenth. I will keep y'all posted. Fingers crossed, I make the final cut!

Until next time,

Warrior Megsie

This event is sponsored by [Count Me In](#), a nonprofit research initiative that hopes to make every patient's experience count in the fight to overcome cancer. Founded in 2018 by the Emerson Collective, Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard, and the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Count Me In empowers patients to accelerate cancer research by sharing their experiences, clinical information, and even samples. To learn more, visit [JoinCountMeIn.org](#).

[This post](#) originally appeared February 19, 2023, on [Life on The Cancer Train](#). It is republished with permission.

UPDATE June 16, 2023. Here's more about the Stories From the Stage series, which is now live:

Beyond Cancer - [TV Episode](#)

Beyond Cancer - [Podcast](#)

Facebook Playlist [with 9 individual stories](#):

Link to article - "[Storytelling for Cancer Survivors](#)"

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