Slow surgical recovery and Bruce Cockburn's "One Day I Walk"

I imagine the beautiful spring in the verdant Annapolis Valley, while seeing the grey skyscrapers and listening to the shrieking sirens of downtown Toronto.

May 3, 2019 By Robin McGee

Some of you will have seen the two-page spread about me in the Halifax Chronicle Herald. The interview details my astonishing past, and the online version has two videos about my medical error story, one short and one long. I was pleased with the piece, because it brings readers of The Cancer Olympics up to date with my ongoing struggles, and because it brings attention to the shortcomings in our healthcare system.

Of course, I am following the story of Marilyn Inez Rudderham, whose tearful FB post regarding a similar diagnostic delay has triggered a firestorm of support, and yielded her national attention and a meeting with the premier. How powerful social media is! If only I had it back in the day! I hope to meet her one day.

Me? I continue. Each day, I go to Toronto General Hospital to the HBOT clinic. Two hours are spent watching CNN on the monotube TV screen. Each day, I either sleep in the chamber or watch agog as America melts down. Some days, sleeping makes no difference — things are just as crazed when I wake up as when I went to sleep.

I try to catch the shuttle home, and then eat the hospital dinner (literally driven over from PMH hospital) they give me. Sometimes I have errands that drag me through Toronto's subways. Periodically, I have patient advocacy phone calls to make. By evening, the pain of my leg is often so bad all I can do is lie down and not move. Netflix and Crave have become beloved companions.

But today holds promise for progress! Today, I hope to lose my one remaining catheter. O joy! My surgeon is pleased with my healing overall and thinks I shall be ready to fly. We will see how my inner apparatus works, after being offline for 15 months! But I digress — many hours ago, I had an MRI (at 4:30 in the morning) to determine the site of my femoral nerve damage. So very slowly, medical answers will be garnered, and hopefully progress made.

I get by on CBD oil and Lyrica (a nerve medication), but those sometimes are not enough. I use extra-strength Advil to help with those crushing breakthroughs. I am helped significantly by weekend visits with family and friends. It is so therapeutic to be in a home setting instead of an institution. Often, homesickness creeps in. I imagine the beautiful spring in the verdant Annapolis

Valley, while see the grey skyscrapers and listen to the shrieking sirens of downtown Toronto. Only about three more weeks to go.

Today's song is a one for someone like me, who has been on many hard pathways, and one who longs for home. Bruce Cockburn wrote "One Day I Walk" for his album High Winds White Sky from 1971. It has been covered by many, but his version captures an irony, whimsy, and plaintiveness behind the journey, as well as nascent stirrings of hope for a final refuge.

Oh I have been a beggar
And shall be one again
And few the ones with help to lend
Within the world of men

One day I walk in flowers
One day I walk on stones
Today I walk in hours
One day I shall be home

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