



Hepatitis C: I Saw the Figure Five in Gold

September 2, 2015 By [Grace Campbell](#)

I've been part of a countdown for a fellow Viekiran in an Australian hepatitis C forum. We've posted songs, poems, artworks and images for each day.

It's given me time to think of how I have seen each day that has passed. The passing days didn't mean much to me for a long time. Hours rolled into days rolled into weeks rolled into months. I rolled along with them. The last two weeks of treatment however have been different. For once I have felt the passing of time - and it's not been nearly fast enough! It seems a common emotion for many who are reaching the end of treatment.

So, back to my original story. Each day I would go hunting for something that summed up that particular remaining day of treatment for my Australian treatment buddy. Some days I really struggled to come up with something, other days I was batting the ideas away.

The fifth day was a case in point. So many options!

Kenneth Slessor's *Five Bells*. Perhaps too morose, but oh, that opening:

*"Time that is moved by little fidget wheels
Is not my time, the flood that does not flow.
Between the double and the single bell
Of a ship's hour, between a round of bells
From the dark warship riding there below,
I have lived many lives, and this one life
Of Joe, long dead, who lives between five bells.*

*Deep and dissolving verticals of light
Ferry the falls of moonshine down. Five bells
Coldly rung out in a machine's voice. Night and water
Pour to one rip of darkness, the Harbour floats
In the air, the Cross hangs upside-down in water.*

- "Deep and dissolving verticals of light ferry the falls of moonshine down..."

Can't you just see it?

Then I thought "OOOH! Nick Drake's *Five Leaves Left*". Great album, great singer/songwriter. He was

one of the forgotten ones, but is now having a well-deserved renaissance. Sadly, he died young, so I thought - perhaps not that to celebrate treatment!

And then I thought, I'm overthinking this. I'm just going to whack up a painting I have loved since forever: Charles Demuth's "*I Saw the Figure Five in Gold*".

To me, it represents energy and action. It is vibrant. The swirling movement, the blood-red layers of colour, the gold bright and glowing. It is arresting and somewhat discordant - looking at it is like hearing jazz for the first time.

It is everything I feel I have lost through having hep C and everything I want back again.

Bright blood red for good fortune and joy. Gold for hope and completeness.

It's just what I have been looking for.

