Sweet Release

October 1, 2014 By Rick Nash

Hospitals never did instill confidence in me, as my complicated history with them would support. When I was 18, a hospital released me after a biopsy. I noted a pain in my shoulder as I left but they told me it was just from some small issue. Three days later the pain grew so intense it brought me back to the hospital, where they discovered that they'd nicked my hepatic artery during the biopsy and I was bleeding internally. I had to spend three more days in the hospital while they corrected their mistake.

The walk around the garden in my most recent visit brought a lot for me to think about. I reasoned to myself that the months in the hospital would be well spent as it would allow me to wait for a transplant and give me some years more of life. After the fourth day, my release was contingent on my bilirubin counts going down, since my other metrics were where they should be. The docs were puzzled to the cause of the rapid increase in bilirubin; it clearly started well enough before I contracted C. Diff. I watched my counts go steadily up each day, by Wednesday I was at 29.9. I was ready for a downward trend.

To combat my growing rage and frustration, I asked if I could walk outside more often. My cabin fever was setting in. With the assistance of a volunteer I was able to wander around outside under the hot sun. It felt invigorating, I soaked up as much sun as twenty minutes would allow. It would be a daily task I would seek out to put me in better spirits.

The trip had been made more comfortable by a dozen friends dropping by with stuffed animals. They each hung out with me for hours, some visiting several times. It warmed my heart to see my friends and family, and I thank them so much for being there at my side. My parents were on vacation when I came into the ER, but when they heard about my hospitalization they took the first flight out. By day four my mom was there every morning waiting for good news. On the seventh day, she would have it.

My bilirubin was at 29.1. While not a big downward swing it was still in the right direction. They also gave me another number, the game changing news of my Viral Load (Quant). With all of the metrics in good shape, I left for home. The C. Diff required that I take eight more days of antibiotics, which meant alarms every six hours. Thankfully they had it in pill form, which doesn't have the same foul taste. After I got home, food, sleep, and staying on top of my prescriptions and antibiotics were my biggest priorities.

I announced my freedom subtly on facebook, it was exciting, but there was something I had to tell all of my friends.

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