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The Crossroad. Chapter 2. Life and Death.

Wed, 2015-07-15 18:28 — Robin Olson

(continued from [Chapter 1](#) ⁽¹⁾)

I had a really really really terrible weekend. My diabetes diagnosis was on Thursday and by Friday I was terrified I had stable angina, too. I decided to be safe and began taking aspirin. *It couldn't hurt, right?* I began to experience a mild reduction in symptoms. I wasn't certain whether it was from the medication or the beginning of my new eating regime.

Speaking of which, Diabetes SUCKS. I read web site after web site of material trying to understand what to eat, when, what not to eat, how much of this or that to eat and it's VERY CONFUSING. I should have been sent straight to a nutritionist instead of being given a few page printout telling me how I had to be careful about my nutrition choices and why I was diagnosed with Diabetes. I got to a point of frustration where I just went to bed and slept, even though it was in the middle of the day. I didn't care. I was too angry and tired and my gut was killing me—I assumed from not eating much.

I was taking aspirin, two, every 4-6 hours, with a shaky hand. My gut **hurt**. I didn't really want to eat. I had to force myself to eat something. All I thought about was the stress test on Monday and if I was going to live through it.

I was so scared all I did was have crying jags and try to come up with something meaningful to say if I died. What would my last-ish words be? I told Sam how sorry I was for the shitty things I'd put him through and that I loved him.

I told him we should end our engagement after seven YEARS and finally get married if I survived. He knew my duress was extreme, pushing me to say things like that, but in my heart I meant them.



©2007 Robin A.F. Olson. Our engagement portrait.

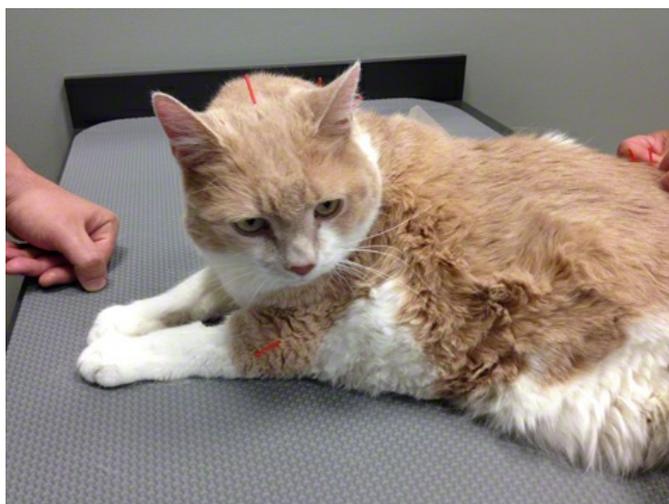
My Will was out-of-date so I sat down and wrote something, anything to ensure some changes might be made if I died. I tried to write up a list of Bequests, too, but I was a member of crazy-town by then and my mind just couldn't make sense of much of anything.

I looked over to my cat Spencer and I thought of him without me and what would become of him and the others and what of the foster cats? **I knew if I did die I'd be leaving one huge mess for Sam and that upset me even more.**

I tried to just sit in front of the TV, hoping to zone out and take a break from worrying, but it didn't work. I couldn't concentrate. All I kept thinking was; "Is this pain the sign of an impending heart attack and if so am I going to live through this? On Monday am I going to the hospital after my test? Will I need a stent? Why did I let myself get so damn fat? Why couldn't I take better care of myself? Why couldn't I love myself?"

As Monday dawned, my gut felt even worse. I had palpitations I was so anxious. At 11AM we had to be at the Vet to bring our 15-year old cat, Nora in for her first acupuncture treatment. I could have stayed home but part of me felt like maybe this was my chance to say goodbye to the staff. **I didn't want to think like that but what if I missed this chance? OR, would I seem like a nut worrying about what was going to happen and everything would be fine?**In the end I decided to remain as stoic as possible and focus on our cat.

Thankfully, I was distracted by meeting our new Vet, Dr. Carmen. She was great with Nora and we were stunned to see Nora walk comfortably for the first time in years right after her treatment.



©2015 Robin A.F. Olson. Nora tolerated acupuncture very well and was purring through most of it.

Sadly, my anxiety returned as soon as we were on the way home. My appointment was at 2:45 PM so there was yet another two hours to wait until it was time to leave...**the longest two hours of my life.**

Sam drove me to my appointment, taking yet more time off from working. He's been incredibly busy the last year and was getting very behind with his clients. I felt terrible about it, but I needed him more than ever and boy was I being nice to him to make up for it. I wonder if he thought he was with a different person? I'm usually not such a delicate flower to live with.

As he drove, I tried to make jokes. I told Sam I felt fine so we could go home. I noticed we were going to be quite early so I suggested he stop and get some coffee (*because you do not want Sam's coffee meter to go low-trust me on this*). Sam pulled into a parking space at the mini-mall as I stayed behind, resting in the car, while he got his caffeine delivery device.

I looked around at the mall, watching the cars slowly pass by. It was a slate gray day and rather warm and humid. I wondered if this was it-this was the last thing I was going to see. **I wondered if I did have to have some sort of scary procedure that I needed to just face it and go through with it so I could begin work recovering as soon as I could.**

I have never been more scared in my entire life.

Sam drove us a few more blocks, then into the parking lot. There were a lot of cars parked at the Medical Building. It comforted me because I thought that if something happened surely there were plenty of doctors in the building who could help me. We entered the front doors passing some very senior citizens who had aides or family members assisting them. As I walked slowly past them, I felt very old, too.

The irony, perhaps, is that in my great fear, I wasn't sure where we were supposed to go. I didn't know the name of the office, only that they would do the stress test. We read the list of tenants, but none of the names sounded familiar. Fortunately I had made a notation on my calendar that said "*Suite 107.*"

It was just down the hall.

As we entered the room what struck me was how dingy and airless it was. There were no windows and the only light was those barbaric florescent tubes suspended in the ceiling that make you feel like your eyes are burning. We took our seats across

from a small coffee maker/refrigerator that had a sign on it "For Stress Test Patients Only."

Did they really want us having a cup of coffee before the procedure? We were the only people in the waiting room. There was no one at the desk. There was a note taped to the window by the desk that said to just wait and that someone would come out shortly.

I looked at the clock. It was 2:45 PM. I weakly held Sam's hand as we sat there in silence. I wanted to say a million things to him, but there wasn't time. I hoped that maybe he would say something important to me, but a few moments later the tech opened the door and called my name. I turned to him and gave him a quick kiss. **I tried to look brave as I handed him my phone and purse. I wouldn't be needing them any more.**

The stress test did not go as expected. Find out what happened in my next post.

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Comments

Thu, 2015-07-16 13:41 — [jmuuj](#) (not verified)

RE: STRESS [6]

As an ex-smoker, I know something about stress and anxiety. When I finally made up my mind (sort of) to quit smoking, I told my mother I'd quit "when I have less stress" -- and her reply changed my life. Right away, she shot back, "You'll never have less stress." We hung up shortly after that, and little did I realize how deeply her words, right on point, would affect me.

Needless to say, I started my quit regime very shortly after our conversation, and regard it as the single best thing I ever did for myself, because once I successfully kicked that worst of all addictions, I realized that my mother was right and that, having triumphed over the worst addiction, I would never again allow myself to be enslaved to, or by, anything. It has been a guiding light in my life ever since, bringing me through many, many times and events I thought I might not be strong enough to endure.

You are much, much stronger than you are allowing yourself to believe. You are loved, and you love. Let that guide you through these tough times. You WILL come through them.

Wonderful news about Nora ;) and beautiful engagement photo! ;)

Sun, 2015-07-19 20:51 — [Robin Olson](#) [7]

That's great advice [8]

Well said and congrats for quitting SMOKING!!!!!!!!!! WoW!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

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Robin @ [Google+](#)

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