

A Beautiful Day for a Stroll

Often, when we look at the lives of other people, we see that through their superior intellect or athleticism, their insatiable curiosity and drive, their hard work, discipline and dedication or their innate abilities with which they were born, they were destined to be great and do great things. There are those people, and then there is me. Through the years, with many 'enlightening' experiences, I have determined that my gift to mankind is entertainment. You see, I tend to often find myself in predicaments, predicaments which can be quite entertaining. Especially for those that have the great fortune of experiencing them 'in person'. Over time, I have grown to accept and appreciate my predicaments. They are not the legacy I would have chosen, had I had a choice, but never the less, I have been blessed with a legacy and it is mine. I will share with you now one of my 'predicaments'. I hope you enjoy it.

My best friend and I had the great fortune of working together at the same company. Over the years, with child bearing, middle age, and perhaps consuming a few too many calories, we were overweight and decided to start walking during lunch for exercise. We had been walking for a few days, when I had the bright idea to walk backwards. I theorized that by working different muscles, it might strengthen my core and perhaps burn more calories. Plus, it was fun, and a challenge. I would walk forward awhile, then backward awhile. I liked changing it up, and since I tend to be clumsy and accident prone, the challenge was even greater. Over the next few days my forward and backward walking was going well and my confidence was growing. It had been 5 days now and no predicaments had occurred, I was proud of myself.

On Friday evening, my husband and I decided to take a weekend trip. Just drive and see where the road takes us. We left early Saturday morning, heading North, stayed overnight in Kokomo and Sunday on our way home, we stopped in Madison by the river for lunch. It was a gorgeous day. The air was crisp, with a slight chill and the warmth from the sun was such a delight. Nature was starting to wake from its long winters nap and the Riverwalk was alive with activity. Everywhere you looked there were people. People walking, jogging, playing with their dogs, absorbing as much fresh air and sunshine as is humanly possible. After a nice lunch, my husband and I set out to enjoy the beautiful weather as well. We strolled along the Riverwalk, enjoying the magnificent cascading river, swollen from the early spring rain. Life was good and it was great to be alive and enjoying it with my one true love. As we talked and strolled, I decided that I would impress my love with my new talent. I flipped around and started walking backward, not missing a step. "Man, that was

quick, smooth, impressive" I thought. Good girl, nice job! My husband's eyes enlarged in wonder and he asked what the heck was I doing? I explained that Julie and I had been walking and I have been doing this for a week now and explained my theory. He was not nearly as impressed as I had hoped. It looked to him like a dumb idea but that did not discourage me. I had made the bold move and I wasn't about to admit defeat and turn back around now.

My husband walks at a quick pace and he wasn't about to slow down, especially for my 'dumb' stunt. We continued at his pace and I kept up, impressing myself even more. The conversation soon returned to normal as if my walking backwards was completely routine. Minutes went by. I am keeping pace but tiring. Surely after 5 minutes he would concede and give me an inkling of pride at my remarkable feat, but no. After 10 minutes of backward walking, I concede and do a quick 180 to flip back around and SMACK, I run dead center into an aluminum sign! UGH!! The impact was so intense that it knocked the breath out of me. I was stunned. For a few seconds, time stood still. It was like I was unconscious, yet awake. I didn't know what had happened. As my lungs recovered and I started getting my senses back, life was in slow motion. I see the sign, bowing and flexing, vibrating from impact. Just like we see in cartoons, I swear, I saw waves of motion reverberating off that vibrating sign.

I remember turning my head to my husband with a look of bewilderment and him saying "Are you ok"? I could see the look of concern on his face as he kept asking me "Are you OK"? Too stunned to respond and everything in slow motion, I turn my head again. I see people all around us, some at great distances and many have stopped and are pointing at me! As I see their arms go up to point at me, I see their heads turn to each other, like "OMG, Did you see that?" At this point, I hear the loud 'GONG' sound the sign is making from impact. The sound resonates as the sign continues to shake. Apparently, the sound is SO loud, it caught the attention of others in the park. Now the realization sets in, that not only had my husband and I experienced my 'predicament', but the rest of the park had as well. How embarrassing!!

When my head cleared and I was back in real time, I assured my husband I was OK. He and those around us enjoyed a good laugh. And I laughed too, a little. The pressure of the collision on my chest prevented me from laughing too much. I straightened my bent glasses, that were now cock eyed on my face, and tried to carry on as if nothing had happened. It was embarrassing, but it makes a great story and just another episode in my life.

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