

The Colonoscopy

*This is the whole truth and nothing but the truth with the exception of where it is not.
There are liberal amounts of poetic license taken and applied.
Please accept with the humor intended. Exaggerations abound.*

Look, I'm - *identity purposely concealed throughout* - kinda nervous about doctors, dentists, hospitals and the like. So, when something out of the ordinary is required, I have a tendency to lock securely into worst case scenario.

So, I ingest the recommended night before drano concoctions and have a most uncomfortable afternoon and evening. By early evening I become paranoid about organ liquefaction and loss. Lord, I cry out, I have no more to give!

In the late evening sleep become risky business.

~~Pat~~ - *identity purposely concealed throughout* - drives me to the hospital at 7:45 and I enter the hospital with ~~Pat~~ at my side.

I *JUST* miss being first in the check-in line by seconds, curse my bad luck, and then patiently, patiently wait my turn. I complete the check in.

A nurse calls out my name and I say my final farewells to ~~Pat~~ and tell her that I love her so and she will always be in my heart. I can never thank her enough for a life of kindness. Tears well in my eyes.

I am escorted into pre-op. I am asked to disrobe completely — *they say "everything must come off"* — behind the curtain. There is a hospital gown of sorts with the ribbons to tie behind that befuddle arthritic fingers. I fail to secure the tie as grasp the gown behind my back as I lie down on the bed and holler - *I was asked to holler* — that I'm ready.

The nurse comes in and says, "I'll get you a warm blanket," and returns shortly with just that. Warm blankets are surprisingly good. I momentarily and with a forced element of humor, think to myself, "Wow, I wonder if a

warm towel and shave is on the menu?” but quickly allow the thought to pass as I settle back into my state of growing paranoia.

The good doctor makes an appearance introduces himself and assures me there is nothing to worry about. He tells me this is a relatively common, and necessary preventive procedure. I do appreciate his professionalism in attempting to quell my fears. I also know that I can think of many reasons to worry but I keep this to myself. I possess a powerful internal engine of worry that always rumbles ominously within.

I am asked many questions by the very courteous attending nurse and then, *as is required in any medical waiting area*, I wait.

I hear conversations between medical professionals and other patients and come to the realization that, in many ways, I am the lucky one here, but the thought quickly fades when I ponder by own fate.

The anesthesiologist comes in and assures me everything is OK. I ask about the anesthesia. He informs me that the anesthesia is propofol, very effective and safe when used correctly. This, by the way, is what troubled Michael Jackson at his end.

I took no comfort there.

Another nurse comes in and applies the IV needle and tube.

I wait and listen to others awaiting the same fate. Their angst amplifies my own.

I wait and continue to listen to the voices beyond the curtain. I consider escape but erratic nerves preclude proper planning.

I wait.

After an hour of reckoning on my life and the many missteps that cannot be made right; I am wheeled into the Operating Room. The O.R. as it is colloquially referenced by those wheeling me in. There are a couple of

nurses that gather about the bedside, and the anesthesiologist is there as well. I am told to take a couple of deep breaths.

I breathe in and out once.

I breathe in....

The black hole consumes me.

“All done,” I hear. I wake up and, for a moment, have no idea where I am at. A brief but intense moment of panic ensues. I have perished.

And then the wonderful realization that all went well, and I live. I LIVE! I suppress the urge to blubber.

I am obsequious in my praise of each medical professional that participated in this effort.

I am given privacy to dress and then a wheelchair is brought to me.

I somewhat eagerly look forward to the corridor of clapping nurses and staff members but there is none to be found; there are no balloons that adorn the walls, no celebratory bell to ring in honor of my courage and return to wellness.

Pat greets me with enthusiasm in the waiting room and walks by the wheelchair side until we are out the doors and she begins to drive me home. The perilous journey is near end.

I hum along on the ride home to Gloria Gaynor and, *‘I Will Survive.’*

I have survived.