“JOINT”

/ LATERAL FORCES

d.a.

beaulieu

A HOUSE PRESS CHAPBOOK
been waking up leg sore & tight

bound
don’t remember falling

why am I so sore?

TYLENOL

Dr. M-------(1)
"x-rays"
"well, kiddo – you have patella-femoral disease. . . I could prescribe anti-inflammatories if you would like"
"lots of physiotherapy before Dr. P------ will even see you . . ."

TYLENOL

Dr. P------(1)
"x-rays"
"before I do this I want you to know that there is only a 50/50 chance of improvement . . ."

gives me the bum’s rush
he’s complete and everything
but
I’ve had this problem for months & I’m
in
& out
of his office in under 5 minutes
in that time he’s determined more physio, surgery, anti-inflammatories &

TYLENOL

but
he’s still guessing &
I’m still limping
(out of the office)

Dr. P------(2)
"well,
we performed an orthroscopy and looked around your knee and everything was ok. we smoothed some spots on the underside of your kneecap, but certainly nothing that could account for this type of swelling . . .” “physiotherapy”

im told that I spent the surgery talking -- yes, I was out but talking away bright & alert, cracking jokes-- hadn’t seen anything like it before (yeah -- I get that a lot. . .)

after surgery leg stops

mid thigh & reconnects mid calf

oliver sacks’ “ghost limb”

like him I am left w/o a leg to stand on no sense of knee at all -- don’t even recognize what to

move

TYLENOL 3

brings on dreams -- restless moving
cold sweat
shaking
cold chattering

and this is supposed to be relaxing?
fog draping mind

cannot connect

2 thots

Physiotherapy(1)

“I cant think of anything else to do to help you . . .”

suffering at work

trying to figure out to be comfortable at least

keeping it moving flexing my leg continuously.

what a dance I perform -- under my desk & from doctor’s office to doctor’s office . . .

Dr. M------(2)

“I’ll call Dr. P----- and set up another appointment, and there’s gotta be lots of physiotherapy before Dr. P----- will even see you . . .”

Physiotherapy(2)

“I cant think of anything else to do to help you . . .”

twice a week I walk down to physiotherapy -- taking up evenings I could better be doing something else (anything else) consists of hot baths
cold baths ultrasound therapy
weights
electric pulse therapy (sets teeth chattering and tinfoil taste)
exercise bikes
wraps with tensor bandages stretches to increase the strength and mobility of atrophying muscles

saying that the problem is that

Physiotherapy (3)

“the muscles are pulling the knee cap in an incorrect direction”

why?

they can’t tell me

they don’t know

they give up

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Dr. P------(3)

“I told you there was a 50/50 chance before & now.”
there’s an 80/20 chance, & I won’t operate under those odds...
“physiotherapy & anti-inflammatories”
“these things just happen”

I refuse to believe that “these things just happen”. I need some sort of answer.

... alarm goes and I jump out of bed, used to sitting and then standing easing myself onto “old” bones, stand and immediately hit the floor sweat at temples before my face can even react
I cannot stand without...

the 4 steps down from my apartment to street level are excruciating. hobble to trainstation, head fuzzy from Tylenol, knee and hip aching with each step.

before work I have to face climbing god knows how many steps & 7 flights of stairs.
each step clinches my teeth & eyes.
worse today than ever before

Emergency Rm. Nurse
“oh -- I see -- this is the emergency room and this is not an emergency... well, you’ll have to wait...

wait for 2 1/2 hours as old men with continuous nosebleeds fall asleep next to me
woman runs to washroom -- green -- every few minutes, and the nurses don’t even react
(they could at least get her a bucket or a mop...)
have to keep my leg moving or still -- I can’t decide as each brings intense pain.

but I just have to sit here (this has to happen on the one day that I forgot my book...) thinking abt

that goddamned dismissive tone
I wouldn’t have come here if it wasn’t an emergency
I’ll have to wait
I’ll have to wait
I’ll have to wait

Emergency Rm. Doctor
“x-rays, bloodwork”
“arthritis”
“see Dr. H----”

(more x-rays? I’ll be glowing like some sort of 50’s b-movie x-files
backwoods monster. they’ll fix my knees
but I’ll glow green at night...)
sent home with bandaid on my arm

& no more answers than when I came in.
they cant even tell me what it isn’t.
they don’t think arthritis
but they still don’t know.

long wait answerless day
I head back to Courtney’s house to tell her the news
she sees the bandaid before I can say anything
and her face just drops

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Dr. M-------(3)
“well, I told you -- you have patella-femoral disease...
I could prescribe more anti-inflammatories if you would like”
“I don’t understand why you went to the emergency room.”
"I've set up an appointment for you with Dr. O----, but I don't know what she can tell you. and you'll have to do plenty of physiotherapy before she'll even see you"

patella-femoral disease -- I ask what that means and I am told:

Dr. M------(4)
"you have a bum knee..."

which of course excuses nothing and leaves me without answers
relief solutions
or even suggestions beyond staying off it & keep going to physio...

Physiotherapy(3)
"I can't think of anything else to do to help you..."

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concerned -- it says on the box of

TYLENOL

that I shouldn't take them more than 10 days in a row

I've been taking 4 a day (at least) for the last 2 months.
60 days.
4 a day
240 TYLENOL

Dr. H----
"try these anti-inflammatory. what you seem to have is mono-
arthritis without any of the symptoms..."

NOVO DIFENAC (DICLOFENAC SODIUM)

finally something that takes down the swelling some (but already after taking them for a few weeks --
I can tell they're not doing as much as they were)
and I have to be alert for
bleeding ulcers
--- cramps
poor digestion
take these with food ("take one tablet by mouth twice daily with food")
tight -- w/o a leg to stand on

DEVL'S CLAW ROOT

FISH BODY OILS (MEGA EPA-1000 OMEGA 3)

NT-OX (ANTI-OXIDANTS)

IBUPROFEN

ECHINACEA

VITAMIN C

Dr. O------(1)
"I have to have a sample of that fluid...wait here while I get my weapon"
"certainly physio won't help at all, & will only increase the pain..."

treats with some common sense & takes some time
but still

no answers
more tests
some guesses

Dr. O------(2)
"there's nothing wrong with your joint themselves -- which explains why Dr. P---- didn't see anything. You have a problem with your immune system. Your knee thinks that the joint lining is foreign body &
is therefore trying to kill it.
This will either disappear as quickly as it appeared
or will manifest itself in other joints. There is nothing that I can do.”

I am left with a mysterious possibility
that my body is trying to kill
part of me
& that it doesn’t recognize me
(well --damn, neither do I at times . . . )
an immune system problem that could just “go away”
how optimistic --
how miraculous in the age
of science
of guesses
w/o answers

&

lots
of
physio
before
they’ll
even
see
you.

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special thanks to The NEW Gallery for a great environment & lots of support

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ph: 403.270.4440
fax: 403.270.4584
dabeaulieu@calcena.ab.ca
cfthomps@cadvision.com

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[Signature]

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