

THE WHEELCHAIR

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(The wheelchair â?? a third party narrative how it has assisted my wife during her two year ordeal which has restrained her ability to walk normally)

Today I stay alone, at one end of the foyer staring through the large glass framed wall. I stand flooded with past images of the quiet preserve of my madam- Mani, where I wheeled her with all my devotion allowing the calm-down time in her selected section of the house: the long corridor.

Iâ??m a wheelchair; I helped my mam for two years to escort her to go around; at first, it puzzled me to learn why such a vivacious lady has to confine to this wheelchair life.

Two years back her husband brought me into this cozy house. Iâ??m pleased with the bright daylight streaming in, well-ventilated rooms opening into a long hallway. I peeped out to see the three-acre family-owned school buildings and playgrounds spread out two floors below.

As I entered they let me into a hall. I thought, â??well Iâ??m here.â?? It looked like a typical hospital room with a hospital bed. Rest of the furniture arranged like a well-maintained visitorâ??s room. All activity seemed bustling there. Lying on the bed where I had the first impression of the mam. I followed her in the bed; it surprised me; she was widely smiling, vibrancy blushing on her face, as if ready to jump out of her bed, get dressed and walk down to her office.

But sadly she couldnâ??t. That was the reason Iâ??m introduced to assist her.

My main responsibility involved helping her to step out from the hospital bed confines.

After familiarizing with the house environs and the key inmates the first detail, I noticed her both of the legs bandaged with cotton and strapped tight with gauze. Later I understood itâ??s to contain the swelling of the legs. She is facing the ordeal of an inevitable â??hard to accept spinoffâ?? of progressive multi-organ cancer. As a result, she canâ??t walk: forever.

From then on, I stayed with mam for about eighteen months. I cradled her as if Iâ??m drawn in by a blessed calling. I have become a loyal caretaker for her. Moving her every day all around the house, I grew fond of charm on her face and gift of will to fight the eventuality of any inconvenience. Iâ??m amazed at how she never uttered a bitter word about her uncooperative feet and her immobility. Undaunted, she is all smiling beneath which, everyone in her family knew; an unfathomable disease is coursing through her body and fast claiming her.

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Iâ??m happy in this arrangement to be a part of strolling relief given to the mam. We shared our daily rides which reinforced hope and happiness enough for a day. I overheard often; she would inquire her husband: â??can I, in future be on my own, and walk by myself.â?? Whatever the answer she got, she never lost her sheen of poise. I admired her forbearance: an independent spirit never willing to shed her burdens on anyone else.

She pleaded for the strength to â??walk,â?? and she divinely got it!

For eighteen months I have helped transcend her disability, I became an envoy of her mobility. But, I have gotten up for a rude shock. One night, and she walked away from me. Leaving back the empty corridors where we shared our sunshine and sunsets and cool whiffs. Departed from the home, she adored dearly, from all our lives. She silently, as calmly as angelic footsteps, â??walked off, and passed awayâ??â??forever!

For less than two years I stayed close to mamâ??s bed where I got so intertwined, connected and witnessed how she deteriorated in her silent, yet a painful retreat.

It has been more than a year from the day she suddenly disappeared from utilizing me. When Iâ??m on the job standing by her bed, I strained to witness the agonizing way she got treated, examined, and sometimes consoled and humored. Now the bed remained empty, serenely placed and neatly tucked in the corner as if praying for its occupant to come back.

I honestly served her; I nursed with pure and genuine concern for my mam. Pity, today I stand as a member of the household, as a mere memory of harsh reality in which Iâ??m a part. I donâ??t know how I turned these days without the lively presence of her. But Iâ??m every day cared, cleaned, and set the cushions, arranged the towels used by her. They would adjust me as if everyone is relaxing in the knowledge they expected her to come back soon.

I even remembered her morning words followed by a sweep of hand and a terse look, â??Open all the doors and windows, let me enjoy the morning Sun,â?• her every day unmissable morning routine.

And everyone in the house dutifully followed. Every day she with the help of nurses popped herself settling on the cushions, her bandaged feet placed on the footrest. I would roll her out to celebrate the early sunshine and slow breeze running along the corridor. As she sat strong as a champion, I enjoyed the moments admiring her penetrating and ever questioning eyes. A gentle smile on lips never left her so was my silent prayer, â??donâ??t let the smile fade away, donâ??t take her away from us.â??

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Her sweetness touched me with which she spoke to her son when he took her around on some evenings; looking out over the parapet wall the place she loved the most. Craning her head, she watched and listened to the sounds of vehicular traffic below. After a while, she would longingly inquire, â??Will I be able to walk around like everyone, how long I have to sit in this wheelchair?â?? Shuffling in silence was the answer she got from her son. I knew everyone in the family struggled to look straight at her to answer her woeful queries.

I waited for her laughter which was the loudest, when Aradhya, mamâ??s granddaughter was around. The three-year-old little sparkling has become a hope of her resolve, a quiet strength to take head on the savage curse standing in between her and her family members. Aradhya, giggling, would stand on my foothold gripping me with her tiny hands, beaming all her smiles, looking into her grandmotherâ??s pampering eyes. Resting her head, occasionally, in the mamâ??s lap as if to receive the warmth of her blessings.

Looking and enjoying the sheer peace she felt holding Aradhya and accommodating her on the wheelchair, thatâ??s me. How I wanted to see these pleasing frames of tenderness may eternally remain frozen. However hard I tried not to, these family portraits, reeled before me every day. Though, I bonded with her family for a brief period. Now, Iâ??m considered a permanent icon, in gratefulness, that I helped madam in her hardest situations. I reconciled myself to remain as an empty frame

without a deity; looking at noiseless, empty rooms, I grieve myself, â??can I ever see the happiness bloom again in this homeâ???

On some evenings, her husband settles on a small sofa sitting next to me. He punishingly left alone, reading a book or leafing through a newspaper. I noticed, all at once, his face would turn dull as he peered outside the large glass windows as if reviewing the descending darkness, perhaps he is relating to something similar, what he is holding inside.

As the days zooming past, let me summarize the goings on.

Perhaps, as of now, I presume, my momâ??s husband got used to â??Iâ??m on my ownâ?? sort of situation. I find him on most days confronting the reality as soberly as his melancholic reminders permitted. Determined to bring back his past into a readable format, he reconciles himself sitting before the keyboard in late evenings, after work, collecting together the memories of his wifeâ??Mani.

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Tags

1. #mywife
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Date Created
2018/12/08
Author
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