

STATUS (attn:brothers and sisters) 59
percent battery

It is now nearing twenty years past the official journey to, and into, the blue wall. Over the years that wall would slowly become a number of curtains, only for me to discover to the curtains were endless entries into the blue. Each entry was coded with an expectation by a human sentry. The sentry may have been a recruiting officer, a coach officer, an instructor, an Inspector. Regardless of their title the implied expectation they carried was powerful. In passing by the sentry I entered and accepted an unwritten agreement. No safe passage sans expectation.

Those that had gone before me had done the same. Following in their footsteps I

found myself looking down at my feet, wondering where this was going? There was movement and an apparent understanding of which I was now intertwined. I found the sentries called us to order with the Siren call of “brothers and sisters”. It meant I now accepted protecting their vulnerable backs with my life. Even in that Siren call it would be rare for me to know what formed their vulnerable markings and what vestments shrouded their bruised bones. I would only ever see the blue cloth covering, the same blue cloth we all wore, trousers housing a dripping a red line from waist to foot sole.

As I took my paces past one of the many blue veiled walls I knew entry to this place and space was for me alone. Those in my life and in my past were not part of this journey and would not understand what I had accepted. What I would find is the

philosophy, the new age healing concept and Newton's third Law all held some similarities with the crime scene investigation. The crime scene investigation was Locum's Law. Regardless of the law or parallel philosophy I was somehow sure that with each step I walked I left something of myself behind while I took a part of what I came across with me. It made my existence in this covert world one of echoes.

Echoes or not, this is where I was, in my now of close to twenty years ago. In the beginning I had some tenured youth as I was on the older side of the rookie start. Regardless of my tenure in age and life I would not know what lay ahead. I would not know what I would touch and leave a part behind and I would not know who or what would touch me and hitchhike into my daily world. Somehow I would pick up a

piece that had been carried from Sir Robert Peel. This person was considered the grandfather of modern day policing as he commented

“The police are the public and the public are the police; the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence.”

Read more at: <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/r/robertpeel260231.html>

This sentiment had carried through the years and was now in my hands. I would now be driving where officers once walked the beat and I now stepped on historic real estate wearing the red dripped blue uniform. I only knew the red line meant something when the training officer asked us what it meant. I would find out what it dripped as I walked my beat.

The ones before me guarding the entry past

the blue wall all had expectations bound in the biology of their bodies. They had “ready to fight” etched in their amygdalae, that place that overrides all with pre-learned habits and patterns. They were my tenacious peers and influential superiors. It would be a long time before I would learn that that amygdala houses history and memories which it uses to send hormones through our bodies invoking quick efficient responses. Emotion is what is housed there. The will to live, the persistence to never give up and whatever else feeds our past is chronicled there, ... in short hand. My entry to the next grouping of brothers and sisters where I worked side by side with “brothers and sisters” would include an awareness of my body language, how I carry myself and an expectation that I have a vow of silence. This awareness and expectation would be both observed by the “brothers and sisters” as well as by my own

person.

My first vow of silence was never clearly articulated. It appeared that there was a lot to be silent about yet the rules were not made clear. I did, however, know that I was being paid to see what others did not want to know existed. What went on behind that blue wall was also the knowledge of what the rest of the world did not want to realize. It meant that I had a limited number of people I could speak with and it also meant I would soon become one of those wearing vestments covering bruised bones. I too would be one that would not show my vulnerability and in the middle of a community I would have no touchstone to share what I walked.

I was walking into a world of perpetual training so my already hyper vigilant being would be even tighter tuned to any sign of

danger while being able to always access the impartial and logical thought process of laws, rights and authorities I was now protecting. Oddly enough I am not sure if I protected the peace or the laws. I am sure that what I was protecting had been created by the public and was still evolving with much influence from the general public.

Prior to walking the beat with the others I had to identify my role as it moved and shape shifted. I would shape shift with the influences and education I brought with me knowing that though we wore assembly line work wear infused in blue till almost black we were all different. I began the job wearing a wool blend. If I were to consider moving up in rank my red line would change colour to black. Our differences would show in how we interpreted our roles and how we were assigned or promoted in power. Some of us would be masters of

street theatre while others of us would be masters of literal interpretation of a set of words. Prepositions and verbs would be what we use to structure order for those we guard. We might learn, over time, that we are actually guardians of peace not people.

In most sacred choices there are rituals allowing for the new community to form deeper bonds. Those rituals included golf, motorcycle riding both of which I had the tools and licence for but no longer wished to do. Those rituals were for officers on days off, ones that were friends, they were not for women and were by invitation only. There was another ritual that all were invited to. It was regular and predictable though different for every cloistered platoon. The ones I remember most were the Tuesday after a set of four busy days. It was around dinner time and marked what was technically two days off before a

stretch of seven midnight shifts in a row. The technicality of those “two days off” began at 1700 hrs if we were fortunate to be off on time and would begin 52 to 56 hours later starting in the late evening of the Thursday which was the first shift of the Friday. That was how it was two days off. Oddly enough a common two day weekend would have work finished at 5pm on the Friday and begin at 9am the following Monday. This would be 60 hours in total and three nighttime sleeps before back to work. I lived in a world of technicalities which meant I could also have two days off, just like everyone else, it would just be a bit shorter and lead into seven midnight shifts. I digress for I was talking about sacred rituals, I suppose my digression named the sacred ritual of technically having what others did not with my time off.

The real sacred ritual I was speaking off

had a sweetness to it that brought on a calmer feeling. It was in our cloister of our platoon, in civilian clothes of woven cotton forming jeans and t-shirts that had never been starched. The time would be sharing stories of the past few days and congratulating each other for, yet again, the commitment to never give up. It was said spattered with words that offer a chemical release in our bodies, the greater the need for that release the greater the presence of the explicative. The stories would flow, we were family gathering for a bite and a brew. The bite would be wings and nachos, the brew would be barley fermented in time and poured from the spigit at the bar. The bar would be a place that knew us, treated us well and left us to our own wounded devices. That sacred ritual would be part of every platoon I would know. It was a sedative that allowed what happened in the day to take some distance, it was shared

from the pitcher and it allowed for us to feel the unstarched cotton on our backs and maybe let our comrades know we had a soft underbelly. It would be the place we would quietly get to know each other and the location of our respective soft spots. That time would connect us for the next back watch. If you know someone's soft spots then you may be motivated to protect them, in time there may also be a motivation to misuse them. That misuse was only possible if there was an imbalance in both power and knowledge. That was not something for right now, we were an intact team nievely thinking this would continue.

Sargent stripes administered to some platoon mates would change everything. They were velcro and it would only be with time that the newly ordained sergeants in our platoon would change everything.

Nothing will ever replace that safety of the first platoon. That platoon that accepted our strengths and weaknesses and taught us how to navigate Human Rights, removal of rights, provincial law, federal law, municipal law and the rabbit spawn of each section. Those laws have multiplied in a fashion us new initiates needed to sort out how they evolved and the fact that they speak different languages hence their ability to function together was in need of an adept translator.

It is now nearing twenty years and my computer has moved from 59% to 45%. The sun in my back yard lights up a water tower. This morning's light was red, as was yesterday. I have not worked with my brothers and sisters for almost exactly 24 months. Today is September 23rd and I am coming up to October 7th. October 7th was the last time I was assaulted and the last

time I wore the blue cloth. Over the years of work it had moved from wool to a poly cotton blend. It was easier to clean blood and biohazards out of the poly cotton blend....or so you would think.

Chapter Two

Yesterday was spent watering my skin with tears, many tears. It began with a migraine and an intestinal irritation that I now call an episode. Those episodes take everything out of me except my trained fight for my life. That fight is still housed in my amygdala. It is a good message. I practice letting my prefrontal cortex learn what is good and as I honour that I hope my amygdala will recognize there is a history to what is good. Today I write, it puts what is good on paper and my eyes read it and another message is sent between the two different houses in the brain. I find myself laughing as I

wonder if the houses in the brain are like the different layers of law. The order of importance and how each one does its respective job yet a lack of understanding how each one affects the other. It is metaphor that makes my world go around. I am, at times, an idiot savant and my only way of insuring I can communicate with others is to understand the metaphor that applies. That way when how my world is ordered is not synchronous with someone else I can find a gentle metaphor.

It was back in art school that the magic of the metaphor was embedded. My teacher was a woman with beautifully chocolate caramel coloured skin. She was younger than I am now but when I was her student she had an air of age and wisdom I loved. What was it with these artists that could take the every day and mark graphite to rag paper and make my eyes dance. She told

me the most powerful way to communicate with anyone is through the use of metaphor. I no longer recall her medium of choice for her metaphors for the teacher did not share her work. My medium of choice was to be photographs and words. They were inside me and had been forever. Now I write with metaphor designed to invite you into my world. The thing is you cannot come as a voyeur for the metaphor requires you bring your own interpretation. The result is then, once you have read these simple words, you too are changed forever and Locums Law has happened and I have asked that blue wall become thin enough for you to see inside.

We all have blue walls. The light on my water tower reminds me that every day tells a story and everyone has a blue wall. This morning's light had a hue of blue as the pink and red spoke briefly before the cars

started to go to work and the children began to mew.

Chapter Three

I will come to you with three stories of yesterday. The three stories that have written the words you have read. One of them

For now I will sip my coffee and share with my partner the ritual of our morning.

Chapter Four

It is now the next day. Yesterday had, yet again, many tears and more gifts.

I saw my brother synchronize with his new horse. He showed me that synchronicity while his horse permitted me to mount, bareback.

I saw a man yesterday that built my

previous house. In the process of building there was some tension and he was called a fraud. Sometimes the fraud is the one pulling the puppet strings, and we are the puppets. We hugged and held on tight, both of us having left the puppeteer. Both of us with our own stories of how we found the strings and left them behind as well. I gifted him with a beautiful photograph of his current construction project. He is a skilled man in many ways and a pleasure to honour in photograph.

Chapter Five

Driving home yesterday I passed my favourite sign. A lot had gone on since I had set down my pen and ink keyboard and had coffee with my partner. I know I said I would share with you three stories but first it appears the content of that sign is important. It relates to everything that

means anything, the content of the sign that day. The content is always changing but the sign is there every day.

Yesterday it said *“you can give without love but you cannot love without giving”*. First inquiry into the origin of this quote appears to be attached to a radio show host from the states, Bernard Meltzer (1916-1998), but upon further inquiry it appears better attached to Amy Carmicheal, 1867-1951. Regardless of the origin the location for me began with the big rented sign beside a farm equipment business. Yesterday I was able to both love and give to the contractor that built my home. When I give that way all judgement washes away and there is a peace similar to the quiet between the leaves of a big maple tree on a windless morning. The three stories....as I write they become loving those people that touched my life after my morning coffee. I would like

to say that they were in between tears but yesterday was mostly tears.

The first story is from a stranger. As I exited the osteopath office, with less tears than upon entry, someone told me that I was quite skilled with dogs. I thought I would take that compliment on and own it making it one of my 365 quotes people have gifted me with over the years. As that anchored another woman approached me while I was asking my service dog, Char, to hop in the back of a Jeep Rubicon. The reason I tell you the type of vehicle is to let you conjure up the vertical jump my dog had to do every time they entered the vehicle. It was a physical act of grace, power and beauty. While I was doing that the image I presented the world with was one of a tall woman with short spiky hair, white in hue, wearing off white headphones cushioned with teal leather. I was not the

every day view to say the least. The auditory input of the world had been too much for a few days at that point so I just wore the headphones....all the time.

It was the headphones that called her to me, along with my jacketed dog. She asked me if I was hearing impaired and then told me that she had a couple of clients that were needing to train their dogs for their progressive hearing loss. Her story began as a Veterinary Technician who left working for someone else and went out on her own caring for other people's animals. This had progressed to assisting people as they age by caring for their pets so they could stay at home and have their pet(s) with them, healthy and happy. I found this to be resourceful and progressive. I liked it yet I did not understand why she was talking to me. She clarified by saying she wondered where I trained my dog for what

she thought was a hearing impairment. I clarified that it wasn't a hearing impairment (while thinking I looked more like I had autism than hearing loss) and asked what she was looking to achieve.

She had a client that could not hear the phone, nor know when someone was at the door to the house. That same client already had bonded with her dog so the path of getting a service dog was not a comfortable choice. The inquiry seemed to beg for a "professional" which was exactly what the stranger was looking to find. I stated that the term "professional" was merely an illusion. I said she had the skills herself which was quite evident from how she had shifted her life to her current career. I said all she and the client had to do was ask how to structure things in order to bring out what comes naturally to her client's pet. I suggested they get a phone or electronic

device that connected with the telephone system and the door to the house. Once that was done all they had to do was make the ringer a dog bark and the doorbell something else but equally as engaging for the pet. The woman walked away and it was evident that she was taking with her the solution to the problem as well as the understanding that the term “professional” is really an illusion. I concluded this interaction by writing the story and realizing that I have genuinely accepted the gift articulated and am skilled with dogs. If the shoe fits....wear it and wear it with humble pride.

What I did not share with you is during the coffee with my partner I found that panic place inside of myself and had been hyperventilating and crying. I managed to only think about breaking something recognizing I was obviously very upset.

Before leaving for the osteopath I gave my partner a hug and said I would be back later. While driving to the osteopath I had to consciously remind myself that community and relationships are what make me stronger. It is only by creating healthy safe relationships that I would heal and re-calibrate to a more peaceful norm. That talking to was designed to manage my internal explosion wanting to run away and separate myself from relationships. It was as if I was tempting that place of living where I could give without loving. I need to love myself which means I needed to go deeper into relationships, safe ones. I needed to make sure I lived a safe relationship and loved myself. The relationship with my partner was an incredible calibration point and I needed to come back to my partner, not run away. I guess the illusion of my professional ability to keep people at a distance was just

that....an illusion and not a very good one at that. It was me being both puppet and puppeteer. It was time to just be.

The second story is a couple of hours later in the day. I went to counselling and my counsellor and I decided that I needed to drop off a form that needed to be filled out by my doctor. That form had in it the term “permanent disability” which for that brain of mine was fraught with images that were not me. “permanent disability” somehow was tied to being “useless”. My day was having a grand old time with me and the illusions I had attached to different words. The word “disability” was by no means related to “useless” and I was recalibrating at a fast pace. The pace was fast enough to cause a waterfall of panic and tears of release. It was overwhelming.

In order to deal with the overwhelm my

counsellor and I concluded I would drop off the “Disability Form” at my doctor’s office. If it was dropped off it was managed and I was not hanging on to it until our next appointment. I was also finding a gently, unintrusive way to say I was worth finding my peace. My counsellor handed me a yellow sticky note and one sheet of lined paper. I gave my counsellor a cheque for \$140 and we both had in interesting laugh at the cost of the blank paper. I left the office and had a good cry in my car. That cry was about feeling like I had not had parents the way I wanted and needed. I had my cry and as I write I realize there appears to be more to that illusion as well. Parents all do the best they can, the fact that they show up every day of our lives makes them stellar at their jobs. I show up every day for my children and I do it without any in service training days or professional development programs. I am a product of

my upbringing, my environment and myself just as my parents were and my children will be after me. With that said my children have already signed off on the waiver that they will need counselling and it was my right to insure the counsellor earned their \$140/hr.

I arrived at the doctor's office and parked to write what I needed to communicate on the blank piece of paper I had acquired. I began writing and my hand instantly went numb. It goes numb and has for a very long time. It is tied to that night I was briefly re-calibrated by a cement pillar. It was further aggravated by carrying a gun, blading my body in the street interviews of the job and the endless driving surrounded by computers, microphones and wedged in a seat that was permanently squished from the uniform and the weight of the officers driving the vehicles....24/7. I could not

write and my beautiful cursive was no longer a forgotten memory rushed away by crisis after recorded crisis. My hand could no longer move that way, my writing looked like age had hit. My hand and arm were numb. I was angry at how this had happened. I finished the note and dropped it off. This is where things get interesting.

Upon exit I spotted activity behind me. I was using Char's body language and some reflections on materials in the foyer to inform me of the activity. It was a man entering the building. He was dressed in nondescript shorts and t-shirt wearing a pendulous lavalier from a chain around his neck. The lavalier was a crucifix and the persons commented that I had a nice dog. I looked at him to say my standard gracious but unengaged "thank you" when I realized I knew this person. The house he, and his preferred pronoun is "he", had lived in

burned down a decade earlier....on
December 24th. He has always visited me,
in my memory mind, at that time of year.
His message in my memory mind was the
knowledge that things are items where
relationships are where love is found. He
was a leader and he was an old co-worker
of mine. Instead of saying thank you I
looked at him and let him see me. He
couldn't believe his eyes once the fog of
strangers meeting had lifted.

In letting him see me I started crying again.
The tears were not far away hence they
came back easily. He was one of those
“brothers and sisters” from the other side of
the blue wall that had grit. Grit to be real
and hone his sense of right and wrong
while working in the law of executing the
concept of right and wrong decreed by
generations of people. I hugged him and
he hugged back. I sobbed and did not stop.

That lavalier did not matter right then and there, I could be real with him. He looked at me and with the utmost of compassion he asked if this is what I was dealing with on a daily basis. I told him it was. PTSD has a devious way of making you either hide to the point of agoraphobia or be real in an unexpected but public manner. I was currently practicing the public manner in this foyer. I had just practiced committing to community and relationships and it appears the world was going to provide me with an opportunity to anchor that thought in both my amygdala and my pre-frontal cortex. I guess there is hope I can reprogram and release this hyper vigilance and iron wall with which I protect my beauty and find a safe way of just being. That interaction lasted a while and I cried, he shared and we were brother and sister again. He is my replacement in the job I loved and have not worked at since 23 months ago. The form I

dropped off was the 24 month review regarding degree of injury.

I left that visit with a brother lighter for the tears and stress of sweat had all bolted to exit the iron cage of my body. Time to be a fish net.....catch that which I have designed my net to catch and let all the rest move on to their respective destinations.

From there I went and saw a baby, three months old. I had not seen the newborn yet. I was having nightmares about seeing the baby and mom. I braved the nightmares and found I could love the child and mom. I could give the way the sign said. It was not just giving it was loving. Maybe I was actually loving myself and allowing relationships to be healthy in my life? Regardless the migraine I had been dancing with for about two days now was still ebbing and flowing. I would soon take

a third pill in under ten hours. This is what I would call an episode and frankly I could not see my way out of the pain, the migraine, the maze. I did know enough to practice being exactly where I was when that maze became overwhelming. I asked myself how I wanted to care for myself and found that dropping off paperwork at the lawyer's office was the way to go. This paperwork said I was worth being on the title to my house. I just needed to complete the paperwork and have needed to do as such for the past couple years. I called the lawyer and though I was in another crisis and crying I was clear and the paperwork was delivered in such a manner that I did not need to be public with another round of crying. I rested until my children came home.

The children were home fifteen minutes into the rest. They cleaned up their school

supplies and lunch dishes and I took one of them to an appointment. The appointment was of no consequence, the person in the waiting room was. I walked into the waiting room and saw an old platoon mate from about a decade ago. This platoon mate had fought to save another mate's life though this one was a half pint of a woman with the grit of the Scots and the lilt in her words to match. She was a fighter and was reading a book titled "How Scots Changed the Modern World"....or something of the sort. That fight she was in was near her last shift, the stress of it appeared to trigger Multiple Sclerosis and she was not working as an officer anymore. We hugged and her perfume permeated my clothing, my migraine chose to stay at bay seeing as the connection was more important than the strike of scent. We talked and arranged for coffee the following week. We texted and there was a gentle understanding found

only between persons that have experienced life altering crisis where the strings tied to the puppeteer had to be removed in order to live in this world. We understood each other and our eyes watered but did not foster the traditional lavalier from that water. We were in public and we were platoon mates. We understood the small signs and what they really meant. As we chatted a lone male in the room would periodically cough and then apologize. It was our room and he knew he was there by circumstance alone.

Later I confirmed with her a time and date for coffee the following week. We both agreed it was wonderful to see each other. She was no longer living in hiding and made no more excuses for the unseen injury or disease she lived. She was able to connect and build relationships again and I was part of that just as she was part of my

new build. I told her that maybe I would have a story ready for her when we met. You are reading that story.

Namaste. 40% battery

