



Gayle Collins

A Survivor's Story
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Did you know that June is
#BrainInjuryAwarenessMonth In Canada? This
month, we're shining a #SpotLightOnBrainInjury.

Help us raise awareness about #BrainInjury in
Canada by following along with our posts and
sharing to your stories!

#SPOTLIGHTONBRAININJURY

Journey Through a Brain Injury

Sunday Morning 4 months after cerebellum stroke
Michael Enright fades as I walk to the kitchen,
To wash the plate that held the omelette.
The taste of salsa and parmesan exploding in my mouth.
My sense of taste is still with me.
I should appreciate it,
but I don't.
The sound of water hitting the plate so loud it frightens me.
It should not, but it does
A knife shifts in the sink, and the shriek hurts my ears!
It should not, but it does.

Sometimes I still crawl
to the bathroom.
It takes half an hour
To brush my teeth,
Ten minutes to find my mouth,
Ten minutes to get
The toothbrush inside to do its business.
Earrings — 15 minutes.
Ears are slimy,
The holes in the ears another matter!
Makeup a task
Worthy of an executive meeting.

Why bother? I ask myself.
Lights never being bright enough
Mirrors never sufficient
Yet somehow I manage.
Probably look like a clown!
At least, I will never know...
Why bother? you ask.
I will not be seen as weak
I will not be seen as inferior
I will not be seen as an object of pity!
I will fight to be seen as...
What you need me to be.

Things fall from my fingers
Unless thy have heft.
My brain forgets to remember
So, things fall from my fingers
I hear a sound
But where?
Then I remember
Things fall from my fingers!
I cannot look down,
But I can bend my knees
And there I feel
Things that fall
From my fingers.
On my patio,
I sit with garbage
I cannot move.
With pots I cannot
Plant,
With furniture
I cannot budge.
Yet still it sits.
I see the flag
Limp
And occasionally
Unfurling as the wind shifts.
My potted pine
Awaits rain,
As grass greens.

Anger fades
Never leaves
Sometimes tiptoes
To another room.
Painting with a
Magnifying glass And
A single-bristle paint brush
Occupies a portion
Of the place
Where anger thrives .
Learning to see
With shadow
And light
Resides in a space
Where fury always
Tries to claim the throne.

I see the tree
Through my window
I know there are birds hiding.
Buds bursting with green promise
I can't see.
If I put on my stronger glasses,
And then my sunglasses
And if I stand right next
To the tree,
Then I might see,
But from here
I can only imagine
Buds bursting with green promise.
End of day
I should have tried to draw
I Should have washed dishes
I should have showered
and washed my hair.
SAME DAY 6:30 p.m.
Walked downtown and back
Had a bowl if soup in the Cafe
And informed a couple
About the benefits of pole walking —
My one chance at being
Social, for the day.
-Three bouts of Cardio
-Two hundred pages of Buffalo Girls
-One-egg omelette
-Small plate of sweet potato fries
-Three bottles of water
-Ten games of Solitaire
-Three games of Mahjong.
The sun is bright.
That's my day!
I had three jobs before my second stroke
Now, that's my day.

Next morning
Niki comes at 9:15
Before she arrives I must:
Do dishes, shower, and wash my hair
And prepare five pages of notes.

I WILL WAYS BE MORE THAN
MY BRAIN INJURY

The Journey continues.....