

Seeing Differently

Category: Guts

written by Munifa D. King | April 27, 2026

I'd lost my glasses. They were replaceable, yet I struggled more than I expected. The struggle was invisible—quiet, constant, easily overlooked. I found myself apologizing often. But amid the blur, I started to see the world in unexpected ways.

I had previously recognized my coworkers by their faces, their bright smiles across the hallway. Without my glasses, I relied on their essence—the way they laughed, walked, and carried themselves. I couldn't make out their features, but I could recognize their energy: a familiar skip, a distinctive sway of a white coat, a certain laugh echoing down the hall; these became my cues.

To get through the day, I had to adjust. I zoomed my computer screen to 200%. I watched as my preceptor struggled to help make the electronic patient record system more accessible for me. I apologized again: for taking longer to find things, for not noticing people I care about, for not moving through my day as quickly or smoothly as before.

Sometimes I smiled and said hello to people I wasn't sure I recognized—just in case. It felt safer to risk being overly kind than to accidentally ignore a friend. I became hyperaware. I noticed colors more vividly. I paid closer attention to smells, to shifts in sound. On public transit, I no longer drowned out the world with music; instead, I listened for the next stop, for signs that I'd arrived.

I became more dependent on others—but I still hesitated to ask for help. I only did so when I absolutely needed to. Even then, I felt guilty.

I knew my experience was temporary, but it made me more aware of the quiet courage—the guts—that many of my patients rely on every day: the work of scheduling appointments, finding reliable transportation, and navigating systems that aren't designed with accessibility in mind.

Today, I went to pick up my new glasses. I was excited—not just to see clearly again, but because I knew the world would look different to me now. Not just visually, but emotionally. This experience changed me.

Even with my new glasses, I know I'll never see the world the same again.

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