

# Chemo Journeys

Category: Recovering

written by Jill Muhrer | November 17, 2024

## **DRIVEN**

My wife closes her eyes as I pull out of our driveway. She usually navigates, but not today. Pale as a ghost, she dozes off.

Even with GPS, I feel lost.

Finally, we arrive at our destination. I position the car carefully so she can get out without falling. As I watch her gathering up her things, I remind her that she's brought too much—there's no way she'll use it all.

She smiles and ignores me.

I wave and move quickly out of the drop-off lane.

## **TURBO**

Mom says she can drive herself, but I know better. I've noticed how fatigued she is, even though she tries to hide it.

It's pitch black when we leave. She likes the first appointment. "Get in, get out" is her motto—and in addition, there's no traffic this early.

She reminds me of the speed limit. "No need to rush. We have time." I ease off the gas, which makes it harder for me to focus. I need a certain edge.

I distract her with stories about my job. Lost in conversation as we are, the ride passes quickly.

"Goodness," she says, "we're here 30 minutes early."

She gives me money for a double espresso, knowing I'm headed to the coffee shop. As she gathers up her snacks, books, and laptop, she smiles. Unexpectedly, I tear up.

I tell her I'll be waiting for her to text me when she's done and will be there in a jiff.

## **DRIVER**

When others drive, I love zoning out, but sometimes I need to be in the driver's seat.

I leave early. It's a long drive, complicated by construction and traffic. I turn off the GPS, which is noisy and bossy. Silence.

As I get closer, I feel edgy. I open the windows, even though it's winter, play Motown, and sing along—loudly.

I park near the meditation garden and admire the evergreens mixed with winterberry and holly trees. I pause. Looking at the passenger seat, I am relieved to see my snacks, books, and laptop. I smile as I think of the nurses who are guiding me with skill and humor through some of the toughest times in my life.

I grab my bags and walk briskly into the chemo suite.

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