

Just One Chapter in My Life

BY ROCHELLE ZEPRUN NOVACK • JANUARY 31, 2009

As I reflect over the past few months
I shutter in disbelief
At how my world turned upside down,
then righted itself back up, to my relief.

It all started with a mammogram.
Not to worry, no family history.
The results will all be normal.
Breast cancer won't happen to me.

"Come back inside one more time.
There are more films we need to see."
Routine, I've done this before,
Breast cancer isn't going to happen to me.

"Let's book you for an Ultrasound,
On the safe side we want to be."
Good plan, not to worry, I thought,
Breast cancer can't happen to me.

I was scheduled for my first biopsy
And Judy was there on a dime.
Always there for me when she needs to be,
Could big sister rescue me just one more time?

The doctor put his hand on my shoulder,
Comforting he tried to be
As the needles bruised my breast I thought;
Will breast cancer happen to me?

Plan to come to the office
No matter what the test results might be.
The sleepless nights grew even longer.
Breast cancer might happen to me.

I'm told the results aren't good.
There was no chance to cop a plea.
The words just needed to be said;
Breast cancer did happen to me.

The Kleenex wasn't soft enough that day
For the tears that would be shed.
I became a member of a club I thought I'd never join,
The one I refer to as 'Club Dread'.

You've been told you have cancer in your body.
How and where did these vicious cells grow?
Did I do something wrong to cause this to happen,
And do I really have the strength to know?

Is this really happening to me?
Yesterday life was so routine.
Now I have to wonder if I am going to die.
Life can quickly turn so mean.

And how do I tell our children?
We try to protect them from such bad things.
We're only supposed to make the world a better place,
Provide all the good things that life can bring.

We didn't need this to draw our family closer.
We always appreciate being with one another.
And now the children have to face the prospect
Of living life without their mother?

And how do I tell this to Howard?
It is so unfair to do this to my brother.
He has been through breast cancer before.
My niece doesn't remember her deceased mother.

My husband cries in his sleep.
He keeps begging to take my place.
The pain he feels is much more than mine,

He can't stand what I have to face.

He assures me that he will always love me
No matter what the scars of surgery will be.
For a woman facing a mastectomy
That meant the world to me.

I am his everything, he desperately tells me.
This disease shakes him to the core.
He claims he failed to protect me.
And he wraps his loving arms around me once more.

My mother flies up from Florida.
She needs to be with me.
It is so comforting having her near.
For all of us, it is the best form of therapy.

As the facts and statistics are revealed
We are on information overload.
What steps should we be taking first?
We prepare ourselves for a long and difficult road.

I am told I have an excellent prognosis.
That is the best thing that they could have said.
I cling to those words like a security blanket
As I face the days and months ahead.

Appointments and tests are set up.
Chaos is all about.
A plan was made; we were all feeling better.
I just couldn't wait to get the scary cancer out.

My friends and family were with me
Every single step of the way.
I went in for surgery as strong as can be.
I am so grateful for them all every day.

They kept me up when I was feeling down,
Cried tears with me that I needed to shed,
Listened to me, comforted me, and kept silent
When words didn't need to be said.

They sent food and beautiful flowers
Offered to cook and do the dishes,
Gave me lovely gift cards and books
And much appreciated get well wishes.

I escaped the wrath of chemotherapy
That so many women have to face.
I won't ever worry again about a bad hair day,
I was petrified to have to go to that awful place.

I'm told I got the best of the worst
And I feel like the luckiest girl alive.
Tamoxifen is my new best friend.
It is going to help me to survive.

I honor my doctors, nurses, family, and friends
And thank them for supporting me to the max.
I also would like to remind them
To be thankful for their healthy set of racks.

This chapter in my life has now closed
I lost a boob, which does really suck
But don't be too jealous of me,
Reconstruction surgery gave me a brand new one
(and a great tummy tuck!!)

Four weeks later I am back to work.
Eight weeks later exercising and feeling great.
2009 is going to be a very good year,

Good-bye 2008!