

Looking Through My Bedroom Window

Barbara McKay

I am jolted awake. A dream has left me washed up on a deserted beach where I'm left to die. It leaves me on the lowest rung of the melancholy scale.

Looking up at my bedroom ceiling, I remember where I am. Pain reminds me of that awful night, five months ago when I suffered a debilitating fracture.

Life as a widow has been extremely arduous. My newly aligned bones remind me of 41 years in a good marriage, when the alignment of our lives needed constant readjustment. This journey is past.

Pitching the doona, I uncover my 79-year-old legs. The freezing weather encourages me to commence my 'geriatricks'. I draw circles in the air with my stiff, left ankle to get my heart pumping. Ten minutes of exercise, then with a rock and a roll, I fire up my powerful glutes and swing them over to the side of the bed. I land safely.

Cautiously, I begin the walk to my comfy chair – searing, intermittent pain in my ankle.

Will I ever learn to walk again? If I lose my independence, will my family place me in a nursing home? What if I had died that night? Black clouds paralyse my motivation.

I grab my Bible. I read Psalm 42 aloud. 'My bones suffer mortal agony as my foes taunt me, saying "Where is your God?" Why, my soul, are you downcast?' David, the psalmist talks to himself, just like I do.

I turn my head and look through my bedroom window. Grey cirrus clouds build up on the horizon, each cloud tinged with a fiery red. The fingers of an invisible painter transform the sky. Reds blend into orange, and the full, round orb of the sun pops with yellow, I think of a marathon runner pulsing with adventure, striding into each new day with purpose.

A crepe myrtle is losing its leaves, the cold of autumn demolishing the green of summer. On the ground below lies a vivid orange carpet. I think of the spring to follow, when new buds will transform the naked branches into a stunning new palette.

I take a deep breath. A sigh brings inner calm

Birds fly through the branches catching insects. Two blue-faced honeyeaters land on the long spiky blooms of a mauve salvia. They poke their brush-tipped

tongues into the flowers to suck the nectar. These black and white birds are striking. A distinctive colour of cobalt blue surrounds each eye. I watch as they sway and dance, losing balance.

I read again the words of Psalm 42 – slowly. ‘Hope in God for I shall again praise him.’

Despite the depressive thoughts and hard questions regarding my recovery, I have this vision of God writing the word ‘hope’ across the sky. My soul is captivated. Euphoria floods my heart as the day pours forth speech. His invisible attributes are on display.

My heart bubbles up in praise. Oh, the wonder of God’s presence...every time I look through my bedroom window.