



Yep, I've been sick again. I'm just as tired of it as you no doubt are. For what it's worth, you likely think that Priapism is a made-up ailment, seen only in stories about Roman debauchees and love-sick cavaliers. Unfortunately, Priapism is very real, and it is painful enough that no-one in their right mind would wish it on himself. The confessions that follow were taken from my FaceBook journals, with minimal editing. Forgive me if there is still a good deal of redundancy in them, as the facts were confused even to me, and many details have been deliberately abridged in the interest of clarity. There is no lesson to be learned. There was nothing funny about it. Kids, don't try this at home.

Doctored Papers 2, May 2020, © Taral Wayne, Taral@bell.net, 245 Dunn Ave. Apt.2111, Toronto, Ontario, M6K 1S6, (416) 531-897. Kiddelidivee Books & Art 326

Before It All Began...

Due to the lockdown, the last time I had been out of my apartment was on the 17th. I would probably have holed up for another two weeks at least, but I had to cash my checks, pay the bills and look for toilet paper. It was an odd experience. To begin with, my bank was closed. Most were open, but not *mine* ... so I had to go to a strange branch farther away. I was apprehensive that the farther branch would not cash my checks without a delay, and would insist only on depositing the money in a new account after two working weeks. Fortunately, the unfamiliar bank gave me no trouble. Nevertheless, it was unsettling that the door was shuttered, and I was allowed in only when a guard admitted me. The banking done, I decided to go for broke, and continued on to the nearby mall for groceries. The mall itself was closed, and only Loblaws and Wal-Mart were open. Once again, it was strange to see how the world had changed in so little time. A line of people waited outside the supermarket, while a guard allowed a few in at a time. The mall itself was empty. This kept the number of shoppers who were actually

in the supermarket to a safe minimum. I was lucky, after a fashion, since I discovered that the disabled were given precedence. *I didn't have to wait!*

There were few shoppers. Nevertheless, groups of people managed to stop and form an effective roadblock in the aisle several times. Not surprisingly, the frozen pizza aisle was more popular than the detergent or olive oil aisles. In any case, there was actually some toilet paper for sale, so I was able to buy a 12-pack to add to the open 12-pack at home. I noticed there was only one left, however. The rest were a smattering of one-ply 2-packs.

In for a penny, in for a pound, I drove Traveling Matt to the Wal-Mart side of the mall, and looked over the movie section. I'm happy to say that I found a copy of *1917* that I was looking forward to viewing ... and the remaining *Star Wars* film. Now I'll be able to watch *that* turkey as well, and never look at it again. For that matter, I have resolved not to watch any other new *Star Wars* sucker-bait. I'm through with that tired old Samurai and Blaster crap!

Then I went home, where I will spend the rest of the evening thinking up ways to spend the next two weeks without going anywhere...

[Priapism Doesn't Mean I am Glad to See You](#)

Have you ever heard of "priapism" before now? It's a real thing, and not a joke about being too willing to exercise your dick. In some cases, it is induced with Spanish Fly or other stimulants, but the side effects are reported to be highly undesirable, even lethal. People *do* suffer from priapism naturally, however, and it shouldn't be wished on a fly.

Congratulate me ... I was diagnosed as one of those unlucky few, who had develop a permanent hard-on overnight. After a bumpy ride to St. Joe's on Traveling Matt, I felt as though my crankshaft would fall out after another couple of bad jolts. By then, my dick was well beyond being merely sore, and was highly uncomfortable in any position. Thankfully, the doctor saw me quickly – I think I was the only other person who occupied the urology ward. It didn't take long to rule out the obvious guesses – kidney stone, for instance – or spontaneous infection.

The doctor had dismissed the possibility of either, so I was hustled to another part of the hospital for an ultrasound. Ultrasounds are easy; in fact, I find them relaxing. A good session is almost as good as a massage, with gels and rubs, and you don't have to pay by the hour. I was then returned to the urology department.

The doctor went away to discuss the case with one of his peers, and eventually came back with an armload of syringes, tubes, and a clear, sterile fluid.

"What are we going to be doing with that?" I asked.

"First, we are going to flush out the shaft of your penis," he retorted.

Ye, gods! Apparently, stagnant blood had pooled in my dick and wasn't draining – hence the painful hard-on. A *much* larger syringe was produced, and – inserting it deeply into my organ – the unwanted blood was sucked out like so much fat during liposuction. After the right side was drained, the operation was repeated on the left. By the way, *never* make fun of how much blood there is in an erection – even a incomplete and unwanted on. I made a feeble joke about providing enough blood for a Bloody Mary. It was *supposed* to be a joke ... but I might not have been entirely in my right mind after the shock of the procedure.

For an aperitif, I was given another injection, of antibiotics – this time, fortunately only in my arm.

The pay-off was that I began to feel a little better within a few minutes. But, even without a couple of ounces of stagnant blood stiffening my dick, my penis *still* hurt. It just hurt in a much more bearable way ... not like a six-inch stake rooted in my balls, and wobbling around at the loose end. After I had been back home for only a couple of hours, I felt that there was some future to look forward to. Perhaps the horror was finally over.

The question in my mind was, what caused this? Will it happen again? The doctor who perforated me repeatedly had said that the cause could have could be one of my prescription drugs – I take over twenty every day – and although I haven't had any apparent trouble up to now, who knows whether the crew of doctors who oversee my many medications are all in consensus?

I was supposed to confer with the urologist who treated me at some point, when he would presumably make a recommendation about adjusting my blood thinner. For the time being, however, I'm was home, and feeling rather better.

But *jeez!* Did fate *have* to add *priapism* to my other woes? Wasn't the kidney stone from four or five years ago, *enough?* Or the stroke from three years ago? Or the edema that leaked water for almost a year?

Why do these things have to happen? The doctor didn't know why, but thought perhaps some of my medications were interacting badly ... but I've been taking the same exact meds for over a year. Funny time for them to suddenly start interacting!

Gawdamighty ... will I have to publish something about all this?

A Fresh Perspective

On the second day, I discovered that my scrotum had swollen up like a cantaloupe. This was totally unexpected, and beyond alarming. Where yesterday

I had an outsized erection, now I could barely find the flaccid member at all, and relieving myself at the toilet was chancy without a mop immediately at hand. I learned to squat on the seat like a woman.

I was due for a second course of antibiotics, and had been given a choice of staying overnight on a gurney at St. Joe's, or driving Traveling Matt home again return the next day. The prospect of staying overnight on an uncomfortable hospital bed, while breathing through a mask, was a no-brainer for me. I went home and slept in my own bed.

When I returned next day, the nurse asked for more blood, and then dripped antibiotics into my arm through a catheter. I was also given a somewhat fuller explanation for what had happened to me.

I take a blood thinner called Warfarin, which prevents me from having another stroke sometime in the future, and new tests said that my dose was *far* too high. What is odd about this is that the dosage is monitored monthly by my regular doctor, who adjusts it up or down as needed. So far, it has been rather stable, and to be informed suddenly that my dose was in terra incognita was incomprehensible. But the doctor insisted, and phoned my drug store to adjust the prescription. I don't see how Dr. Vo – my regular Pharmacologist – could have allowed this to happen.

As though I hadn't seen enough of St. Joseph's Hospital to last me for another several months, I had to make a third, unscheduled trip to see one of the nurses at emergency. When I had dressed to go home the day before, I had pulled my sweater over my arm without noticing the catheter, and left the emergency ward. It was only when I removed my sweater at home that I realized what I had done. I considered dressing again, and returning to St. Joe's, but decided that I had had enough fun for the time being. I could live with a catheter in my arm for a day, and instead returned the next day. I was already imagining the fanzine article I would eventually write.

Meanwhile, I was still as sore as hell. The day before, I had been send out into the street with no pain relief at all, but today I wasn't about to make that mistake again, and asked for a prescription for the persistent discomfort that was wearing me down. Naturally, I was unable to fulfill it because of the Covid lock-down – the drugstore was closed early.

Fortunately, I had hoarded a few morphine tablets for such an emergency. First thing tomorrow, I would present myself at the pharmacy to renew my pain-killers. I had no idea that this would end up less well than I expected.

The handful of pills I got lasted only about five days, and then I was on my own again. There was no refill for the prescription without my General Practitioner's

say-so, but it would likely take two weeks, *or a month*, to book an appointment. That was when I knew I was truly and royally fucked.

Black and Blue is the New Orange

I'd made significant progress since all this began, and I was sleeping fairly well as long as I didn't need to get in or out of bed. But make no mistake, I was in considerable pain whenever I wasn't seated just right, and could only bear it all by spending almost the entire day at FaceBook. Each night's sleep did me a little more good, though, and I woke up somewhat less swollen and discolored every day. I was even able to move around and stand well enough to brew coffee and make a light dinner.

Notable among one day's events was an unwanted call from my respirologist. I had already phoned to cancel the visit as unnecessary, but had to leave a message. However, the respirologist phoned back, and I ended up speaking with the specialist for several minutes. This was not such a bad thing, since I had experienced a little trouble breathing three or four months ago ... but I've had no trouble since then. By canceling the appointment, I also avoided exposure to the Coronavirus. Similarly, I had recently conducted a virtual appointment with my cardiologist. Still, I hadn't needed to speak with the respirologist at all. I sleep days most of the time, and he had woken me up just as I was going to bed!

Later that day, I also received a call from a certain Dr. Jain, who talked to me about my unfinished business with priapism. I think doctors take lessons on how to talk to their patients without actually revealing any information that they might accidentally understand. What I *thought* I understood was largely contradictory. So, despite the specialists explanation, I still have no idea what had happened to my tender vittles, or whether it will ever happen again. I can only hope this ordeal will translate into some kind of effective resolution, and my balls will never explode.

Meanwhile the World is Ending

Day *four* of my post-priapismic nightmare. Little has changed in the last two or three days, but some of the ugly swelling seemed reduced. I was still pretty sore when I got up to walk around, and sat down again, but while I was seated or standing it was not too bad. I no longer pined for a good fix. Tylenol sufficed. I hoped to see continued improvement over the next few days, though I suspect I will bear marks from this experience for much longer.

I worry incessantly that I will contract Covid-19 while I'm more than usually vulnerable. Suppose my junk fills up with blood again. Will supplies begin to run out at the supermarket, will banks no longer honour my pension, when will I be able to buy good coffee again, how will the little drama over my air-conditioner

turn out? For the time being, my status is very much quo, and perhaps the most I can expect for the time being.

— —

Day *five* was just *shit* – one the most wretched days in the last few years, at least. I've been wading through so much crap for at least the last decade that the number of weeks in which everything was fine was surely less than the number of times when I wondered if it was worth carrying on. Still, there was more incremental improvement over yesterday, and presumably there will be more small improvement when I wake up tomorrow. I feel shaky a lot of the time, and make more than the usual irritating number of typos that I have to correct.

I'm sure I can't have Covid-19. Apart from medical personnel, I haven't been near a human being in weeks. I have no fear of touching anyone either, since I'm rarely out of the house. For the time being, that may be the best I can expect. But I wish I had a fresh pizza, some chocolate, cookies and ice cream. I have a lot of wholesome food like bagels, beans, spaghetti, corn and some meat in the larder, but I can only survive a short while on that junk – I need soul food for the duration! *Doritos!*

Maybe rat poison in my coffee wasn't a good idea

Many people probably have no idea that Warfarin – a standard medication for controlling blood thickness and reducing the threat of stroke – is based on a chemical that was once used to rat poison rats. Because I take Warfarin, I am very sensitive to how I must take like clockwork everyday. If the doctors are right, my dose has been set far too high, making my blood dangerously thin. Maybe so, but *so far* no one has explained to me why my reading could be so regular for so long, and then suddenly go off the scale without anyone noticing it? My blood was so thin that I was almost in danger of bleeding at the pores!

Then again, perhaps my pharmacologist was right, and the sudden unexpected blood coefficient levels were the result of the recent trauma I suffered? Except ... wasn't the *priapism* I experienced the recent trauma in question? How could the cause be the effect as well? This sounded to me like very circular logic. Blood tests and ultrasound readings were consistent with my blood thinners being much too strong, but before that my results had been completely predictable.

Days of Whines and Grosses

I am still pretty sore, but that is passing. However, my left testicle is still embedded in a very swollen scrotum. It is still about the size of a pair of avocados, but at least it is, thankfully, not growing. It is spongy, and might be full of either blood, water or whatever else. I prefer not to think about it. I think it isn't urine, however, since I'm hardly passing any. The little water I piss seems normal, and not painful at least. Getting a clear shot is tricky, though. My best

effort seems not to be any more accurate than a 60-degree arc. To mop up, I keep a rag near the toilet.

Getting in and out of bed continues to be a minor ordeal. Even to sit in my customary chair is a constantly changing equation that balances a finite but nevertheless uncomfortable number of unsatisfying solutions.

For someone who is supposed to be "social distancing," I have been involved in a good deal of unwanted travel. For the third day in a row – going to and from St. Joe's – the weather was windy and cold, even wearing my heavy winter coat. I wasn't tolerating the cold well, and temperatures appeared to be well below normal. To my surprise, I seemed unusually weak even around the house – shaky, and still typing as poorly as ever. My bum hurts every bit as badly as my balls. I had run out of morphine and Tylenol was just not cutting it. Just as I was beginning to feel a return to normalcy, in a visit to the bathroom, I noticed that my balls felt a little different ... a *different* sort of different. I noticed a few tags of parchment-like skin that I hadn't noticed before, and absently plucked at it. A few bits obligingly peeled away, like a sunburn. Then, suddenly, my hand was full of fresh red blood!

I was standing over the toilet, thankfully, and the gush of blood went down the loo, and not all over the floor or my clothes. To say it was alarming would have been an gross understatement. Before I was able to give in to outright panic, the blood flow slowed, then stopped, as quickly as emptying a cup. I spent the next few minutes cleaning myself up, and so far as I could figure out, there had been a large, blood-filled blister under the skin of my scrotum, which chose that particular moment to become paper thin, and *pop!* In retrospect, I had been lucky. It might have happened while I was at work and fully dressed. Worse, it might not have been a "blister," and I was about to bleed to death...

It happened once again a couple of days later, in very similar circumstances. Dead skin. Sudden gush of bright red blood that ended almost as soon as it started. No sign where it had come from, or where it had been lurking until then.

Yes, my humorous, light-hearted nature is wearing thin, finally. It's about time.

Keep Me in a Cool Dark Place

How much does it take for a very stable genius to be driven to the brink? Apparently, the White House is a shorter drive, but I'm only starting to cover that distance on the subject of my new air-conditioner.

To begin with, I already owned one, a very nice 10,000-BTU unit that fit into my bedroom window, and worked perfectly to air-condition my apartment. I paid around \$700 for it new, with taxes, and I had only owned it for about a year.

But last winter Toronto Community Housing, which owns all the city's subsidized housing, declared that in future all personal AC installations would have to be removed!

Instead, the city would replace such installations with an "equivalent" unit that the city would install. There was a complete lack of information about the size of the new unit, how it would be mounted or when it would be delivered. All I knew at that time was that I would have to sign a waiver for the new one ... or I would not be able to have an air-conditioner at all. Of course, my original AC was still my property if I wanted to sell it, store in a locker in the basement or keep it in the closet. But I could not *run* it ... only the one the city wanted to install in its place!

So what was the reason for this appalling intrusion? Apparently, someone wasn't watching where their darling little child was wandering on the grounds. In a once-in-a-life-time accident, a badly installed AC slipped its mooring and hurtled to earth at a poorly chosen moment to turn the darling little urchin into street art.

Naturally, to save even a single child is worth any expense, however costly to the city or how much inconvenience it takes. So, it was decided by some committee that all the ACs would have to be removed. To avoid a general insurrection of air-conditioner owners in the building, a replacement would be installed by the city. For some reason, nobody thought about putting up a cheap fence, instead.

I worried about this all winter, until about a month ago when I was finally told to expect some men to remove my own AC, and install the new one.

My biggest worry was that the replacement would be a cheap, floor-mounted unit that had to be emptied every day. In my weakened condition, carrying a heavy bucket of water from the front room to the bathroom once a day was not a very practical prospect. As it happened, the reality was not *quite* as awful as it might have been. Not quite, but *nearly*.

From the first moment, I knew it would be bad. The men brought in an large, ungainly box, and proceeded to remove the packaging. Even removed from the box, the AC was much larger than my old unit. A quick inspection left no doubt that this was a floor-mounted model, perfectly positioned to blow all the lovely cool air around my feet, not in the upper half of the room where all the hot air was! Moreover, there were several feet of cheap plastic air-conduit to connect the AC to one of the window frames. I would be spared emptying a bucket daily, but where the fuck was I supposed to stow all that ducting? I had to move my computer aside to make room for it, and realized suddenly that my desk-top was no longer sizable enough for me to work on conveniently. As well, the AC stuck out about 18 inches into the room, right next to where I worked, and was in the way of the desk drawers and the cabinet opposite. It just sat there, in the way of both, and there was no way to move it anywhere else. Hell, there was no

“anywhere else” to move anything to! I would have to rearrange that whole end of the room, and probably get rid of things that I would no longer have room for!

Even if I were a normal, boring sort of person who had no interests, or anything other than ordinary living room furniture, this huge, white piece of crap with sprawling plastic tubes could not have been a welcome addition to anyone’s decor. It looked best suited to a commercial laundromat.

I was reluctantly able to count some good points ... but there were not many. In fact, I was able to count only two. Regardless of it being a hideous monstrosity, it was *mine*. It did not belong to the city. I was still pissed of about the exchange, since I strongly believed that someone had profited by reselling my own handy AC. But if I ever moved from here, to someplace where I had the perfect spot for an oversized, floor-squatting monstrosity, it would be *all mine*. And the hot air was exhausted outside, so I wouldn’t ever need to empty a bucket. Also, I can see no reason why I can’t run the AC inside, even in winter months. My apartment is always far too hot, even in winter, when I could not run a wall-mounted air-conditioner that vented outside. Yes, it would be nice to sleep under sheets again.

That aside, I only ran the new AC for a few minutes before the fuse blew.

I experimented with the new AC, trying different settings: high or low, it just didn’t work for more than a few minutes before the power bar blew its fuse. I was only able to run the AC on the fan setting! My own beautiful, \$700 air-conditioner, that had worked so well, was replaced with something that was good for nothing but a fucking *fan!* There was no other way to put it than that I had been cheated! Perhaps the city had been cheated, or maybe it was the city that cheated *me* ... I didn’t care. I myself had been cheated, cheated, cheated, and would swelter all summer, like some damned old auntie in a cheap nursing home, waiting to be claimed by heat-prostration!

Meanwhile, my balls were swollen like mangos, pigeons had broken through the outside netting and crapped all over my balcony, and the Plague of 2020 was merrily raging outside. I was beginning to feel a sense of being imminently overwhelmed. (I hope I’m not coming off a little hysterically, but how else can you deal with layer after layer of frustration?)

Over the next few days, I silently brooded over the situation. I tried positioning the air-conditioner to face me, but that way it actually stuck even farther into the room. I tried to compress the accordion-duct so that it took up fractionally less space. I then considered moving my entire computer desk 18 inches farther away from the wall, which might permit me to tuck the entire AC and its tubing into the opened space. But that would also push my computer desk farther out into the living room. If I did that, it would leave very little space for me to get in and out of the other end of the room, or to reach and my book shelves. But ... it *might* just be doable.

Of course, I am utterly incapable of such heavy lifting. When the current lockdown is over, I can likely find willing help. In the meantime, the real problem was that the AC didn't *air-condition!* All it did was blow warm air around.

As is often the case, it is sometimes better to try to solve a problem by forgetting about it for a while. After bitching mightily about the useless hunk of junk on the floor, I decided there was nothing I could do as long as moving from my seat was almost more of a task than I was up to. Sure enough, when I felt a little better, I began to think about the problem again. There was nothing I could do about rewiring the apartment where I lived. Nor could the AC reach any of the wall sockets. The nearest one was too far away from the outside wall, and needed an extension to reach. I had a couple of power bars, however. One of them ran my computer system, and fortunately that one was separate from the second power bar serving the AC, so when my AC repeatedly popped its fuse, it affected nothing else important ... merely a cheap lamp. But what *about* that power bar, I wondered? It was just a cheap one that I had bought at WalMart, that had probably not cost much. I had another power bar that I wasn't using, with a much heavier cord, and I wondered if it might also carry a heavier load. As soon as I felt able to lie on the floor again, mess around under the desk, and – most importantly – *get up* again, I thought there was a chance that the heavier power bar would do the trick.

When I finally tried it a couple of days later, the new power bar worked perfectly.

The new air-conditioner might still be an ungainly monster, but at least it was a functioning *air-conditioner* that could prevent my apartment from becoming a Turkish bath this summer.

People may die from heat-stroke by the hundreds, but thank gawd, if another child dies from a falling air conditioner, it won't happen under *my* window!



The monster that ate my living room, in all it's awful, intractable glory.