

It wasn't until last week that I realized my leg was missing.

If you think that's strange, don't worry. I thought it was strange too. You see, I had been sure my leg was there. I mean, I could even *feel* it there! I could feel it aching and itching quite often. So it came as a shock when I reached down to scratch it and my hand touched emptiness.

Now that I reflect on it, I think it was kind of rude of the doctors not to tell me, because I ended up fainting three times before I fully recovered from the shock and was able to look at things objectively. Thankfully, I was still in the hospital bed. I haven't ever fainted from a standing position, but I would presume it's an easy way to accumulate bruises. When you faint in bed, however, nothing happens except that you don't remember the next few minutes until you wake up.

However, as I said, after fainting three times I was able to look at the problem objectively. There were three points which I had to consider. 1: I had no leg. 2: I wanted to walk. 3: I couldn't walk without a leg. So I lay in the hospital bed and pondered those three points for a day and a half before opening my mouth. That created another problem. You see, the doctors didn't realize I was simply pondering the problem. Instead, they thought I had gone into shock. I was too busy pondering to tell them that I wasn't in shock, so the poor doctors were going kind of crazy trying to get me out of my supposed shock. If I had realized it at the time I might have taken pity on them and let them know that I was simply trying to think objectively. Then again, I might not. After all, they hadn't taken pity on me, but had just let me find out about my missing leg myself. So I just let them find out that I wasn't in shock themselves. Turn and turn about's fair play, isn't it?

After I finished considering the three points and had come to a conclusion, I spoke. This created another problem. I had been silent for a day and a half, and everyone in the hospital knew I was "in shock." So, when I was ready to speak, I spoke to the nurse who was attending me, and she fainted. She hadn't expected me to speak, obviously, and when I did, I suppose the shock was too great for her. Unlike myself, when she fainted, she was in a standing position. I assume that she received some bruises from her fall, but it was a beautiful fall. Worthy of a Hollywood actress, I would say. Her eyes rolled back, she swayed twice – no, three times – and then her knees bent forward and she fell slowly to the ground. Seriously. It was like I was watching it in slow motion, she fell so slowly. It was very interesting to watch. But after that there was a huge fuss and a lot of other nurses ran over to her and crowded around her. I thought that was rather strange, since I had always heard you should stay back from someone who has fainted so that they will have room to breathe. But oh well. I suppose I don't know more than those nurses who I'm sure were trained in the art of taking care of fainthearts.

When they had finally revived the nurse she told them why she had fainted and then the crowd gathered around me instead. They asked me so many questions I couldn't keep

them straight, and I just lay there looking at them with a smile. Finally they calmed down and I found a chance to speak. I asked for my leg doctor. Isn't it funny that I had a leg doctor when I didn't have a leg? If the leg wasn't there, what would the doctor have to do? But I was glad I had a leg doctor anyway, because I needed him for what I was about to say.

They jumped around and bumped each other after I asked for the doctor, each one of them trying to go in a different direction, it seemed. It looked very funny, and I wouldn't have minded if they hadn't jostled the bed so much. That part was pretty annoying, since when they jostled the bed my leg that wasn't there began to hurt. And I *know* a leg that isn't there shouldn't be able to hurt, but I also know that it *did* hurt when they jostled the bed. It hurt so much that I had to reach down to make sure it wasn't there, and when I did it felt so funny to feel the emptiness where my leg used to be that I fainted again. It was getting to be a quite annoying habit. I wonder if fainting will become a chronic condition for me? I hope not. That would be rather awkward.

When I woke up the doctor for my not-leg had arrived. He asked me how my leg was feeling and I was a little confused from the fainting experience so I'm afraid I responded rather strangely. (When you faint your brain gets mixed up. That is why I think if fainting were to become a chronic condition for me it would be awkward.)

Anyway, the doctor asked how my leg was feeling and I responded, "I do not have a leg. If I did have a leg, it wouldn't be able to feel anything. A leg does not have a brain, though it is controlled by a brain. Therefore a leg cannot feel. However, I feel my leg, even though it isn't there. Could you explain that, sir?"

He explained something about "ghost pains" but I wasn't really listening. I had remembered my three points and was preparing to speak my mind regarding them. When he finished talking I looked at him steadily and said, "Doctor, I have something to say."

The doctor's eyebrows rose up and his mouth went down. I think that meant he was worried. I wasn't sure why he would be worried, so I ignored his confusing facial expression and stated my case.

"Doctor," I began, "three points."

"Three what?" he stammered, "Is that like three stars or something? Are you rating my work?"

"No, doctor. Will you please be quiet?" I was a bit annoyed. My points were important, and I didn't have time to waste with the doctor asking silly questions.

"Three points," I continued. "Point one: I have no leg." The doctor nodded, twisting his hands. Probably a nervous habit. Maybe he should see a psychiatrist. Do doctors go to other doctors when they need doctoring? That's beside the point. Speaking of points, I went on, "Point two: I want to walk." He twisted his hands harder. Definitely a nervous habit.

“Point three: I can’t walk without a leg.” Now he was twisting his hands so hard I almost thought his fingers would come off. Well, that might make it a bit more fair. I had no leg, he would have no fingers. Are fingers as important as legs? I would have to consider that later. Right now I needed to be back on topic. So I finished with my conclusion.

“Conclusion: I need a new leg.”

The doctor sat down suddenly. On the floor. He still had his fingers, which was fortunate for him, but unfortunate in case I had wanted to test my problem of whether fingers were as important as legs. Oh well, he was about to speak, so I stopped considering and just listened.

“You want a prosthesis?”

“I said I need a new leg,” I answered. “I don’t want a prosh-what-sis or anything else. Just a leg.”

The doctor grimaced and stood up again, his hand rubbing his back. He shook his head and explained, “A prosthesis is a leg. If you want a new leg, we’ll get you a prosthetic leg, and you’ll be able to walk again.”

“Good.” I said.

And that was a week ago, like I said in the beginning. Well, a little less than a week, actually. Taking out half a day for the four times I fainted, then another day and a half of not speaking, you have five days since my conversation with the doctor. Those five days seemed very long to me, but in about thirty seconds the doctor will bring in my new leg.

“...twenty-eight, twenty-nine, thirty. Hello, doctor.”

THE END