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A kidney donor wanted to thank his wife for her unwavering support in taking care of him during the entire experience, but felt his writing skills weren't up to snuff. Below are both his original draft and the final version I polished up for him.

Original Version:

It really isn't fair that the person that held everything and everyone together throughout this whole ordeal also happens to be the writer in the family. Debbie G********* deserves more than the ramblings of a middle age man that writes like a ten year old. However, from day one Debbie has been there for all of us. She was our protector, caregiver, sounding board, medical advisor, and our rock. She is cute too. I am sure you can imagine the fear and anxiety we all had going into this. I actually had the easy job. Deb had to play offense for the set up and coordination for taking care of everything. Coordinating care for the kids who are old enough to know what is happening and worry about it. Right down to getting care for the dog who also strangely knew what was happening. Debbie had to play defense for my anxiety and the extra family anxiety that was put in front of us. She never wavered. Never complained. Never took a break.

When we were in the hospital, Debbie was the first person I saw when I woke up. I don't remember waking up in the OR. But I vividly remember waking up in PACU seeing Debbie on my left. She never left from that point. Every time I winced, Debbie was there. Thankfully every time I smiled she was there as well. If you don't know, Debbie is a nurse. Even if she didn't have an advanced practitioner nursing degree, she is a nurse. A true care giver in every sense. When we were in the hospital she always knew the right thing to say and do to take any fear or pain away. When we got home, she sat me down for a talk. "OK G********, the kid gloves are off and Nurse Ratchet is coming out." It was exactly what I needed. I would have curled up in my bed, pulled down the shades on the windows and hid until the pain hopefully resolved. I was told that I have a new job and it was time to go to work. "Today, we walk to the end of the driveway. Tomorrow halfway down the street. Let's see how you are doing and where we go after that."

Thank you Debbie for everything you do. If you are reading this and you don't know Deb or can't tell her how amazing she is in person.....find a nurse, nurse practioner, PA or doctor and let them know what they do makes a difference

Edited Version:

Is it fair that the person who held everyone and everything together through this entire ordeal is also the gifted writer of the family?

No, it's not. Alas, you'll have to make due with me for this. Sure, Debbie G********* deserves more than the ramblings of a middle-aged man who writes like a ten-year-old, but this is what you get.

From Day One – hell, even before Day One - Debbie was there for all of us. She was our protector, our caregiver, our sounding board, our medical advisor, and our rock. I'm sure you can imagine the fear and anxiety we all faced heading into this. I actually had the easiest job – just lie there like the guy in the Operation game and hope that nobody makes my nose buzz. Deb, on the other hand, had to keep enough balls in the air to make an accomplished juggler gasp in awe: setting up and coordinating everything related to the operation that wasn't left to those wearing scrubs; arranging care for kids who were old enough to know what was happening and were worried about it; comforting our dog, who eerily seemed to know exactly what was going on; and, last but not least, mitigating all the anxiety being generated by myself and others.

It was a Herculian endeavor that might have overwhelmed some people. Not Debbie. She never wavered. Never complained. Never took a break.

She's pretty funny, too.

When I woke up in the hospital, Debbie was the first person I saw. Not in the OR – I don't remember anything from that - but I vividly remember waking up in PACU and seeing her there by my side. From that point on, she never left. Every time I winced, Debbie was there. Thankfully, every time I smiled, she was there as well. Listen, if you're going to give part of your body away, I *strongly* recommend being married to a nurse (get your own, though. You can't have mine). Debbie is a true caregiver in every sense, and while we were in the hospital, she always seemed to know what to do to take the fear and pain away. She always knew the right thing to say, and I could not have felt safer or more well-cared for.

Then we went home.

Once I was settled in, she sat me down for a talk. "OK, G*********, the kid gloves are off. Nurse Ratchet is coming out." Good joke, right? Remember, I said she was funny.

She wasn't kidding.

Just like in the hospital, though, she knew exactly what needed to be done and how to make it so. Left to my own devices, I would have curled up in my bed, pulled down the shades, and hid until the pain went away. Instead, I was told that I had a new job and it

was time to go to work. “Today, we walk to the end of the driveway. Tomorrow, halfway down the street. Let’s see how you’re doing and where we go after that.”

She wasn’t bluffing. It wasn’t an easy road back, but I don’t regret not being permitted to cower under the blankets. Once again, she’d been right.

If those of you reading this can’t thank Deb herself for being so amazing, then find a medical professional – a nurse, a PA, a doctor, a nurse practitioner - and let them know they make a difference. Since I’m lucky enough to see her every day, I’ll get right to the point – thank you, Debbie, for all that you do.