

Incurable illnesses are a lot like war, and I've covered a lot of wars. They tend to be moments of panic and anxiety that are separated by hours of tedium. And it was during that time I was trying to compose my thoughts and keep a running record of an extraordinary time and an extraordinary woman, who was sharing herself with her family and in many ways a lot of people around the world.

I am getting a life's lesson about grace from my mother in the ICU. We never stop learning from our mothers, do we?

In line at Hospital Starbucks. "Dancing in the street" comes on, line begins to sing "... they're dancing in Chicago."

What is the idea behind deep fried onion rings in a hospital cafeteria?

I consider this a good sign, Mother says when time comes obit headline should be: three jewish husbands but no guilt.

Nights are the hardest, that's why I'm here. I wish I could lift my mother's pain and fears from her bones into mine.

No real sleep tonight, but songs, poems, memories, laughs... My mother: "Thank you, God, for giving us this night and each other." That would be my life slogan from now on.

My mother: "believe me, those great deathbed speeches are written ahead of time."

Mother: "what time is it? Me: "6:30." Her: "Oh, let's raise the curtains of the city we love."

Mother: "I don't know why this is going on so long. I am late for everything, I guess."

Listening to La Boheme now, Boccelli. Mother can't keep eyes closed. "Maybe opera will help, I always slept when I went."

I just realized she once had to let me go into the big wide world. Now I have to let her go the same way.

Just spent 45 minutes looking for mother's favorite dental floss. Waste of time? Act of faith.

I think she wants me to pass along a couple of pieces of advice, ASAP. 1. Reach out to someone who seems lonely today.

And... listen to people in their 80's: they have looked across the street at death for a decade, they know what's vital.

Oh, and "Oh, earth, you're too wonderful for anyone to realize you." It goes too quickly.
(Thornton Wilder)

I love holding my mother's hand. Haven't held it like this since I was nine. Why did I stop? I thought it unmanly? What crap?

Mother cries "help me!" at 2:30. I've been holding her like a baby since, she's asleep now. All I can do is hold on to her.

Listening to to Nat & Natalie singing "Unforgettable". Mother and I sang it just two nights ago. Coles have better voices for sure.

I know end might be near as this is only day of my adulthood I've seen my mother and she hasn't asked "why that shirt?"

Heart rate dropping, heart dropping. The heavens over Chicago have opened and Patricia Lyons Simon Newman has stepped onstage.

*"She'll make the face of heaven shine so fine that all the world will be in love with night."
(Esto es de Romeo y Julieta).*