

# To Life, To Life, L'Chaim

Well... week one back at work following my rather eventful stay at the doc shop is over. I don't think I've ever been so exhausted. HOWEVER, I am noticing a bit of improvement.

Almost non-existent is the discomfort in my upper leg where part of the clot is/was. Now, I have to contend with the same in my lower leg. Once again, I HAVE to thank you all for your warm thoughts and most importantly your prayers. If not for you my friends, family (those I was born into and those I feel just as close to), and lurkers, I feel that I might not be here posting this latest entry... but we won't dwell on that TOO much.

Perhaps it is the fact that I have never felt so... I dunno what the right word is... IMAGINE THAT! but it seems that it has been months instead of weeks since I was at the hospital. But I continue to make a list of things I WILL do once I am walking at my normal pace: Taking my 2-3 mile walk every three days; Walking the 2 blocks to work instead of driving (Who says I was inactive before my clot formed?); Seeing my friends I have not seen since January and those who visited... or were in... the hospital; Auditioning for two summer shows and seeing which I fit better. And finally and most important to me, realizing the great turning point I have reached following such a life altering... or is it affirming... event in my life. I will let you know what that great adventure is as soon as I set out on it.

Another thing I really miss is my weekly voice lesson. So many great things were happening there and as soon as I REALLY get back on my feet, they will continue! There may even be some additions to my repertoire (aside from the myriad classic stage and screen songs) which I have been encouraged to take on not only from a great friend but also by my coach as well.

But FIRST, I must continue to pray and strive to improve even

more every day. Thank you all once again. I guess I can look back on these posts and thank Him for everything.

I know this is my blog to post what I will, but I hope that these latest entries are perhaps a tiny bit as meaningful to the reader as are to me to roll out and reflect on.

**AND GOOOOOOOO BUCKEYES AND BULLDOGS!** Ohio State just won the Big 10 Tournament and continues in March Madness. And my high school alma mater basketball team is two games away from going to the state championships.

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## **Big Little Things I NEED To Get Back Into**

I dunno... I just pray that I get to feeling more like your friendly neighborhood Jamiahsh soon. I know it is going to take time and I am an optimist but really I do miss the things I was able to do before all this began (putting my voice lessons on hold, missing theatre board meetings, Oscar party... but I did get to participate over the web, little things that may seem trivial that mean so much to me). With time, prayers, and good thoughts I **KNOW** that I will be on stage, in the choir loft, at game night cleaning up playing Oodles, and most importantly of all... just being with the greatest group of friends ever. I really do feel blessed and thank all of you for your well wishes and prayers as I have been doing more and more of the past few weeks.

Monday, I went for my first blood work. Tuesday, I was called and was informed that it came back good. Wednesday, I returned to the doctor who is quite happy with the progress I have made and that my numbers are good. However, I will most

likely be on coumadin (a blood thinner with a hint of rat poison ☐ ) for the rest of my days because of the clots in my lungs. He assured me that the clots will dissolve in time.

No more testing for 4 weeks and no more doctor visits for 3 months... will that be **JUNE?** when little ones will still be going to school after the long winter.

Sunday morning will be my first day back at work... which means I will miss another of my friends' performances at their church. **UGH!**

At least I am in good company. Last weekend during an Oscar party, tennis great [Serena Williams](#) was rushed to a hospital.

Apparently, she had clots in her lungs. I know that she has been laid up for a few months with other injuries but if this can happen to an active professional sports figure then I guess it can happen to a 30-something guy who truly enjoys taking long, brisk walks (something else on mu "can't wait to get back to doing" list).

Once again, thank you all for all of your thoughts and prayers. I pray to and thank God everyday that He and my special angel are watching over me. I believe that He is not finished with me yet. Now how to take those things I feel so strongly about and use them in such a way as to show glory to Him. Being a song leader and occasional choir member at mass is a great start...

Thanks again and All Glory and Praise to Him!

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**Over The Rainbow In A**

# Different Oz

Tonight sees the opening of what sounds like a different production of [The Wizard of Oz](#). Produced by Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber, the London premiere has all the elements of the classic 1939 movie however, it has added elements which (according to Sir Andrew) make it more suitable to the stage.

Added are 4 songs which give Glinda, The Wicked Witch of the West, and the Wizard a chance to use their singing chops.

Apparently, the Good Witch's short bit in Munchkinland does not count as a song. For the new songs, Lloyd Webber re-teamed with lyricist Tim Rice a partnership which dissolved 30 years ago after *Evita*.

Casting for Dorothy was done in what seems to be the Lord's new-found trademark: the televised talent show. He did it for Joseph, Maria in *The Sound of Music*, and now for Oz. I dunno about this American Idol meets theatre concept.

A familiar name was cast in the title role. Michael Crawford (the original Phantom of Lloyd Webber's production) was number one on the list. I can actually picture Mr. Crawford in the roles of Professor Marvel and the Great Humbug. Wonder how many other roles he will be filling. [Taylhis](#), how many parts did Frank Morgan have in the movie?

This July, [Fountain City Festival](#) will be performing a version closer in production to the original movie. As soon as I get back on my feet... I really pray that it is soon... I look forward to helping to bring one of my favorite shows to the stage.

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# Truly Divine Intervention

The past few days have been a big ol' slap in the face, whack over the head, ice water thrown in your face. Monday morning, I got out of the shower and noticed that my left leg was swollen to twice the size of my right. I had a doctors appt made to see what he could tell me about my on-going aches. It is a good thing I did. Five minutes after arriving I was on my way to the hospital for an ultrasound. Shortly after, I was admitted with a "extensive blot clot that extended from my left groin to my foot." So much for a little nagging ache.

A few hours later, I underwent a CT scan which informed me that the clot had broken up and was now in both lungs so I was moved to ICU. I was indeed very fortunate. Someone was really looking out for me!

This is the first time I had been in the hospital since my tonsilectomy back in the 5th grade some 20+ years ago and that was pretty much in and out. I was home by Thursday but man... all that poking and prodding and not sleeping can take its toll. And more to continue... words like blood thinners and blood tests.... YUCK! But I am here and mean to reflect on that and ask HIM to take control and help me go forward in what ever ways HE deems necessary.

The doctor is convinced that the 2 hour plane trip to Florida a month ago was a major factor in the clot. I know I am not as old as I was in '92 when I flew to Hawaii, but WOW!

Thank you all for your thoughts and prayers and hopefully with His help, I will be back 1000% soon.

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# Goodbye, Andy

Just moments ago, ace New York Yankee pitcher Andy Pettite announced his retirement from the team he has been with for 13 of his 16 year career. He will be sorely missed. Instrumental in many Bomber seasons, notably in 5 Championship seasons. Physically, he is ready if he was needed. Emotionally, it is time for him to move on.

Pitching has got to be the most taxing and demanding position on the diamond. So many injuries and surgeries reported that one may wonder how many are able to continue into their mid and even late 30's. And now with only three starters returning (A.J. Burnett, Phil Hughes, aaaaand C.C. SABATHIA), it looks like the Yanks will once again be looking to strengthen its starting rotation.

Long-time catcher Jorge Posada has also been re-assigned to full time DH duty. Let's hope that Cervelli is able to step up and assume the position full time.

Less than a month before Spring Training games begin in Tampa!

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## NewShoes=NoFun

Well... got back a few days ago from a week in the sun (and just one day of rain) with some of the best friends ever! Along with a couple of stragglers from Chi-town. It was a ton of fun except for ONE thing... I did a number on my back. There is speculation abound as to the cause: could it have been the extremely fun extreme go-cart track we adults check out; could it be the new shoes I bought just days before I flew out; or any of a myriad of scenarios.

I just know that by Tuesday, I needed to rent a wheelchair to be pushed around EPCOT and the Magic Kingdom on Wednesday. It would have been a funny bit of payback since I had to push C around when he had his ingrown toenail. However, although I tried to keep a light heart about the situation I discovered that it was not very funny.

Thursday, I stayed behind and soaked in the giant tub then slept on the rollaway bed so I did not have to climb the stairs.

Friday, saw my return flight to Detroit (\$117.00 roundtrip, still marveling at the price). The three of us were greeted to a shower on the way to the airport. I was given VIP service by a skyhop who pushed me to the front of the security check line and from there to my gate. Would rather have not had to zip by, but hey it beat standing.

When I arrived in Detroit, I had to wait 3 hours for my brother and his significant other to pick me up. On the way home, we stopped at Applebees just inside Toledo. We were warned that the heater was broken and were shortly shown to our WINDOW booth. This may be a bit of a coincidence, but half of the staff was out sick. Welcome back to NWO... from 70° to single digits all in a few hours time.

Monday, I went to out hometown chiropractor who was recommended by my aunt who is enjoying Florida as we speak. Dr. Scott was very personable and gave it to me straight. At my age, the chances of a disc injury increase. I am able to stand and do some menial tasks as well as the stretches I was given. I know it will take time but for now I feel so useless. I'm used to being up and around and here I am sitting on a bag filled with rice. My first heating pad met with a grisly end. Someone put it in the microwave for 1:45 and before the time was up... **BOOM!!!** I did not see the aftermath but I could smell it.

I did have fun on my week off but I got a little more than I bargained for...

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## Once Again Hollywood Has Come Up With A Creative Idea

Or maybe not so creative idea. It seems that ABC and Selma Hayek are combining forces to create a magical miniseries which is based on a popular novel which was based upon a beloved classic movie which was based upon another book. The popular novel was also the basis for a megahit Broadway musical which is (the last I heard) is being turned into a big-screen production. Whatever happened to an original, creative idea.

The miniseries in question is based upon the novel, [\*Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West\*](#) by Gregory Maguire. While the musical may be a blockbuster, one of Maguire's newer "Fractured Fairy Tales" was made into a telefilm. Anyone remember *Confessions of an Ugly Stepsister*? That's ok... neither do I.

I think I will stick with the Fractured Fairy Tales as ready by Edward Everett Horton as seen on The Adventures of Rocky and Bullwinkle Show. For your enjoyment, I have chosen a classic Mr. Know-It-All segment.

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# Migraines SUCK!

I used to get them quite frequently while growing up but every once in a while they rear their ugly heads and I am done. My only regret is that I had to miss my voice lesson for which Kathrine was more than understandable ☐ Next week promises to be interesting as she is hosting an exchange student from New Zealand, I will have some one critiquing me full time. Kathrine tries to play the piano and watch me at the same time.

My New Years Day was ehh. After getting to bed around 5AM, I was awakened 4 hours later by the dulcet tone of "Can you come in to work today?" I probably would have been more receptive of the idea had I not been brought out of a deep sleep. I did go in from 1-6 and at time and a half plus the 9 hours at the same rate that I put in the day before, I wasn't all that upset. Even the fact that the day just SEEMED to DRAAAAAAGGGGG did not put that much of a damper. At 5:45 however, a customer called asking if we had Similac Baby formula. About 30 seconds later, the man of the house called, asked the same question, and thankfully asked how late we were open. So, being the nice guy I am... waited for the customer's arrival. But as he was checking out with his 9 cans of formula (which put us over \$100.00 for our last hour) I turned out the lights.

Bowl Games for Big 10 country have not been overwhelmingly successful. Thankfully, the Buckeyes ended their 9 game winless streak against teams in the SEC as they defeated Arkansas 31-26. And poor Rich Rodriguez is out of a job. I thought he did a fine job as the 3 year coach of the team up North but I guess the PTB had other ideas.

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# A Year Full of Ups And Downs

2010... What a year! So much happened that I do not know where the time went! It started off LAST January when I received my first two awards for acting in *You Have the Right to Remain Dead* (as everyone's ill-fated, lovable, hammy narrator... Harnell Chesterton) and for bringing the Grinchi Scrooginess of Mr. Henry F. Potter to life in *It's a Wonderful Life*. Even my best friends gave up a Bears' playoff game to share in my moment as well as family!

I can't even fathom the reality that I had limited myself to only two plays this year. I tackled my first lead role in the three person DRAMA, *Miracles*. I hope that Dawn and Rebekkah share in my belief that this play was one of the best shows I have ever been a part of. Thank you Beth for pushing for this show to be done and spreading its important, powerful message.

Chris next challenged me to seek out a new vocal coach. I had wanted to find one ever since Emily passed; however, I was uncertain as to whether I could find one as determined to help me in what I need to do. Thank God, he helped me find Kathrine. I could not ask for a better coach. I just adore people who know where your talent lies and are willing to guide you with suggestions on how best to cultivate them.

Over the years I have had and continue to have some of the best!

I also became a board member of a new theatrical group in which I get to spend more time with my friends and help to bring *The Wizard of Oz* to the stage next summer. I also had my first byline when I reviewed the company's production of *(Cr)Oklahoma!* last summer.

My final performances of the year came in the Mare helmed production of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* in which I played a dual role as Barrymore, the caretaker of the Baskerville estate and as the doomed Selden who met a rather grisly demise. Each production lends some challenge as well as fun working with old friends and making new ones.

The fact that I only limited myself to two shows this past year allowed me to do some very cool things with my friends.

In July, we went to Cincinnati to the zoo and then to Kings Island. I had not been to one of my favorite parks in several years and to go and be treated as V.I.P.s was extraordinary.

Not to mention the multiple game nights (from which I just opened 2011), chats in person and via I.M.ing. Just good times!

Of course a year is not all roses. On January 5, we lost our beloved Aunt Carol to cancer. Gone long before her time but held on longer than many thought she would. And more recently, my brother separated from his wife. I think that ultimately with the help and guidance of prayer and the love of family and friends striving forward yet remembering the special times only make us stronger.

So as we bid farewell to 2010, wrap up the holiday season and look ahead to the new year, I wish all of you the very best of peace, joy, and happiness.

*Should auld acquaintance be forgot and never brought to mind?*

*Should auld acquaintance be forgot, and days of auld lang syne?*

*For auld lang syne my jo,*

*For auld lang syne,*

*We'll take a cup of kindness yet,*

*For auld lang syne.*

**HAPPY NEW YEAR EVERYONE... GOOD NIGHT!**

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## **But We Did Go To The Second House**

Today, the family gathered for an extended Christmas celebration which my mother, father, sister, and I ALMOST did not make it to. In my mother's defense, we did go to the second house along the road. Unfortunately, the correct house is now the third house as apparently within the last two years (the last time she must have visited her brother's house) a new house was added. We went up to the house, my sister rang the bell, and when no one answered I said "Just go on in."

She tried the handle and it was locked. A few seconds later, Mom's cell phone rang. Bob and Lu were watching from next door and called to inform us that we were indeed at the wrong house. Just then, the inhabitant of the house we were at appeared and saw our collection of folding chairs, gifts, and bowl of cole slaw. He did offer to help us eat. We all had a good laugh! Guess Mom should visit her sibling (who lives less than ten miles away) more often. ☐ No one else went to the wrong house.

The gathering was very festive and full of fun and laughs. As usual, Auntie Lu provided everything except for the cole slaw (which is a favorite of many) and Aunt Sandy's goodie tray (which was nearly devoured by the end).

We had a very nice surprise from an unexpected visitor. Unbeknownst to most, one of our cousins from Florida (whom

most of us had not seen in more than a few years) had come up to visit and she arrived with her twin daughters. I guess I should keep closer tabs on my facebook page.

Football games, kids (under 18) opening presents, Grandpa falling asleep, and Chad being picked on all made for another perfect celebration. Hopefully, we can exit 2010 (which has had its share of ups and downs) and look forward to an even brighter 2011. Provided we can find the right destination ☐