

# Charm

Well... yesterday was another voice lesson. It went much better than last week's meeting... perhaps it was because I focused on 4 or 5 pieces I have been working on since almost the beginning. Once again, a deceptively simple song is one of the most problematic (well... the last part of it is rhythmically tricky, but will come). Another piece, I need to find that spot of greatest emotional impact. I KNOW where it needs to be but need to back off just a bit on some of those other big moments. I have to skip next week as the j-o-b asked me to come in an hour early on Thursday.

Today, I had my first follow up with the doctor. He seems to think all is well... progressing nicely. He asked me what I have been doing... how long I am on my feet each day, etc.

Well... given my current job, I am on my feet probably 95% of the time. I have been taking short walks as the seasons have changed but not quite up to the 3-4 mile hikes I was accustomed to taking but those will come in time. As we have both commented, "I miss my walking buddy." I told the nurse, who lives two houses south of me, that I didn't think that trying out for [The Wizard of Oz](#) or [Annie](#) was such a good idea.

Once again, I did bring up the idea of trying out for Roosevelt and brought a chuckle. But I have been going to my weekly voice lesson so once my leg is closer to 100% I will once again be doing something. The actual appointment was nothing more than hearing things I had already known. He did feel my leg and commented that it is still a bit tight. I guess his prescribed 4 month check was nothing more than witnessing my charming personality ☐ KIDDING... I know it is necessary but doesn't hurt to display that indelible Jamiahsh charm.

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# Now THAT'S A Jamiah Song

I now have my set list for my little weekender. I'm sure it is too late to submit until fall arrives as they usually take the summer off... or have the last few years. Today at my lesson, I informed K that I had made a few changes... deleted a few songs and replaced them with others and whittled my list down from about 15 to 10. Some of them require a second voice... so be on the look out for a request those of you who would be willing (I know at least one tangenteer who I will not ask... upon pain of torture or worse). One of my new additions was a spark of hilarity. I have had the song in the back of my mind since I began. K was not familiar with the song until we had gone through it a few times. She was in her husband's car listening to the satellite radio when it came over the air. After hearing it for the very first time she exclaimed... "Now THAT is a Jamiah piece!" So glad she agrees. And it even went fairly well for a lesson in sight singing.

In other news, I must wish a Happy Birthday... in case I don't make a post tomorrow... to a GREAT friend! The last few months have not been the greatest for me personally and our Wonderful admin has been right there for me every gimpy step of the way. Definitely not the only one who has been but I thank God every day for his wisdom, guidance, and above all his friendship. Happy Birthday, C!

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# Feelin' Groovy

I can honestly say that I AM feeling better today than I have for a while. I was able to stand throughout my entire voice lesson without feeling the need to sit. Maybe this thing is not going to take a year to fully heal after all. But if it does, I can deal with it. Someone asked when I was going to be in another show. It just dawned on me that I COULD have tried out for the role of FDR in *Annie*... no walking involved and he does get to sing and harmonize during the White House reprise of "Tomorrow." AH, well...

I am a step closer to replacing my blown Sunfire. "Big" John and Edy are in the process of looking for a new auto and they know I am in the market for a good, reliable mode of transportation. I went to their house this morning and checked out the '02 Honda SUV (a compact SUV). Definitely a car that has been well taken care of and very nice, full of bells and whistles. During my test drive, I commented to Big John that there was no "ka-chunk ka-chunk" as I approached a stop sign as there is in the car I currently drive. I have been told that it is "nothing to worry about" but somehow...

Back to my latest lesson... I am thinking my list of songs I have been working on is about to be edited. There are some songs which I do not think I am going to have performance ready anytime soon and there are others that I have been looking at which will take no time at all... one of which we ran today. Plus, by the end of my first song, I was on my feet! Much better than sitting on the chair.

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# 12 Days & Counting...

Until my first recital! I cannot believe that I have never been a part of one and I am really excited! When I arrived at my rehearsal place, K reminded the young Herman lass (who is the student ahead of me) of this. As I made my way over to the piano, I was asked if I was going to be sitting for my piece or if I was going to go all out. The song I have chosen lends itself to a wide range of choreographed bits; to sing it while sitting would be doing myself and most importantly the song a great disservice. So yes, I will be adding movement to the piece. After going through the selection once with some of the movements I have been brainstorming, my partner in crime arrived to much fanfare and relief, Last week, poor Ca got stuck driving to rehearsal. Need not have worried because she fit the bill tremendously.

Actually, I did better practicing the song with the movement then sitting anyway. Just need the freedom of the stage to enhance them. The limited practice space did not lend itself well to BIG, THEATRICAL movement!

Just need to ask how many friends and family I am allowed to invite. Hope it is not like the *Brady Bunch* episode in which poor Cindy has to decide whether to give her one and only ticket to Mommy or Daddy to her starring role as the Fairy Princess. I don't think I have to worry too much about that.

No Italian this week although I was handed a few pieces to look at in the coming weeks.

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# Horizons

Today was a special off-day voice lesson. K and her family are leaving Thursday afternoon for a long road trip over the Easter holiday. My recital piece had one little glitch while hardly noticeable will be remedied by NEXT Thursday. Now, all I need to do is figure out if I want to prance around with choreography... depends on where the ol' leg is but I have a lot going in my head that would benefit the very active piece.

After running the song a few times, we decided to do a bit of sight-singing. I flipped through the first book given to me (I did not bring anything else with me) we looked at "I Don't Know How to Love Him" from *Jesus Christ Superstar*. After finishing, we both agreed that the range was perfect for my voice but I commented that the context was a bit off for me ☐ . Mary Magdalene singing about having "so many men before. In very many ways. He's just one more." I did remember that Judas has a short reprise later in the show. Reading too much into the reading ☐

Then, K suggested that we try something completely new next week: Italian aria. I looked through her book and came across one that I had done while at BGSU and came across two others that were familiar by their title. Something different but not completely foreign (wink, wink) to me. Not scared at all, more excited than anything. Yet another chance to expand my horizons.

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## This & That

It seems that the addition one of our newest [tangenteers](#) (I see a newer addition... but it has been years since I have taken

a French class) I am quickly falling behind in my posts (although she does have a few hundred to catch me ☐ ).

Yesterday, I noticed real progress in the continuing dissolving of my blood clot. I still feel it... not really painful but it is still keeping me at a slow clip. Madame Peters was in tonight (haven't seen her since the day before I went to the doctor nearly two or THREE (?) months ago. I assured her that I am recovering nicely... however slowly. But I will be back to my 3-4 mile walks 3 times a week before long. Telling myself that I will be able to do the things I really enjoy doing in time helps with the psychological.

My recital with the rest of K's students is less than 4 weeks away. Memorizing my very wordy but very fun piece is challenging but I am really close. I have nailed down a fine female to do the bit with and once she completes her run in *The Wedding Singer*, we will get together and get 'r done.

Well... that is all... My food is probably over done and I have to watch *The Office* which I DVR'ed... Michael Scott's farewell is looming. I think next week is the extended special episode.

Is this the moment when the series will "Jump the Shark?" How will Will Ferrell fare in the new role? Time will tell.

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## **BOY DID I NEED THAT!**

My adventures for the week have been very rewarding and gratifying. Monday, I went to a board meeting of which I have not been since January ☐ Everyone was happy to see me and inquired about my well-being and progress. Slow but sure and gimping along but progressing however little. After the meeting, C,L, and I went to dinner and had a nice, engaging conversation that entailed a lot of topics not the least of

was some possibilities about my next great adventure. One **VERY PROMISING** possibility will depend upon my current manager. Since I seem to see her less and less frequently, I left her a message informing her of the possibility. I just pray that she makes a decision that will be beneficial to both of us. I told her I will not pursue anything until I am as close to 100% as possible.

Today, I went to my first voice lesson in three months. I was immediately bombarded by two adorable boys. One who kept regaling me with jokes typical of a three or four year old.

By the time the 6 year old was read to whoop me at Battleship, it was time to begin my lesson. I did AMAZINGLY well for sitting in a chair... of course, I tried to sit with correct posture. But I narrowed my recital choices to two.

One requires a female to join me. K informed me that there are a few of her other students who would be up to the challenge but she hesitated to have a teenager perform the number with a 30 something. So, she allowed me to try finding a guest performer. Very fun piece while just a bit challenging. I can think of a few ladies I would enjoy performing with.

So... while still gimping along, the two days venturing around helped immensely! Being with great friends and doing what I love to do definitely helped! Just learning to accept the fact that it is a talent which I need to begin to share more and more. One of the many gifts I have been told that I possess which can only come from Above. Thank Him for that!

PLUS... as an added plus, I got to catch up with a GREAT friend from my WM days. Via facebook on which I found her a few weeks ago. Go to chat a bit, discuss lots of things including the dismissal of our former boss which seems to be interesting yet surprising all at once.

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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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## **Emote BUT Hit the Note**

Today's lesson was fraught with insightful bits of trivia. I learned that the ["Many Mumbling Mice"](#) warm up was attributed to one Theodor Geisel (better known as Dr. Seuss) in his ABC Book. Or maybe it was K's octo-, or nonagenarian (if he is still among us) college choir director. The prolific author may have stolen it himself, a la his Grinch-y creation who (quite fittingly) stole Christmas from the Whos down in Whoville who liked Christmas a lot..

This week, I practiced two up-beat pieces and one ballad (working on two slower, emotionally charged selections). Both brisk pieces have challenges of their own. The first, I am having a bit of problems memorizing and the second contains the EVIL patter line which I did manage to do well WITH the words in front of me. A bit of homework over the holiday for me.

The third piece has never sounded better. Drawing the audience into the emotional context is key on this one. However while focussing on the emotion, I was slightly pitchy but everything else was praiseworthy. We are going to have t-shirts printed with the post title.

Much too soon, the clock tolled the half-hour. I could not believe that it had gone so fast. So, I went to BK to get food to go before I have to head to church for Midnight (11 o'clock) Mass rehearsal.

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# A Vocal Workout

I am happy(?) to inform all that my voice lesson today was ALOT of HARD WORK ☐ I loved every minute. During my warmup (does sound like a workout, yes?) I was offered three pointers on reaching those high notes:

1. Bend your knees slightly (already knew that)
2. Hold your hands out palms down and turn them up as you hit that soaring note (I tried that once and it DID WORK!)
3. Squeeze your glutes together. (Haven't tried that one)

Today, I chose to work on some of the "power pieces" which I am on good standing to perfect. Boy oh boy maybe next week I'll mix it up with some novelty songs. As it was, we only made it through two selections but a lot of work was put into polishing them up. I think it is much more draining to perform a song that is driven by heavy emotion than lighter fare. But one of these pieces is one of my favorites so of course I am going to focus a bit on it but man what emotion it carries with it!

I even surprised myself by the emotional impact I created. When it was over, I did feel like I had been on a roller coaster of turmoil and angst. And I don't want to perform them until Spring?! Imagine the possibilities! I did get to have a little gingerbread cookie on my way out! Who could ask for anything more?