

Embracing the Miracle

Gwilda Wiyaka

I've had the same UPS driver for years. When he brings a heavy package, he will carry it all the way into the house for me. He has done that ever since I broke my back one icy February. Now, even though I am mostly healed, he continues to carry the larger packages inside.

I'd been outside on the property working in the greenhouse when I heard him pull up. I had a package he was to pick up for return, so I walked around to the side of the house where he could see me, but kept my distance.

"Do you have a package for me?" he called out.

"Yes, but I know you're not supposed to go inside because of the Coronavirus, so I sat it out on the shed porch in the sun. I hear the sun kills the virus."

"How are you holding up out here all by yourself?" he kindly enquired.

"I'm good."

"I'll leave the tracking number under this rock," he said, then pulled a piece of paper out of his breast pocket and wrote something on it. "This is my phone number. If you need anything from town, just call me and I'll see that it gets to you." He sat it under the rock with the tracking number.

"Thank you so much, and be well," I called after him.

He waved and drove off.

I stood there for quite some time watching the dust settle on the dirt road following his departure. I was thinking I may not see another human being for a week or so, until I am due for my shipment of dog food. He is a hard working man with a family – small children at home. Still, he is out on the front lines keeping supplies coming, putting himself and his family at risk. Even so, he takes the time to be sure I'm okay and have what I need.

I turn to go back to the greenhouse, deciding to plant extra this year. After all, I have plenty of seeds left from last season and others are not able to grow their own food. I was just getting back to work when my cell rings from my hip pocket.

“Gwilda, you are due to have your RO filters changed.” It's my Culligan man.

“You're still working?” I ask, thinking he would have been shut down with the other businesses in the area.

“Yeah, they consider keeping people in drinking water essential services. I'm getting too old for this. I just got out of surgery three weeks ago.”

“I am so sorry to hear that. Are you okay?”

“Yeah, just old and grumpy. About your filters..”

“I will have to put it off. I'm afraid I can't afford them this month. I'm sorry.”

“Well, we can't have you drinking dirty water! I'll come out and change them this afternoon and you can pay me whenever you can. Besides, you never know how long we'll be able to get filters, and the new ones will tide you over for another year.”

He showed up a short time later, decked out in mask and gloves, carrying new filters and his tool kit. I was waiting for him on my porch and followed him inside at the required and carefully measured six foot social distancing.

I sent him home with a quart jar of my homemade spaghetti sauce, a package of Italian spaghetti noodles, a bottle of red wine with a roll of toilet paper and a bow on the neck of the wine bottle. Ever mindful of social distancing, I had set them out on the counter along with a brown paper bag to put them in before he arrived. You would have thought I had given him the world.

On his way out the door, he stopped and looked me in the eyes. His were a bit misty as he thanked me for the gift. He shared that, being considered essential services, he and his wife were working long hours, often not home before 10:00 at night and then confronted with cooking.

His wife called the next day expressing her gratitude, telling me they had consumed the food all in one sitting and were still chuckling over the toilet paper topped wine bottle.

I live alone on 45 acres and yet I am surrounded by angels – beautiful people that look after each other in the teeth of a pandemic. My heart is full of gratitude for these gallant ones, working long hours at great risk to themselves in order to provide what we need.

In times like this, it's so easy to go into fear, hoard what we have and hide from the world. After all, we don't know who may infect us, where our next paycheck will be coming from, or if it will be coming at all. But do we ever really know?

I didn't know that when I said goodbye to my son, who was going to work out of state for a while, we would be forced into a long separation. I didn't know I would not be able to go out of state to see my daughter and her family for my granddaughter's birthday. For that matter, I don't know if I will be alive tomorrow, but I am here today.

Whether we realize it or not, we're in the process of making history. How we respond to the unprecedented worldwide crisis this pandemic has brought upon us will dictate our future, and our legacy. While it's easy to get caught up in fear, hype and hysteria, it is next to impossible to respond consciously and intelligently from that mindset.

Instead, if we stay centered in our hearts and help those around us, we become as one organism. My Culligan man freely provided what I needed with no expectation or agenda. I had no way of knowing he and his wife were having trouble finding time to shop or cook, but I gave what I had, which was food I'd prepared from stores in my pantry.

When we come from the heart, these synchronicities become the norm. The push/pull of life draws in what we need and draws from us what others need. The tree exhales the oxygen necessary for us to live and we offer back the carbon dioxide that sustains it. It is the natural way. When did we forget and leave the circle of life? Look what is happening to the world as a result.

Some fear things will never be the same and I won't argue. We're being presented with a huge opportunity to change our world for the better, to come together as individuals and communities – globally, creating the positive changes so needed.

We are all in this together.

Let's embrace the miracle and make magic happen.