

“Just Another Procedure!”

Pages with reference to book, From 383 To 383

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There are moments when life itself becomes speechless

Husain had to be the bravest little boy I had ever come across. He was wheeled into the operation theatre silent and grave, eyes fixed on the bed looming ahead of him and on the terrorizing lights and gadgets. They asked him his name and then fumbled for his thin, brown hand still untainted by the countless courses of toxic chemotherapy drugs he had received so far. The hands clutched at his arm as if at an inanimate object in which they had to drive another needle home. A suitable vein was selected and Husain's ever-silent, unquestioning, fearless gaze then rested on the tip of the needle as it poised in air seconds before the final plunge. Someone asked him if he could recite Bismillah and Husain did so, more calmly than anyone I could imagine in that moment...

The cannula in place, they proceeded on to the anaesthesia. No struggle from him even then as the gases clouded his consciousness. Someone kept soothing him to ease his journey into the twilight zone by gently pressing his arm, but it was as if he was determined to make it entirely on his own. They turned him over and the brutal needle for canying out the bone marrow procedure was driven into his bare hip bone. Only a muffled cry through his slumber as if he was in the midst of bad dream. The aspirations, drawing out, drilling into the cortex of the frail bone, all was over soon. Another 'bone marrow' successfully done. Husain was aroused and with wide, silent, unquestioning eyes, wheeled out.

Had he stopped wondering about the unfairness of it all? Why did those eyes not question? Why was that silence so disturbingly loud? Husain has left me with many tangled thoughts.

There are moments when life itself becomes speechless.....