

EVERYTHING HAPPENS FOR A REASON
And Other Lies I've Loved
By KATE BOWLER
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Book Review by Pat nee Deitz

Soon in the reading, or even scanning, the unpretentious heroine reveals she had Stage IV Colon Cancer. Her stalwart effort to accept with grace this prognosis brings inordinate humor, deep emotion, and an optimistic attitude. The author has an uncanny way of introducing her viewpoints and those of the cast of interactors she reports encountering. The verbal clumsiness we all feel in tense situations is expressed with clarity. Written in the first person, Bowler explains, not only her, but her interpretation of her many relatives', visitors' and acquaintances' feelings. When she looks at her toddler, almost 2 years old, playing outside she feels deeply the desire not to go to the other side yet. These gripping thoughts are replayed as she hugs each of the people who visit or care for her at home or in the hospital.

Sprinkled throughout are references to her investigation of the "Prosperity Gospel" basis of religions she has examined in her career as a writer. "Eventually, I wrote the first history of the movement from beginning to end" She tells the reader. She mentions some of the famous televangelists, whose reputations were in line with this thinking. She relates an anecdote of Gloria & Kenneth Copeland praying, even commanding, God to protect their home and their neighbors' from a tornado-He did.

A previous illness scare left her temporarily attending prosperity healing services with double arm braces. Needless to say, there were many theories on how or why this could happen, prayers were offered for her and she heard the "everything happens for a reason". This time before the correct diagnosis of cancer, she also found out she was pregnant and describes how this miracle affected her body.

She underwent tests every 60 days determining whether the experimental drugs were working or not; it kept her hopeful. The upside was that, if the expensive tests, drugs and etc. were not effective, they would be discontinued on her and probably not used on someone else. She would be left to her own devices to find a cure.



SOMETIMES PAINFUL
THINGS CAN TEACH US
LESSONS THAT WE
DIDN'T THINK WE
NEEDED TO KNOW.

She remembered when her grandmother's life was afflicted with TB at a time when the cure was just beginning to be used with only temporary success. This equated to her struggle to find out exactly what her ailment was.

By examples of what each person is doing when she calls to let them know of her cancer diagnosis, she perfectly shows how we all have felt at one time or another over a catastrophe. Maybe we didn't want it to be in the middle of an exciting trip, or doing a mundane household chore like polishing furniture when we heard news that left our life in shambles. The book moves

gently through problems others she called were experiencing at the same time; some personally and some with relatives who had diseases like Alzheimer's.

She had enough knowledge to analyze the way each piece of information was being dispersed to her by professionals and to reach some conclusions on her own. She shared her grief with her husband and mother, who was worried about the care of her son. She told her that her husband would be able take care of him-It was as though her mom had forgotten about him.

Bowler lives out what she expects could be her last earthly year comparing the time to seasons in the church calendar-Lent, Advent and Ordinary Time. With much gratitude she acknowledges the multitude of friends, co-workers, and family that eased every phase and consequence of the disease for her. Maybe the moral of the story is learn to live one day at a time in as much peace and joy as we can, no matter what our circumstances are and to graciously accept the help offered.



MUSTARD SEED

By Pat Redick-3/7/2015

if all of us with faith the size of a mustard seed
would plead with our Father God could we
make a difference in the reign of terror that
cancer has in our world and I suspect
the rest of humanity too?

I personally know a half a dozen or so
people in its throws
right now – all younger than I,
a reason to cry out to a merciful
Lord for some breakthrough.... although we
hear good news about every day it seems more
of the nasty stuff moves in any way to
disrupt lives at best or take good people from
our midst at their prime..... sometimes
we should organize a dreaded fast to help
make a correction to this situation with a
chance to last – I for one have a built-in
aversion to even the sound of fast
but maybe if we put our heads together we
could make it pleasing to God and somewhat
palatable to the average person on the street
since there is no one we meet
who hasn't been touched peripherally or deep
by its menacing feat!

(8/10/19 & IT STILL HOLDS TRUE)

(If you search "fast" in Catholiccrossreference.com, you will find there are 75 verses that mention it.)

<https://melkaplance.com>