

BEYOND COLOR

INTRODUCTION

One day, while preparing for work, I was looking in the mirror, and things didn't look quite the same. It looked as though I had put on some weight. I climbed on the scale, and I had indeed picked up a few pounds. At first, I mentally thought this was great. I had weighed the same amount for over 15 years, one hundred and forty-three pounds, and I had always wanted to put on a few extra pounds.

I didn't consider anything until my weight gain wound up noticeable to friends and co-workers. I stepped on the scale once again, and I had put on more weight. My dietary patterns hadn't changed; Nor did my way of life. As I looked in the mirror, my face was puffy, and I had begun looking as though I were worn out. I realized something wasn't right.

It was time that I tended to the issue. I visited the Bolling Air Force Base Clinic in Washington, DC, to have it checked out. Bolling was the base where I was assigned preceding my retirement from the Air Force in 2002. I was assigned there in 1995.

After an examination, the doctor sent me to the lab to have blood work and to run a few tests. She said she would call me in seven days with the results of the tests.

A week passed, and after not hearing anything from her, I thought everything was alright since I didn't get a call. No news is good news was my thought.

A week and a half passed, I noticed I had put on somewhat more weight. I called the clinic to ask about the test results. I asked to speak with the doctor who requested the tests. She picked up the phone. The first question she inquired was as to whether I had been reached by anybody from the clinic or the Malcolm Grow Medical Center at Andrews Air Force Base with the results. I informed her that I hadn't and that I was waiting to get a call from her. She, at that point, inquired as to whether I could come into the clinic. My heart skipped two, perhaps three beats, my stomach felt as if it had dropped an inch, and there was an empty feeling all over my body. I realized something wasn't right. I promptly left for the clinic.

Upon arriving, I went to the front desk to sign-in. The front desk staff said the doctor was sitting tight for me, and she requested that they bring me directly back. They took me to an examination room, where I waited. The door to the room was left somewhat slightly open, and I could hear the voice of a lady who sounds like my doctor saying, "I can't believe nobody has reached him concerning this."

At that point, what appeared to be fifteen minutes; however, it was distinctly around 45 seconds later, the doctor came into the room. She began by asking me how I was feeling. In a shaking voice, I told her that I didn't know. I was exceptionally anxious and nervous to find out the results. She inquired as to whether I had been reached by or even got notification from anybody concerning the results of the tests. Once again, I told her, "No, I hadn't."

She sat down on one of those rolling stools, moved right up to focus me, put her hands on both of my knees, and said, "MSgt Jordan, you shouldn't hear this from me. This information should originate from a doctor in one of our specialty clinics at Malcolm Grow Medical Center. I'm sorry to be the one to tell you this, but "you have cirrhosis of the liver. You are going to need a liver transplant, and if you don't have a liver transplant in time, You Will Die".