A Positoid’s Tribute to E.R.

November 19, 2008 By Shawn Decker

I can’t take any pills for the kind of lingering cough I have right now, so my only prescription is some herbal remedies and an excessive amount of *E.R.* episodes.

For those who don’t know, *E.R.* is a television show about a hospital in Chicago called County General. New interns unwittingly enter, believing they will learn what it takes to become successful doctors. Those who have been around keep the dark secret of County General under wraps, never telling the newcomers that the place was built on an ancient Indian burial ground. Hoping they will take over so that they the elder doctors can move on.

Somehow the spirits never fully tip their hand to the interns, even when a helicopter lops off a doctor’s arm. Then, the same doctor perishes a couple of seasons later when a helicopter crashes down on him. I don’t know about you, but I’d be putting in for my transfer after that.

But no, the young would-be doctors stay, and over the years they meet their gruesome demises, one by one, as the rest of the E.R. hopes to accomplish the ultimate in medical miracles, to cure the ancient spirits of their insatiable bloodlust.

In the last week, Gwenn and I have cleaned out our TiVo, speeding through commerical breaks for last year's hottest Christmas items, then hitting Valentine's Day ads, and now, finally, we're up to McCain and Obama ads.

The series ends in February, a dark day for thinbloods who have long enjoyed the bloodiest show to ever hit network television. I was looking for a complilation of the show's most violent moments, but only found sappy tributes to Luka and Abby's love story. I did find the original opening credits...

I started watching the show with Gwenn shortly after we moved in together in 1999. When it first aired in 1994, I was in a totally different place, living in Waynesboro with my parents.

Fresh out of high school, and two years away from speaking out about my HIV status, I was wondering how much my recent hepatitis C infection would affect my health. (Not much, as it turned out, thankfully.) So, when my mom became obsessed with this new show, I asked the obvious question.

"Haven't you seen enough hospital drama in your lifetime?"

I didn't get it.

But now, after a decade of watching it, I do. The show makes everyones' medical dramas pale in comparison. People with HIV, diabetes, cancer and whatever else ails us as humans can tune in every week, and somehow feel better about ourselves after watching an episode. As doctors arms are lopped off, when grab a handful of popcorn. When a maniac enters the E.R. and starts shooting up the place, that missed attempt by an intern to find a vein doesn't seem so bad. By the end of every episode, there you are,thanking your lucky stars that you don't have it *that bad.*

And really, what more can you ask for from a T.V. show? *E.R.*, you will be missed.

Positively Yours,

Shawn

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