Yea, Though I Walk Through...

July 3, 2012 By Lora René Tucker

I have been "injured" for the past few weeks; there is a cyst on one of the bones in my right wrist. Being that I type for a living, this causes some difficulties. (You think?) So, as I continue to figure out the best way to write, I'm keeping it moving, even in this heat. (I bought Nuance's Dragon Voice Recognition software for home....if anyone has mastered the software, please send tips!) With a brace on my right hand and forearm that resembles a Klingon bracelet, I'm going to work, riding the subways, making field visits, and just "social- workin." And right now, writing. So, while the pain killer's working, let's catch up, I decided to keep things "light."

It's summer in New York City, and when you think of summer in New York, you think of...the subway. Ah- how the subway brings you closer to the true pulse of the Big Apple. With a Metro Card, (the techno-key of frustration), and a subway map, (showing the different realms of purgatory,) you go from point "A" to joining the Lemmings off the cliff.

In a writing exercise I did at a New York Writer's Coalition workshop, (they are great...more on them in another blog,) I wrote a vignette, a prayer/observation for the subway riders of the world starting with a line from a favorite phrase. Please note: This may "sound" familiar; t

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death," after swiping my MetroCard -

Oh hell - I can't go anywhere; it's telling me to: "Swipe again at this turnstile."

Suddenly, time and motion slows down. I swipe again and look before me: The token booth clerk is peering at me, daring me to "make her day," leave that turnstile, go up to her, and lose my $2.25. The professional pan handler began to shuffle towards me; his lips perched to blabber how he can "help" me for whatever I could give. A young, long legged Vogue Magazine Ad, who was right behind me, swerves and huffs, as if she has had one too many encounters with a non-rush-hour strutting, poor -MetroCard swiping, black women for one day... I swiped again, and again....

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, after swiping my MetroCard *three* times; I began to realize that I am one of the thousands of life members (or "lifers") of the New York City Metropolitan Transit Authority (the MTA,). Here I am, donating daily to the capital

improvement fund, which the next generation will enjoy (like the 2nd Avenue subway). I am one of the many working stiffs who, no matter how the weather is or who won the election, will mill, meander, and march through the "valley" called rush hour in the subway. Thousands of miles of track, countless turnstiles, and I am stuck here, swiping my MetroCard, (watching my T-cells jump the turnstile and run for the train).

My bags and smart pad shall comfort me... Well armored, usually with a smile, my mantra is from

Rodney King’s plea (“Can’t we all get along?”) I put the soundtrack of my very own epic adventure in my ears and grab thy rod and staff; I mean my hand bag. As one hand clutches my bag and the other all my patience, I successfully swipe my MetroCard, put on my “Sista won’t take any {umph] from you either,” face (to address my immediate competitors,) and head toward the platform.

And I will dwell in the maze of the MTA forever.

A - train.

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