

## **Rain, Snow, Sleet or Hail**

“Rain, snow, sleet or hail—I’ll be there.” Have you told your friends and family that? “Three times in a row gets you a Munro,” is my version. It means that no matter what I might be doing, I’ll stop and take your call if you dial and hang up three times. Rainy flat tire with AAA delayed? Emergency room? Emotional equivalent thereof? All are fair game. I’ll be there, at least on the other end of a phone.

My Dad’s version was to give me his business card with a dime taped to it. Yep, it was that long ago, and I recall it as if it were yesterday. “Anytime, any day from anywhere—no questions asked,” was his phrase along with the promise that his secretary would always patch me through and that he would always accept a collect call.

As payphones dwindled, and a dime got you nothing—a quarter took its place. Eventually, a cell phone would become like my third kidney, (although I try not to keep it too close to my real ones), and the quarter, went into a parking meter.

Yesterday, after the final step in desperately dealing with a broken-down car and a refrigerator that sounded like my beloved Honda should, I learned the answer to something I had briefly pondered, “Why is there a firetruck at my local gas station?” I saw no flames nor smoke and continued driving feeling great relief.

During the two days after that, while my small town was—I now know—all over the regional news, I had declared a moratorium on all things procrastinated. Barely turning the TV on, I got so much done. The news I had missed haunts me now. The kind, friendly young man who would pump my gas on days when I had my “nice” clothes on—or in the rain, snow, sleet or hail—had doused himself in gasoline and set himself on fire. He had doused himself in gasoline. And set himself on fire. In a medically-induced coma in a world-renowned hospital he rests and perhaps survives and heals. Time will tell.

I found myself desperately wanting to call someone to process this late-to-me breaking news but, alas, in the hoopla of getting a new alternator and a new refrigerator—I had left the house with just two kidneys! The distress I felt for the next 20 minutes of not being able to place a call was mind-heart-soul-&-eye-opening. If I thought I felt “desperate” knowing there are people I could call and just not having my phone with me, what must it feel like to think that there isn’t anyone—friend, family, professional, stranger on a hotline—who could help you, no matter how many times you dialed? WTF.

Today, I will change my use of the word “desperate.”

Today, I will call my dad to say “thanks,” and that “I am putting a quarter back in a safe spot in my wallet as a sweet reminder.”

Today, I will call my husband and say, “I love you,” and thank him for the origins of three times in a row gets you a Munro.

Today, I will phone a friend –not to get the answer to a million-dollar question, but to tell the story of a quarter and remind them of the three times in a row promise.

Today, it is overcast—but the sun is peeking through. What will you do?