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"A Different Light"

A Different Light – 27th April 2024 – “I think I have still got some good conkers in my marble collection”

He thought he had a motor car, but he only had a horn. It’s one of those lines that’s added subsequently after someone saying, “you know what thought did”? My dear old Aunty Alison used to naively say that and wondered why me and my brother Tim, would snicker uncontrollably.

This week I had an appointment with a Dermatologist to look at my vasculitis. My doctor recommended I see a Dermatologist when the apocalyptic rash came on, she felt it was outside of her broad knowledge of health. The Health Coach at the practice rang around Dermatologists in Auckland and told me that there is an appointment available in Auckland to go privately. Apparently, appointments with Dermatologist are rare. They are in short supply. This was in early March and I was appalled by the length of time I would have to wait. Looking back I was somewhat naïve. Finally the 22nd April arrived. Sally and I decided to have a urban mini vacation and stay in Auckland for a night. Sally being a native West Aucklander was quite keen. We booked a hotel on Queen Street, knowing that there was a French restaurant next door that was reasonably priced and authentic. As we drove through Cove Rd/Mangawhai Rd detour, winding our way by the coast we started pontificating what the Dermatologist Dr Chin Yun-Lin would be like. I had looked at his photo and bio on the Skin Foundation website. He looked young. He looked surprised. We wondered if he had cosmetic surgery himself. His specialty interests include skin cancer, melanoma, dermatitis, psoriasis, acne, pigmentary disorders, cosmetic dermatology. As I was going privately I wanted value for money, I said to Sally “the first thing I am going to ask him is what experience have you had in Leukocytoclastic Vasculitis”. I then spent quite a bit of time practicing how to pronounce Leukocytoclastic. I was hoping he would tell me all kinds of important information that would heal my legs and bring them back to some kind

normality. I was thinking of alchemist lotions and transformist supplements. I wondered if it would be inappropriate to ask about shaving rash.

We finally arrived at the Skin Foundation in Remuera. I went up to the reception and announced that I had an appointment with Dr Chin Yun-Lin. "Oh" the receptionist replied, "he's not here", I nearly coughed. My eyes started bulging. "What's your name?" Feeling a sense of rage building up, I gave my name while scrolling through my phone looking for the email with the appointment on it, to produce evidence of my appointment and demand an explanation for Dr Chin Yun-Lin's absence. I found the email and in a state of slow motion shock, I read the date was not the 22 of April, but the 22nd of JULY! I stood there blinking, what the hell! For some reason the minute I heard the Health Coach say April, it just stuck in my mind. When I got the email from the Skin Foundation, I obviously doggedly saw the date and ignored the month and thought it was April. We went back to the car, I was in a daze of self loathing and wondering if I had early set dementia. Sally however was optimistic and upbeat, "don't worry" she said, "it was a good test run and now we get to have mini urban break and enjoy that French restaurant." What was I thinking? Well to reframe a negative into a positive it's the thought that counts.

Jonny Wilkinson is the CEO of Tiaho Trust - Disability A Matter of Perception, a Whangarei based disability advocacy organisation