

## Perhaps You Can Relate??

by SHERALYN ROMAN

Not too long ago I had occasion to travel within Canada with my younger brother, his partner and mine.

Even though I'm older by a good five years, we made fun of him relentlessly for being tired while we walked significantly more than 10,000 steps a day and enjoyed ourselves late into the evenings, well past the time he called it quits and went to bed. I refuse to let my age define me, 'it's just a number' and all that, until it isn't.

My great comeuppance occurred over the Canada Day weekend once we had returned home. What comes of gloating? Nothing good I can assure you and I'm left wondering whether anyone else can relate to my experience?

Before I explain what happened, I really need to share some insight into my personality.

Probably a little too much, but I've got nothing to hide ? I don't even hide my roots anymore having made the decision to let my silvers shine during the pandemic. True to form, however, I've never been content with just one hair colour so even though I've ?gone grey? my lovely stylist has thrown in some purple too, just for fun! (If you just took a quick glance at the picture accompanying this column, change is coming soon, I promise.)

I'm not ?embracing? old age so much as I am having fun with it. I got my first tattoo when I was 38, my nose pierced in my mid 40s and tattoo number four will be onboarded soon. In my mind, I stalled out counting my age at about 45 and see no reason to count any higher than that, despite what the mirror tells me some mornings. All of this is my way of saying I'm not denying my age but I'm sure as heck not using it as an excuse for anything either. That is, until this past weekend.

After having first confirmed the bank balance and our available line of credit, off I headed to the grocery store, Visa card also in the wallet just in case it was needed because let's face it, buying food for five adults is about the equivalent of what a mortgage payment was back in the year I first got married. I shopped wisely, if one can call a \$10 bag of milk prudent (I might be ignoring my age, but ignoring my lactose intolerance is simply not possible) and was almost ready to cash out when I remembered the eggs. They were my undoing. Scrambling back to collect a dozen, I picked them up then decided 18 might be better and bent down to retrieve the larger carton. And froze in place. I may even have yelped. Out loud. I can only describe what occurred as a back spasm, for it was certainly nothing more dramatic than that. I didn't slip and fall on a wet floor. No one bashed a cart into me. I simply bent over to pick up some eggs and I've been virtually incapacitated ever since. Please tell me you can relate and I am not the only one?

Despite years of yoga practise, Pilates and even some recent weight training classes; along with a healthy attitude toward aging and perpetually being busy and in motion, it was a carton of eggs that brought me down. I now reek of camphor courtesy of dual action ?ice to heat? lotion rather than my favourite eau de parfum. Muscle relaxants weren't touching the pain so a combination of painkillers that would frighten my doctor is what's currently keeping me afloat. A heating pad was procured and has accompanied me everywhere, even to the office, and my drive to and from work is a strange combination of heated seats for the pain relief and the AC set to ?Arctic? to counter-balance the resulting overheating of every other part of my body.

I haven't called my brother yet to share the good news because I can hear his laughter already.

I'm pretty certain such comments as, ?serves you right,? will be top of mind and even if he doesn't say this, I'll know he's thinking it. I suppose that's only fair.

All of this time spent laying around feeling sorry for myself has also forced me to finally acknowledge what anyone around me has probably known for far longer than I care to admit ? I AM getting older. I took the downtime now available to me to also start the process of changing all my social media pictures, profiles and LinkedIn accounts to finally acknowledge the grey hair is here to stay.

I expect two more things to happen as a direct result: When you meet me in the street you'll no longer have to try and hide your surprise at the colour of my hair and I predict I'll be receiving far fewer 'invites' to connect over Facebook with recently widowed, retired naval officers who also just happen to be medical doctors.

Perhaps you can relate?