



KATHERINE'S COUNTRY

On Monday, I made a call during break time in school. Conor Murphy, the proprietor of Murphy's pharmacy in Templemore, Co Tipperary, answered. Having introduced myself, I continued: "Did a fax with prescriptions for John Campion arrive this morning from the Hermitage Medical Clinic in Dublin?"

"It did," answered Conor. He had no idea of the wave of relief that rushed over me. I gathered my thoughts and prepared for my next group of students, now that I knew that the fax had landed.

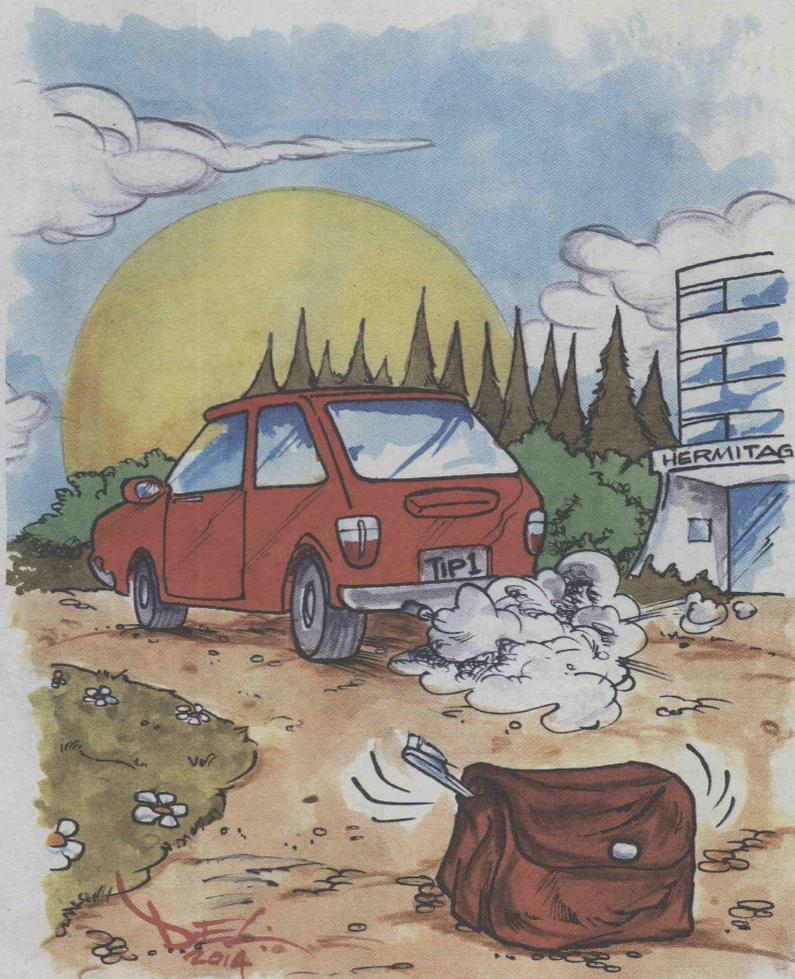
Dad had gone for a check-up. His GP had referred him for some tests which showed that he needed to have a stint inserted to free a blocked artery. The appointed day was Friday and he would be let out on the Saturday. Dad is a very independent man and rarely needs our assistance.

My brother Phil dropped him off in Dublin for his 8am appointment and I followed on later that day. I had neglected to book a hotel and soon found that many of the ones in the locality were booked out. So I called Tim's cousin Helen. She and her husband always have a wonderful welcome for the country cousins and this time was no exception.

AFTER THE EVENT

On Friday evening I found Dad in good form, considering that he'd had a procedure done. He was hooked up to several monitors in the Intensive Care Unit.

We chatted and he told me of experiencing severe pain in his chest during the procedure. I didn't think anything of it. His blood pressure was raised and again we considered it all part



stabilised, Dad would go home the next day. The care he was getting from all the medical staff was second to none.

I returned to Helen and Fergus late that evening and enjoyed several hours of tender care and a fine chat. This is exclusive to the Castleknock hotel and priceless.

On Sunday evening Dad was released. We got home to Tipperary around 7pm. My brother Phil and his son Conor had the kettle on. Once in the kitchen Dad said: "Bring in my bag please Katherine."

I went out to the car and opening the door, I saw nothing but my own handbag and coat. I remembered distinctly placing the bag on the ground when I was opening the car. I could not remember picking it up again. A cold chill went up my spine. I checked the boot knowing full well that it wasn't there. It was time to face the music. My brother seeing my distraught face started to laugh.

That came to a quick stop when Dad interjected: "My prescriptions and wallet are in that bag."

I felt a right fool and went outside to ring the hospital. I could hear the chorus going on between the three males.

"She forgot the bag. Imagine she left the bag on the ground. How could she drive off without the bag?"

They were all questions I was asking myself. Jenny the receptionist said that she had the bag. We decided to call in the courier Eric from Thurles rather than have one of us returning to Dublin as we were all tired. Alas, the bag would not return before 5pm and that would be too late for the prescriptions.

With Phil about to drive up

IN NEED OF A HELPING HAND

of the process. The following morning I was relaxing in bed in my Castleknock 'hotel' waiting for Dad's call. It came earlier than expected and he said that the doctor would like a family member to be present when he did his rounds that day.

I was out of bed in a flash and on my way, without Helen's fabulous breakfast, to the Hermitage Medical Centre. It's located just off the M50, near the Liffey Valley shopping centre.

Going through the large open-plan reception area, the fountains were leaping into the air outside the huge glass windows. It was some time before Dr Kahn arrived. He greeted us both, checked on the monitors and asked Dad how he was feeling.



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His next sentence stunned us both.

"John, unfortunately you had a mild heart attack during the procedure."

It's a right shock when you hear words like that. Apparently, when freeing the artery a piece of 'debris' had gone into a branch supplying the heart muscle itself and had caused the heart attack. The insertion of the stint and the subsequent rush of blood had then cleared the blockage. It is

so important to have a family member or an advocate there when you receive news like that. In one way, Dad was relieved that the pain he had experienced had been explained. He knew that it was unusual.

So, there were new medicines to be introduced. These were detailed by the doctor. It was important that two tablets in particular would not be missed any day. I took notes of the cautions. All going well and blood pressure

for the bag, Mary, my sister-in-law, suggested that maybe the prescriptions could be faxed to Murphy's pharmacy. Phil rang the pharmacy and although it was Sunday evening the phone was answered promptly by Conor.

Phil talked to Jenny in reception in Dublin. She was going off duty. She'd give the prescriptions to Garry in security, who would give it to Denise in radiology, who would fax it down to Murphy's.

I drove off without a bag. It took nearly 10 people in all to fix my misdemeanour, not least the person who returned the bag to the hospital.

It does my heart good to think of all those kind people who helped me out of a stressful situation. Thank you one and all. **KL**