

Miles to Go: The Second Journal of the Walk Series (2)

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Alan Christoffersen, a once-successful advertising executive, wakes one morning to find himself injured, alone, and confined to a hospital bed in Spokane, Washington. Sixteen days earlier, reeling from the sudden loss of his wife, his home, and his business, Alan left everything he knew behind and set off on an extraordinary cross-country journey. Carrying only a backpack, he planned to walk to Key West, the farthest destination on his map. But a vicious roadside stabbing has interrupted Alan's trek and robbed him of his one source of solace: the ability to walk.

Homeless and facing months of difficult recovery, Alan has nowhere to turn-until a mysterious woman enters his life and invites him into her home. Generous and kind, Angel seems almost too good to be true, but all is not as it appears. Alan soon realizes that before he can return to his own journey, he must first help Angel with hers.

From one of America's most beloved and bestselling storytellers comes an astonishing tale of life and death, love and second chances, and why sometimes the best way to heal your own suffering is by helping to heal someone else's. Inspiring, moving, and full of wisdom, Miles to Go picks up where the bestseller The Walk left off, continuing the unforgettable series about one man's unrelenting search for hope.

Richard Paul Evans is the #1 bestselling author of The Christmas Box. Each of his more than thirty-five novels has been a New York Times bestseller. There are more than thirty-five million copies of his books in print worldwide, translated into more than twenty-four languages. He is the recipient of numerous awards, including the American Mothers Book Award, the Romantic Times Best Women's Novel of the Year Award, the German Audience Gold Award for Romance, five Religion Communicators Council Wilbur Awards, the Washington Times Humanitarian of the Century Award and the Volunteers of America National Empathy Award. He lives in Salt Lake City, Utah, with his wife, Keri, and their five children. You can learn more about Richard on Facebook at Facebook.com/RPEFans, or visit his website RichardPaulEvans.com.

CHAPTER

Two

I've gone from a schedule of hours and minutes to not being able to tell you what day of the month it is.

Alan Christoffersen's diary

My second night in the hospital was rough. I was wet and hot with fever and somewhere in the night I started coughing. Each expulsion felt like another blade plunging into my stomach. The nurse checked my bandages, then told me not to cough, which wasn't at all helpful. In spite of the medications they gave me to help me sleep, for most of the night I just lay there, lonely and aching. I wanted McKale more than life. Definitely more than life. Of course, if she were with me, I wouldn't be in this mess in the first place. Exhaustion finally overcame me and I fell asleep around 4 or 5 A.M.

The next day I woke to a young nurse walking around my bed looking at monitors and writing on a clipboard. Since I'd been admitted to the hospital, a bevy of nurses and doctors had been swarming around me in my delirium, flashing in and out of my consciousness like dancers in a music video. But I didn't remember any of them. This was the first nurse I was cognizant of. She was small, petite, and barely the height of a floor lamp. I watched her for a few minutes then said, "Morning."

She looked up from her clipboard. "Good afternoon."

"What time is it?" I asked. It was kind of a funny question since I didn't even know what day, or week, it was. The last two weeks had run together like eggs in a blender.

"It's almost twelve-thirty," she said, then added, "Friday."

Friday. I had left Seattle on a Friday. I'd been gone for just fourteen days. Fourteen days and a lifetime.

"What's your name?"

"I'm Norma," she said. "Are you hungry?"

"How about an Egg McMuffin?" I said.

She grinned. "Not unless you can find one made of Jell-O. How about some pudding? The butterscotch is edible."

"Butterscotch pudding for breakfast?"

"Lunch," she corrected. "Also, in a couple hours we're sending you in for a CT scan."

"When can I take the catheter out?"

"When you can walk to the bathroom on your own-which we'll attempt after we get the results back from your scan. Are you claustrophobic?"

"No."

"Sometimes people get claustrophobic in the scanner. I can give you something for anxiety if you are. A Valium."

"I don't need anything," I said. I didn't care about the scan; I wanted the catheter out of me. In the haze of the last forty-eight hours, I vaguely remembered pulling the catheter out and making a real mess of things.

I had two good reasons for wanting it out; first, because it hurt. No one should stick anything up that part of the male anatomy. Second, an infection from a catheter is what

killed my wife. The sooner the thing was out, the better.

A hospital orderly, a husky young freckled man wearing bright purple scrubs, came for me around two in the afternoon. He unhooked some wires and tubes from my body, then wheeled my entire bed down the linoleum corridor to radiology. I didn't know it was my second visit until the technician operating the equipment said, "Welcome back."

"Have I been here before?"

"You were out the first time," she replied.

The scan was tedious, surprisingly loud, and took about an hour. When it was through, the orderly wheeled me back to my room and I fell asleep. When I woke, Angel was back.

Other Books

English Mechanic and World of Science.

⌘ ⌘ ⌘ ⌘ ⌘ . The child is healthy - looking , but very fat and flabby , and much troubled on sudden change of weather with a hard , dry cough ; he , however , coughs up phlegm occasionally Food . oatmeal porridge , milk , and plain bread ."