

Sometimes the answer to life's greatest problems can be found on the FM dial.

TIM'S SONG

"Hello my children; this is your bossman, 'Brother Love', bringing you the big boss sound of WBOS, 91.7 on your FM dial ...

... and right now, something a little different ... we're going to dip our toes into the sea of country music. So, for you, Alyssa, and all my ladies who love cowboys, here's ...

... Tim McGraw."

"Alyssa, turn it up, please?"

"Sure, ma'am ... how's that?"

"Good."

"Didn't know you were a country and western fan, Adrienne," Bobby Jo chuckles. "... had you figured for classic rock, or maybe rhythm and blues."

"Well, I can understand that ... being from Boston and all ... not exactly 'Dolly Parton country.' And you're right; during clinic hours it's either oldies or easy listening."

"So why, the switch?"

"Well, something amazing happened this morning, and I really want to hear this song."

"Which one?"

"It's called ...

... Live Like You Were Dying."

Hi Tony here. Again. we're in the Kurle Up n' Dye Salon and Day Spa, this fine Friday afternoon. The place is busy as usual. Right now, Bobby Jo's working her magic on one of the "Kurle's" regular customers, Dr. Adrienne Falcone.

Working alongside Bobby is Angie Santini. Angie is a 35ish-year-old single mother with a seven-year-old little girl named Maria. Right now, she's attending to Samantha; owner of the neighborhood's popular Bistro, Sam's. The two have become close friends after Angie worked, what Sam called, a last-minute miracle one day. Besides, Sam and Angie's little girls are about the same age, and, who, like their mommas, are really good friends.

And Bobby Jo and Angie are close, too. Four years ago, Angie was the first stylist Bobby hired. The two celebrated their birthdays together last week on the same day. Needless to say, a memorable party was had.

For those visiting for the first time, Dr. Falcone is the head of oncology at the University Medical

Center. She's a regular patron, on a first name basis with everyone. And today, she's in an upbeat mood. Which, while not unusual, isn't always the case. You see, her specialty is the study and treatment of cancer. Sometimes, the demands of her job; the bad news and harsh, sometimes brutal, treatments, can leave Adrienne, let's say, closed off. Often, it's her visits here, among friends, that lifts her mood. When she needs a boost, this is the place she comes.

From her request, I gather something unusual happened this morning. It's not like her to ask Alyssa to call the classic rock station and request a song; moreover, a country music song. So, I'm curious ...

What say we listen in...

"So, tell us, what amazing thing happened this morning" Bobby Jo asks.

"I had a follow up with a patient. I'll call him Mr. Smith. Early fifties, successful, owns his own business, has a wife, two kids, fourteen and seventeen, and several months ago, I sent him home with a terrible diagnosis."

"That bad?"

"Inoperable. Nothing was working. As a last resort, I put him on a government sponsored trial medication. It hasn't shown much success but it's all I had left. I told him he has maybe six months and suggested he get his affairs in order."

"So, what happened?"

"Well, he came in as I was talking to the intake nurse. He said, 'hi, doc' and when I turned to see who it was, for a minute, I didn't recognize him."

Dr. Falcone pauses, as Bobby Jo turns her head to apply some styling gel. The application complete, the good doctor continues.

"He'd put on weight; he was tanned and looking fit; as upbeat as I've ever seen anyone with the diagnosis, I gave him."

"The medication worked?" Angie asks.

"Well, I can't say it did or didn't. The five-year survival rate for his form of cancer is less than four percent. But from his appearance this morning, I'd say there's hope."

"So, to what did he attribute his success," Bobby Jo asks, turning the chair for Adrienne to see herself

"A song, and an attitude."

"And not the medication?"

"Well, he thought maybe it was working, but he said what made the difference was a song he heard and decided to take Tim McGraw's advice."

"Who's Tim McGraw."

"The artist who recorded the song."

"Live Like You Were Dying?" Angie asks."

"Right," Adrienne says, stopping to let Bobby blow dry her hair.

"The song's about a man who, given the news I gave Mr. Smith, decided to make some major changes in his life," Adrienne says as Bobby finishes her task.

"'Maybe this cancer will eventually win,' he said. 'But I realized today is all I have and I want to make the most of it' ...

"... I remember saying that one's attitude is important in the treatment process, and asked him what he'd been doing since I last saw him ...

"... he smiled, maybe the first one I can remember. 'I've gone skiing; took the whole family,' he said. 'I've loved Melissa, my wife, in a way I haven't for far too long. Paid way more attention to her than I have lately. I told her how much I love her and how much I appreciate all she's given me. Same with my kids, Adam and Barbara' ...

"... 'and get this; I never knew Adam was such a good baseball player and Barbara's being pursued by several universities with scholarship offers to play lacrosse. I

knew she played, but I was so busy working I never realized how good she is' ...

"...' before, I'd only caught one of Adam's ball games and the last half of one of Barbara's lacrosse games. Not only is Barbara earning a scholarship, but Adam's only a sophomore and his coach told me he's already being considered for the city high school all-star team' ...

"... he shook his head. 'I never knew that ... never knew what I was missing' ...

"... and again, he smiled. It sounds like you've had an awakening, I said ...

"... 'Yea, and what's funny is right after hearing the song I heard someone say, 'life isn't measured by the number of breaths you take, but the moments in life that take your breath away' ...

"... 'doc, my business doesn't take my breath away, but Melissa and Barbara and Adam, do' ...

"'Impressive,' I remember saying ...

"... 'and I went back to church,' he said. 'And, would you believe it, the first thing I heard were the words, 'let the day's own troubles be sufficient to the day'. It was like He was talking directly to me' ...

"... he took a sip from a bottle of water, then said ...

“... ‘and the next week; ‘I came to give you life and life more abundantly.’ Doc, I’ve been listening to the wrong voices all along’...

"... we talked briefly about the trial and its possibilities. Then he said, ‘and something else’ ...

"...’Got some vacation time coming ... Melissa and I are taking a trip we’ve promised ourselves for years ... Key West ... scuba diving and deep-sea fishing for a week ... a whole week.’ Then he smiled ... ear to ear ...

"... and with that, he left my office. And you know, I have the feeling I’ll see him again when he gets back."

"Sounds like somebody got their priorities straight," Sam says, listening from the next chair.

"I hope so, Sam. I wish I could believe the course of his disease will change. Unfortunately, the realist in me says his future may not be a long one."

"Well, I guess the best you can do is be glad his present is so much better now." Bobby Jo says.

An introspective look ambles across Adrienne’s face. "Guess I’ll have to be satisfied with that."

Pausing, a moment, she looks at Angie and Bobby.

"But maybe the best thing he gave me is another treatment for my future patients."

"And what's that?" Angie asks.

"Tim McGraw ...

... and his song."

We often make a mistake. We consign God, to our finite understanding of time.

God is eternal; the Alpha and the Omega; the beginning and the end. The uncaused cause of all things. That God lives in only one dimension of time; the eternal present moment. All time is simply today in His Kingdom ... no yesterdays ... no tomorrows ... no future ... no past.

As Mr. Smith said, our Lord told us the days own troubles are sufficient to the day. Maybe, what our Lord didn't say is to let the days own joys be embraced in the day.

Something vital for the health of the soul.

Being All Knowing, in His eternal today, our Heavenly Father knows we'll be with Him ...

... eventually ... if only we ...

... live like we ...

Thinkaboutit ... I'm Tony Baggz.

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