

David Ward's Waltz

by Anita Anderson

Slap. A hard fall on equally hard concrete, just at the end of my run. Passersby gathered to see if I was OK. “No, I think my arm is broken,” I said, gasping at the pain and swearing. I couldn’t move the arm, couldn’t sit up. The medics came, then the ambulance (a siren? for me?), and then there was a ride to the hospital over potholes as I tried to breathe deeply and hold the arm still. “Female here, possible arm fracture, in intense pain,” the EMT told the hospital on his cell. “She says she’s lucid, though.”

Once there, examined and x-rayed, finally given some morphine and a judgment (not as bad as it might have been, probably no surgery, use this sling), I tried to think of what friend to call. I had no phone with me, no ID, just a house key. Once phone numbers were stored in my cell, I never dialed them again, so how did they go? I was loopy from the drugs and had to think hard.

But wait—when I write tunes, I often jumpstart them with a sequence of notes based on people’s phone numbers. Did I have a tune I could use? My fingers started to play the beginning of a waltz, still not finished. David’s number.

They gave me a phone to use; in my confused state, it took a couple of tries to get it right. Several rings. “Hello?” said David.

My rescuer arrived to whisk me home, with stops for prescriptions and food that could be eaten with one hand. He opened packages that I couldn’t handle, helped me to clean up, and even lent me a shirt that had snaps instead of buttons—so much easier to deal with.

So David, I think it’s time I finished that waltz for you.

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C F Em7 Am F

9 G C F Am F Dm G

17 C F Dm G F G C

25 Am C F Dm G C

Anita Anderson, in Seattle, plays a lot (*Roguary, Bag o' Tricks, End Effects, Spin*) and writes dance tunes (yes, she's the one who wrote "Bus stop"). Her arm is mending nicely, and she's back gigging, running, dancing, and gardening.