



Superman is back on the movie screens this year. I can remember intently reading about him in comic books when I was a young boy in the early 1940's. My hometown was a city with skyscrapers and big buildings just like Metropolis and I guess you can say that he was my first hero. I even made myself a red cape and tried to fly. Believing I was Superman, gave me courage; but at times it worked against me, as I would get into situations that were not so good with my mother and with the kids down the block from me.

It takes courage to live each day because you never really know what is in store for you when you awake. When you are living with someone on a daily basis, you take on additional courage from your mate and you become confident that, together, you can handle any situation that comes along. Then comes that fateful day when your spouse or parent leaves you and besides the uncertainty of what the day will bring, there is the reality that you must take on the day's challenges alone. Herein lies the state that all of you are in at this time.

Too many consecutive days like this can lead to depression which comes with an ever increasing set of problems. Or, you can gather your courage together and set out to re-establish the order in the house and take upon yourself, the new duties that you have, to keep things moving in a forward direction. You may need courage during the day to: drive yourself to stores, businesses that you used to go together; to drive some place that you yourself, has never driven to; to figure out how much soap to put in the clothes washer; to cook a meal using any of the 50 jars of seasoning that are in the cupboard and by the way, learn how much is correct when you actually do select a seasoning. Going to a store or even a fast food restaurant becomes a totally different experience now that you are alone.

Where does this needed courage come from? I can assure you that it does not come from a homemade red cape. Psychologists write that it forms deep inside all of us and is available to us if we chose to use it. Necessity will pull some of it out. If your husband always pumped the gas for the car, you will need to learn how to do it for yourself. Cooking a full balanced meal from scratch for the first time can be a challenge for a man, but too many fast food meals will soon force him to learn how to do it. Grief Therapists suggest that a person should set simple goals for the day that are achievable. Basically, take it one step at a time, and let the small successes of the day invigorate your self-esteem as well as your courage level so that subsequent days will yield even more successes. These successes will form a solid basis and provide the additional courage to take on larger endeavors. It is certainly acceptable to use family members and friends as crutches as you begin to move about in society. This allows those people the opportunity to help you and it does strengthen your relationships with them. You should however, keep in mind that they also have daily agendas to pursue.

Mustering your courage to tackle the day's events will create successes that will increase your self-confidence, which allows you to dig deeper and pull out more courage for larger tasks. Soon you will see yourself attending to those things that must get accomplished and your courage has allowed you to turn the corner to return to living life as best you can without your loved one. Each of you tonight are to be commended for having the courage to drive to this location, attend this meeting and tell your stories. You should never lose sight of the fact that besides the internal mental and emotional push behind your courage, there surely is some help coming from your loved one. When you achieve a success during the day, stop, smile and say thanks. You know that they are very proud of you.

Art Ercolani

## AN IRISH FRIENDSHIP WISH

May there always be work for  
your hands to do;

May your purse always hold  
a coin or two;

May the sun always shine  
on your windowpane;

May a rainbow be certain to  
follow each rain;

May the hand of a friend  
always be near you;

May God fill your heart  
with gladness to cheer you.