



Farewell Foot

To my Midwestern-born friends I'm a wimp. My temperature tolerance is a from 73 to 78, I'm scared of corn fields and the only story I've heard about tobogganing ends with a broken back. So yes, I'll avoid that like the plague. Not to mention, my constant ailments that prove I don't have the same hearty Midwestern constitution of my friends. Most of the time they tune out my not so subtle complaints. So, one muggy Friday, when I was whining about a few mosquito bites on my legs during a backyard BBQ they just chalked it up to me being me.

The next day I had the "normal" allergic swelling around my bites and skipped off to a concert hoping it would help distract me from scratching them. With drinks spilling, dust everywhere, and people stepping on each other, I'd expect my feet to be a little gross and sore. But after the concert, my left ankle was REALLY sore. I looked down to see that it had already surpassed cankle-sized.

After a mild freak out during which I forced everyone to look at my ever-expanding cankle, I finally accepted my body's decline. Let's just add the cankle to my stretch marks and stomach rolls. I'm getting old, and at 22, a little more rapidly than most. I went home, washed up, and crawled in bed for a refreshing night's sleep.

But it wasn't.

I tossed and turned all through the night. The sheet on top of my left foot felt as if it weighed a hundred pounds. In the morning my alarm blared, and I tried to step out of bed. The pain was excruciating. After screaming out a few expletives and holding back tears I did what any self-sufficient 22-year-old would do...called my mom.

Mom didn't mess around. After texting her a picture of my deformed foot she went into full emergency mode and secured a 3 o'clock doctor's appointment. I settled in on the couch turned on some Bachelorette and iced my foot with a bag of Trader Joe's Chicken Fried Rice.

When the doctor saw my food she said, "Wow, it's a good thing you came in today. Had you waited any longer you could have lost your foot." LOST MY FOOT?!?!? Of course, I had webmd'd the symptoms when chillin' with fried rice and it said "go to the doctor, you may lose your foot." While I normally find any reason to irrationally freak out I had actually calmed myself down. Convincing myself that it was the typical webmdoverreaction. After all, my foot was just a little red.

But no. Overreaction was needed.

After explaining that I would have to get an antibiotic shot to save it, she proceeded to call ALL the doctors in to show off how deformed her patient was. They warned me the shot would hurt a bit (WHEN HAS A DOCTOR EVER SAID A SHOT WOULD HURT, AREN'T THEY SUPPOSED TO REASSURE YOU?!?!?) but after some questioning they promised I could choose where to get the injection. Okay, I

can handle this. After all, nothing could hurt as much as my foot did at that moment. The doctors left and two nurses waltzed in carrying maniacally glinting shots.

After a long debate with nurse #1 about whether I could handle the dosage in my arm, I finally succumbed to the humiliating reality that I had to get not one, but TWO shots in my butt.

"Okay, because of the large dosage we will have to inject these in your buttocks," the first nurse said cause you.

In shock, I blurted out "HAHA, that's funny. I choose my arm." After all, the gawking doctor had just promised me it could go anywhere.

The doctor returned and wrote me out a prescription for antibiotic pills in addition to my sore butt. Then, she pulled a sharpie out of her pocket and proceeded to draw a dotted line around the red swelling on my foot, warning, "If you see the redness go outside this line, go to the emergency room immediately. You can lose your foot."

And that was it. She didn't say I was in the clear, she didn't say my foot was safe. She said I could still "lose" it. As if there would be some glimmer of hope that I could find it after.

I expected to leave the doctor feeling reassured and almost instantaneously better. But she left me with looming thoughts of life without my left foot. As the redness crept sneakily past the dotted sharpie line that likened me to Frankenstein the constant picture texts sent to my parents back at the mother ship and the thought of never having to wait in line at Disneyland again as Footless Katie were the only two things that kept me from bolting to the ER.

In a few days, my foot returned to normal size. I didn't have to go back to the less than reassuring doctor, and I can sit on my butt again. And fortunately, I still have to wait in line at Disneyland. But now, I'm not annoyed by mosquito bites, I'm petrified of them. I carry military grade bug spray with me everywhere, ready to strike down one of those blood-sucking demons at a moment's notice.