

Extracts from the book "L'OSCURITÀ, MA IO HO UNA LUCE" (working in progress) by Loredana Denicola

When my sister helped me to take off my pajamas to wash myself in the hospital toilet, I saw my body in the mirror.

I closed my eyes and cried.

I didn't want to see such hurtful truth. I was scared ... deeply.

What had I done to myself?

From 8.82 stone (or 56 kg) in October 2017, my weight had fallen to 6.46 stone — 40 kg.

I was unwholesome: my skin had weakened, and I looked like an old lady, all aged skin and bones.

It was astonishing to see my body react: shrinking, transforming; abandoning the skin — and me. I felt very weak — sometimes without even the energy to answer the phone. I still passed only blood in the toilet, with no traces of poo for more than three months.

Where had my poo gone?

It had disappeared.

Then, I thought about my body's vital functions: how much I had aggravated them — so that, by then, everything was upside down.

My immune system had lost its equilibrium; it was not recognizing what was good for me, and what was bad. My digestive system was fucked ...

... we are so complex.

I had destroyed my body.

Believe me, it is shocking, when you see your reflection, to feel its sick energy, reduced almost to that of a helpless vegetable: impotent, having to accept your fate ...

Deep inside your mind, a little voice shouts, loudly — I can change my fate: why must I accept it ...? I will transform it as I wish.

It is hard just to accept something as it is, especially when it is bad for you. You look at yourself as a detached observer, and see yourself helpless — who is that woman?

You cannot get up anymore, because you don't have the physical strength.

You are a piece of meat, lying on a bed.

People are helping you; without them, you couldn't do anything.

Your mind is absent ...

I am trying to motivate myself: I am desperately looking for my inner strength; the whole process requires mental strength — yet also acceptance, hope, compassion for oneself, patience.

You realise that, for the time being, you cannot do anything about the situation.

You can only wait — patiently — and trust that everything will be ok again, in the end.

Have trust in life — and especially in yourself.

Forget everything else: just relax, and move on; seeing your disease as an opportunity, and not as a problem.

That is what I did.

One day, it will pass. Oh my God — it is so difficult!