



STYLIN' & PROFILIN'

by Megan Waldrep With over ten years in the industry designing for her own label, she began writing because "it just felt good." In addition to writing, Megan is currently the head designer and creative director for Mew Kids, a children's clothing line, as well as a co-author of the much loved children's book, *Spice & Little Sugar*. You can say she wears many hats. Which is fitting. For a fashion writer and all. Discover her world at www.mewkids.com.

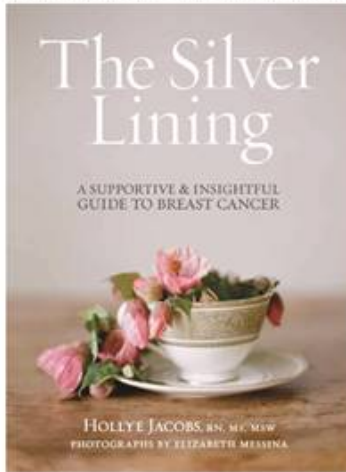
The Silver Pen

“Who's that over there? She's lovely and so put together!" I said to my friend.

"That's **Hollye Jacobs**. She has a blog called 'The Silver Pen' about her journey with breast cancer. You should check it out."

I pull out my iPhone and go to www.thesilverpen.com right then and there. And so is my introduction to the world of Hollye Jacobs, where the atmosphere is filled with enlightenment, the tone is welcoming and warm, and the clouds are lined with silver.

Hollye is a force of nature wrapped in an elegant package of a caring friend, loving wife and mother of one. With a highly accredited background as a pediatric and adult palliative care nurse (read "palliative care" as "relief of pain"), social worker, child development specialist and speaker



The gorgeous cover of the much-anticipated book out March 18. Pre-order your copy today!

with experience contributing to various medical journals, her writing is self-aware, precise, informative, thoughtful, gentle



Co-author of *The Silver Lining: A Supportive and Insightful Guide to Breast Cancer* and renaissance woman Hollye Jacobs of "The Silver Pen."

and humorous in all the right places. Her extensive medical knowledge combined with her true-life experience as a breast cancer patient gives readers a truly unique and realistic insight into the journey of living with the disease. **F-word Breast Cancer** or "FBC" as she calls it is as real as it gets.

"It started when my very best friend was diagnosed with breast cancer about 18 months before I was. Then I was diagnosed with it, went through it, and wrote about my experiences through my professional lens as a nurse, social worker, and child development specialist. When I was in recovery, two of my very best friends were diagnosed with late-stage cancer and one of them actually died. So I went from the role of the friend, the role of the clinician, to the role of the patient, to the role of the friend again – so I ended up having all of these different perspectives."

What began as a way to keep family and friends apprised of her treatment, her blog, *The Silver Pen*, has manifested into a book deal with Simon & Schuster. The blog-turned-book, which she co-authored with her close friend **Elizabeth Messina**, *The Silver Lining: A Supportive and Insightful Guide To Breast Cancer*, combines Elizabeth's beautiful photography with Hollye's medical knowledge and breast cancer experience, creating a visual and vocal resource for anyone whose life has been touched by

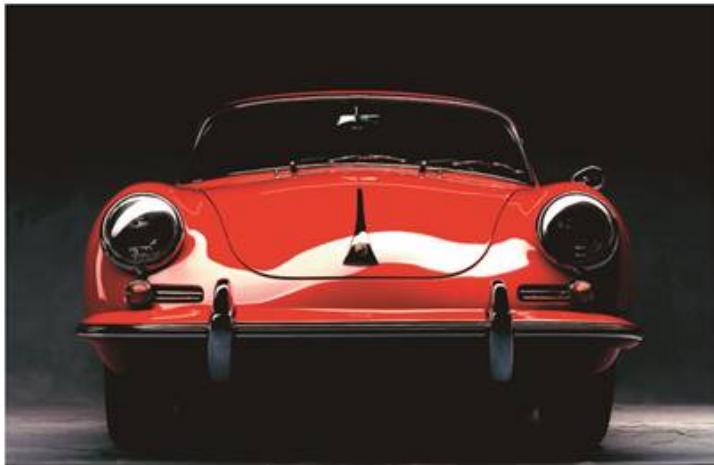
cancer. *Kirkus Review* describes the book as, "a dignified, intensely personal journey of survival." It's that and much more.

"When I was going through my experience, my very dear friend Elizabeth Messina photographed me. She said to me at one point, 'I'm a photographer, and I'm your girlfriend and this is how I want to support you. I want to give you the gift of memory if you ever want it. So if you ever want to look back on this experience and have a memory of it, I'm going to give that to you. And if you never want to look at these images, that's fine.'"

Hollye agreed and off they went into an adventure neither of them could have ever imagined.

"We did a bunch of shoots over the course of my treatment. It's interesting because her images showed me that I was still me. When I looked in the mirror (during treatment), what I saw was a reflection of cancer, illness, mutilation, chemotherapy, radiation, surgery... that's what I saw. Elizabeth's images showed me that I was still me; it's still my smile, it's still my eyes, it's still me. It's the most incredible gift I could have ever imagined, and this is just something that she wanted to do. The power of friendship is phenomenal."

Elizabeth's images created much more than a memory of Hollye's journey through cancer treatment; they are a catalyst to further connect her story with



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Hollye and the HOTY (Photo by Elizabeth Messina)



The Silver Pen in action. (Photo by Elizabeth Messina)



"Suddenly Seven" (Photo by Elizabeth Messina)

people all over the world.

"She came to chemo with me at one point, and she had never been to chemo. So she shot chemo. The images she captured where incredibly insightful for me, because I saw it as the opportunity to demystify the experience. As a nurse, I had that clinical knowledge and experience to see things more insightful for my experience, but when I looked at Elizabeth's images from chemo, all of a sudden it dawned on me that we might have the opportunity to demystify the experience. To say, 'This is what it's going to look like, this is what a chemo chair looks like, this is what it looks like to be connected to an IV bag...' So much fear about what is about to happen comes from the unknown. You're still getting chemo, but there's a little silver lining to know what to expect. This is what you can plan for. All of a sudden it became clear that we might have something that could be a paradigm shift for the cancer experience."

What exactly is a silver lining? Hollye explains, "The important thing is that when I talk about silver linings, it's not in a Pollyanna way. (For example), I'm lying on your bathroom floor and I'm too sick to get to bed. I ask, 'What's the silver lining, where's the silver lining?' and my dog comes in and lays with me. Or I'm looking outside my window when I was too sick to stand, and there was a hummingbird. It doesn't mean I can suddenly get off my couch, but there's a little light in this place of darkness. It doesn't make the wait in the doctor's office move any more quickly, but if you sit within a situation that is uncomfortable, painful, or even tragic, there can be that glimmer of hopefulness or light in that darkness... how to live with it, how to process it in a way to get through it hopefully unharmed or better because of the experience. Cultivating this sort of resilience because, for me, that's what life is all about."

Hollye leads with a loving foot, always considering the feelings of family and friends during the process. Her husband (affectionately known as HOTY or "Husband of the Year") also contributes to her blog, sharing insight from his point of view. Her daughter, "Suddenly Seven," is frequently mentioned in her daily posts as well.

"When I went from the role of the patient to the role of the girlfriend again, I had a better sense and understanding of what is helpful to a patient and what doesn't work. Even though the intentions come from a good place, sometimes what is said or what is done isn't perceived as intended." One chapter is titled, "Children Always Know," which discusses how to talk with and incorporate children from the time of diagnosis throughout the trajectory of the disease. There are chapters discussing "how to be a friend" and "how to support a loved one through the experience." Precious information that empowers not only the patient, but family and friends as well.

Her book is described as part memoir, part curated information – simultaneously clinically credible because it is written by a clinician and also visually beautiful. A book that is both supportive and informative, while also hopeful and realistic. Hollye further explains, "It's a book I wish I had had and doesn't exist. Because if it existed, I would not have written it!"

The book breaks down every piece of information you may need to know about going through treatment – from all the questions to ask your doctor, what to pack for chemo, how to help with needle phobia, how to help with insomnia and everything in between. A "must read" hardly describes it.

I ask her what is the biggest lesson she's learned from all of this. Hollye reflects, "I've learned two things with absolute certainty after this experience. The first lesson is that pain is pain, and it's inevitable that we are all going to experience it in life. Whether it's a diagnosis, heartbreak, financial devastation or whatever it is, we're all going to go through some sort of pain. The second lesson is how we can get through it is to look for silver linings. They don't make the pain go away but provide the balance and perspective to get through it. More is gonna come in life, I know it is. I don't know what it is, but it's gonna come and now I know how I'm going to do it."

On March 18, Simon & Schuster officially puts the much-anticipated book to print. Pre-orders for *The Silver Lining: A Supportive and Insightful Guide to Breast Cancer* are available now through Barnes & Noble, Amazon and Indiebound.com. Thank you, Hollye for helping us recognize the silver linings in our lives. We look forward to following your journey that is sure to be guided by what you do best: letting your love light shine! ✨

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