

## CHANTS OF A SURVIVOR

A lump appears.  
Am I imagining it or not?  
Mammograms, exams, biopsies, and surgery follow.  
Then wait, wait, and wait some more.

Words from the surgeon  
“I’m sorry, you have breast cancer”  
Echo through my waking and sleeping mind  
Week, after week, after week.

Fear tries to seize my heart and body.  
Deep breathing and walking calm my nerves.  
Words of a song remembered from my church:  
“Be not afraid, for I am with you always,”  
“Be not afraid, for I am with you always”.

Warrior Woman emerges from my body.  
From within she puts up her shields to prevent  
this cancer spreading.  
I have so much to live for! I have so much to live for!

Chemotherapy drugs work their way through me  
Like a raging forest fire scorching all life in its path.  
I honor you.  
You are my powerful ally. You are my powerful ally.

That second week I lose my hair.  
My vanity is stripped and I feel naked.  
Then I hear comforting words from another survivor:  
“It will grow back, it will grow back.”

Love, support and compassion from my husband, family and friends  
Carry me through this turbulent time.  
My body feels wrapped with a warm security blanket around it.  
All the prayers, cards, and positive energy lift my spirit  
And gives me strength to continue on.  
I am healing. I am healing.

Radiation comes next.  
This golden healing light cleanses me and purifies me.  
Make me whole again. Make me whole again.

This enemy may have invaded my body  
But it no longer wields its power over my mind and spirit.  
Hope springs forth!  
I will live one day at a time in joy! I will live one day at a time in joy!