

Tuesday 27/2/01

Up early. I needed to write. I didn't like the new specialist. He might be a hotshot surgeon but he is a nowhere man personally. A large area of skin and tissue around where the mole was has to be cut away and a skin graft put over.⁴ Three other moles⁵, with the potential to become problems, will also be removed. The ten days enforced bed rest in hospital to allow the skin graft to heal will be difficult.

It was a rough night. Rex was up too. He woke me at 12.30am for a chat. It took nearly three hours to go back to sleep. I'm waiting, wondering what is going to happen. What does the future hold? There is a sick feeling in my stomach. I feel for him. It's bad enough for me, but it's worse for him.

I'm going to see David Lester this afternoon. I want to know more. I want to gain some ownership of the process. I need to bring our guardian angels to bear, to watch over us and protect us. We need to surround ourselves with goodness, positiveness, carers and people to do the journey with us.

I'm going ahead with planning the trip, and with our super fund and investment company. All previous thinking and planning holds good. To put on hold is to acknowledge we won't make it. We can and we will. It's okay to feel mortal and negative occasionally, you wouldn't be human otherwise. I feel so close to my man right now. He needs me in a way he's never needed me before. He wants me to be strong, to look

⁴A malignant melanoma is a skin cancer involving the pigment cells of the skin. If untreated it will continue to grow and invade the surrounding tissue. It can also spread to the lymph glands and later elsewhere around the body. For this reason it must be removed. In order to achieve complete removal a margin of apparently normal skin and tissue is removed with the tumour. Depending on the size of the defect this area may then need to be covered with a skin graft.

⁵Some people have certain abnormal-looking moles (called dysplastic nevi or atypical moles) that are more likely than normal moles to develop into melanoma.

after him. I will. He's frightened of leaving the dogs and me alone.

My legs are leaden, hardly able to move. Life has a touch of unreality at the moment. I'm not letting him go. Touch is so important - holding his hand, touching his arm or leg, stroking him, feeling the beauty of him, feeling his love and sending out all the love I have in return.

Marriage vows – for better, for worse, in sickness and in health, until death do us part. For now it is time to muse, to think of my man and what he means to me. He's the best thing that's ever happened to me. Twenty-three years on Monday.