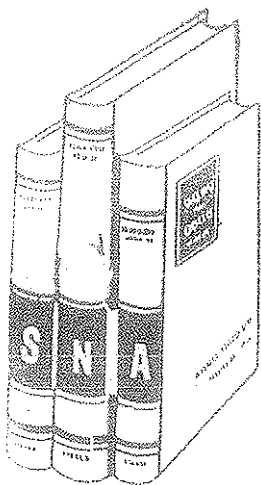


MY MOST UNFORGETTABLE PATIENT

By

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It was a rainy, chilly night. We could hear only the drops of water falling on our hospital roof. Suddenly I heard the bell ringing in the out-patient department. It was 11.30 p.m. and I was on night duty with the private patients. I thought it would be a new admission and I was just finishing my work. In the meantime, I received a message that the patient was going to be one of mine.

On my way back to the duty room, I heard screaming from downstairs. The noise was coming from the new patient. When I looked at her, I found her in a horrifying mood. She was a well educated, middle-aged and wealthy woman from a good family. She was suffering from asthma. Immediately Doctor was called and she was kept comfortable after the necessary examination.

I read Doctor's orders and went to give her medicine and treatment. As soon as she saw me with an injection tray, she started to shout loudly. I thought she might be mentally ill also. After a few minutes she said to her attendant, that she wanted injection only from the Doctor, and not from me. Her relatives were puzzled over her refusal to take the injection from me. Any way they consoled me. I explained to Doctor on duty, and the injection was given by her. The patient slept all through the night.

Next morning her condition was serious; she was semi-conscious and restless. Oxygen was going on. All necessary examination was done

and she passed two days in the same condition.

On the third day her condition was better. I entered her private room and wished her good morning. She turned her face away from me. I was surprised to see her behaviour because I knew from the Doctor that she was not a mental case. I also had seen her talking and acting normally with her relatives and the Doctor. It was very hard for me to work with such a patient who didn't like me as a nurse. Anyway, I tried to do my duty as best as I could.



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After two days I went close to her and asked "How are you?" She gave me a short answer—"fine". I arranged her bed and gave her morning care. She did not say a word, nor show any expression on her face during that procedure. After that I fixed her room and changed her flowers. That day she also refused to take the steam inhalation from me.

The next morning when I went to her and wished her she acted the same as before. I finished my work

as usual, but that day I noticed she was watching me very carefully. The very same evening I went to give her medicine which she took. Then she thanked me. I was really surprised to hear "thank you" from her.

I told her frankly, while I was giving her evening care, that I was wondering why she acts so differently when nurses come for treatment and asked her why she seems to dislike them. As soon as she heard this from me she laughed and said, "It was true that I disliked nurses and the nursing profession, but now my ideas have been changed". She told me that the reason for it was that a few years ago her father was sick and died in some other hospital, and there, she found that the nurses were careless in their work, behaviour and even character.

And from that time she hated nurses, and she had taken a decision that she would never talk to a nurse, or be under a nurse's care. But after coming to this hospital she saw the noble work of nurses, which is all for the patient's comfort and happiness. It seems that she never thought a nurse could be a model of sacrifice, and that her actions be so filled with dignity.

Yes, I was really very happy to hear such kind words from her and to know that she had received such a good impression of nurses.

Thereafter I found her very humble, gentle and thankful in her talk and behaviour.

The next day when I came on duty, I learned from the report that she had an attack of asthma again and she was quite ill. I was really sad to know that. After receiving the report I went to her room and I saw that she was restless. Oxygen was going on. I stood a few minutes in her room and thought she needed
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