

Things in Motion ...

All things are in motion and nothing is at rest...you cannot go into the same (river) twice. --Heraclitus (540?-480?)B.C.

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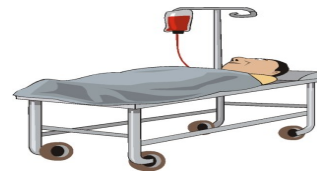
"BLOOD ON THE SADDLE...."

IN THE FALL of 1951 the "police action" in South Korea had severely reduced our army's supply of blood for the wounded; a large-scale effort was needed to replenish the dwindling supply. Among the "volunteers" who rushed to donate blood were both students and ship's company of the US Naval School, Naval Justice, US Naval Base, Newport, RI. I was, at that time, the youngest student in the school, woefully un-qualified to attend because my rank at that time was Seaman; a grade short of the usual petty officer requirement. I was one of the living examples of the Navy's honorable tradition of getting the job done. In all my nineteen years I had never given blood—nor even had blood drawn for lab tests more than was required for my naval enlistment. As a product of the farm I was unaffected by the butchering of livestock or the dressing of slain game, but having my own blood taken was a white horse of another color.

Most of the students in the current two classes at the School of Justice were petty officers up to and including Chief—and most were serving aboard ship; none were in my category—fresh off the turnip truck. I put on my most unconcerned facade as I sat

in the clinic with sixty classmates awaiting our turn to give blood and get back to class. I wasn't exactly afraid ... it was more like having a slight case of *absolute terror!* We filed into the wing where a long row of beds with attendant corpsmen and one or two doctors were waiting. Each student stood by a bed, removed his jumper, climbed in bed then turned his face away from the corpsman who jabbed an enormous needle into his arm, placed some kind of rubber gimmick in his hand and said, "Squeeze!" After a few seconds, I decided it wasn't so bad after all, and I quickly pumped out my blood, feeling a new surge of confidence. The corpsman removed his gear, put a patch over the hole in my arm, and told me to sit up for a few minutes before I stood on the floor. Others were beginning to stand and don their jumpers, so I hopped lightly to the floor and reached for my own jumper.

My next recollection was of being upside down while someone with a large swab was dabbing ammonia into my right eye. One of the doctors pointed out my nose and the swab moved away from my burning eye at the same time that four corpsmen grabbed whatever part of me they could reach and lifted me onto the bed. I was quickly covered by a blanket, had two pillows under my head and was offered orange juice and pastries. I'm sure my face was scarlet from my embarrassment, but I was treated like a VIP, was encouraged to nap for an hour and after further examination, transportation was called for me and I returned to class. To my surprise, no classmate poked fun at me, but I took special precautions to insure that no such event occurred at future donations.



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