

Nightingales

Subject: RE: Hello again from Beemer

From: davidg@abc.rr.com

Date: Sat, 14 Mar 2009 21:48:32: -0400

To: "Bill D.Thurman" <billdth@nomail.com>

Hi Nephew Bill,

Your Aunt Immy and I are just dusting up after hosting your cousin Amy for the week, while visiting us after graduating from the nursing college in Painted Post. That young lady is a challenge, as you may remember. I don't think I've ever gotten as much advice from one person in 7 days, on everything from my health to tying wet flies. It is true she ties a pretty good Leadwing. I'll admit.

I haven't known very many nurses in my life, but that's OK with me. The few that have crossed my path either broke my heart or annoyed me with well intentioned advice I didn't want to hear.

I suppose there's no question nurses are compassionate and helpful. What motivates these women (and men, of course) to care for the sick is beyond me. My compassion could never stretch far enough to provide intimate care to someone I wasn't planning to sleep with. That sounds terrible, I suppose, but I always tell that to women so they don't take their clothes off in my presence unless they really, really like me. It works, because I haven't yet had a lady disrobe in front of me. Anyway, I guess that means I wouldn't make a very good doctor, either

Another puzzling mystery is what motivates a nurse to give advice on any topic imaginable, to anyone within a mile of her. It's true! They all do it! A nurse knows what's good for you, she thinks, maybe because she can better imagine what's going on inside you than you can. Book learning makes 'em confident, I guess.

An old friend of Immy's is a nurse and she stopped by frequently while our kitchen was getting a makeover two years ago. Melissa was convinced I couldn't make the right decisions without her help, and I often found myself defending where I wanted one appliance or another. I guess nurses are used to being listened to. She didn't like my idea of having the stove right next to

the kitchen door, in case I had to get burning fritters right out the door and throw them in the back yard, something that happens more often than I care to admit. Your Aunt Immy didn't like my plan, either. We did it Melissa's way. I got even, though, and named my new dog after her. I call him Mel for short.

I fish with a bachelor college professor who tells me his neighbor, a nurse, often walks into his home unannounced, washes the breakfast dishes and then rearranges his cupboards. He's worried about starving to death some evening when he can't find his box of hamburger helper. One morning, the lady reshuffled all of his book shelves on two walls and left the books arranged by height rather than topic. Yes, the shelves are much neater, but he curses her out loud as he runs from one end of the book stacks to the other hunting down a book.

And then there was Immy's late cousin, a nurse I called the Angel of Death. Unwilling to hang up her stethoscope and retire, she kept working at the hospital well into her ... well, I can't say exactly how old she was, but she looked older than the Grim Reaper. No telling how many folks keeled over dead from fright when she entered their room in the middle of the night. You'd think they would have fired her for ruining their business. Maybe the insurance companies liked her.

The nurse who broke my heart? A sweet young girl who attended me many years ago when I was hospitalized after that accident. My face and hands were all bandaged and I couldn't help myself with anything. Not realizing I was her age because of my bandages, the lovely lass was about to give me what they call a full bath. You know, both front and back on the same day. But then she saw my age on the chart. When she found some old coot to do it instead, it broke my heart. Just as well, I suppose. She wouldn't have gotten very far, I can tell you, without learning my age and a lot more.

Oh, I sat down to write you because your cousin Amy is on her way to Beemer to stay a week with you! Your new wife will enjoy her immensely. If she wants to learn to tie flies.

Warmly, your Uncle Dave

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David Griffin

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