

NIGHTINGALE SONGS

A forum for nurses to share their silent moments of reflection on their nursing.

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"Ann"

She stood transfixed
in disbelief
Her expression
filled with fear
Wide eyes surveyed
the tiny babe
As they filled up...
and then a tear
Spilled down her cheek.
As I opened the isolette
"You can touch her hand,"
I said.
Hesitantly, very hesitantly
Her finger touched lightly...
A tiny hand grasped tightly
She smiled through
The Tears
Her name is "Ann," she said.

Carol Drozdowicz

Diversity

Different customs, different times
People come from varying climes.
What's important in their lives?
Sons and daughters, husbands and wives.
Ways of worship, foods they eat
Rest and hygiene are needs to meet,
How do I communicate?
A smile, a nod, a touch will state.
Though not the same as you or me,
We all share in our need to be.

Barbara Sorbello

Nursing - The Seasons of My Life

Nursing is the spring of my life -
Each experience is fresh and new.
There's wonderment
Like flowers washed with morning dew.

Nursing is the summer of my life -
A time to perfect all I know.
There's confidence
A world where I can grow.

Nursing is the autumn of my life -
Ablaze with experience rich and glowing.
There's compassion
From richness of caring and knowing.

Nursing is the winter of my life -
A tapestry, a mosaic of all I am.
There's challenge
To find the spring again.

Charlotte Dison

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Because I care...

Because I care, I bring
 hope to your hopelessness,
 Because I care, I see you
 as loving woman and mother
 Because I care, I enter
 your world with humility and respect
 I honor your belief that
 somehow I can help.
 I live your caring with you.
 to cry when sad
 to howl with delight.
 Because I care, I want to
 be there with you and for you
 in sharing your pain and joy.

Because you care, I can
 care with you.
 Caring creates meaning for you and I.

Daniel L. Little

Campos

We arrive in our fancy blue van,
 Smiles fade to tears
 Which I am afraid to show.
 Big brown eyes peer up at me
 Asking who?
 And what?
 And why?

It is at least one hundred degrees
 but the breeze makes the heat
 almost bearable.
 I scan beyond the gravel and shacks
 to see a garden---
 where everything is green and glistening
 in perfect, diagonal rows.
 The sprinklers are spraying gallons of water
 over this Eden---
 As I see the señorita with long
 flowing black hair
 turn on the faucet, filling her plastic bucket
 spilling and splashing over---
 I see droplets on your face
 And am ashamed to tell you who,
 and what---
 and why.

Alysa Hilton

Blue...

I write in blue because it is the color of the sky
 and the ocean and because it is the color I feel
 inside as I grow through one of the most difficult
 times in my life...

The art of nursing helps me through these times
 though, because in caring for certain patients lately I
 have regained a kind of sense of faith that was lost.

I have been caring for some very ill men lately
 and because of their closeness to the super being we
 call "God" they seem to all be surviving the
 desperate, critical illness!

Their commonalities: A steadfast faith that
 "everything will be alright" and that "God loves me
 and will help me." They have begun to help me turn
 the dull blues in my heart into a bright, shiny blue
 as the one in the sky. I only pray to continue in my
 quest for the place they have achieved.

Carmen Prieto

A Student Nurse First Bath

I remember walking down the hall hearing the
 hollowing and screeching screams coming out of a
 patient's room -

Surely they won't give that patient to me - I
 wouldn't know what to do with him -

My classmates and I jokingly, nervously call -
 "that one's going to be mine!" -

Surely they won't subject this patient to a
 fumbling unknowing novice nurse -

My instructor assigned us our patients to bathe -
 to practice on - Yes that was my patient -

Surely she'd give me further instructions how to
 care for this man - lying in a fetal position, yelling,
 bellowing out those strange sounds -

His eyes were crystal clear blue - a young adult
 with all his limbs in painful contractures - looking at
 me, sending me a message

As a child on her mothers apron strings, I
 pleaded for more time - more experience but my
 instructor sent me back in with reassurance -

Surely you don't want me in here - his eyes so
 frightened - so devastating - so alone - very alone -

As I spoke to him, and I touched and caressed
 his body with a warm wash cloth, our eyes met and
 I learned from him what nursing is.

Chris Pfeffer

She is Still Beautiful

Miss Margaret opened her weary eyes. Lids heavy with pain, tired from months of suffering.

Chemotherapy....Radiation....

Can't eat....Can't sleep....Can't walk any more. Her once beautiful face, glowing skin, strong body, has been ravaged by disease. But she is still beautiful.

I could see that she was being well cared for. Miss Margaret was clean, linens fresh, environment safe, I.V.

running well, tube feeding intact, foley bag dependent, dressings clean and dry. What else could she need?

I knew what I could do for her. We held hands and then I brushed her hair. Stroke after stroke, her soft downy hairs fluttered through the brush. I brushed gently, in a comforting rhythm. How important touch and physical comfort is. As I cared for her, I remembered my mother brushing my hair, and how special and cared for it made me feel. I am glad that Miss Margaret and I shared this moment. We both felt a time of peace and comfort.

Yes, she is still beautiful.

Barbara Sorbello

Outside Her Window

Grandchildren playing outside her window...

How can she live?

With a fist-sized cancer devouring her chest,
perched there like an angry red beast.

Floors to wash, meals to cook...

How can she live?

No one else will change her dressing,
blood sprays each time from open arterioles.

She gives motherly advice to the young nurse...

How can she live?

The daughter will change it,
next visit, maggots debride the wound.

She loves her husband for fifty years..almost...

How can she live?

Brain metastasis? She is afraid. She cries - no golden
wedding.

Invisible black cats outside.

One day before fifty, her husband suddenly dies...

How can she live?

In peace. No more black cats.
Her husband smiles at her, outside her window.

Marcia Dombro

I See Your Fear

I see your fear.
 I sense your loss.
 I can hold your hand.
 I cannot talk.
 Yet we communicate.
 Love has no
 barriers...nursing...giving!
 Our needs are met.
 "You can get pregnant again."
 has no business here.
 Our touch, our tears, our sharing
 to start our grieving
 and start living...again.

Rosa Noguera

Don't Turn the Light Off

"Don't turn the light off nurse -
 I'm going to be in the dark a long
 time."

How can I respond? It's a quiet
 night - I can sit here and take your
 hand and talk about the light and
 beauty and love in the place you're
 going. We can talk about your
 loved ones, your comfort, your
 needs, your life experiences, Our
 life experiences -

Lead me to what you'd like to
 share and, and let's make this
 precious moment meaningful to
 both of us forever -

Etha Miles

A Friendly Smile

A friendly smile
 in a new place
 A soothing voice
 in a fearful time.

 A calming stroke
 in a painful time.
 A reassuring face
 in a frightful moment.

 A skillful hand
 to perform a task
 An alert mind
 to keep on track.

Compounded with
 love and compassion
 this is what
 nursing is all about.

Zoila Davis

Good Morning

Good morning I say to you,
 as I hold your hand and smile with
 you,
 hoping to melt away all barriers,
 hoping to bridge our spirits, to
 care,
 to nurture and together soar like
 eagles
 over the day's challenges,
 because...
 I am your nurse.

Darla Brown Libby

From The Editors

Some readers have responded
 with financial support for future
 seasonal issues. We appreciate
 this assistance, and to avoid the
 expense of a special account, we
ask that checks be made
payable to: Marilyn E. Parker.

We invite your continuing
 responses to this forum and
 encourage your contributions to
 these pages.

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