

NIGHTINGALE SONGS

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

November 1993

Volume 2 Number 4

ISOLATION PRECAUTIONS

I

Some drive you deep
unto the coils of your self
not because of your being,
not because of your soul,
but because
of what you might give them
in return.

One of them was here.
Lady in white was here.
She had hopes for you
She had wishes for you
and she gave you time.
But she was half in, half out,
isolation precautions,
The sign told all,
the reason for masks and gowns,
and how you were
to be separated from them.

II

She wore boots over her shoes
so she won't have to pass the
broken paths you've trod.
The mask covered her mouth
to silence her asking;
She already knows you.
The goggles over her eyes
to blur your suffering.
for she understood your hurt.
The gowns were donned
to keep you from being too near
her immaculate body
There was no time, no hope,
no need for others to be close
The gloves covered her hands
so she did not have to touch
your sore,
after all your end was near.

III

I was here
but I wore the boots
so I can trace your footsteps,
to where you've been
so I too can partake of
your journeys past
and guide you to where
you're going.
I wore the mask
so I can remember
that soothing sounds come
not only from my tongue
but also from my body
which shouts the louder.
I wore the cap on my head
to remember that you are human
as much as I am human.
I wore gloves
to remember that what touches you
are not my hands,
what touches you
is my soul.

Tomas M. Madayag

NIGHTINGALE SONGS

is free to be used
by nurses and for nursing.

The copying and sharing
of its contents is
encouraged.

THE BITER

Hey there old man tied to your bed, do you know
where you are, do you understand. I'm here to
help you -- yes I've come as a friend.

But you came with a warning, be wary, beware for
this one's a biter, be bitten, stand clear.

When I walked into your room for what did I see,
not a biter, but a bitter, angry old man staring at
me.

Just give me a chance and I'm sure you'll know,
I've come as your friend, your nurse, not your foe.

I'm not here to hurt you, no that's not why I've
come. I've come as your companion, a friend, a
chum.

I've come here to feed you and clean you my
friend, I've come here to give you your dignity
again.

Just give me a chance and I'm sure you'll see
there's no need for biting a friend like me.

James D. Wright

I CARE FOR HIM

My hands are moist,
My heart is quick,
My nerves are taut,
He's in the next room,
I care for him.

The room is tense,
It's anger-filled,
The air seems thick,
I'm with him now,
I care for him.

Time goes slowly by,
As our fears subside,
I can sense his calm,
He softens now,
I care for him.

His eyes meet mine,
Unable to speak,
I feel his trust,
I open my heart,
I care for him.

It's time to leave.
Our bond is made,
Unspoken thoughts,
But understood,
I care for him!

James M. Collins

TIMELESSLY AGING

Autumn, quietly and gently, cloaked
the timeless fields
Splattering its colors of reds, pink and yellows on
once lustrous green leaves.

Leaves once limber and graceful,
now brittle and fragile...still...
dancing softly in the breeze.

The leaves glow brilliantly,
have never shone brighter
or danced so gently.

Leaves aflame proclaiming life
in whistling whispers to one another.

A playful tiny brown squirrel
skitters to my boughs
confides its lost safety among my branches

Wrinkled, beautiful leaves
whisper aloud of life and breathe the air of earth.

And who said old is ugly?

Naomi Poston

4/2

She came into the room smiling.
 "This is the real thing," said the interpreter.
 "Sientese," I said, gesturing to the chair, grateful
 for my limited Spanish.
 I asked her questions about cancer and illness.
 "Only Americans talk of dying of cancer" she
 said.
 I asked her questions about cancer and illness.
 "Look in the eyes, you can tell by the eyes" she
 said.
 I looked in her eyes.
 I asked her questions about cancer and illness.
 "The curanderas use objects and herbs for
 healing.
 They have their own way of speaking.
 No one else understands them."
 She looked at me.
 "That's all" she said. *She stood.*
that's all that's all that's all
whispered ancestor spirits.
holders of ancient wisdom
written in Aztec
kept in jars and pots
herbs animals
stones
goat's milk
 "That's all," she said.
 she smiled
 she left the room

Jolene Siemsen

**CELEBRATE THE MANY HANDS OF
 NURSING**

How like a patchwork quilt are we!
 Some are bright & outgoing,
 Some are quiet & shy,
 Yet how well we blend together!

The quiet ones set off the colorful,
 The bright ones accentuate the pastels.

Our many, touching hands,
 like the stitches on a quilt,
 Are expressions of a love --
 That holds us together in perfect harmony.

Deanne C. Timm

I HAVE CHOICES

He was 58 but looked 98.
 Very tall, very thin, very weak.
 His hands shook, his breath ragged.
 His strength gone with his diseased heart.

STILL HIS WILL WAS STRONG.

"You can't do that!" the nurse said.
 "You can't smoke, you will die."
 He had crawled on hands and knees to the
 bathroom thirty feet away.

"OH, YES I CAN."

"But don't you see," I said to my peer.
 "We choose his meals, time to sleep, to
 wake, to each, to have medicine for pain, to
 have visitors, to watch TV.
 He even waits to pee until we have time to
 take him."

"WE'VE TAKEN AWAY HIS CHOICES"

So we scheduled OUR tasks in HIS
 appointment book.
 He now had a say.
 And isn't it odd that now he didn't have the
 other need.
 The need to do anything that showed he still
 had choices.
 Even if that only choice was to smoke and
 end his days.

YES, HE CAN CHOOSE

He lived, you see, longer than expected.
 Long enough to see a son graduate from
 college.
 Long enough to see a wedding.
 Long enough to live his dying with dignity.

HE HAD CHOICES.

Susan Ragazzo



TO STUDENTS: OUR NURSING HERITAGE FOR THE FUTURE

You have entered into learning our shared ministry of caring in these turbulent times -

We teach you ideals. You confront realities where ideals seem impossible to achieve.

But who will strive towards them when our breath is stilled and our patients' needs remain unmet?

You will!

We believe in your potential to advocate - to change lives and systems for the better.

To be a nurse is to be both artist and scientist.

You are the bridge which joins these two callings in service to humanity, in excellence of quality endeavors for present and future.

You are artist when you devise creative, holistic, individualized care plans.

You are scientist when you base the plans on valid rationale, discerned through research.

The road ahead for you is arduous; you are equal to its challenges.

You are our heritage.

We form you on your way and trust that our profession is in the hands and minds of competent, caring visionaries.

We are proud of you, our heritage.

We thank you for the privilege of sharing in your learning. WE, too have learned; I hope.

Kathryn W. Sullivan

From The Editors

We appreciate the response of readers of Nightingale Songs to our request for financial support for future issues. We used the contributions to pay for postage for the last issue and to publish and distribute the issue you hold. We have several gifts of \$50 to \$100; most were around \$10 to \$15--the amounts we'd like to receive regularly to meet expenses of regular publication. (Checks made payable to Marilyn Parker save the expense of a separate account.)

We are considering the idea of a book of Nightingale Songs, which would include selections from past issues as well as new material, both literary and visual. We value your interest and would like to hear your ideas about the future of NS.

Marilyn E. Parker, Ph.D., R.N.
Savina O. Schoenhofer, Ph.D., R.N.
Susan Frischman, Production Asst.
Rozzano Locsin, Ph.D., R.N. Prod.Asst.

NIGHTINGALE SONGS

P.O. Box 811535
Boca Raton, FL 33481-1535