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HARD TO SWALLOW

I have been afflicted with a stomach trouble ever since I was a child, and I was thoroughly convinced I had ulcers. Last fall my condition became so bad that practically everything I ate disagreed with me. Worried, I went to the hospital and had my doctor give me a thorough examination. Among other things he did was xray my stomach from five different angles. The diagnosis was, no ulcers. He then decided to analyze ~~the~~ the contents of my stomach and sent a nurse in to pump me. I cross my heart and hope I die if she wasn't the ugliest young woman (I judged her to be about thirty) I ever laid my peepers on. To put it more strongly, her mug would freeze a fence post. A little later she proved to be as ugly of temper as she was of feature. I couldn't help wondering what the doctor had against me, that would cause him to inflict a phiz like that on me, while I was so sick and helpless.

She shoved a garden hose down me---At least it seemed that large to me---
and said, "Swal-low---swal-low---swal-low." I went gul-lup---gul-lup---gul-lup. Somewhere down in the upper regions of my dinnerbasket the tube struck a tender spot and I went heave ho and the tube returned back up by the route it came, only much faster. The nurse was obviously irked by my failure to swallow the hose, but she didn't say anything. I suppose she thought I should ^{swallow it} it as it were a piece of chocolate fudge or some other delectable.

Again she shoved the hose down my goozle and said, "Swal-ow---swal-ow---swal-low." Again I went gul-lup---gul-lup---gul-lup. In a few moments

the nose struck that tender spot again and I did the heave ho as before. Again it and I broke contact. By this time the nurse was getting hot under the collar. I believe she thought I was disgorging the tube just to be mean or to annoy her. I wanted to tell her, if she would put a veil or a drape over her puss, I believed I could swallow the damned hose but I refrained. I didn't want to be rude. At the next attempt I closed my eyes, hoping thereby to bedim her map but it didn't work. Imagination then took over.

She shoved the hose down my gullet a third time and said, "Swal-low---swal-low---swal-low." This time she said it with unnecessary vehemence, so it seemed to me. A third time I went gul-lup---gul-lup---gul-lup and the tube touched that tender spot. And a third time it and I parted company pronto. By this time the nurse was red hot---red in the face and hot all over and she made no attempt to hid her anger. Thus we wrestled for fifteen or twenty minutes, trying to get the tube down my throat but without success. By now her temperature must have been around a hundred and ten, and mine was a long way from zero. She finally gave up. Said, rather sarcastically, it seemed to me, "You wouldn't swallow it for me. Maybe you'll swallow it for your doctor and she put a lot of stress on the word your. I said, "I'm sorry." "Sorry me eye," she snapped, "You could have swallowed it if you had tried.

Pretty harsh language, don't you think; for a nurse to use on a patient--- at any time, let alone after he has heaved all the lining out of his throat and strained until his eyeballs are practically hanging out on cheeks in an effort to get the tube down his gullet. I wanted to tell her where to go and the reader may be assured it wasn't to paradise. She hesitated a moment, looking as if she wanted to claw out

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the little fringe of hair Old Father Time had so mercifully spared me, then left the rum.

In a few minutes the doctor came in and with little effort got the tube down me. I don't know ^{Why} he could and she couldn't get it down me. It may have been the difference in their techniques, but I'm inclined to believe it was the difference in scenery. Having gotten the hose down me, the doctor turned the pumping over to the nurse and left the room. By this time my stomach was sufficiently settled for me to do a little thinking. I toyed some bit with the idea of reporting her ~~her~~ conduct to the doctor or head nurse but soon decided not to, lest I cause her to lose her job.

While she was packing up her implements of torture, I recalled that song so popular during World War II, PRAISE THE LORD AND PASS THE AMMUNITION, and I praised the Lord for bringing me through that ordeal alive and I prayed for a few handgrenades to throw under that nurse.

I met her several times later in the aisles of the hospital, and she would always turn up her snoot and look the other way, which, of course, was quite agreeable with me.