

A Visit to Swedish

Thanks, to all my fellow bookworms, for the separate well-wishing. It must have worked, they sent me home!

A couple of notes:

I had a previously scheduled my annual physical for Friday, and had coincidentally been battling a weeklong episode with diverticulitis. Arriving at the Polyclinic on Capitol Hill on Friday, I entered the lobby and saw the long queue for the check in, similar to waiting for the next cashier at Barnes & Noble. I thought, "I forgot how long this process can take." It was then I suddenly discovered if you unceremoniously collapse in the middle of the lobby, depositing blood on the carpet, you needn't wait in line at all.

I was immediately the center of attention, surrounded by white coats, blue coats and green coats. And they were all so friendly. They put their faces close to mine, and asked lots of questions about how my day was going so far, how I was feeling, what drugs I liked best, and so on. Before I knew it I had IVs in both arms, and a couple of husky gentlemen in blue uniforms showed up in a red limousine with pretty flashing lights. They even had a nice rolling bed so I didn't have to walk. I felt positively pampered.

Then we set off on the short trip to the Swedish Emergency room. In the limo I met another nice gentleman in a white coat who, like the ones at the Polyclinic, got very close to my face and asked me a lot of questions. They must have all gone to the same school, because the questions they asked were always the same. I think they just put their faces close to yours so you'll know they like you.

Upon arrival at the emergency room, I was greeted by three doctors. I immediately thought about those poor people back at the clinic, waiting in line to see just one.

They all asked lots of questions too, but must have gone to a different school. When I deposited some blood with them--they didn't have a carpet--the conversation got a little livelier, and it was off quickly to the big donut room. I didn't even get a chance to ask them what they liked to do in their spare time.

The donut is a ride that scissors you back and forth through a hole, with a big whirring sound and a voice saying, "hold your breath," "hold your breath." I've been on way-better rides.

Then it was up to the Penthouse--they called it the ICU. Boy, were they happy to see me. And they all had something to do. They had probes, tubes, needles, cuffs, and lots of conversations. I could tell why they were all trying to talk to me—it was because nobody else there had their eyes open.

Then, along came the pokey man. He wanted blood. I told him I had just deposited some there in the room, but he wanted it in a tube. He kept coming back for more, so I asked him why they didn't give him a bigger tube, so he didn't have to make so many trips. I think I'll write to the hospital about that one.

Everyone finally got tired of talking, and I looked for something to read. That's when I found out they didn't have a library. Why would you, I suppose, when all your guests keep their eyes closed?

Finally, Denise showed up with *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*, and the next thing I knew, it was time to go home.

So if you don't want to wait for the doctor at your next physical, you know what you have to do.

Next time I spend the weekend on Capitol Hill, I think I'll try some of the other restaurants, though.

P of the Steves
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