

Taking time to talk to the roses

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I love my job. I truly enjoy going to work and being part of the controlled pandemonium. The IVDA in 12 that was given Narcan by EHS and arrived awake enough to grab his full syringe and start injecting again. The sound of swear words wafting through the department and the sights and smells of human waste products exuding through all body orifices. Sometimes it is overwhelming: the noise, the demands, and the sadness of the conditions that people end up in.

The department is full. I go into the suture area to see a 78-year-old woman, Emily Rose, with a laceration at the back of the head. I ascertain that she tripped, that there wasn't a more sinister cause for her fall, and start into the task at hand. Her husband is there; he notices the bicycle grease on my leg from my ride to work, and asks about it. This is a good excuse to discuss cycling. You see, he cycles every day, usually 40 or 50 km.

As I continue suturing, he continues talking, and holding her hand. After he has talked for a while she starts to talk too. You see, she goes to day care

every day. She tells me about her crafts, and when she can't remember exactly what she wants to say, he gently fills in the gaps.

The conversation continues, both of them competing for the "floor" and both letting the other say their share. I continue suturing, slowly, because I am witness to the romance and caring of fifty years together, and I just want to watch for a while longer.

But the department is busy, and I

finish, and it is time to give the discharge instructions. Just as I am about to leave, he asks me how he will get the blood out of her clothes. She pipes in "oh yes, that's my best jacket." I look at the frayed collar of the bright yellow jacket with the dried blood spattered all over and grab a bottle of hydrogen peroxide and we all scrub for 5 minutes and chat some more.

I do love my job, especially when I take the time to talk to the roses.



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