

## Blog Export: Minicia, <http://minicia.bluegarter.org/>

Monday, August 22, 2005

### A terrible night, a day saved by presents.

Here I was thinking Vascular Surgery was going to be all tough. Well, it IS tough--get there at 4:30 am, don't leave until 8:30 most nights, stay post-call and do 5 hours of surgery. I've only been really yelled at once by the big head honcho, but everything he said was true, and now I don't do those things as much. Plus, I've learned SO much about being a better presenter of my patients, knowing many things about them and being definite with my "Plan" for that particular day of hospital life. I almost think that the two main docs LIKE me!! I'm interested and hard working, and they appreciate that. Still, at the end of next weekend I'm switching to anesthesia, which is like a mini-vacation of kindness and relative abundance of sleep! Last night, though, was awful. I was on call, and things were moving along smoothly, until my friend and I got emergency "get your asses down here" kinds of pages from the resident on call. There were 5 simultaneous traumas coming in to the ER. A drunk driver smashed into a family of drove them off the road, where their car rolled twice. The mom and dad were in the main trauma bay, the kids were okay enough to be in the pediatric ER, which is kinder and less scary than the trauma bay. The driver was also there in the trauma bay, so we were running three traumas at once! I've never seen so much organized chaos, and so many people. The drunk driver was pretty much just fine, the dad was not so bad, but the mom not so much. The thing about trauma is that you don't have time to feel stressed or upset or angry or grossed out. You just do whatever the trauma chief tells you--in my case I was in charge of recording the physical exam for the drunk--they yell out things rapid fire about his eyes, ears, spine, legs, and I write them all down. It is a good job for med students because it is hugely important, but doesn't require us to know exactly how to manage a bleeding head wound, for example. I was fine with all of this until I started to realize what was going on: the dude I was working on was the one who caused all of this chaos!! One of the chief residents, John, put me in charge of getting him to X-ray and then to the CT scanner. While he was getting some x-rays, I looked down the hall and saw the two kiddos sitting in one of the hospital crib things. The poor things were hanging on to the toys they give you for dear life, with vacant expressions in their eyes. Then their aunt and uncle came, which perked them up a bit, but they were still very focused on where mommy and daddy were. For the FIRST TIME yet during this clerkship I almost lost it. I really thought I was going to cry. My friend came over to ask if my patient was done in X-ray, and I looked at him and said, "I don't care!" I wanted to leave the patient in the middle of the hall and walk away. Of course, I didn't, but this morning after 1.5 hours of uncomfortable rest, I still couldn't get that feeling out of my head. Thank goodness then, for packages in the mail! My SP is the coolest! It all came wrapped in green tissue paper: Barbara Walker's "Treasury of Knitting Patterns," a big yummy bar of dark chocolate, some sour Altoids, a pretty card with a very nice note, and two bracelets from Working Assets and The One. Oh, and a really lovely lacey knitted bookmark that I think she made herself--IN GREEN! Oh the abundance of goodness, and how it soothes my sorrowed soul. Thanks SP, you ROCK! Then some stuff from Knit Pixie. I've not bought yarn for about a month, and had a yearning the other day. Some was on sale! And I think I had a hunch that I'd need some yarn love.

Posted by Mia in Medical School at 14:42

Yahoo! And there I was feeling all bad at taking so long to get the package out. And then it got there at exactly the right time! I hope the rest of your week goes better. It's good to know people like you are becoming doctors. Always remember how much people like me appreciate it.

(I did knit the bookmark, by the way. I'm glad you like it.)  
Anonymous on Aug 22 2005, 16:46

For your sake, PLEASE be careful about the medical stories. If anyone recognized the people in that accident, then you would be violating HIPA regulations about violation of confidentiality! I've been in your shoes, and I am a practicing physician. Believe me, I recognize the need to vent and tell the stories, but there is ever increasing vigilance about privacy violations.

I am glad to hear that you are interested and enthusiastic. Keep up the energy, grab what education you can both from the attendings, the housestaff and your patients.

Take care.  
Anonymous on Aug 22 2005, 18:30

Oh my gosh. That sounds awful. I'm so glad it's over. I second your secret pal: I'm glad people like you, who care, are becoming doctors.  
And congratulations on the great mail. It sounds like it was just what you needed!  
Anonymous on Aug 22 2005, 20:16

Folks, Dianna is right, I should be more careful about my stories. I think it is such a part of my nature to share things that upset me

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with people who listen and are interested in what I have to say. So I went back into the post and trimmed out some details that may be too close to truth. Privacy of my patients is not something that I take lightly, I just wasn't thinking clearly. Sorry!!  
Anonymous on Aug 22 2005, 20:20

Hey honey, I'm sorry you had such a horrible night! I hope those kids' parents are going to make it. Adam and I were driving back from Maine (it was Rachel Seabury and Jon Sprague's wedding, btw - we should talk because I have a story that will make you laugh) and I knew it was going to be a bad night for accidents with the Sunday night traffic and the thunderstorm coming through. We thought of you when we were driving through Woo-town - wish we could have worked it out to see you somehow! Missed you at Camp Bobo, too - it's just as great as ever, although sadly they're gutting Hyde and totally renovating and it will be all new and swanky and not charming. No more pipes for kids to hang from.

P.S. Your Secret Pal and mine are the bomb - the Barbara Walker treasury is so awesome.  
Anonymous on Aug 22 2005, 20:29