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5:32 A.M.: Hospital Time

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The silent flashes of rigid white, stilled starched, stubborn aprons
And nylon symphonies in scurries of soft speeded-breath nurses;
Exhausted, sweat-marked, haggard interns desperately draped in smocks,
Once hardened to white marble stiffness,
Wrinkled, blood sprinkled, and crushed by the night's harsh hours of wear;
The crumpled, fluid stained, light blue slacks of Obstetrics' delivery room
And the scalpel creased, prim green trousers of the Operating room;
Protrude as pilings supporting tornado tossed, cyclone cursed beacons
In the inscrutable ocean of life.
These apostles of modern medicine possess the hard won knowledge of centuries,
But are slaves of the mechanism,
Hanging and humming on the wall above the desk in the Emergency Ward,
That projects its movements into each treatment room.
Their eyes plead with the hands of the clock to give them minutes,
Precious minutes, valuable minutes to work -- to sweat -- to pant
To fight and fight and fight and work.
But defiant Death collects its toll from man for having lived.
The somber garb of sacerdotal black absorbs the whispered words
Of consolation, that bounce around and in and out the ears of shocked, staring, stunned, death-robbed parents;
And the clock spits seconds into eternity.
Against the rhythmic hum of the huge red hand, that chops its eternity.
Around the face of the twenty-four hour clock,
Cradled in the alcove of the Labor Room,
The mother's cry in pains of birth announces the entrance
Of a helpless, strengthless, seven pound, six ounce mass
Of sprinkled-pink, slippery, slender, soul-stained, innocent flesh
Into this weary, fighting, pushing, striving, warring, brawling, feuding, wrangling world.

5:32 A. M. in the hospital corridors with pox-lighted windows.
Death walks its patrol, a snatching, silent, sneaking, thieving sentry,
And tosses a mocking, sneering, scornful, sarcastic laugh to Life.

5:32 A. M. Hospital Time -- a night's rest is gone.
The day begins anew for a weary brain in a tired body to visit the sick,
Comfort the sorrowing, to prepare the dying, to give them Christ,
The Saviour of their souls.
The chosen one of God's Anointed continues the endless guest
For that lonely, saddened, wandering soul
To speak through Heaven's unlocked back doors,
Forever opened by dropping blood in the blackest hours
On Calvary's slope.
Death can claim the body,
But his consolation is to know that Hell is cheated of a soul.

The Physician Who Became Pope of Rome

Hardy A. Kemp, M. D.

On the twentieth of September, 1276, the Cardinal Bishop of Tusculum, Petrus Hispanus, was elected Pope of Rome.

For this office he chose the name by which he is known today, John XXI. In his own time he was better known as Petrus Hispanus, Physicus, a Portuguese physician, one indeed of high ecclesiastical preferment, and the only one of the medical profession to occupy the Chair of Saint Peter.

The immediate origins of his priesthood are somewhat obscure. There is, however, a clear record of his first appointment to a Church Office: that of Canon of Leon. It was there, it appears, that he attracted the favorable attention of a strongly influential churchman, Cardinal Ottoboni Fieschi, who was later to become Pope Adrian V.

Church history shows that Canon Petrus served the Cardinal as personal physician on his journeys as Papal Delegate, thus no great imagination is necessary to surmise that through these services the physician-priest became archiater (chief-physician) to Pope Gregory X.

Shortly thereafter, Petrus Hispanus, Physicus, became Archbishop of Braga (1273), and in the same year Cardinal Bishop of Tusculum.

These were momentous times in a momentous century, one indeed which some regard as one of the most important in the Christian Era. It was a time when immensely powerful forces of the Church and the State were beginning to exert pressures that would shape the centuries to come. It was a time of great auguries and portents, and one in which some prescience must have guided the

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