

Bunyip Bedpans



Nurse Clara Forme cast a critical eye over the display of Bunyip Brothers bedpans and emesis basins in the lobby of Saint Salmon's Hospital. She was proud of the product line, and looked forward to performing the Official Daily Inspection. Every morning at 8:45, she stopped whatever she was doing to slip on a freshly starched white uniform and give her autoclavable charges the undivided attention they so richly deserved. Today, for instance, she interrupted a radical craniotomy at its second most critical stage to perform the examination. (Dr. Beezer was *so* mad, but he just had to understand where her priorities lay!) So, claspings a clipboard and a Saint Salmon's combination rectal thermometer-and-ballpoint-pencil, she began. Cleanliness? Check! Temperature? Check! Absence of abrasions? Check! Natural, healthy aroma? [sniff] Check! She ticked off the boxes one by one and nodded in approval when she reached the bottom of the list and everything was in order. Oh, but wait! What's *this*? Some scallywag had added a gag dribble surgery spill pail to the display, how insufferably rude! It looked just like the others and only a trained eye – hers – could've spotted it. Scowling, she picked up the offending utensil. But before she discarded it in the rubbish bin, habit took over and she instinctively sniffed it. She reeled. It was a smell from her childhood, from those awful days in Albuquerque when Dad rubbed ether all over himself in an attempt to become invisible. Oh sure, it worked all right, but you could still smell him a mile away. "Clara," whispered a disembodied voice scant inches from her ear. "Clara, it's Dad." And suddenly, the surgery spill pail wrenched itself from her hand and hovered five feet off of the floor. "Clara, I've come back to life and ..." And that was all Nurse Forme heard before, unable to deal with this assault on her sanity, she blacked out.