

Collateral Damage



When Dr. Fangleman, Enid's dermatologist, phoned her to ask if the medicated lotion he'd prescribed for her chronic seborrhea had gotten rid of all those unsightly scales that had covered her body, she had to say yes. Unfortunately, he rang off before she could tell him about the dozen or so giant pustules that had since erupted over half of her body. And they itched just as much as the seborrhea had! But he probably would have just chalked that up to "medical collateral damage," as he had so many times before when one or another treatment didn't work as he'd predicted. Maybe it was finally time to call her sister Myrna to ask for the number of that holistic witch doctor she knew. But as she recalled Myrna's graphic description of the daylong leech bath the doctor had insisted she take to cure a hangover that one time, she put down the telephone and reached for the bottle of lotion. Again.