

A Pre-Med Student's Reflection Witnessing an Internist

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INTRODUCTION

As I sat in the back pew, I suddenly heard the door gently creak open. I turned and saw a man creeping through the wrinkled oak door. His dark withered face was barely visible as he delicately leaned over his walker. What could be seen of his face bared no remnants of a smile. Each step from his suede shoes slowly slushed together as he walked past. He sat down and then slouched over with his arms crossed over the back of the pew in front of him. As he stared down at the floor, the priestess approached him from the front and subtly placed her hand on his shoulder.

ANALYSIS

Standing tall over the man, the priestess began to speak, "*Hola Carlos, dime, how is everything.*"

The old man leaned back and shrugged his hands to his side and replied, "I have pain *Madre, me duele mucho.*"

"Where is this pain?" asked the priestess.

The old man clutched his hands on his legs and said, "*Madre, I must tell you, my legs hurt, and my neck is very difficult to move.*"

The priestess nodded her head and replied, "I can imagine this pain to be very difficult to deal with."

Staring down at the ground the old man replied, "As you say *Madre, as you say.*"

"When I have seen you here before you have told me you have pains. Where else does it

hurt?" asked the priestess.

"*Madre mia, me duele, me duele.*" complained the old man

The priestess quickly replied, "I can't help you unless I know where your pain is."

"*Madre*, I don't know, this pain is different, all of it hurts" he responded.

The priestess starred at him and gently responded, "Carlos I cannot help you, or prescribe you medication or therapy if I don't know where and importantly why it hurts."

The old man turned to the priestess and opened his hands in front of her, and pleaded "You, you know, *Doctora*, you know, you know why I have this pain. *Digame, Digame Doctora.*"

The old man then leaned over and placed his right hand over his forehead and his elbow on his knee.

The priestess paused for a moment and began to lean on the pew. She looked at Carlos and smiled as she said,

"Well, have you been outside, have you been active, who have you been spending time with?"

"No *Madre*, I just sit in my apartment most of the time." he replied

The priestess looked at him, twiddled her fingers on the back of the pew and said "Carlos I don't think that is good, *dime algo*, share a story with me, what did you do for fun last week Carlos?"

"As you say *Madre*, as you say. Occasionally, once in a while I sit in front of the apartment building."

The old man paused and looked up at the priestess for a moment and began to laugh as he turned away.

CONCLUSION

The doctor sat down next to him. And before she could speak the cackling old man said, "You know *Madre*, when I sit outside, once in a while some of the pretty young women say hi to me."

The priestess paused for moment, as she turned facing the old man, she smirked and responded: "Well look at you Carlos." After pausing for a moment, she said, "You must enjoy the company. How was your Thanksgiving, did your family come and visit?"

The old man continued to look away as he replied, "No *Madre* all my family is far away in Santa Domingo."

The priestess looked at him and nodded her head and she said, "That is never easy, you must miss not being able to see them."

In a soft and waning voice, the old man replied "*Si, Si Doctora.*"

The man looked up at the priestess and said "You know *Madre*, I have to tell you, *mi mujer*, my wife, she died around this time a few years ago. I miss her, I miss her. It is very sad, very sad."

The priestess nodded her head and put her hand on the old man's shoulder and before she could say a word the old man replied, "It hurts, it hurts"

"Dime mas, tell me more" replied the priestess.

The old man smiled and grabbed her hand, kissed it and gently responded

"As you say Madre, you know me well Doctora."