

No Respect

by Jake Barnes

I'm lying on a bed in Emergency freezing to death. They've got me in one of those little blue cotton robes that is open in the back. My reason for being there is an animal bite. I was nipped by a raccoon. It was my own fault; my wife and I had been feeding the animal. I brought out a bowl of kibble one morning and walked right by the 'coon' who gave me a nip as I passed.

I have been in the E.R. for more than an hour now, and a nurse finally shows up to give me the shots I will get today. Four of them. One in each shoulder, two in the butt. I roll over on the gurney or bed or whatever they call it and pull down my pants and underpants. The nurse gives me a shot in each cheek.

Afterwards I roll over again and lie back on the bed. The nurse is a chubby little woman with frizzy hair and glasses. I grin at her. "Was it good for you, too?" I ask. The nurse looks confused. She frowns. "What?" she asks.

"Never mind," I say. The nurse gathers the spent syringes on a tray and ducks through the curtain. I sigh. I think to myself: No one takes an old man seriously. The elderly get no respect.

