

Placebo

My patient crawls in on his hands and knees
“Help me!” decries his emotional pleas
‘Release me from this terrible pain
I need some deliverance
I’ve been searching in vain!”

“I was out in the garden mowing the lawn
When finished, now tired, I stretched out to yawn
Dust in the air made me suddenly sneeze
I felt a sharp twinge
And my back then did seize”

I stand for a moment and examine him closely
“Your grunting and groaning I’d say is due mostly
To muscles in spasm therefore concluding
That one of your low lumbar discs is protruding”

I help this poor soul up onto the couch
Ignoring his cursing of “Oohs”, “Arghs” and “Ouch”
I lay him quite gently down on his back
Then do my manoeuvre with a resounding ‘CRACK’.

The patient wide eyed starts to peer around
“What in the world was that terrible sound!”
I then try to give him a grand explanation
Of the merits and aims of Manipulation

He pauses a moment then leaps from the bed
Faster than Lazarus brought back from the dead
He wiggles about like he’s on the dancefloor
Then thanks me profusely and skips out the door

I feel my cheeks flush and my heart swells with pride
“My reputation’s sure to spread far and wide!”
But a widening stain in my pocket is when
I realise the “CRACK” was my blue fountain pen

So hardly then was this a grand demonstration
Of expertly administered manipulation
I fall back to earth with the humiliation
Of what really succumbed to my administration!

That lesson I learned as an Osteopath
Gives me smile and sometimes a laugh
But serves to confuse my esteem and ego
To realise my treatment was just a Placebo