

The tooth fairy

by Amos Arthur
Holmes

The other day I had a most violent toothache and I went into town to find a dentist who could relieve me of my suffering.

Unfortunately, I found one.

The sign outside the office read, "Dr. Paul Parker, Dentist. Please Come In." When I walked through that door I knew I was in trouble. There was not one living soul in the waiting room. Now, whenever you enter a doctor's office, or a dentist's office, and that office is empty, then brother...you

better turn around and walk out again. A good dentist will have his waiting room filled. A mediocre dentist will have his waiting room half filled. Only the raunchiest kind of butcher will have his waiting room empty.

But I was in such pain I decided to take a chance. Maybe I was reading the situation incorrectly. After all...it was very early in the morning and probably a huge mass of patients would arrive in the next few minutes. I picked up a 1939 copy of LIFE and after dusting away the cobwebs I began reading about Germany's invasion of Poland.

It was while reading this bit of ancient history that I heard the scream.

"YYYYEEEEEOOOOO-
WWWWWWW."

Good Lord, what was happening in that other room? Somebody was being tortured violently. Somebody was being killed. The door to the other room burst open and out staggered this poor, bloody old man. He was holding his hands over his mouth and he was sobbing his heart out. He staggered out of the door and I sat immobile for a few seconds thinking of 100 reasons why I should get the hell out of that dentist's

office. I was just starting to get out of my chair when the dentist appeared.

He was dressed in a long flowing white gown and was completely covered with blood. He looked exactly like one of those mad scientists you see in the old horror films.

"Who's next?" he inquired.

As I was the only person in the waiting room I thought it justifiable to raise my hand.

"Very good, Madam, please step into the office."

MADAM? This was my first inkling that the good dentist had extremely poor eyesight. When I was seated



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in his office I pointed out the bad wisdom tooth.

He took up a huge pair of pliers, pried my mouth open, and started pulling. When the tooth came out I saw that it was a fat, healthy bicuspid and not a decaying wisdom tooth.

"Doc, I don't want to sound like an ingrate, but it

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seems you have pulled the wrong tooth."

"No big sweat" he said, "we'll just try again."

The pliers went in my mouth again, the dentist tugged, and out came the tooth. GOOD JUMPING PANTYHOSE! IT WAS ANOTHER BICUSPID.

"It's none of my business" I said, "and I sure hate to keep bugging you...but you pulled the wrong tooth again."

Well, he wasn't a quitter. I had to give him credit for that. He put the pliers back in my mouth and with a dedicated, deep concentration...managed to pull the right tooth.

He charged me forty dollars. That was his sale price for pulling three teeth. As I left his office I knew that I had what people have been accusing me of having for over 20 years.

Holes in my head.