Medical Slang

A dialogue between two nurses at the nurses' station in the city hospital:

RGN Mary: Hi Sarah, how was your shift?

LPN Sarah: Oh, hello Mary. It was a nightmare, I ended up pulling a double shift and haven't slept in almost 30 hours. And for the last 6 I have been dealing with this goldbrick I'm exhausted!

Mary: Yeah, I remember those days well. Look on the bright side, in less than 6 months you will have completed your RGN training and those days will be behind you.

Sarah: I can't wait, I've had enough of being an LPN!

Mary: Was it very busy last night?

Sarah: Yes, we got hammedered with that train derailment and of course we had the usual frequent flyers just looking for attention.

Mary: Someone should do something about them. I mean we have a hard enough time treating people who actually need it, let alone those who don't.

Sarah: I know, but what are you going to do?

Mary: True.

Sarah: Oh, and we had two bouncebacks

Mary: Who?

Sarah: Mr Jones, you know the one with the velcro and Miss Spencer

Mary: I thought the slasher had finished with Miss Spencer

Sarah: He had, but it didn't help. She still has the same symptoms.

Mary: So what is happening with her?

Sarah: Well, Dr. Singh was shotgunning last night so we will see if that turns anything up.

Mary: And what about little Jimmy? Has his condition improved?

Sarah: No, I'm afraid he was discharged up just after midnight.

Mary: Oh no, the parents must be devastated.

Sarah: They are. I actually felt sorry for Dr. Evans, he tried everything when Jimmy was circling the drain but he just couldn't save him, and then he had to break the news to the mother. It was tough.
Mary: Yes, I can imagine. So this means we have a free bed? Sarah: No, we admitted a guy with an appy this morning. He is due to go into surgery at midday.

Mary: What's he like?

Sarah: He seems nice enough, but apparently he got quite angry when the paramedics performed the wallet biopsy.

Mary: I'm not surprised. I would feel exactly the same.

Sarah: Yes, but it has to be done. You know the gatekeeper wouldn't let an uninsured patient be treated here.

Mary: I know. So after his operation he can be transferred to recovery?

Sarah: Yes, they already know he will be turfed later on today.

Mary: Great. And has the consultant seen Mrs Timms?

Sarah: Yes, but he reached a zebra.

Mary: What does he think it is now?

Sarah: Churg Strauss Syndrome.

Mary: What? Surely it is an ILI.

Sarah: That's the logical diagnosis but you know our consultant. If it's not exotic, he isn't interested.

Mary: I would love to give him a piece of my mind but the last time I contradicted him he started calling me a noctor.

Sarah: I hate it when he gets all condescending like that, but you know it's not just us nurses he looks down on, he behaves the same way with his puppies.

Mary: Yeah, last week I overheard him telling one of them to do a full run-up on the albatross at the end of the hall and then complaining that the intern couldn't diagnose the guy.

Sarah: Anyway, I'm just about finished so I am going to pop by the departure lounge to try and catch Joe before his shift finishes.

Mary: Ok. Well, have a nice couple of days off. And get some rest! (intercom): Paging nurse Mary, please report to ward A, we have a code brown.
Discussion Questions

How would you feel if your nurse/doctor described you as an albatross?

Why do you think so much slang is used in medical language?

Do you agree that doctors look down on nurses? Why/why not?

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