

*In September 2003 I underwent surgery for a hiatus hernia. I should have been over it in a couple of weeks but complications set in and I was destined for two years of extreme weakness, not able to digest my food and going from 159lbs to 139lbs weight. During that time I learned to relax, knowing that I was ill but would one day get better, as the doctors tried to remedy my esophagus blockage and related complications such as pleurisy, blood clots, gall stones. I saw no benefit in being downcast so took my time in reading, praying and writing poetry. If you can't laugh at such situations you'll surely get worse!*

### **Holier than Thou!**

It started on a Sunday when I had gone to bed  
I felt the pain a'coming, some thumping in my head  
So I rose and took two aspirins, but I couldn't get them down  
They stuck in my throat and started to burn, causing me to frown.

So on the Monday morning I went to see my doc,  
He said "your throat's restricted, a spasm due to shock"  
I found it hard to swallow and there was heartburn in my chest  
So he sent me off to hospital to have a barium test.

By 10 o' clock on Tuesday, the test results had come  
They said the valve was 'floppy', 'tween esophagus and tum  
They advised an operation to make the hernia right  
But they'd need to keep an eye on me so I'd be there all night.

The op was done on Wednesday, the arthroscopic kind  
Where they pump you full of CO2 while you're out of your mind  
They punctured me with several holes, used their instruments to see  
As they tightened the valve to stop reflux, guided by TV.

I came home on a Thursday and I really felt no pain  
And I was told "in two more weeks, you'll be fit and well again"  
But soon more problems started and my joy turned to a frown  
As every meal became a chore, I could get no substance down.

Twos on a Friday morning I saw my doc once more  
I knew at once he was concerned as he met me at his door  
"My goodness, Gareth, just look at you! You've lost a lot of weight  
We must get you rehydrated before it is too late!

So back to hospital I went where they pumped me full of fluid  
A saline solution specially prepared as a substitute for food  
Three days later they sent me home – in a very sorry state  
Broths and soups and custard puddings the only things I ate.

As my condition got no better they tried more tests on me  
An MRI, a Cat scan and a third endoscopy  
Until at last a barium test the cause of the problem found  
In the initial op the surgeon had turned my stomach 'round!

A second op was scheduled this fault to remedy  
And after pumping in CO2, more holes were punched in me  
If of spiritual things I need to boast, then this one thing I trow  
That I can say with confidence, I'm holier than thou!

Twas on a Monday morning more complications came  
It seems that while he did the op, the surgeon bled again  
His instruments had nicked my lung causing it to bleed  
Another pain shooting through my chest is what I didn't need.

Twas on the Tuesday morning I saw the doc again  
I begged him take some action to take away the pain  
"I'll prescribe for you some Tylenol, two tablets twice a day  
Just take it really easy and your chest will be OK."

Twas early on the Wednesday I rose quickly from my bed  
Needing to use the bathroom, forgetting what he'd said  
"These tablets will make you drowsy so be careful when you stand"  
The room went spinning round me as I reached out a grasping hand.

They rushed me into emergency to clean the blood and gore  
From the gaping wound on the top of my scalp where I had hit the floor  
They pumped me full of antibiotics and sent me home to bed  
Where I moaned throughout that day and night with another aching head.

Gareth Evans  
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