

The Resident from Thailand

Dr. James Barlow, the Chief of Surgery at Milwaukee State Hospital, agreed to supervise four visiting Thai physicians who were sent by their government to the United States for additional training. The first-year residency went very well, and the Thai doctors have been asked to stay on for a second year. A party is being held to celebrate the end of the first year. Toward the end of the festivities, people are seated in small groups, reminiscing about the events of the past year. Dr. Barlow sits with the Thai residents. One of the residents, a particular favorite of Dr. Barlow's, confesses shyly how nervous he had been when he first came to Milwaukee State.

"Yes," responds Dr. Barlow, "but look how much progress you have made. Why, I remember the time you were told to prepare two male beds, and you asked me how you could tell a male bed." Dr. Barlow slaps the resident on the back and breaks into laughter. The Thais exchange glances, examine their watches, and, calling attention to the lateness of the hour, excuse themselves and leave. The next morning, Dr. Barlow finds a letter of resignation on his desk from the young doctor he liked so much.

What precipitated the resignation?

Possible Explanations

- (1) When the resident returned to his room, he found a message saying that his mother was critically ill in Thailand, and he wanted to fly home to be with her. (Turn to page 126.)
- (2) Dr. Barlow's slap was too forceful, and the resident thought he was being hit for his early mistake. Since the Thais do not use such punishment, the resident was very ashamed. (Turn to page 117.)
- (3) The physicians from Thailand felt a responsibility to their government, and after they left the party, the other residents said he should resign because he had disgraced the Thai government. (Turn to page 127.)
- (4) Dr. Barlow committed a grievous breach of etiquette by embarrassing the resident in front of his friends, and the Thai doctor felt he could no longer work under Dr. Barlow. (Turn to page 147.)

From p. 126

**For The Resident from Thailand, you chose
Answer No. 1**

When the resident returned to his room, he found a message saying that his mother was critically ill in Thailand, and he wanted to fly home to be with her.

A Thai would feel compelled to return to the family in the event of a life-threatening illness of a relative, but there is nothing in the story about a sick mother. Go back to page 81 and try again.

From p. 117

**For The Resident from Thailand, you chose
Answer No. 2**

Dr. Barlow's slap was too forceful, and the resident thought he was being hit for his early mistake. Since the Thais do not use such punishment, the resident was very ashamed.

A slap, even a light tap, is not considered a friendly gesture in Thailand (or other parts of the world, for that matter), but this is only a partial explanation. Return to page 81 and try again.

From p. 127

**For The Resident from Thailand, you chose
Answer No. 3**

The physicians from Thailand felt a responsibility to their government, and after they left the party, the other residents said he should resign because he had disgraced the Thai government.

The physicians from Thailand would feel a responsibility to behave correctly at all times as representatives of their country, but this is not a likely explanation inasmuch as all four had been asked to continue at the hospital for another year. Return to page 81 and try again.

From p. 147

**For The Resident from Thailand, you chose
Answer No. 4**

Dr. Barlow committed a grievous breach of etiquette by embarrassing the resident in front of his friends, and the Thai doctor felt he could no longer work under Dr. Barlow.

This is the best explanation. Thai culture, like many cultures in Southeast Asia, strongly condemns scolding or embarrassing a person in front of friends or coworkers, even in a light-hearted manner. —

The Roommates

Henry Cook had shared many classes with Nhak Bun, an émigré from Cambodia, during his senior undergraduate year at the local commuter college. The two men got along well, and when they discovered they were both going to attend the same medical school, they made arrangements to share a dormitory room together.

During their first week at medical school, the roommates studied together, sympathized with each other's problems, and gave each other moral support.

Then one evening Henry went back to his room early to study, and Nhak attended a campus recital. Henry was sitting with his feet propped up on his desk when his roommate returned. Being very comfortable and a little sleepy, Henry just waved hello and went back to his reading. Much to his surprise, Nhak left their room and did not return. The next day, a staff member packed up Nhak's belongings and removed them, telling Henry that Nhak had asked to be relocated.

Henry was shocked and at a loss to explain what had happened. Can you enlighten him?

Possible Explanations

- (1) Nhak's feelings were hurt because Henry did not ask him whether he had enjoyed the concert.
(Turn to page 111.)
- (2) Nhak had just found out he had failed the last examination he and Henry had taken, and he was so ashamed of himself that he could no longer face his roommate.
(Turn to page 106.)
- (3) Henry's failure to accompany his roommate to the recital was interpreted as a rejection of their relationship.
(Turn to page 116.)
- (4) Cambodian etiquette says exposing the soles of one's feet to view is an intolerable offense to the individual who sees them.
(Turn to page 113.)

From p. 111

For The Roommates, you chose Answer No. 1

Nhak's feelings were hurt because Henry did not ask him whether he had enjoyed the concert.

Cambodians, like many Southeast Asians, tend to appreciate scrupulously good manners, so Nhak is probably suffering from injured feelings. But there is a more serious issue in this situation. Go back to page 37 and try again.

From p. 106

For The Roommates, you chose Answer No. 2

Nhak had just found out he had failed the last examination he and Henry had taken, and he was so ashamed of himself that he could no longer face his roommate.

There is nothing in the episode about an examination. Return to page 37 and try again.

From p. 116

For The Roommates, you chose Answer No. 3

Henry's failure to accompany his roommate to the recital was interpreted as a rejection of their relationship.

This is unlikely. Nothing in the description indicates that Nhak felt the two were inseparable. Try again on page 37.

from p. 113

For The Roommates, you chose Answer No. 4

Cambodian etiquette says exposing the soles of one's feet to view is an intolerable offense to the individual who sees them.

This is the best explanation. Most Southeast Asians consider showing the soles of one's feet an unforgivable insult. So do many Middle Easterners. Another posture one should avoid is crossing one's legs (here, too, the soles may be visible).

The Indignant Grandmother

Consuela Valdéz, an eighteen-year-old Mexican woman, uneventfully delivered a baby boy a year and a half ago despite a diabetic condition, and she has been bringing her firstborn in for well-baby visits and immunizations scrupulously.

One Tuesday afternoon, however, Sra. Valdéz, her mother-in-law, and a brother-in-law entered the health center without an appointment. The senior Sra. Valdéz stormed up to the reception desk and demanded to see the nursing supervisor, Cora Rostyn. When her request was not granted immediately (Ms. Rostyn being at lunch), the older woman and her son began to shout imprecations and threatened to sue the facility for discrimination against Mexican Americans. At this point, Ms. Rostyn returned from lunch and, having been apprised of the situation, asked the Valdéz family to enter her private office to talk things through.

When the family members were seated, Ms. Rostyn asked, "What is wrong?" She was told that Sra. Valdéz wanted Dawn Gilmore, the nurse who had seen Consuela's baby the day before, fired. "She hates Mexicans. She told my daughter-in-law the baby is too fat and should eat less for a while," sputtered the older woman.

Why would Sra. Valdéz feel Ms. Gilmore is prejudiced against Mexicans?

Possible Explanations

- (1) Mexican Americans often believe a fat baby is a healthy baby, so Sra. Valdéz thinks Ms. Gilmore wants the baby to get sick.
(Turn to page 130.)
- (2) Sra. Valdéz heard Ms. Gilmore call the baby "Chico" and assumed she meant "Chicano," which used to be considered a pejorative term for Mexican Americans.
(Turn to page 107.)
- (3) The elder Sra. Valdéz has had such a long history of being subjected to discrimination and hostility that she automatically assumes everybody is prejudiced against Mexican Americans if they are not of Latino background themselves.
(Turn to page 108.)
- (4) The Valdéz family is highly regarded in Mexican American circles and, therefore, expects to be treated with deference. Nurse Gilmore criticized the baby (and hence the care given to him by the family). Only a prejudiced Anglo would dare to do that.
(Turn to page 101.)

From p. 130

For The Indignant Grandmother, you chose
Answer No. 1

Mexican Americans often believe a fat baby is a healthy baby, so Sra. Valdéz thinks Ms. Gilmore wants the baby to get sick.

Some Mexican Americans (and members of other groups as well) do equate fatness with health in babies and assume health professionals agree. Therefore, Ms. Gilmore's behavior seems wrong to Sra. Valdéz. This is the best choice.

From p. 107

For The Indignant Grandmother, you chose
Answer No. 2

Sra. Valdéz heard Ms. Gilmore call the baby "Chico" and assumed she meant "Chicano," which used to be considered a pejorative term for Mexican Americans.

There is nothing in the description about Ms. Gilmore's reference to the baby as "Chico." Return to page 55 and try again.

From p. 108

For The Indignant Grandmother, you chose
Answer No. 3

The elder Sra. Valdéz has had such a long history of being subjected to discrimination and hostility that she automatically assumes everybody is prejudiced against Mexican Americans if they are not of Latino background themselves.

Sra. Valdéz may have been so psychologically scarred by lifetime discrimination that she is prejudiced against members of other ethnic groups, but this is an unlikely explanation for her behavior. Go back to page 55 and try again.

From p. 101

For The Indignant Grandmother, you chose
Answer No. 4

The Valdéz family is highly regarded in Mexican American circles and, therefore, expects to be treated with deference. Nurse Gilmore criticized the baby (and hence the care given to him by the family). Only a prejudiced Anglo would dare to do that.

There is nothing in the description about the social status of the Valdéz family. Moreover, even if the Valdéz family is highly placed and accorded deference in their own ethnic group, they would not necessarily expect similar treatment in an Anglo setting. Return to page 55 and try again.