I dreamt again that I was standing in front of the Medical and Dental Council. They had square steel-framed glasses and gold inlaid incisors. Black shoes shone with polish, jewelled tie pins.

Each had a briefcase by his chair. They appeared uncomfortable when I walked in, even amongst themselves.

I promised to tell the truth, the whole truth and carefully selected portions of the truth.

Why had I not gone on that 2.00 a.m. call?

Did I really think I was competent to give that anaesthetic?

About those manipulations of the tariff code?

Why did you not ask if she was allergic before you gave the injection?

I really must not drink so much red wine. I get heartburn and the Medical and Dental Council in the early hours of the morning.

Note: This poem is reprinted from Ruminations from Rural Practice, by Chris Ellis, with illustrations by Louis Hiemstra. Published by Academy Publications, 1994.