

2013



Wild Onions

Wild Onions

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The title of our journal has raised a good deal of speculation. The wild onion is a common garden-variety weed, a hardy plant that grows almost anywhere and tends to spring up in unexpected places throughout the woods and fields and roadsides in this part of the country. It blossoms into an unusual purple flower and its underground bulb, if tasted, yields a pungent, spicy flavor. The wild onion is a symbol of the commonplace yet surprising beauty that is living and growing around us all the time, the spice that though uncultivated, unexpectedly thrives and – if we only take time to notice – enhances life.

Editor in Chief:

Kimberly R. Myers, M.A., Ph.D.
Department of Humanities

Senior Student Editors:

Jessica Lake, MSIV
Pamela Wagar, MSIV

Guest Editor:

Heath B. Mackley, M.D.
Radiation Oncology
Penn State Hershey Cancer Institute

Managing Editor:

Deborah Tomazin
Department of Humanities

Journal requests or inquiries:

phone: (717) 531-6423
email: wildonions@hmc.psu.edu

Class Managing Editors:

Class of 2014: Sarah Tisel and Yehoshua Laker
Class of 2015: Hannah Ross-Suits and
Chevon Alderson
Class of 2016: Eric Jung and Aaron Cantor

Front Cover image:

Davey and the Chicago Bean
Michael Green, M.D., M.S.
Departments of Internal Medicine and Humanities

Back Cover image:

Ophthalmus
Michael Huang, M.D.
Clinical Instructor
Pediatric Hematology/Oncology

Submissions are due by February 1 of each calendar year and can be sent via email to: wildonions@hmc.psu.edu.

Visit our website to download a copy of *Wild Onions* at www2.med.psu.edu/humanities/the-doctors-kienle-center/wild-onions/

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Wild Onions is an annual publication funded by The Doctors Kienle Center for Humanistic Medicine, Pennsylvania State University College of Medicine. It is a journal of poetry, prose, photography, and visual art created by members of the entire Hershey Medical Center community.

Entries are selected on the basis of artistic merit, representation of the broad diversity of the medical community, and recognition of the interplay between science and creativity that is essential to medicine as a human endeavor.

Faculty and staff – both clinical and non-clinical – patients, families, students, and volunteers are invited to submit original (not previously published) literary or artistic work on all topics. Photography or drawings may be submitted in either black and white or color format. All entries may be submitted to the Department of Humanities or electronically via wildonions@hmc.psu.edu. For an unbiased selection process, we ask that identifying information (author's name, relationship to Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, mailing address, and telephone number) be listed on a separate sheet of paper and sent along with the entry. If you wish to have your entry returned, please include a self-addressed envelope.

No portion of the journal may be reproduced by any process or technique without consent of the author. All submissions, inquiries, and requests for authors and current or past issues of *Wild Onions* can be directed to Managing Editor, Department of Humanities, H134, Penn State University College of Medicine, 500 University Drive, Hershey, PA 17033.

The aim of The Kienle Center is to advance the appreciation, knowledge, and practice of humane and humanistic medicine, defined as health care that is sympathetic, compassionate, and effective. *Wild Onions* serves this goal by encouraging literary and artistic work that seeks to describe and understand, with empathy, the experiences of giving and receiving health care.

Activities of The Doctors Kienle Center for Humanistic Medicine include:

- The Kienle Service Grant*, co-sponsored with the International Health Interest Group, for medical students engaged in volunteer work with underserved patients.
- The Doctors Kienle Lectureship*, which brings national leaders in humane medicine to Hershey Medical Center.
- The Experience of Care Project*, which teaches medical students through participant-observation studies.
- The Doctors Kienle Prizes* in literature, art, and photography featured in *Wild Onions*.
- The Doctors Kienle Collection* of materials concerning humanistic medical practice (located in the Harrell Library).
- The Medical Student Humanitarian Award*, co-sponsored with The Association of Faculty and Friends.
- The Mary Louise Witmer Jones Humanitarian Award*, given annually to an outstanding resident.
- The Nurse's Humanitarian Award*, in honor of Lawrence F. Kienle, M.D.
- Humanism in Medicine Awards*, co-sponsored with The Arnold P. Gold Foundation, for a graduating medical student and for a faculty member.
- The Kienle Cultural Series*, a series of presentations in the arts and humanities.
- Patient Portraits*, a photography exhibit by Joseph Gascho, M.D.

Greetings

Welcome to the 2013 edition of *Wild Onions*! The theme for this year's publication is "The Reality of Imagination." Imagination shapes our reality in every stage of our lives, from early childhood to advanced age, so it is not surprising that we can see its effects throughout the world of medicine.

We see it in our patients in countless forms. Imagination lies on the path to healing as young children with cancer play while they receive chemotherapy. It can also prove to be an obstacle, as an anorexic teen's view of her weight gives her a reality that harms her body and spirit. Viewing reality as it can be gives hope and resolve to an adult facing the long road to recovery after a severe trauma. In the delirious, imagination becomes reality, often in unpredictable ways.

We also see imagination in ourselves as medical professionals. It can provide a temporary escape from painful reality when it seems too overwhelming. Without imagination, there would be no innovation that keeps science moving forward. The visionary may synthesize two disparate pieces of knowledge despite the conventional thinking that they are not connected, or the magic of creativity may produce a paradigm shift out of thin air! Imagination fuels the hope that there can be a world where the diseases and disorders of today can be cured, and that the suffering we see does not have to be a permanent part of human existence. Imagination helps us challenge our current reality with a vision of the world as we'd like it to become.

We see imagination throughout this publication. Imagination fed the process that has led to the artwork, photos, poetry, and prose we are presenting to you. Every piece tells a story. Some of these stories will lead you to insights the author intended, and some will be your own unique interpretation of the author's work. Let your imagination be your guide!



Heath B. Mackley, M.D.
Associate Professor of Radiation Oncology

Welcome friends!

We are very excited to present the 2013 edition of *Wild Onions*! This year, we received numerous creative and insightful pieces that moved us to tears, inspired us, or prompted us to laugh out loud. The power to express emotions along the entire spectrum is what makes the creative arts so vital, especially in the serious realm of medicine. The humanities offer us the ability to laugh at the irony of our own illness through poetry or to express our pain and sorrow through visual art. As editors, we are in awe of the imagination and resilience of those who contributed works to this year's journal. We hope you enjoy this edition of *Wild Onions*, as well as this year's special section, as much as we have enjoyed it!

Senior co-editors

Jessica Lake, MSIV



Jessica's passion for all things creative began as a young child, when she could be seen with her pad and pencil, jotting down the next great idea for a story or the rhymes of a new poem. Her love of the Humanities continued at the University of Florida (Go Gators!) where she studied trumpet and earned a Bachelor of Music degree. She then moved to Philadelphia to continue her education with a Master of Public Health degree from Drexel University. One of the main reasons she decided to attend Penn State for medical school was its strong emphasis on Humanities. While at Penn State, Jessica has kept her creative side engaged by practicing music, perfecting her playful cupcake designs, inviting friends to potluck parties in poetic form and, of course, her participation as a contributor to and senior editor for *Wild Onions*. She will soon be moving to Milwaukee to complete a residency in Pediatrics at the Medical College of Wisconsin, where her imagination and creativity can continue to thrive! Her ultimate goals are to practice Pediatric Hematology/Oncology and participate in medical education.

Pamela Wagar, MSIV



Pam's appreciation for the arts and humanistic medicine began in early childhood, when she spent most of her time as a patient in children's hospitals. She turned toward her love for drawing and music as an escape from the pain and challenges that are often imposed by a medical condition. Although she always wanted to touch individuals' lives the way physicians had influenced hers, she thought she would pursue a career in animation or medical illustration. Pam attended Alvernia University, majoring in Biology with a minor in Art; and it was during her undergraduate years that she decided to pursue medical school. She was enthusiastic about Penn State College of Medicine's integration of the arts and humanistic approach to medicine. Over the years, Pam has remained active in choral groups, musical theatre, and *Wild Onions*, and has called upon her drawing and painting skills when time allows for it. She will begin her residency in Pediatrics in Augusta at the Medical College of Georgia and looks forward to cultivating her love for the arts in this historic city. Pam plans to pursue a subspecialty in pediatrics with an active role in university teaching.



Student Editors

Class Managing Editors:

Class of 2014: Sarah Tisel and Yehoshua Laker
 Class of 2015: Hannah Ross-Suits and Chevon Alderson
 Class of 2016: Eric Jung and Aaron Cantor



Literature Editors:

Front (L to R): Holly Boyle, Hannah Ross-Suits, Sarah Tisel
 Back (L to R): Myra Trivellas, Lisa Passmore Beyers, Louis Di Salvo, Jesse Blank, Jessica Frey



Art Editors:

Front (L to R): Diep Ho, Neil Manering, Alicia Stone
 Back (L to R): Hannah Ross-Suits, Kyle Lewis, Irene Li, Aaron Cantor

Contributing Editors (Not pictured)

Yehoshua Laker, Darren Hill, Sarah Findeis, Seemal Awan, Eric Jung, Ashley Mo, Chevon Alderson

Special Section The Reality of Imagination

"Imagination is everything. It is the preview of life's coming attractions."

-Albert Einstein

Every great discovery begins with imagination. Life's greatest inventions, from the light bulb to the laptop, would not exist had someone not imagined them to be possible. Our imaginations today help shape the realities of tomorrow.

Throughout our lives there are times when our imagination becomes reality. As children, everywhere our imagination took us and every imaginary friend or monster under the bed was, in our minds, real. We often imagined new worlds or new experiences that, in reality, helped shape our relationships with and our understanding of others. As we age, we often use our imagination to create a new reality - an escape from the everyday or a way to evoke a more pleasant world. Or, our minds fail us and what we imagine seems all too real (and sometimes scary) but is actually a symptom of a degenerating illness or psychosis.

For this edition of *Wild Onions* we encouraged our contributors to explore the imagined realities of their own lives. We invite you to share in these realities and the imaginations that helped to create them.



The Prettiest Pumpkinhead

© Alek Tomazin Patient

Thinking Outside the Box

© Holly Boyle MSI

What is this?! A spaceship decorated in buttons and large computer screens, and I am an astronaut going to outer space. An alternate universe - Let's go to Mars! A castle king, and my queen. A cave can go on adventures, explore. A pirate sail the seven living room, a house, the Mom can be the place to hide and-seek. A surrounded of sharks and even piranhas – BEWARE. The arm of a robot. LOOK! There's its head. Let's put it all together. To the adult, a simple cardboard box.



Reality

© Jean Henry Patient

The old glass pane in the mullioned window
Has bubbles and facets in its plane.
Jewels of ordinary materials
Refract light
As it enters this house
Illuminating it.

In daylight looking out:
The hill is not a hill.
It is much more.
As my eye wanders the window,
The oak moves from this world to the next;
The grass grows green in the spring
And withers in the fall,
Disappearing altogether.
The sun moves across the pane:
One dimension, two,
Three dimensions, four.

At night the light from my lamp
Moves outside the glass
And looks in from the night.
Flat, but bright,
It seems to mock me.
Which is the real light?
Three planes, four
Five planes, six
The light that shineth.....



I Saw Him

© Amanda Moyer, MSIII

I saw him
Staring
Into the infinite
Sweet dreams and fancies
Intended for another world
Straying here through him

The Box

© Jessica Frey MSI

Living with Frontotemporal Disease: Adventures in Wonderland

© Claire Flaherty, Ph.D. Department of Neurology

They share the joy of maple leaves emerging as so many embryonic hands.

They have sight now.

He searches [mostly by sight] for her favorite floral fragrance to grace their foyer.

They have smell now.

They languish in the shade of 'their' weeping willow tree, ice cream dripping to their chins.

They have taste now.

She kneels to tenderly pull on his Hunters and Wellies as he tousles her hair.

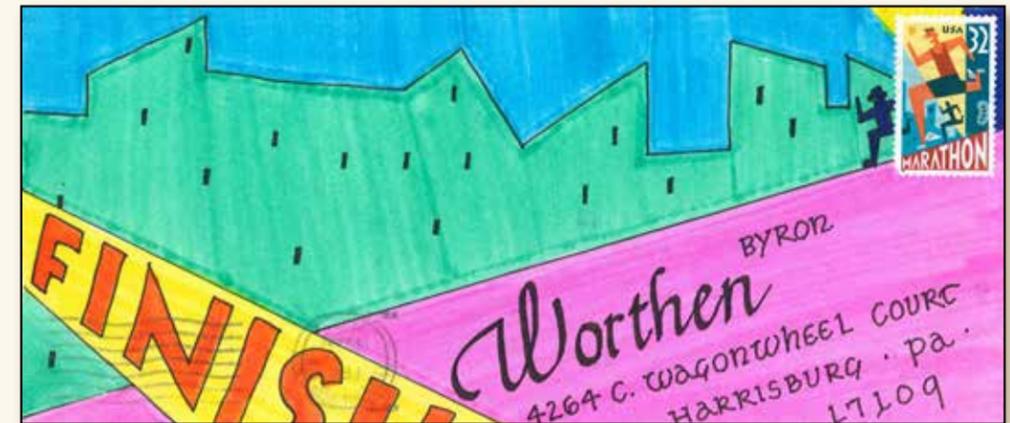
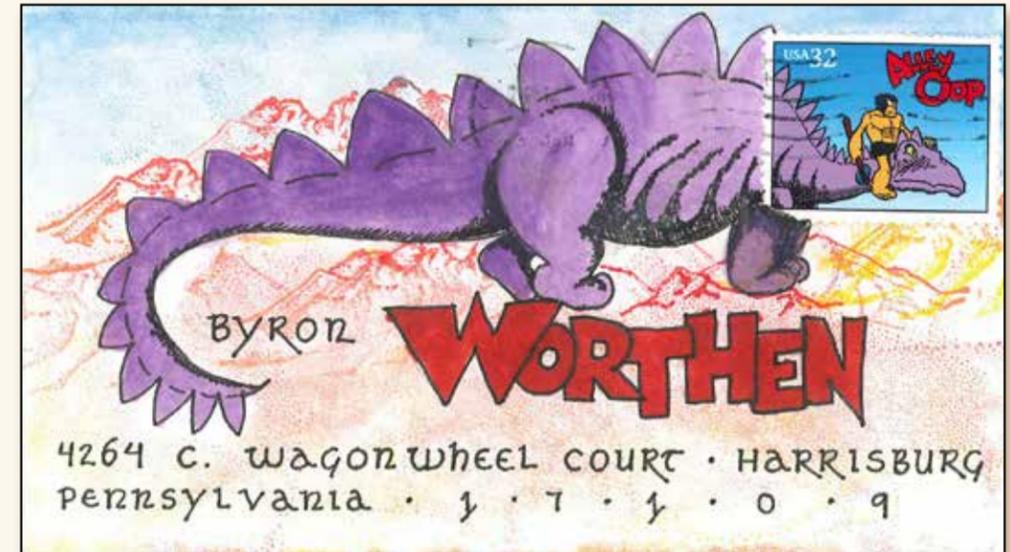
They have touch now.

They move as pilgrims through winter's cathedral, stirred by woodlands' dawn cacophony.

They have sound now.

She reads him his favorite verses, grateful for the gift of yet another day.

They have time now.



Mail Art Envelopes

©Deborah A. Worthen Patient

Human After All?

© Travis Ludwig MS III



Imagination Becomes Reality

© Dennis Gingrich, M.D. Departments of Family and Community Medicine and Humanities

I graduated med school in Seventy-six.
Not much tech in the curricular mix.
No CT, MRI, or genome map,
Though knowledge didn't seem to have a learning gap.

In an advancing society
Imagination becomes reality.

So as each student learns clinical skills
And knowledge and wisdom every mind fills,
Mysterious unknowns begin to change
As what's understood increases its range.

In our own university
Imagination becomes reality.

And learning to know patients we see each day
Means understanding in a different way,
Seeing each life with its fear and hope
And translating illness so patients can cope.

In discovering mind set and personality
Imagination becomes reality.

Reflections in a Room

©Lynelle David Patient

Writing fills the void
The cracks & crevices abound
Filled with many secrets
-- Hiding words that have no sound
Voiceless, nameless fragments
Rising, wraith-like, in a room
Smoky trails of sighs, unheard
Yet mingled in the gloom.

Far-fetched, stray imaginations
Circle overhead
Unsummoned from some wasteland
Where all hope & trust lies dead.

In this place of images
Conceived - disowned, Alive
Visionary landscapes seed
themselves, grow lush & thrive.

But think not that the pen in hand
Has dreamed or writ these lines
Images abound in other places, other times
Living & unbound by narrow spaces in the mind
Graceful notes surrounding, calling seekers forth to find
Swirling inspiration is the substance, we're the mime.

ALS I - Wings

©Don Farrell Patient

I am a dark brown pelican
gliding with my pretty brothers.
They are speckled specimens,
souped-up pterodactyls,
but i am neither black nor grey;
blue sky fills the spaces
in my wings, where my feathers
just won't grow.

Contrast

©Neil Manering MSII



Flower Garden

In memory of those lost in the
Connecticut school shooting

©Heather Moore
Patient Financial Services

Imagine my garden;
spectrum of bright colors.
Lush with life from above;
a Garden of Eden's little souls.
Grown from the deepest love;
groomed for the years to come.
The sun shines brightly;
illuminating the way.
Branches from many;
shelter the precious life.
Yet thick weeds from below;
uproot chaos and fear.
Peaceful murmurs and praise;
nurturing the young seeds.
Vanquished are these sounds;
replaced with crows' shrill cry.
Speak sweetly of your miracle;
while others' drown in sorrow.
Sun is gone and branches broken;
The garden of reality leaves little beauty.



Keep Her Believing

© Pam Wagar MSIV

When Buses Dream

© Daniel E. Shapiro, Ph.D. Department of Humanities



Matchstruck

©Jessica Lake MSIV

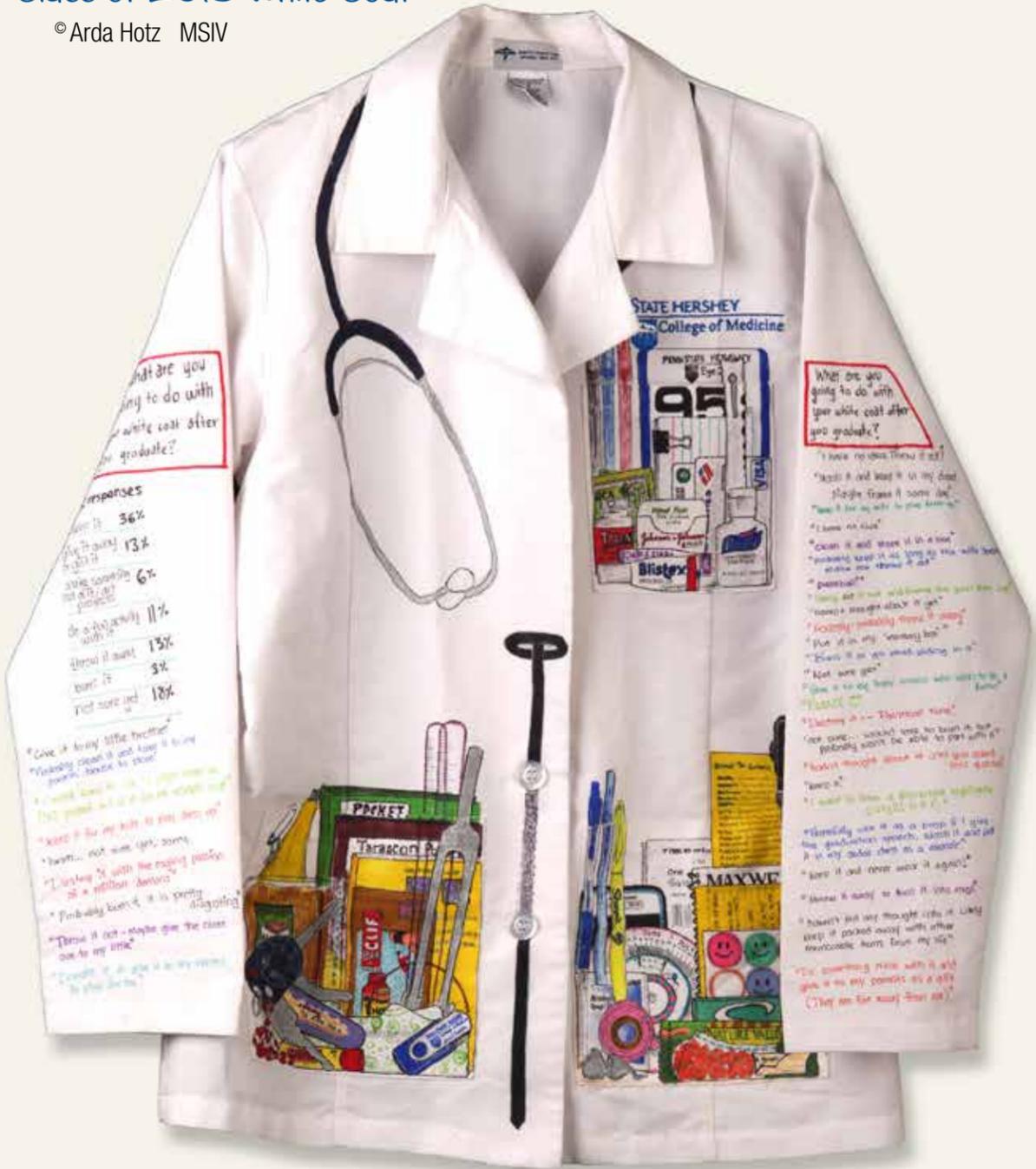
It starts with high hopes
Then reality descends
Expectations change.

Childhood dreams come true
A white envelope stares back
with new dreams inside.

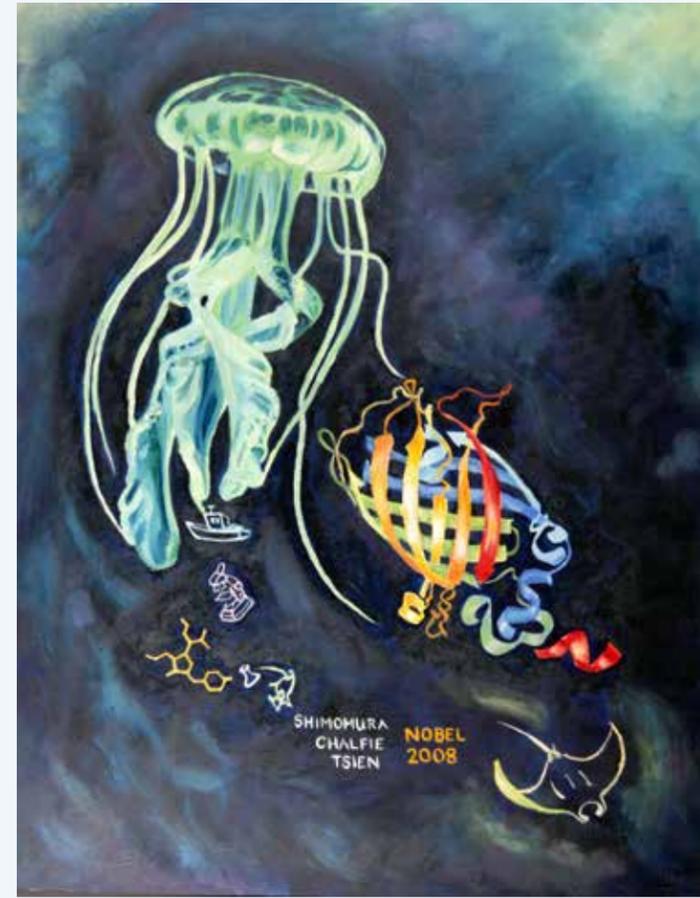
White coat of winter
brings summer maturation
Titles, coats and debt.

Class of 2013 White Coat

©Arda Hotz MSIV



The Doctors Kienle Competition in Literature, Photography, and Art



Cast Your Net Wide

© Mohammad Bader MSIII

Prizes are awarded yearly to writers, photographers, and visual artists whose works are considered to be of exceptional artistic and humanistic merit. An outside judge determines awards in each category, which range from \$100 to \$200.

This year's judge for the Kienle Competition in Literature is Elizabeth Dolan, Ph.D.. Dr. Dolan is an Associate Professor of English and Director of the Health, Medicine and Society Program at Lehigh University. She held the Senior Fellowship in Literature and Medicine at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, where she earned her Ph.D. in British Romantic-Era Literature. Her research and teaching explore the representation of suffering—including illness, slavery, women's oppression, and poverty—in both eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literature and in contemporary illness narratives. She is author of *Seeing Suffering in Women's Literature of the Romantic Era* (Ashgate 2008) and serves as the Book Review Editor of the *Keats-Shelley Review*.

The photography and visual art judge is Andrea Worley. Ms. Worley holds an MFA in painting and drawing from East Tennessee State University. She has consulted with, lectured, and taught drawing and painting at East Tennessee State University, Milligan College, and Gardner-Webb University. She has had shows of her work in art galleries in Johnson City (TN), Evansville (IN), Claremont (CA), Gardner-Webb University (NC), and, in 2009, at the Green-Rice Gallery in the historic NoDa art district of Charlotte. Following that exhibit, she developed macular holes in both eyes, requiring several surgeries and resulting in many drawings depicting what she saw and did not see during that time.

Winners of The Doctors Kienle Competition in Literature

First Place

Tibetan Sky Burial

©Derek Reighard MSII

Do not delay the vultures now—
no, not on my behalf.

I have awaited daylight
since the morning dawn bloomed black,
since my grandfather's insides turned tumorous.

I am not afraid for him. The strident teeth
that once terrorized his paper-thin skin
have eroded into quiet tufts of dust.

Above the Drigung Monastery today the sky is clear,
a cloudless panorama for a soul in flight. Even the
mountains seem to recede and make room.

Solemn monks assemble on the ancient stone
landing, summoning the scavenger birds with
incense of juniper sprigs and cypress wood.

Yogin-butchers begin breaking my grandfather down,
his leathery frame short work for sharpened blades,
his bones crushed fine and entrails splayed.

For a moment I am certain the body
rearranged before me isn't him,
isn't anything.

With bold cacophony the vultures strike,
tearing at tendon like common carrion—
a frenzied mass of shifting wings.

The gift of this body comes free of beauty's strings.

Through the relentless work of beaks
my grandfather is rendered weightless,
a proud impermanence in earthy grasps.

The heavens crowd with bloodied feathers
as white clouds offer rain:

Benediction.

Judge's Comments:

This astonishingly beautiful poem is set in the Himalayas, at a Buddhist Monastery founded in 1179. Because Buddhists believe in reincarnation, the body is no longer needed after death, and thus, in this ancient ritual, it is offered as a gift to nature. In this poet's intricate rendering, an act that might seem violent or gruesome—the dismembering of one's own grandfather—becomes sacred. Listen to the vowel sounds and the rhythms of this poem as you read it aloud. The first two lines sound the “o” and “ow” of lamentation, but maintain a steady two-beat rhythm that gently expands into three beats in line three, capturing the growth of the grandfather's tumors in sound. The poet introduces an end rhyme just as the Yogin-butchers begin their work: “blades” and “splayed.” As the body separates, the poem tightens, preparing for the vultures and the ascension of the soul. Three-line stanzas structure the poem, yet the first stanza has only two lines. The single line—“The gift of this body”—serves as a third line to the first stanza, but stands alone to encapsulate the speaker's own feelings. The final two stanzas leave the personal perspective behind, moving the reader into the sacred as the body disappears into the clouds. Nature opens early in the poem to accept the soul and then at the end of the poem, sends down rain, a “benediction,” as if in thanks for the soul it has received.

Second Place

Central Park Revue

© Domenick Moore Patient

The park bench on 82nd Street groaned, sounding like old men shuffling around the marketplace. I sat in front of the Met, my lunch in my lap. Surrounded by the hustle and bustle of the city, I watched masses of Very Busy People spreading out like the Diaspora, assembly lines of taxis jockeying for position.

That's when he introduced himself.

You could see the street on him; it'd crept its way into every line and crease worn throughout his face and hands. His hair was an early gray, a Byzantine nimbus radiating around him. He looked both sage and wild man, left too long on his own; Rasputin in the Big Apple. The smell of alleys and cheap whiskey rose from him, an acrid odor that wouldn't be ignored.

“Ahem. Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Alvin.” A courtly bow was followed by an unceremonious flop of his tattered red hood, but the man — this Alvin — continued unmolested. “How you doin' today?”

No words came, though my eyes still worked, as though I could puzzle out this man's sudden, magical appearance by blinking. All I'd expected from the day was the museum, nothing more — hours spent meandering among some of the world's greatest works of art, guarded by men and women that wore scowls more comfortably than their polyester blazers. Screaming children that would have been better served by a day spent with a sitter. Adults who scoffed at Pollock, Miro, and Gris, muttering under their breath that their kids drew the same crap every day at daycare, but you didn't see anyone throwing millions of dollars their way.

Alvin was an anomaly.

I shrugged. “I'm good?”

Laughter literally shook Alvin from head to foot. Sunlight streamed through his gap-toothed grin and my mother's piercing voice rang out in the back of my head: “Never make eye contact with the homeless. That's just asking for trouble.”

But I'd read the statistics — a little more than 50

percent of all homeless suffer from some form of mental illness. I was well aware that if only one thing in my life had been off by even the merest of degrees, it could be me walking around carrying my life in a plastic bag. I usually took every opportunity to give what I could. Here I was with a ham sandwich and a bed waiting for me back in Pennsylvania. There was Alvin with more fingers than teeth. He didn't seem to notice, though.

“Hey, that's good, that's good. How could you not be happy on a day like today? You in the greatest city in the world and the sun's shinin,' birds singin.' Makes you happy to be alive.” Alvin breathed in deeply, stretching his arms like an eagle preparing for flight. He smiled again, teeth like tessera, mouth like a long-abandoned mosaic. Every time he exhaled, I found myself trying to decide if I was smelling Wild Turkey or Old Granddad.

“Exactly,” I said, unable to disagree with such a shining endorsement.

Alvin did a little jig of a dance and clapped his hands.

“All right, lemme tell you my gig, lemme tell you my gig here. I sing. That's what I do. I sing songs, an' if you like what you hear, you can give me a lil' somethin.' You know, whatever you got.”

Guilt turned to regret as I looked at Alvin. As sweet and beguiling as he was, all I had was an empty wallet and an overpriced sandwich.

“I'm really sorry, Alvin. I spent the last of my cash on this ham and cheese sandwich.” I reached to pull out my wallet, prove I wasn't just handing him excuses instead of a few dollars. Alvin just shook his prophet's hair and smiled.

“Hey no, man. I dig. That's what happened to me. Ham and cheese sandwiches, man. Like a drug. Couldn't stop buying 'em. One day, I just couldn't pay the rent no more.” A pause, then Alvin reached out, clapped me on the shoulder. “Just kiddin,' man.” He wiped an invisible tear from his cheek and hooted, this barn owl of the streets and underpasses.

The thought came to me, and I was embarrassed that it hadn't occurred to me sooner.

"I have an idea, Alvin. You sing — any song you want. Doesn't matter to me. If I like it, I'll split my sandwich with you."

Alvin fixed me with a sideways glance, not speaking. The ambient sounds of the city — traffic, pedestrians chatting, a squirrel racing up a tree — seemed to expand in the sudden vacuum left by his silence.

"You sure, man?" The words were sotto voce, as though we were passing sensitive information. "Yo, it's one thing to ask for money. It's another to take a man's food out his mouth."

I tried to follow this odd logic, hoping the smile plastered on my face masked the confusion in my eyes.

"I'm positive, Alvin."

His eyebrows knitted. Shades of red crept up beneath the stain of the street. He began to wring his hands as though trying to stay warm. Finally, he nodded once.

"Thank you, man. That's really sweet. Just for that, I'm gonna sing you a Marvin Gaye tune. You dig Marvin?"

"I love Marvin Gaye. Who doesn't?"

As simply as that, Alvin was swept up in a wave of frenetic energy, all fingers snapping and grinning.

"Yeah, man. You gotta dig Marvin."

Alvin cleared his throat by means of warming up and opened his mouth. The first note sung was like an enchantment — the nervous energy dissipated, the

eccentric street dweller disappearing like a glamour. Years seemed to peel away, shaking loose from the wrinkles and folds. The cologne of cheap booze magically evaporated. This new man before me channeled the spirit of Marvin Gaye. Alvin's rich tenor soared and swept, dipped and dropped. It flowed, wrapping itself tightly, but softly, around me as goosebumps crept across my skin.

"Mother, mother, there's too many of you cryin'. Brother, brother, brother, there's far too many of you dyin'. You know we've got to find a way to bring some lovin' here today."

When the song finally ended, Alvin held the last note just a little longer before letting it drop gracefully away. Realizing I'd forgotten to breathe, I sucked in a lung-full of air and shivered, enthralled by this virtuoso in a distressed infantry jacket. For his part, Alvin stood there waiting, unaware of the effect he'd had on me.

As I wrapped foil around one half of the sandwich, I sighed. "Good Lord, Alvin. That was amazing."

"Thanks, man. You know, it's just somethin' I do." He held the sandwich in one hand, reaching out with the other; he had a firm grip. "Thanks for this. I can't tell you how much I appreciate it."

Alvin gave me a little salute with the sandwich and was on his way. I watched him walk his little jig, eventually blending into a crowd, becoming just another part of the city. I took a bite of my half of the ham and cheese, the spicy mustard drawing tears from my eyes.

"Man," I said with my mouth full, to no one in particular, "can that guy sing."

Judge's Comments:

Read this beautifully wrought short story for the movement it captures—from the crowds flowing through the streets of New York City, to the "frenetic energy" racing through the homeless vocalist Alvin's body. This sense of movement makes the moments of quietness and transcendent stillness even more powerful. First Alvin lowers his voice when the speaker offers to share a sandwich, as if aware that something unusual is about to occur. But this is just a prelude to the magical way time and space open up around the two characters while Alvin sings. This exchange—half a sandwich for a song—transforms an interaction between two people on the street into a communion both sacred and social. Together the singer and his auditor create a momentary masterpiece outside of the walls of the world-famous Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Third Place

Abra Cadavera

On meeting my first patient in medical school

©Yehoshua Laker MSIII

The face is stark. Raving. Had.
Frozen, with grime. Constricted, in time.
Mortal; unmoving. Supine; reproving.

My face is dark. Staring. Sad.
Liquid, with emotion. Transfixed, at the notion:
Mortal. And moved. Erect; and improved.

Her chest, deeply gashed. Her stomach: collapsed.
Her heart failed within her. Her blood did but hinder.
A life force off track. A resource attacked.

My chest... abashed. My stomach: unlatched.
My heart quailed within me. My blood stirred with pity,
Faced with the Fact. A moment compact.

Thin; black; hairs. Barren of cares; unknown to tears.
Swollen legs and thighs. Stained knees and cries.
Ankles, of shorn support. Feet, of mean comfort.

Sin; hope; fears. Riven with wonder; senses asunder.
Frame that will teach us. A figure to reach us.
Aware of a life. A mother and wife.

Her life, though aborted — her death, made supportive.
An act of magnanimity. To live for posterity.
The circumstance was tragic.
The moment is magic.

Judge's Comments:

All first-year medical students encounter their "first-patient" in anatomy class. This musical poem, full of symmetry, compares the speaker with the cadaver and honors the gift of her body. Look at the way alternating stanzas mirror each other; listen for the rhyme within and between lines. This is the connective tissue between cadaver and student. The first stanza describes the physicality of the cadaver; the second the physicality of the student. The third and fourth stanzas capture the working of the stomach, heart, and blood—first in the cadaver and then in the student. In the fifth stanza the student speaker records signs of the female cadaver's vulnerability, then his own in stanza six. The final six lines address their connectivity and acknowledge the way the donation of the body transforms a "tragic" death into the "magic" of learning.

Honorable Mention

Hunger

©Erica Bates MSIV

The sweet elderly woman on five presented looking pregnant, abdomen distended with ascites. It had been collecting for a while, but her husband has had two heart attacks and she takes care of him. She came in when she couldn't bend over anymore. Her husband visits every day. It's just the two of them.

"Eating okay?" A routine question for a routine discharge.

"Oh yes, I am eating very well now. But you know, the portions they send up here are so big! I couldn't possibly eat it all. Last night they sent up a pizza, a whole round pizza, this big!"

An exaggerated gesture. I've seen them in the cafeteria, six inches across.

"So sometimes, you know, I give the rest to George to finish, because I'd hate to see it go to waste. But I always tell the nurses how much I eat, so I don't mess up your records."

Eyes down, waiting for censure from a student doctor less than half her age.

Her husband returns, holds up her prescriptions. "These pills she needs...do you know how much they cost?"

Judge's Comments:

A lifetime of loving sacrifice emerges in this economic "short short" story. Hospitalized for ascites, or accumulation of fluid in the abdominal cavity that is often a sign of serious disease or even organ failure, the elderly woman shares her hospital food with her husband. She says that the food they bring, a six-inch pizza, is too much for her. But if you read between the lines, you discover in her husband's question about the cost of her medicine a confirmation of their poverty. She gives her husband her food so he won't go hungry.

Winners of The Doctors Kienle Competition in Photography

First Place

Prism (Ha Long Bay, Viet Nam)

©Lauren Schmidt MSII



Judge's Comments:

At first glance, this is mainly a photograph about blues and oranges, given that most of the kayaks are these colors. The photographer has used the title "Prism," though, as a way to encourage the viewer to look more closely at all colors of the spectrum and enjoy their complexity. For example, most of the water is a full blue-green, but at its very tip in the lower left corner, the photographer has caught where the brightness of the sun has turned that same color into a very light tint of itself.

The photograph is also a marvel of composition. The eye begins by running across the housing system on the distant horizon, before being swept downward in a right circular motion around the boats and back up on the left into the denseness of the forest. For some viewers, the eye begins with the kayaks in the foreground and sweeps around in the same circular direction. It is both subtle and classic. Overall, the photo's great strength is the way in which the horizontals and circular elements echo each other, via their colors, while backed up by the delicate verticals of the background trees. At every level this is a dynamic and artistic photograph.

Second Place

Hanukkah in Peru - Making a Menorah from Bottle Caps

© Sarah Smith MSIII



Judge's Comments:

This inviting work takes on a slightly skewed pyramidal formation—first, with the vertical edge of the left chair connecting with an upward white support of the banister; second, the joining of that support with the two thrusts downward from left to right; third, those two finally ending with the middle chair and the strong horizontal base.

The middle candle of the Menorah—the Shamash, the helper candle that is used to light the other eight—breaks free from the eight candles that are contained within the pyramidal structure, rising above the banister and therefore distinguished from the four candles on either side. The light it emits becomes symbolic of Isaiah 42:6, representing Israel's mission as “a light unto the nations.” The significance of this particular Hanukkah taking place in Peru takes on more meaning when viewed in this context. The menorah is admirable in its simplicity, hand-crafted from common objects. It sits here in a country far from Israel, yet its ability to create this much brightness represents faith that outshines everything else in the room. The photograph speaks of great care and deep reverence, a spirit of common people finding their faith in common elements of life.

Third Place

Umbrellas

© Joseph Gascho, M.D. Heart and Vascular Institute, Departments of Medicine and Humanities



Judge's Comments:

This is a fascinating work of great visual simplicity, constructed by rules and guidelines known by good photographers and artists but rarely known by those outside the field. One of the most elementary conventions is the use of an odd rather than an even number of objects. Odd numbers in art and photography are far more interesting, in that balance has to be created by placements and spaces rather than with geometric structures. While the collection of entries in this photographic competition is of remarkably high quality, this is one of the most unusual and artistic pieces.

The colors of both the “field” of the work and the subtlety of the wide range of blues in the triad of umbrellas are the key to what makes this photograph so powerful. In both cases, the colors are unique and challenging; and the interaction between the background color, with its linear horizontals and verticals, and that of the umbrellas, with its curvilinear shadows, is virtually mesmerizing. The eye wants to travel back and forth from umbrella to umbrella, even though the field between them is also inviting. The eye does not wish to give up, which indicates the magnetism of the photographer's work. It is an uncanny visual experience.

Honorable Mention

Magic Mirror

© John Landis Husband of Susan Landis, C.R.N.A. Department of Anesthesiology



Judge's Comments:

The fact that everything within the mirror is upside down takes the viewer aback. The dark wooden floor is on top, and the brightness of the ceiling and its lights leads the viewer's eye to the woman herself. The use of the circle keeps the viewer's eyes bouncing from the dark wood down to the black coat the woman wears as she stands in the hallway. The very confinement within the four straight lines of the photographer's paper gives strength to this magical circle. Ultimately, the viewer's eyes cannot leave the mirror and its contents, despite the presence of the woman herself.

Because everything is being pulled into the mirror, one could question whether the contents of the mirror might be the true reality in this work. What is real? What is illusion? The mark of a good photographer is to see the unusual, the unexpected. That is what sets this photograph apart.

Winners of The Doctors Kienle Competition in Visual Art

First Place

Transformation of Frustration Mixed Media

© Carmen Marcucci Age 16 Daughter of Gina Marccci Neural & Behavioral Sciences



Judge's Comments:

This mixed-medium drawing utilizes a classic compositional pyramid with the young woman's right arm forming a solid horizontal base. Repeating this shape are the shards of glass that fly from her right fist—clearly the visual focus of the picture. Ostensibly, she is breaking glass in a fit of rage. Intense anger is most commonly expressed through the use of a strong red. Here, however, the intensity of the red is lessened by a touch of blue, which makes her gesture more intriguing.

While on the surface this appears to be a portrait of a young woman letting loose of her anger, the expression on her face, the position of her body, and especially the beautiful piece of art she has created belie that. All of us have times of frustration and imagine things we would like to do to release it: slug a wall, smash a plate, knock over a plant. But fortunately most of us have learned to control our tendencies to act out in violence. I believe this is what the artist is conveying here, something opposite of what appears on first glance. This is exactly what the title says it is: a transformation of frustration.

Second Place

Orchid and Sheet Acrylic Paint on Canvas

©Daniel R. George, Ph.D. Department of Humanities



Judge's Comments:

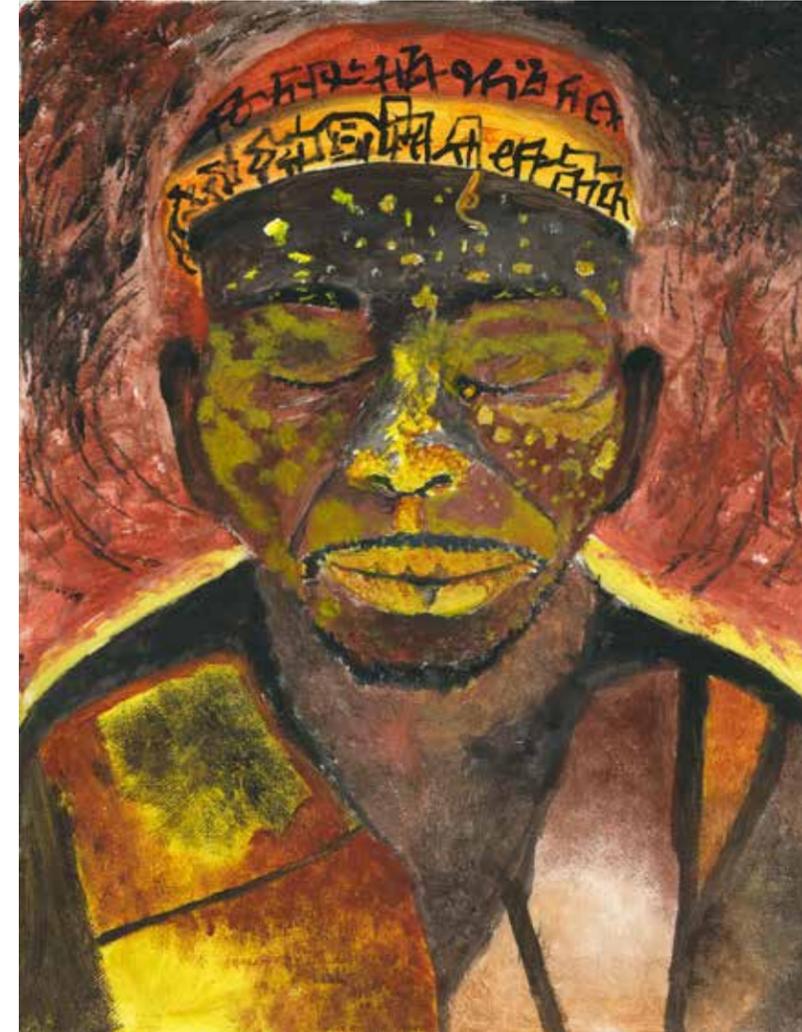
Among the most beautiful and delicate flowers, orchids often take a long time to bloom, and they require a healthy source of light for the blooms to flourish. This scene is somewhat poignant in that the sheet masks the light that would enable the orchid to thrive.

This work is of very limited complementary colors, red and green. The only object of heavy substance is the table, and its presence, along with the shadow it casts beneath, keep the viewer's eye solidly within the work. The artist draws the viewer in through the dense red of the table and dark green of the leaves, then invites attention upwards with the arc of the petals. Placing the orchid's bloom toward the wall and showing its curve downward, the artist moves the viewer's eye down until it catches the edge of the table. Then a half-oval sweep leads back up to the sheet hanging over what is presumably a window. Within the folds of the sheet one can almost see the image of a face whose downcast eyes contribute to a sense of mystery—a sense of story we're not told.

Third Place

Mozambique Miner

© Francesca Travagli Age 18 Daughter of Florence Travagli Neural & Behavioral Science



Judge's Comments:

The life of a miner in Mozambique is very difficult and dangerous to his health. Although we cannot be sure what he is mining (coal? gold?), we are drawn in by his weariness and we are curious about his story. His eyes are closed. Has he made it through the day alive or is he just resting his eyes from exposure to dust or other substances in the mines? What are these written marks on his double-pieced cap? Is this the language he speaks? What is not in question is the miner's strength, which the artist conveys with sureness of stroke.

Most of the colors in this work are warm—yellows, oranges and reds. The painting of the miner's clothing is particularly well done. The artist could have simply made the side of the vest duplicates of each other. Instead, dark black seams are boldly painted in a way that appears almost random but also increases the visual interest of the work. There are no signs of hesitation in the drawing of the black seams. Nothing seems worked and then reworked. The technique is as raw and honest as the single image of the miner himself.

Honorable Mention

Spy Glass

©Ariana Iantosca Age 17 Daughter of Mark Iantosca, M.D. Department of Neurosurgery



Judge's Comments:

This collage is a whimsical take on finding one's place in the world and where one is heading. The young woman seems to know Florida well, for the artist has hand-printed the names of the beaches on a map, as well as a recipe for a local delicacy. The map and recipe, however, are upside down, suggesting that this young woman's world has turned topsy-turvy; now she's like a pirate, looking for direction or a different horizon through her "spyglass" AriZona tea bottle—a fanciful way to suggest "reading tea leaves" as a means to see the future.

The juxtaposition of undulating and straight lines is striking. The empty bottle's white tea flowers are repeated on a larger scale in the bottom left of the drawing, which pushes the viewer's eye back to the center of the work: the girl's open eye, looking forward to see what's coming. The bright lemon-yellow line that surrounds the girl suggests her struggle to maintain control of her journey and a wish that it is happy.

Selected Works

We often use art as a form of self-expression, for healing or for coping with the realities that life has to offer. Poetic and literary works allow authors to tell a story with creativity, deep expression, and heartfelt words, while visual imagery becomes windows into the boundless imaginations and minds of those who create or capture them. Through the artistic talents of those within our community, we share in their joys, their sorrows, their sufferings, and their hopes for the future. These pieces are reflections of those who choose to share their stories and gifts with us, and we sincerely thank them for allowing us into their lives.



Morning Nectar

© J. Spence Reid, M.D.
Department of Orthopaedics and Rehabilitation

First Breath

©Kevin Berry MSIV

Silence now shattered
Lungs expanding, arms moving
Our hearts beat again

Aortic Dissection

©Joseph Gascho, M.D.
Heart and Vascular Institute
Departments of Medicine and Humanities

Aorta bulging out
big as your three-year-old's right arm,
walls thin as the front page
of the sports section.
No surprise (to me)
that when you picked him up last night
and threw him in the air
the ripping pain
shot to your back.

Will you survive the knife
and live to crouch and catch
the curves your teenage son will throw?



Concealed

© Alexandra Shapiro
Daughter of Daniel E. Shapiro, Ph.D.
Department of Humanities

Yoga in a Bolt of String

©Anthony Sedun Son of Yvonne Sedun, R.N. Pain Clinic

Dressed in her Loft trench, stripe pleated knit top, and boot cut stone wash dark denim, she prompts: "It's green." Nothing. She looks at him, taps his knee. "Honey?"

But he's lost. Stopped at a light behind a silver Civic, the teacher-husband-father coils the consonants carefully, folding the sounds of the word on the bumper sticker quietly, compulsively, like a cloth. A napkin. *Namasté*.

He remembers his professors' refrain: The helping professions take a lot. Teaching isn't for everyone.

My mom pours hot sauce in my mouth and holds my lips together to keep it in whenever I do something bad.

I remember being thrown down the stairs when I was still in diapers.

My dad hates me and wants me to leave him alone all the time.

I didn't kill my brother!

Like the ugly asymmetry of cigarette burns on silk, these were the stories he spun so seamlessly into a winter cloth of years, without purpose or prayer, stretched and combed shear.

Peopled with burdens, no wonder the children came home with him in snippets and stories, half-heard conversations voiced in the halls. High-pants in a kaleidoscope of cream-complexioned kids, darned between cheap Hollister discount racks no one with real money would wear and department store door-busters designed to move quick.

He knows the blue mountains just north of this light abstain from the judgments he can't. Geologic time, genres of abuse, textiles of neglect, the instability of youth accused. Yes, he thinks, people present a strange, sad gravity. Just like they said.

His wife: "Let's go."

His life: "Let go."

He blinks and sews the strings without a word.

Namasté and ever and forever. Amen.

Yoga in a bolt of string.

Through the Mist

©Brian Piazza MSIII



Stethoscope

© Amy Siyuan Ni MSIV

Cold metal touches clammy skin,
A mere inch below rests a dying heart
That belongs to a mother, a wife.
It murmurs its last secrets,
With each
Slowing
Beat.

Lungs of a tenor,
Once filling an opera,
Now gasp
For a few mouthfuls
Of precious sustenance.

The shrill shriek of a bowel,
Once savoring feasts,
Now writhing,
Begging for release.

It patiently listens.
Iron tempered by a thousand stories,
A hundred lives inscribed.
Years go by and it drapes
Around our necks
Our shoulders become heavy.

ALS 3 - t.i.d.

© Don Farrell Patient

Slow . . . motion, slow me,
slowly, surely shake out a pill,
all the tiny pills in frankenfingers,
branded and corralled in my palm,
the gate of the bottle is open,
challenging damaged tendrils and
an unbridled mind to attend
a slow . . . motion athletic event.

Lamb of God

© Angela Sedun
Daughter-in-Law of Yvonne Sedun, R.N. Pain Clinic



Frog Pond

© Francesca Travagli Age 18
Daughter of Florence Travagli
Department of Neural & Behavioral Sciences



Colors

© Cab Bingaman Patient

The burial site tent was black
and open at one end.
Probably, he thought, for summer and shade.
But this January morning was cold and gray
hinting ice from the blank, granite shroud of cloud.

The two Army color guard, in full olive-green dress
stood at attention at the closed end.
One of them, he noticed, subtly flexed
his white gloves against the stiffening frigidty.

Reverential words and a Psalm were spoken
a final prayer, an amen, then "Taps"
from a third color guard outside the tent flaps.
When those pure, crystalline, lonely notes
trumpeted out over the surrounding marble
carrying seemingly forever on the glazed air:
Dear Lord that's my father – and his eyes welled.

The last silvery note from the braided, silver horn echoed away.
The two solders' alabaster gloves
crisply mechanical, meticulous and perfect
began folding the flag draping the casket
bright against the drab, dead day
its rich blue, vivid red, pristine white stripes, stars
snappily turned it, shrunk it into a triangle.

He stood when the bearer approached
staring at the precise national ensign
only partially hearing the practiced words
of recognition, pride, honor, servitude.
Accepting, he couldn't meet the soldier's eyes.

Then afterward, before the black limousine ride
he sought them, wanted to thank them
they probably rarely were
wanted to ask a few spontaneous questions.
But the color guard
like their duty, the trumpet hymn, his father
had faded away.



Chicago Spring

© Michael J. Green, M.D., M.S.
Departments of Internal Medicine
and Humanities

Permission Slips

© Anthony Sedun Son of Yvonne Sedun, R.N. Pain Clinic

I just want you to know I never blamed you.
Even after you picked me up late for prom, stood me up
at Starbucks the next day, only to tell me you joined the Marines.

Quantico, Parris Island, Texas to the Hindu Kush.

Without the Hallmark, without the wet white of a first snow,
I took care of it. Quietly.

I wasn't about to wreck you like you learned to wreck towns and tanks,
IEDs and insurgents. After all, that's what trainings for.

A few months after your Taps, our friend told me:
"He kinda asked to cheat on me for you."
Just imagine. Losing all over again.

Permission slips in a place where people politely disappear.



Haiku

© Michael Huang, M.D. Pediatric Hematology/Oncology

Seasonal Affective Disorder

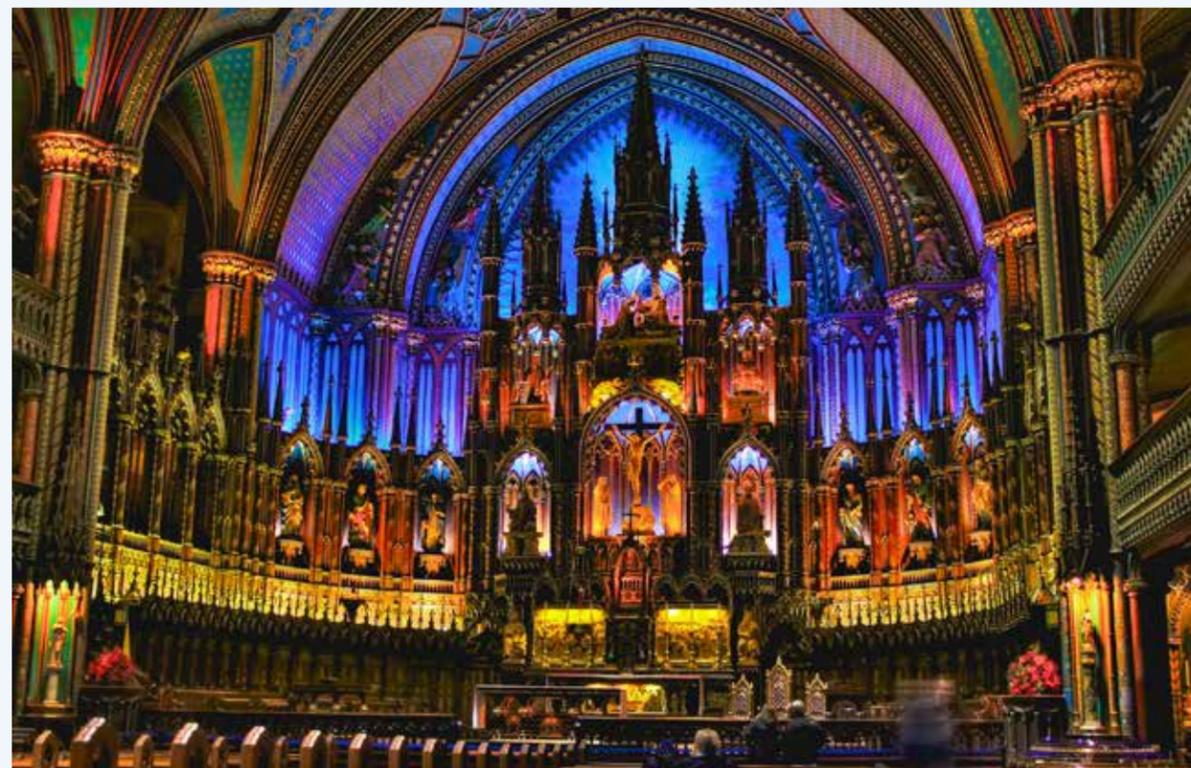
© Kim King Wife of Steven H. King, C.H.P. Department of Radiology

You suffocate thick grief in summer's heat,
by yanking weeds that choke tomatoes, beans
and peppers, hot and sweet. The hoe conceals
the pebbles underneath the soil you rake—
Cicadas drone a melancholy dirge.

In autumn, shadows lengthen over rows
of broken corn, while Leyland cypress tilt
in shifting light. You wield your shears at stems
of marjoram and lemon balm—the scents
enduring snips. The ocher leaves decay.

Midwinter wakes to chalky drifts that smooth
the earth's uneven tracts. Demeter's cries
escape in blurring icy sleet, then freeze.
In leather gloves you axe the apple wood
and stack the cords for warmth to sleep. Alone,

Persephone emerges with her seeds
that coax your leaden boots to trudge along,
through fields where rains assuage, abating
drought with drizzled fingers. Dead nettles bloom.



Notre Dame Cathedral, Montreal QC

© Eldhose Thekkethottiyil MSIV

Twinkies® à la Mode

© Lisa Passmore Beyers MSI

After we got married, we found ourselves penniless and with a kitchen full of new toys. Distant relations had sent along tidings of eternal love, happiness and an industrial blender. Great Aunt Mabel sent her love and a set of steak knives.

So we concocted curries composed of cheap, dry lentils. We invested in economy-sized bags of basmati rice, which you carried over your shoulder like a squirming toddler. Week-long menus were devoted to a bin of marked-down squashes. When organic produce was on sale, it was tantamount to seeing the Virgin in a piece of toast.

It wasn't long before we each settled into our kitchen identities. You became a pizza expert, reveling in the timelessness of a crust topped with cheese and sauce. I became the well-meaning adventurer, sneaking in new and exotic flavors.

Perpetual tensions existed, like the correct amount of garlic and onion to add. Or if cilantro should be added at all.

But by the end of the week the wilting produce that was left in the fridge was thrown into a stew, a risotto, or in the most desperate cases, the Crock Pot. We cooked the hell out of it, and hoped it would taste good over rice or with a crisp, sliced baguette.

And in those quiet moments at the kitchen table, we were almost sophisticated. We even drank our seven-dollar wine from real wine glasses (thank you, Barb from Dad's office). It was during this time that we had our most poignant and philosophical moments. Like whether the last bit of spinach on the plate had to be eaten, even though it tasted like dirt and there were no children around to set examples for. Or, on one occasion, a heated discussion on the place of mushrooms in the food pyramid, after which we ate dessert in silence.

We kept dissecting until it was just a collection of crumbs, held together by melted ice cream. Finally, you nudged the last bite to my side of the plate and set your spoon down, smiling. I ate it, imagining the day I would polish it off without asking.

Clueless

© Eldhose Thekkethottiyil MSIV



Happiness in a Wrapper

© Aparna Paul Age 13
Daughter of Zahira Paul, M.S., OTR/L
Orthopaedics and Rehabilitation

Chocolate is so delicious
Your happiness is not fictitious.

The anticipation while the wrapper is ripped,
The grin that spreads; the hungry frown has flipped.
The feeling of it melting, turning into goo,
The opening of the cave, as teeth get ready to chew.

The deep, rich smell of cocoa in your nose,
You shove it all in, look how fast it goes!
The taste itself, melting on your tongue,
Catch the feeling while it's still young.

Other chocolates are on the wall,
Dark, milk, I must try them all.
One imposter among the rest.
White chocolate! The worst of the best!

So this chocolate saga draws to an end,
But remember to share the sweetness with a friend!

Diabetes

© Jessica Oser Age 10
Daughter of Sean Oser, M.D. and
Tamara Oser M.D.
Family and Community Medicine

Diabetes makes me sad,
It also makes me really mad!

Why does it have to be this way?
There's just one thing I have to say...

I do not feel any shame.
My life will never be the same.

I am stronger, that is good.
At least I'm not Red Riding Hood!



City Summer

© Neil Manering MSII

Lessons from a 13-year-old

©Erin Banashefski MSII

As per camp policy, names have been changed.

“Morning, Banni!”

The typical 7 a.m. greeting from my camp boss, Mike, his booming voice wakes you up quicker than any jolt of caffeine.

“Let me know when Sara gets here; I want to talk to you two about this week.”

I smiled and assured him I would. This was nothing out of the ordinary; Sara and I were always willing to be his go-to people for the odd tasks that needed to be tackled around camp. After three years on staff, we could put together a skit in two minutes or come up with a group games list in a minute; and we had become quite adept at laughing off whatever compromising cleaning situation we were assigned. I even allowed myself to get excited over the possibility that Sara and I might be in charge of the same cabin again and that he simply wanted to warn us not to search out red wasp nests in the attic of our girls’ cabin...again. This act of valor, as Sara and I still hold it to be, resulted in our having to wake Mike at 1 a.m. so the three of us could squeeze through the attic access doors and spray down the multiple wasp nests together in a very confined area. While a fond memory, Mike reminded Sara and me often that it was not something a 55-year-old man wanted to repeat.

Sara and I entered his office laughing, but quickly stopped as Mike quietly said, “Please, close the door.” Now, this may not seem like an odd request, but I assure you, he never closes his office door. Ever. And it was disconcerting to be asked to do so. Mike has been a camp director for over thirty years, so not much fazes him anymore. But as he slumped down in his chair, I knew something was weighing heavily on him.

“Girls, due to your cabin assignments this week, I wanted to be the first to let you know. In 20 years we have had only one camper die while at camp....There is a significant chance that during this week, that number will increase to two.”

Where I worked is not your ordinary summer camp; the reality of death is much closer to the population of our campers than most. This is not due to poor supervision or inadequate facilities, but because it is a camp for children with chronic illnesses and physical disabilities. Each week of the summer brings a different diagnosis to camp, and each week camp’s activities are adapted to give all children the ability to

experience every aspect of summer camp, regardless of medical limitations. It is a place where children who have been thrust into a world of medicine and who have known greater pain than most adults can come and be free. They are free from the sideways looks of their classmates; they are free from constantly sitting on the sidelines; they are free to simply be a kid. Even after studying their sometimes quite extensive med notes, you can’t possibly see these children as being sick in the camp atmosphere. There is too much joy drowning out their pain.

Mike allowed the news to sink in, and then continued. Sara would be hosting Morgan’s cabin; I would be hosting the cabin of her younger brother, Sam. Morgan was a 13-year-old with brainstem cancer. According to medicine, she had already lived six months longer than expected, but she had a goal to make it to summer camp for the first time. Childlife suggested to their parents it would be beneficial to say their final goodbyes as they dropped Morgan off, as no one could honestly know if she would be coming home. With a heavy heart, Mike then informed us that Morgan had no idea about her prognosis. Against the advice they had been given, Morgan’s parents had chosen not to tell her, in hopes that it would allow her to live her last few months without burden.

The news felt unreal. Camp is hope; death is for the outside world. Death is not supposed to infringe on camp time; this is the time to be free. Many of our campers have challenging prognoses and many pass away throughout the year, but not within the fences of camp. Sara and I had only a few minutes to process the information before a counselor reported a sighting of a snake. As we changed gears and were quickly off to track it down, Mike, running beside us, told us we would be having a meeting with the medical and childlife staff later that evening to discuss it further.

And so the week began.

Morgan was a vibrant young girl, a little timid, at first speaking only in whispers, but by the end of the week she was yelling louder than anyone in her cabin. She was wheelchair bound, and her parents had gifted her an electric wheelchair two days before camp. Learning to drive a wheelchair is difficult even in the best environment, but Morgan proved she could conquer yet another hurdle by learning how to drive on the rocky, twisting terrain of Texas nature.

As happy and eager as Morgan was to experience camp life to the fullest, she was in such deep, physical pain that she had to work hard to push through to the next activity. Sara and I would help her shower at night, and

she would be crying because the pressure of the water was too much for her paper-thin, delicate skin. As soon as that torture was over, we would lift her into her bed where we would move her into various positions until she determined which one was going to be most comfortable for her back that night. I have never heard true screams of agony before those moments, and it is a sound I will not soon forget.

The moments I feel I truly came to know Morgan were through the special daily time she spent with her brother, Sam, who has a severe case of Down syndrome. He is non-communicative and often non-compliant, his favorite maneuver being to collapse cross-legged on the floor as soon as he starts to walk anywhere. I thoroughly enjoy working/playing with kids who have intellectual disabilities, but my favorite times with Sam were observing how his entire being would light up as soon as he saw his sister, Morgan. He adored her, always sprinting to take his place behind her wheelchair so he could “push her,” always listening to whatever she told him to do. Even the sound of her name would cause him to smile. And wow, did she love him back. Most 13-year-old girls would much prefer to hang out with their friends than spend time with their 7-year-old brother, but Sara said Morgan would request to see him every morning. Despite all she was going through, Morgan was always fully present for her brother whenever he needed her.

It was during one of these play dates that Morgan discovered I was starting medical school in the fall. She started talking a mile a minute about how she also wants to be a doctor, clarifying she wants to be a member of the “fun doctor” crowd, instead of the “way too serious” variety. She talked constantly for five minutes about the scrub colors she wants to wear and what she thinks will be gross and what she will absolutely refuse to do (“Do you think I’d ever look down a man’s pants? No way. They can keep that to themselves, thank you very much!”), getting more and more excited as the minutes ticked by. And I sat there, actively engaged in this conversation, but owning the terrible secret that she would never be able to live out her dream. I was holding myself together pretty well; a lot of these children have tough stories to share, and I had developed an art of being composed on the outside as my heart was breaking on the inside. Her final words, though, caused me to crumble. As she was rolling away to the ropes course she looked back and said, “Promise me you’ll write down everything you can about medical school, so you don’t forget to tell me anything when I see you again next summer.”

I was so thankful she said that as the door to the room was closing, because I immediately began sobbing—for her planning a future she had never been told wouldn’t happen, for her life being taken too early, for the loss her little brother was never going to be able to comprehend. In Sam’s world, one day his favorite person was just not going to come home, and he was never going to be able to grasp why. In that moment I felt extreme anger toward her parents, not giving her the respect to know exactly what was happening with her body, not allowing her time to say good-bye. Even though I still believe she knew her prognosis couldn’t have been good, I so desperately wanted someone to talk to her and explain everything. I ached for her parents to open up that avenue of communication. She had to be terrified. She knew her body didn’t work like other kids’ her age. She had to know something was wrong, but she was trapped to process through this information alone.

The final morning of camp had arrived, and I knew that my life had been changed through being a small part of Morgan and Sam’s journey. There are no specific words Morgan spoke, no specific deeds she performed that I can pinpoint to demonstrate my awe of her. Rather it was through experiencing her spirit that she made a way permanently into my heart. She did not let her body tell her what she could and could not do, and she never gave in. She had been the best example of perseverance through whatever circumstances you are given. Little did I know, even on the last morning of camp, she was going to give us one more lesson to remember her by.

Due to Morgan’s mobility restrictions and the increased medical attention needed for her and her brother, it had been decided that their parents would provide transportation, even though every other camper rode on a bus back to the city. Midway through the week, Morgan was determined to get on that bus. Her parents were initially very resistant to the idea, but after much discussion with the medical staff and many moments of Morgan asserting herself, she was given the go-ahead. As she sat there watching the other campers file onto the bus, members of the summer staff and medical team were going over our plan one last time to ensure the transition onto the bus was as smooth as possible.

Morgan had control of her legs; she just couldn’t bear much weight on them due to weakness. The fact that she had control was what our whole plan hinged on, and it should have been executed flawlessly – had we not failed to account for the height of the initial step

onto the bus. Morgan simply couldn't flex her hip that far. Time stood still for a couple of seconds as everyone hurriedly tried to think of a new approach. She had told us quite directly that if she didn't leave on the bus, she wasn't leaving at all, so we knew we had to deliver. After what seemed like an eternity, Sara took off running as she yelled, "There's a step stool at the horse barn!"

Sara returned with the step stool, Morgan climbed the bus stairs, and she victoriously took her seat next to Sam in the front row of the bus. I will never forget their smiles and waves as they pulled out of the driveway. She had accomplished all she set out to do. It was finished, and she was satisfied.

Four days later, we received news that Morgan had passed away in her sleep. I had not even known her name two weeks prior to her death, but I learned that some people are powerful enough to make an imprint on your heart in whatever small amount of time they are allotted to be in your life. It was a difficult pain for me to work through: her absence would not affect my everyday life, but there was still something very tangible to miss. It was surprisingly easy for the positive memories of our time spent together to outweigh the painful ones—effortless really. Perhaps it was because the painful moments masked the true Morgan, but those joyous memories allowed her true essence to shine through.

Her parents were so thankful for the week at camp; they said she hadn't looked that alive in a long time. Through this loss, there was lesson in living. Morgan's parents could have been selfish and refused to allow their children to go to camp, knowing their time with Morgan was so short, but they let her experience as much life as she could. And dear, sweet, young Morgan beat cancer every time she decided to not let it defeat her. She stood up to the pain every day and was determined to live her life the way she wanted, no matter who or what was telling her she couldn't. Morgan's memory is one of life; her death was simply punctuation to a beautifully woven story of compassion, love, and unending strength.

And wouldn't you know it, she's even accomplishing her dream of medical school. She has attended every lecture, every exam, and every clinical experience with me—as a picture in my wallet, as a constant reminder of what it means to persevere at all costs.

She's the best study partner I could ask for.



Before the Doors

© Kelly Chambers, C.R.N.A.
Department of Anesthesiology

The Emperor Has No Clothes

© Heath Mackley, M.D.
Penn State Hershey Cancer Institute
Division of Radiation Oncology

Once appointed, they play the role
Of the expert.

Only they have the knowledge,
They will assert.

Clothed in data their opinions are,
Or so they say,

With reassuring smiles they tell us,
A yay or nay.

Is their answer right? No one knows.
What if the emperor has no clothes?

Topsy's Revenge

© Jessica Frey MSI

To kill an elephant
it takes 460 grams of potassium cyanide
and 6600 volts of alternating current
sent through copper electrodes strapped like sandals

to the soft-leathery pads on the undersides
of the feet. And if that's not enough,
it takes 1500 people staring with excitement
at the 3-ton elephant falling to its death.

The rigor mortis sets in so suddenly
that the elephant snaps to standing
before tumbling over onto its front,
before the sparks leap up in clouds of smoke
at the elephant's limp feet.

To kill a dream it takes less.
But there is still the horrible rigor mortis,
the somersault over,
and the fire turning everything to ash.

The Measure of Man

© Thomas Lloyd, Ph.D. Department of Public Health Sciences



In Passing

©Sheryl Purrier MSIV

It was the third day of my internal medicine rotation and I almost hadn't made it in. Freezing rain had fallen that morning and the frozen tundra outside had yet to be salted or plowed. Yet driven by a desire to succeed, or rather a fear of failure, I willed myself out of bed and into the blustering cold, a cold that no amount of layers could ward off. The string of accidents that littered my route to the medical center did not deter me. I had a job to do. Then I skidded, into an intersection. My pulse pounded with palpable panic. I could have died in that intersection. Yet I turned the car around and headed to the hospital.

I shook off my distress as I entered the hospital. I was ready to take on the challenges of a new day. I proceeded through my daily tasks, juggling the needs of my patients on the floor and the new admissions in the emergency department. The day was going well. My attending decided that we have earned a break, so he and I ate lunch in the cafeteria then proceeded to do a few board review questions. He thought it was important that we did some formal teaching during my rotation. We had gotten through maybe five questions when his phone rang. We were needed.

I had met you, his patient, in passing the day before. The doctors had boasted that you were doing better than anyone had expected and that pretty soon you would be off for rehabilitation. They had recalled your accident, how just a week earlier you had been hit by a drunk driver who ran a red light. How you had walked into the emergency department, with vague complaints of numbness. You were treated and then released, only to have your spinal cord lesion discovered on your second visit. You would never walk again. I'm told you had taken this news in stride and came out of you decompression surgery without any complications. When we spoke, you were already planning how you would make a living, what new jobs you would interview for, questioning your surgeon about when you could start physical therapy. You didn't seem bitter or resentful. You looked great.

That was less than 24 hours ago. Yet here we both were, walking towards your room. He was saying how vigilant the nursing staff was and that this was probably nothing but we should check it out. We enter the room. You do not look good. You are pale, sweating, and your breathing is uneasy.

You are unable to tell us what you are feeling, only that you don't feel right.

"Are you in any pain?"

"No."

"Are you having difficulty breathing?"

"Not really. I just don't feel right. Something is wrong."

We assess you, order imaging. Then the attending leaves me to keep you company while he goes to find your nurse. I hold your hand and tell you things will be okay, that hopefully your chest films will give us some answers. You look at me, eyes searching, concern etched on your face, but you squeeze my hand. The technicians arrive. Before they come in you ask for the doctor. I tell you I will go find him.

I leave you.

I leave you and the technicians enter.

I leave you and I go to search for the one with more knowledge than I have—your doctor, the one that should be there with you.

I return. You are not as I left you. You are sweating more profusely than before; your clothing clings to you, drenched. Your blonde hair lies flat against your forehead. They are trying to slide their board behind you and you are not responding. I call your name and you do not respond. I check for your pulse. I think I feel one, but then it is gone. Did I imagine it?

I check if you are breathing. You are not. Your skin is cold, pale and mottled. I rub vigorously on your chest with my knuckles and you do not respond. I look up at them, asking how long you have been like this. I couldn't have been gone more than a few minutes. They look at me like I'm a crazy person. They are still trying to get the x-ray!

The often-dismissed small red rectangle plastic button on the wall comes in sharp focus. I hit it.

I call the code.

I start compressions, but your bed is too high and I am too short. Am I doing this right? I don't have time to think. I attempt to lower your bed but only succeed at wasting valuable time. You are now frothing at the mouth. Is that a good thing? Should I do mouth to mouth, or will that cause you to aspirate? What

level did you have your back surgery at? Are my compressions causing more damage? Oh no: I have lost count. Why has no one showed up yet? Where are they? Seconds seem to drag on. This can't be happening.

Finally others begin to arrive. They pepper me with questions about who you are and what happened here. "Whose patient is this?" they ask. I am at a loss for words. I get the details wrong. I am bewildered.

Your doctor, my attending, finally shows up. "Someone, take over compressions!" he says. I am relieved.

"Good job," he says to me. I am horrified.

Someone has lowered the bed. A step ladder is now next to the bed. Why didn't I see that?

Like a flash mob, doctors, nurses, technicians all pour in; the cast, each with a predetermined role, is in place. The scene that unfolds around me is both riveting and appalling.

Someone tries to gain peripheral access, but your veins are clamped down. A femoral line is started and furious red blood comes pulsating out onto white linens. Finally we have access. Life is messy.

No sooner had it started than we were at an end.

The drugs keep your heart going but only barely. You are no longer with us.

We are finished.

Yet there is more that must be done.

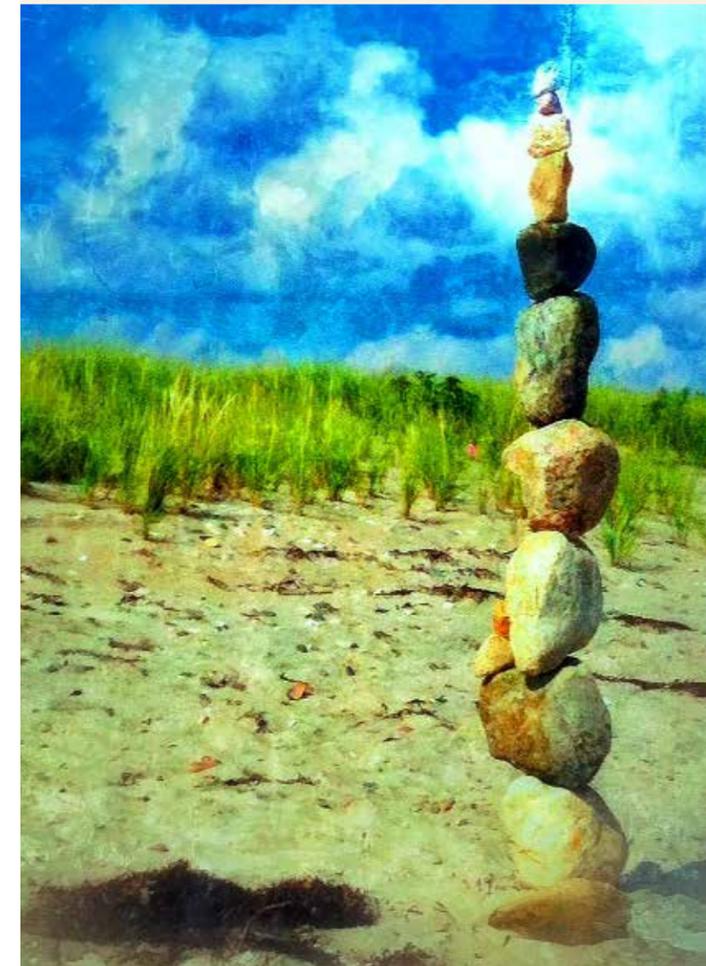
I see her face framed by curly blonde hair. She is young, 16 maybe, dressed in dark blue denim and red wool pea coat. I approach her and let her know she can see you now. She looks at me with your periwinkle blue eyes.

"Who are you?" she asks.

I am nobody. I am a failure.

I guide her to your room, tears streaming down her face. How could we do this to her?

It's 9 p.m.. My shift ended 3 hours ago. I am sitting in my car, uncertain how I got here. The wind howls outside my window. Another storm approaches and I cannot move.



Tower © Robert Ganse IT Technology



A Long Way to Go

© Hannah Ross-Suits MSII

Chandalua

©Linda Truong MSI

Nets,
like princess frillery,
except these meant as salvation
from malarial expiration.
Excess and necessity -
cross purposes indeed.
Wonder if I had breathed the same
trash-flavoured air,
sucked up dusty road
with each and every
pulmonary rise and fall,
how different would the same world be?
Black and white
imagined third world theory
smudged gray
to charcoal fueled reality.
Seeing now through
that MADE IN CHINA© polyester,
bottled water, light even
with clear eyes
as precious commodity.
A half a world away
tucked in PJs
under a princess veiled bed,
privilege and poverty
finally finally finally
for once
translucent
to me.

Less

©Allison Gockley MSIV

First an adoring grandmother, devoted wife and lover of pansies.
Then an ICU patient, entangled in tubes,
silenced and packaged into this room.
Endlessly accosted with medications, therapies
and people trying to make you better.
But everyday is less. First you lost your smile, your blood pressure,
then as emboli ravaged your legs you lost them too.
And now you have lost your strength to move or speak.
But we do more—more therapies, more studies,
more imaging, more tests, more surgeries.
Your piercing eyes focus on us as we stand outside your door
using large words and not looking at you,
but looking at the monitors and the machines that serve as your messengers.

Colorful Land

© Zhongyong Li, Ph.D. Penn State College of Medicine Retiree



The Stray

©Jennifer N. Roper MSII

She paces, back and forth
Hunched, frizzled mane
Embers of a lit cigarette
a dancing orb in the dark.
She's lucky to be a hundred pounds,
Wet. From afar, frame of a young thing
Up close, dancing skeleton
gray skin a weathered canvas
stretched over sharp bones.

Passerby glances
Of pity or distaste, fear or loathing
She's an invisible inconvenience
As they enter the convenience store.
Unbrushed hair, mistrusting eyes
A small, scruffy shadow
Fading into the dull gray pavement
and soft glow of neon lights.

What did she look like, before
Muscles twitched in need of a fix,
Pricked skin and burnt lungs,
Self-hate, sickened intoxication, strange men
before

Being a stray outside a convenience store.

At five or six, her mother may have put lipstick on her
Saying her lips were so full, so pretty.
Drawings could have covered her bedroom,
Aspirations in crayon and colored pencil.

The gas pump clicks, the dispenser replaced.
Plump lips are reflected in the car window
Slim hands grip the wheel and turn away
From the parking lot and the stray.



Primehate

© Sara Tabikh MSII

Balancing Act

© Gordon Kauffman, M.D. Department of Cellular
and Molecular Physiology, Humanities and Medicine



Blasphemy

© Holly Boyle MSI

Place pencil to paper-
 Write a sentence,
 Erase a sentence.
 Comprise an expression.
 Dot some i's,
 Cross some t's.
 Read out loud.
 Reread it.
 Love it.
 Hate it
 For its minor
 Imperfections.
 Deep in contemplation,
 Vent frustration-
 Crumple paper
 Start again.

Write, Erase, Cross out,
 Rewrite
 A word,
 A phase,
 A line,
 A stanza.
 Scratch
 Through a word.
 Replace a word.
 Edit.
 Backtrack.
 Walk away and
 Come back again.
 Reread.

A word, a phase,
 A line, a stanza,
 A Poem.



Focus

© Kyle Lewis MSIII

Alchemy

© Jessica Frey MSI

It's dew drops evaporating
 from the hairs on your skin,
 sucked up by the sun.
 It's the smell of cotton candy and hookah
 staining the air with sugar and smoke.
 It's fried dough spritzing its boiling water
 onto checkered table cloths,
 ants running between your toes and through blades of grass.
 It's laughter and the sparkle of birds singing,
 glitter that bounces off the
 walls of cellophane.

I've shrink-wrapped each one of them,
 each key chain, each stamp, each ribbon, each totem.
 I put them in boxes, put the boxes in drawers,
 promising when I have all the right chemicals,
 all the right masses, all the right beakers and funnels and glasses,
 I'll take them out
 and stir them together
 and watch the memories
 bubble and foam and solidify.

Come on.
 Crystallize.
 It's not that hard to freeze time.

Directory

© Cab Bingaman Patient

On a wall in the kitchen
 near the old landline telephone
 a sheet of paper
 browned with age and typewritten
 a lengthy list of numbers beside names
 crumbling to powder pieces touched by two fingers.

Numerically preserved, barely
 never called anymore
 a church, its parsonage, an ex-fiancée
 her landlady, professors, neighbors
 acquaintances from pickup basketball
 a plumber, a pharmacy, several friends
 sons, some bankrupted stores, various doctors.

So old not one cell-phone cited
 of people mostly local but distant now
 moved on for one reason or another
 out of state, out of time – a history
 like running a finger down a telephone book page.
 New people once who shared our lives
 but removing it turns us to dust.

Bearing Gifts

© Brian Piazza MSIII



Autumn Fraises Des Bois

© Jean Henry Patient

I found some Fraises des Bois between the stone wall and the barn,
A surprise at the end of the summer
As if the season had turned upside down
And it was spring again waiting for summer to unfold.

The crickets would not be singing the last songs of the season.
Fireflies would wait to light the nights
And holding hands we would search for hidden flowers
In warmed crevices.

Fallen Flower

© Daniel Contract MSIV

Radiant sunshine
Spring flowers in bloom
Corsages adorning delicate wrists
White light flashes
on youthful skin
to remember the night
Bleak incandescent light
A spring flower,
starved.
For what?
Barcode bracelet smothering a cold wrist
White light flashes
on mottled skin
to document a flower
that withered before it blossomed

Bug Eyed View

© Kelsy Reisinger Music Therapy Intern



Old Wood

© J. Spence Reid, M.D.
Department of Orthopaedics and
Rehabilitation



Hatchling

© John Ingraham, M.D.
Division of Plastic Surgery



Only Moving

© Dan Wolpaw, M.D.
Departments of Medicine and Humanities

We stored it in the garage months ago
when the space was waiting for unused things
Only moving it now
to make room for our cars
under a November storm
Only moving it to a place it belongs
because the house is full of other things

My father's workbench
Dark and soft, scored with images -
finding him there, working beside him,
watching him lose himself

He is not there now
He is where we brought him
only moving restlessly or sitting
behind worried eyes, asking
What now? What should I do?
in a place with no place to work
nothing to work on
Only moving to be moving.
Only lost

Empty House

© Kim King
Wife of Steven H. King, C.H.P.
Department of Radiology

Start with the first incision, above my belly button,
and connect the five slices that include an appendix
scar, and you have traced a house, a child's sketch
of where I used to live as a complete woman.

Like Van Gogh's *Church at Auvers*, there is no door—
no entrance or exit to the hollow temple that nourished
and grew three children. Spayed like a dog, void
of those organs, I ask if you will now touch my scarred
canvas with eyes closed, or, will you mix new oils
on your palette and layer paints, malachite over
cadmium, in thick swaths of pigment to cover wounds
like an impressionist's stippled brush strokes on tableau?

Barn with Red Door

© Renee Dugan, R.N. Department of Pediatrics



The Red Fox

© Sigmund David Patient

*I held your limp but warm body briefly
I really did not want to see
My first red fox
this way.*

It was two hours
From dawn
The fox ran
In front of me
In the dark
And I could
Not avoid
Running
Over it

I then turned around
And found the red fox dead
Dragged the dead animal
By its rear and front paws
gently depositing it
In the nearby gulch

*I was so sorry
This is the way we met*

I did not want
Its bones
and flesh
Picked apart

By crows
And vultures
I could not bear
the thought
Of another car
Running over it
This was the
First one
I had ever seen
In the wilds
I know
It did not suffer
I was so happy
Yesterday
At a festival I had bought
A photo
Of a red fox
Gazing in the grass
Peering right
At me
Had my wife
Hang the photo
In a prominent
Spot
Just above
The TV

Now I can
View
the red fox
In all its
Splendor and glory
And gaze
At it
Again
Alive
And mourn
The one
Whose life
I snuffed out
I held in
My grief
And loss
For a day
Finally
I told
My wife what
Happened
I then cried
For ten minutes
Till there were no
Tears left

It occurred
To me (much later)
Maybe, the fox
Was just stunned
After all
There was
No blood
And picked himself
Up
And disappeared
Into
The undergrowth
Now
Every time
I pass
That spot
I think
About
That
Red fox
And pray
He is
Still
On the prowl

Dinner for One

© Daniel Contract MSIV

They told you it was lucky to catch it so early.
They told you the recurrence was amenable to radiation.
They told you to think in terms of months.

And yet, every Sunday evening at seven o'clock,
just after dinner,
I saw you.
And Christie.
And Bert and Ernie.

They were wrong.

This Sunday evening, I saw Bert and Ernie
resting in the yard,
watching younger couples take their Sunday walks.
Once radiant fur now dull and gray.
Once lean bodies now gaunt and tattered.

This Sunday evening, I saw you
resting as you waited
for the check to come.

They never told you about eating alone.

Living Alone

© Jordan Gaines PGY2

I cook
And read.
Boredom—
Then sleep.

Wake up,
Rub eyes.
He's here?
Surprise!

Good food,
We laugh,
Bubbly
Hot bath.

Sunday—
Must go;
Backpacks
Through door.

I sigh,
I groan.
To bed
Alone.

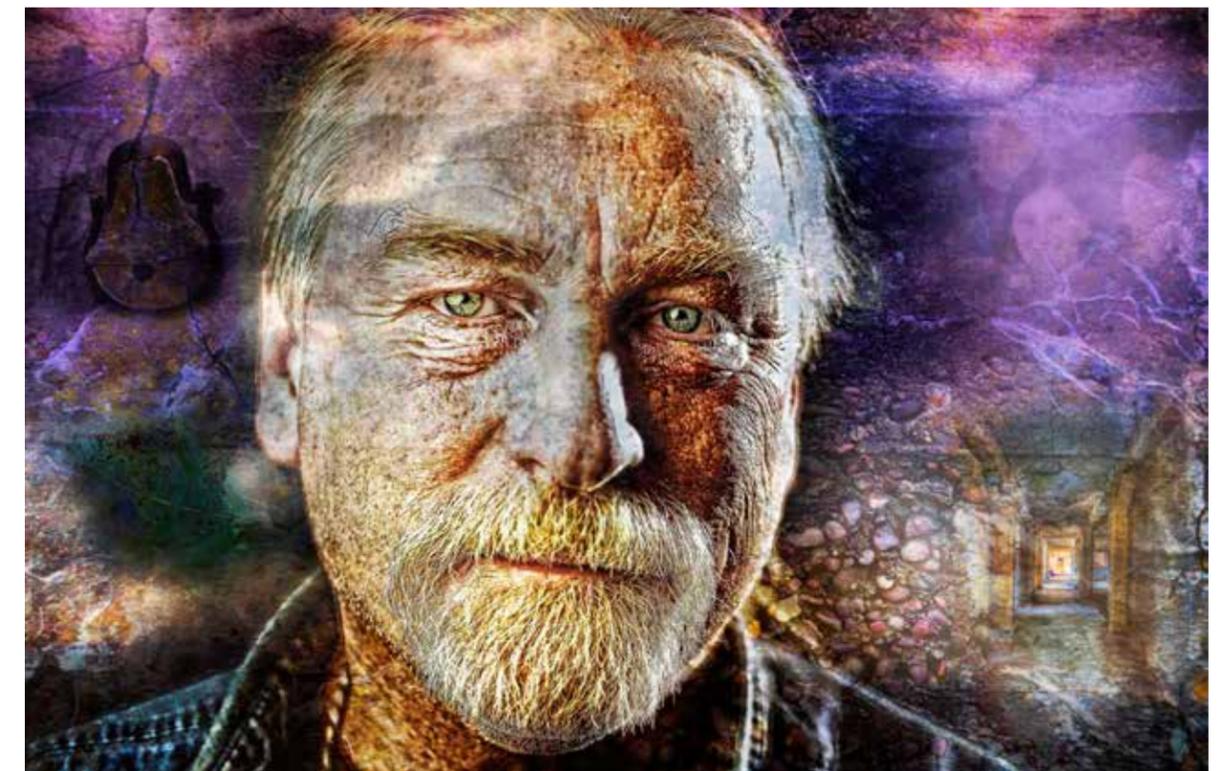
The Fox and Figure

© Seamus Carmichael George T. Harrell Health Sciences Library



Father of Ill Child

© Daniel E. Shapiro, Ph.D. Department of Humanities





Goat on Shed Roof

© Alek Tomazin Patient



Frozen in Time

© Renee Dugan, R.N. Department of Pediatrics

Scrumptious Plunge

© Amanda Moyer MSIII

Take the scrumptious plunge
 Deep under the resplendent waves
 Tossed in the turbulence
 Of a wrinkle upon ordinary days
 Hypnotizing deviations go no further
 Swirling only every closer
 In the solo sparkling twister
 Through mellifluous thought
 Who dares to rendezvous
 So close to anonymity
 Might tumble instead upon
 The clandestine stage of serendipity
 Slowly acquiescing with graceful lethargy abundant
 Pools of light bipolar
 Shadow and spotlight
 Unfathomed depths of inevitability

Ineffable

© Sheryl Purrier MSIV

Came to me confused. Postictal?
 Thought you had a stroke; speech aphasic.
 Found your tumor, cradling Broca's area.
 As you found your words.
 Benign
 But we will take it.
 I came to you and found you, speechless.

A Silent Watching Ghost Thing

© Linda Amos Ganther Wife of Patient

Her dreams had withered up
 until they were little more
 than a rattle in the reeds,
 or a wisp of wind
 in the heather.

The Sign

© Dennis Heitzmann, Ph.D.
Center for Counseling and Psychological Services, University Park

The stun of discovery fades,
 as she gently lifts the colding body,
 all a-crooked
 and holds him close.
 This boy she knew so well,
 so full of himself once, mother's boy
 now the ebb of life, the stiff of death.
 She cradles him till tender warmth returns,
 Born now a second time, we believe,
 upward in straight trajectory
 to some unknowable calm.
 The transport, twice over,
 her exquisite pain.
 She sought a sign, an image, a way to
 know he is somehow secure.
 Yet so, the sign it appears
 was there all along.
 It is you, and he, in this softening image of
 one last exclusive exchange.
 And gradually, "Why me?" becomes "Why not?"
 the pangs of pain soften to succor,
 and all that remains is this clear view,
 mother and son in final filial repose.

Rwandan Survivor

© Gordon Kauffman, M.D.
Departments of Cellular and Molecular Physiology,
Medicine and Humanities



Handcrafted Black Cherry (Prunus serotina) Bowl

© Aaron Cantor MSI



Missed Opportunity

© Mitchell Sternlieb MSIV

That was when I found you
the man who came covered in
his own feces and jailhouse tattoos,
uncooperative and speechless.
You had Don King's hair,
rotting barren gums
and a mysterious brown smudge
on your gray beard
that I avoided
with my hand as I leaned in holding
my breath to look into
your locked pupils.

I saw you
for a few days,
every morning covered
in cracker crumbs.
You eventually could hold up
your fist and say G-d bless,
as I left the room
frustrated
that I could not complete my exam.
So I left you
for patients who I thought
could teach me more.

Jackson, Pebble Or Poverty Beach

© Jeffrey Feehrer Patient

A different name each time they drove down
but it was unsupervised
swimming at their own risk
no lifeguard, beach patrol, police cruiser

so uncrowded, an occasional stray beachcomber
only the quiet, empty expanse of Atlantic
before them, all to themselves.
Wetting the sand with brine
at the edge of their blanket
to screw in and keep chilled
a bottle of wine, some cheese or bottled water.

Many pilgrimages annually
disregarding the seasons, these soul mates
to the unchanging, renamed beach
he and the girl of his dreams
and that's just who she became.

Halcyon Skies

© Ha Pham MSIII



Peonie

© Domenick Moore Patient

Peony (pee-uh-nee) n. a herbaceous or shrubby plant of north temperate regions, which has long been cultivated for its showy flowers; Genus *Paeonia*, family *Paeoniaceae*. *ORIGIN* Old English *peonie*, via Latin from Greek *paionia*, from *Paion*, the name of the physician of the gods.

The sunroom on the back porch was just warm enough to lull a person blissfully to sleep. In a day or two, though, the temperature would spike just enough to bring out the first beads of sweat of the season. He sat on the wicker rocking chair in the sun room, a glass of iced tea sitting next to him, untouched. At the far end of the yard sat six English-style raised garden beds, and he couldn't take his eyes off them. Even from his seat he could tell the soil looked parched and cracked, devoid of even the merest possibility of life.

His wife had hectored him for weeks to build the boxes. Once their daughter had headed off for college, her job wasn't enough to keep his wife busy. There was church, and dinners with friends, the trips to Cape May at the beginning of beach season. But she'd always had a green thumb; an article on raised beds in one of the myriad gardening magazines she was always thumbing through caught her attention. The moment he agreed to build them, he regretted his decision. His work kept him plenty busy, which left him little time to putter around in the garage, cobbling together something for which he couldn't imagine a practical purpose.

There was no reneging on that particular deal, though, so one Saturday he consigned himself to making the damned boxes. As soon as he put the final stroke of paint on the sixth and last box, he may as well have become a bachelor again. His wife spent all her spare time weaving her way through those boxes tending to the multitude of flowers spilling over the edges.

It seemed to him that before the paint had even finished drying she'd turned them into something out of *Better Homes and Gardens*. In the moments where she managed to pry herself away, she'd thank him for the garden boxes — the best gift he'd ever given her, she said — and show her gratitude with a passion unlike anything he'd experienced since their daughter first left for university.

Even during chemo, she'd be ambling about, albeit at a slower pace, pulling weeds, watering, doing whatever needed to be done that she could manage.

After the funeral, their daughter came over and tended to the beds. But after a few years, with work and the kids, bit by bit, weeds took over. Eventually, even the weeds died and the garden beds simply lay there like corpses.

During the winter, he spent less time outdoors, or there'd be snow blanketing the ground; it was easy to convince himself the tiny white mounds were accumulated snow.

As soon as the mercury began to rise and the snow disappeared, there the boxes sat, like accusations. But he'd never had a taste for gardening — it never made any sense to him. Why go to all that trouble when the flowers were just going to die come autumn?

Why the boxes remained was a mystery. After a few weeks of mourning, he'd boxed up her clothes and donated them to the church. Some of the knick-knacks he kept — the ones they'd picked up on vacation and the like. Others went into another box for donation, usually ones she'd seen while window shopping. He'd arrive home from work to discover some new gewgaw staring up at him. He'd just sigh and suffer through her very animated explanation of how she immediately fell in love with it and just had to have it. Wasn't it the cutest thing he'd ever seen? She'd be so enamored with this latest find that the fact he always said yes with the lack of enthusiasm usually reserved for agreeing to a prostate exam went unnoticed.

All of those things were gone by the end of the month. But here it was, a year later, and the beds were still there in all their rundown glory, like some obscene reminder of infidelity. He'd lived with the indignity for twelve months; he just couldn't do it anymore. So with a sigh, he heaved himself off the wicker chair and headed to the garage to grab his tools.

Rolling up his sleeves, he surveyed the boxes spread out before him. Initially, he'd planned to simply smash the boxes to pieces and be done with it. The longer he looked, though, the more uncertain he became. The wood was weathered, edges split, the paint chipped and peeling. But the wood could be sanded, refinished, repurposed. So he reached for the crowbar, carefully prying the pieces apart.

What he discovered once the frame was removed surprised him: Below the desiccated surface, the soil was dark and rich, smelling of vitality, of the possibility of life. Every root cluster he pulled out, though, was a tangled, shriveled mess. Before long, there was a mound of dead plants like a mass grave.

Sifting through the soil of the sixth and final box, he felt something round, something solid. Thinking it a rock, he was surprised to discover a peony bulb resting in his palm.

When their daughter had gotten a tattoo of peonies in a traditional Japanese design over her shoulder blade, his wife had cooed over it for hours. Peonies were her favorite flower, and her daughter had inherited the affinity. When she suggested her mother get a similar tattoo, the notion was dismissed with the wave of a hand — she was too old for that sort of thing. Tattoos aren't just for sailors and convicts anymore, their daughter had said. Well, her mother had said, there's plenty of time for that.

Plenty of time, she'd said.

Rolling the bulb between his fingers, it felt different than the flotsam he'd pulled from the other boxes. It was soft and full instead of withered and undeniably deceased. Carefully peeling back the brown outer skin, he was flabbergasted to discover moist green flesh.

There was a twitch in his wrist as he went to toss the bulb on the pile, but something tugged in his chest. He stared at the exposed sliver of green and the strangest thought capered across his mind. What could it hurt, he thought, carefully placing the bulb in his shirt pocket. Standing up, he gathered the pieces of the garden box, a handful of nails, and his hammer.

In short order, he was gently patting freshly tilled soil over the hole in which the bulb resided. He was certain nothing would come of his little experiment, but he had the time. More importantly, he was curious. This was a chance to try and understand his wife's attraction all those years, what had kept her circling each box with a watchful eye.

Still, he wasn't a complete idiot. There was more to gardening than simply covering the thing with dirt and dumping water on it from time to time. There had to be, considering how many hours his wife had spent in the backyard. So he found himself looking up information on peonies on the Internet. He'd scoffed when she'd insisted they buy a PC for the home. They both dealt with the infernal machines all day at work. Who in their right minds would want to go home and park themselves in front of one after clocking out? Still, he'd managed to find pages of data on proper hydration, fertilization techniques, pest maintenance, and on and on, ad infinitum.

She'd been right once again.

And so he began to spend more time tending to that single raised garden box, hoping the alchemy he'd gleaned from the Internet was enough to coax the bulb to grow and make itself known. He hoped it'd simply been dormant all that time buried in the soil, that there was still some life existing within its tiny body.

Weeks went by with no change. He followed the instructions he'd printed judiciously, using exactly the amount of fertilizer specified at the appropriate intervals and not a drop more. He was careful not to overwater the bed, finding an inexplicable urge throughout the days to wander outside and place a hand atop the soil. Still there was no sign of vitality.

Just when he was about to admit defeat, feeling the bitter nettle of disappointment, there it was, barely visible but there just the same. A tiny green finger was poking through the surface as though testing the air. It was foolish, maudlin even, but when he saw that first slip of stem, there was a knot in his throat and his lungs felt so small, so inefficient. It was the same sensation he'd experienced when he first saw his wife turn to walk down the aisle in her wedding dress.

When the first bud appeared on the stem, reluctantly blooming in the early morning sun one day, it reminded him of watching their daughter take her first steps. As time went by, it occurred to him the peony looked lonely in the box, its beauty diminished by all that brown earth. A trip to the nursery and a few hours later the box was a riot of color.

Before he knew it, the other boxes had been rebuilt and were overflowing with life. Afternoons were spent wending his way around the beds, tracing and retracing his wife's steps.

One afternoon he heard his daughter's voice calling from inside the house. He replied, elbow deep in peonies, never hesitating in his work. He could hear her padding across the yard, saying something about a Little League game when she made a choking sound. Standing up, he whirled around, asking her what was wrong? Was everything okay? Why wouldn't she answer him?

Hand on her chest, she stood there, gazing at the six flowers boxes in all their lush glory. Her mouth hung open, eyes wide, the color in her cheeks gone like humidity after a thunderstorm. He asked her again: What's wrong?

Blinking again and again, she took a step forward. What happened, she said, but he didn't grasp her

meaning. What happened to the flower boxes? Who'd replanted them? And it looked like they'd been repainted. He blushed, like a young man with a secret suddenly found out. A shrug of his shoulders and a few stammering attempts at speech.

He'd done the work, he said in a voice so tiny it reminded her of when her son asked for a cookie before dinner, knowing he shouldn't, but also knowing that she'd say yes, with the caveat that he have only one.

Wait, she said, hearing but by no means comprehending what her father had just said. He'd taken up gardening? Since when? He'd always disliked anything remotely botanical, thought it was an imprudent pursuit.

Another shrug and then he began to tell her about finally taking the boxes apart, only to find that single bulb. It was a mawkish notion, he knew, but it felt like the only living piece of his wife he had left. Then he told her how he'd planted it, nurtured it, damn near sat on it like a mother hen waiting for it to hatch. When he got to the part about surfing the Internet, his daughter thought she was going to faint. One thing led to another, he said, and voila, a flourish of the arm taking in all six boxes.

She put her arm around her father's waist and they both stood there, drinking in every petal, every color. They stood there for a few moments; she wiped away a tear before resting her head on his shoulder and sighing happily.

"Mom would've loved this, Dad."



Housetree

© Susan Landis, C.R.N.A.
Department of Anesthesiology

My Space

© Kelly Chambers, C.R.N.A.
Department of Anesthesiology

Ghost Writer

© Judy Schaefer, R.N.

Member of The Doctors Kienle Center for Humanistic Medicine

Everything comes clean
when I write about it

*The wind sits
in the shoulder of your sail*

Hot sun on stained sheets
Bones with the marrow bleached
ten paces off the road in Arizona
One day I wrote so many
poems that I became a ghost
Space rested between each molecule
of flesh; truly unhinged in between

Give everyman thy ear

*This above all
To thine ownself*

After a gluttonous writing binge
Now light as the bones of a night owl

Naturally Urban

© Josh Burkhardt MSIII

In Dark Woods, The Right Road Lost ¹

© James A. Jenkins MSIV

Like a shadow at noon
Waiting, contracted and faint,
Amid the past dawn and one to come;
Existence without essence.
The dreamlike hopes of yesterday
Find themselves fading away.

Weltschmerz, die Welt schmerzt mich.

The tears I cry do not appear,
There are no tears here.
Sworn stone-cold stoicism,
Set in septic juvenescence,
Empties hearts of jubescence.
Ambition, thwarts Love's nascence.

Die Seele müde ist. Mein Seele ist müde.

Acheron. Kokytos.
Where is Lethe? ²
To escape this purgatory,
Forgetful river to dip my feet.

*"Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo"*³

I have raised Acheron!
By the power of the Djinn, Distorted aspirations granted.
In this deluge, I cannot swim.
Ozymandias ⁴, whose hard-wrought works turned to dust,
Is this what comes of slavery to labor-lust?

Verzweiflung, verzweifle ich.

Who am I now?
In this state of future-being,
Existing as shade, protracted becoming;
Grasping, grappling, gasping for present:
Whispered supplications to Beauty and Truth-
There is no answer. Only fleeting, hollowed youth.

Existenzangst, meine Existenz ist.

Prisoner to profession,
Prisoner to memory,
Prisoner to isolation,
Prisoner to psyche.
Beatific bond breaks binding chains,
Sacrificial Love trades pain for pangs.

Thou-Thou,

I-It.

I-Thou ,

Pray...How?

*"Forsan et haec olim meminisse juvabit."*⁶

¹ Ref. Dante's Divine Comedy Canto I, Lines 1-3

² Reference to the five rivers of the underworld in Greek Mythology: Acheron (River of Sorrow), Kokytos (River of Lamentation). Lethe is the River of forgetfulness bordering Elysium, resting place of the virtuous.

³ Virgil's The Aeneid Book VII, Line 312. "If I cannot deflect the will of Heaven, I will move Hell (lit. the Acheron River)"

⁴ Ref. Percy Bysshe Shelley's poem "Ozymandias" (1818)

⁵ Ref. Martin Buber's I and Thou (1937). The book outlines an existential philosophy of types of relationships and their crucial role in finding meaningfulness.

⁶ Virgil's The Aeneid Book I, Line 203. "A joy it will be..."



Work in Progress

© Hannah Ross-Suits MSII



Catching the Light

© Chloe Wang MSIII

Winter Solstice

© Allison Gockley MSIV

You know long before it's spoken into reality,
you feel its icy silence slip under the door
and pool across the bed, freezing slowing.

Much is the same, sterile solutions drip into your veins,
machines display your performance incessantly.
The world switches to a black and white channel.

Amid the static, huddles of white coats drop their voices,
frown their brows outside your door.

But it could be a phase,
A wide hurdle you think, but you know
Its really a black hole, unavoidable, undeniable.

So you settle into this arctic season, holding your breath
for a thaw that will never come.
Because this coldness, this darkness, you know,
You can roll it on your tongue and feel it run down your spine.

Retirement

© Kevin Berry MSIV

The final job is so like all the others.
Years of pain and strain have taken their toll.
Always on the go, it's time for repose.
The field's prepped, the incision's made.
Sternum's shattered, and heart's exposed.
The vessels are clamped, the organ's gone.
The work now done, he takes his rest
Forever
To beat no more.

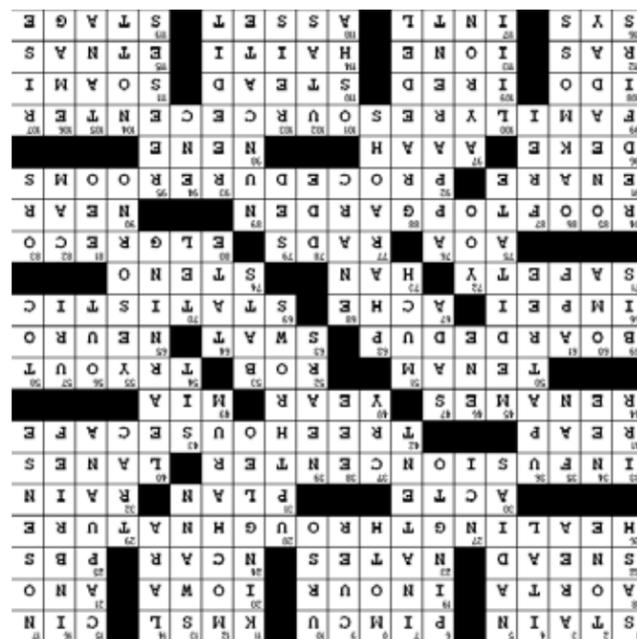
Thank you

© Lindsey Zubritsky MSIII

Thank You
You will never know who I am
Or how you helped me
But Thank You
So delicate, so innocent
You were asleep before I could say hello
Your father, strong and silent
Gave me the permission to learn from you
With the nod of his head,
I prepared the chemo
Shaky and unsure,
I slowly and nervously injected the needle between your vertebrae
You didn't even jump
I pressed your back for support
Your dad squeezed your hand with love
I was afraid of many things
Will the needle hurt you?
Will the chemo hurt you?
Will the anesthesia hurt you?
I pushed on
Slowly but surely
The bright yellow liquid disappeared into your body
It was over
Just another day for you
Just another treatment
But you were my first
You will never know me
But I will always know you
Thank You

Answer Key

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Sympathy for Little Black Sheep

© Corinne Gibilterra
Pulmonary, Allergy, and
Critical Care Medicine

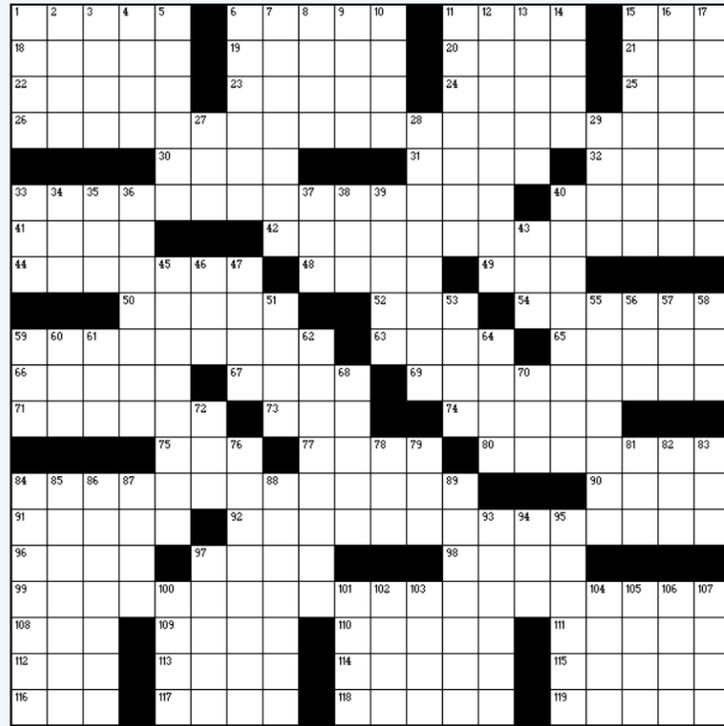


Feathered Friend

© Melissa Shapiro MSII

The NEW Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital

© Barbara E. Ostrov, M.D. Department of Pediatrics



Across

- 1. Spot on ruined shirt
- 6. FOURTH FLOOR
- 11. Texting letters for "killing myself laughing"
- 15. Precancerous PAP finding
- 18. Largest vessel
- 19. ___ Time; Hemingway collection
- 20. Ames state
- 21. "It is ___ vote from me"
- 22. Golfer Sam
- 23. Berkus and Silver
- 24. Boulder weather inst.
- 25. Sesame St. network
- 26. HOSPITAL THEME
- 30. Portion of Les Miserables, in the original French
- 31. Set up
- 32. Pour, at times
- 33. FIRST FLOOR
- 40. Bowling needs
- 41. Sow
- 42. FIRST FLOOR EATERY
- 44. Creates a new title
- 48. Calendar listing
- 49. Actress Farrow
- 50. Hr. for coffee break
- 52. Steal
- 54. Experiment with
- 59. Window cover in preparation for a hurricane
- 63. Shoo fly!

- 65. Anatomy and biology lead-in
- 66. Louvre pyramid architect
- 67. Soreness
- 69. Baseball information, like RBI
- 71. ___ CENTER, FIRST FLOOR
- 73. Second century Chinese dynasty
- 74. Shorthand, for short
- 75. Org. for some surgeons
- 77. GENERATED BY ACTIVITY ON THE GROUIND FLOOR
- 80. Spanish Renaissance painter born in Crete
- 84. THIRD FLOOR OUTSIDE
- 90. Close by
- 91. Finnish lake with outlet to the Arctic
- 92. SECOND FLOOR
- 96. Fake in ice hockey
- 97. Open wide for the doctor sound
- 98. Hawaiian goose
- 99. FIRST FLOOR
- 108. Wedding words
- 109. Angered
- 110. In place of
- 111. Childhood retort for "I am the best"
- 112. Alertness section of the CNS
- 113. Actress Skye
- 114. Country still recovering from earthquake disaster
- 115. Bunsen burners, for example
- 116. Progr. operation part
- 117. Part of worldwide org. name
- 118. Money, for example
- 119. FIRST FLOOR, VIDEO LINKS

Down

- 1. Tie of a kind
 - 2. Musical note
 - 3. Space
 - 4. Font opt.
 - 5. Comaneci and Ali
 - 6. Send Morse code
 - 7. Where one sleeps when camping?
 - 8. Wool enemy
 - 9. Stage assistant role in live theater
 - 10. Liver disease therapy
 - 11. 100 year old candy brand famous for peppermints
 - 12. Spiked baked cake flavor
 - 13. Football great and politician Lynn
 - 14. Croft; Angelina role
 - 15. Italian opera conductor Franco
 - 16. State succinctly
 - 17. An illogical thinker has ___
 - 27. Oncology research org.
 - 28. Tosses
 - 29. ___ Fone
 - 33. Sale item label abbr.
 - 34. Application name request
 - 35. Room cooler
 - 36. Where a cat gets stuck?
 - 37. Bawl
 - 38. Large shoe size
 - 39. Approaches
 - 40. ___ WALL; FIRST FLOOR
 - 43. Rest
 - 45. PURPOSE OF ROOM ADJACENT TO 42
- ACROSS**
- 46. Chem. suffix
 - 47. Actress Thompson
 - 51. Alot
 - 53. Belfry inhabitants
 - 55. Response to a vote?
 - 56. Exit
 - 57. Psychic Geller
 - 58. Lead-in book sect.
 - 59. Chem. prefix equivalent to di-
 - 60. Suffix meaning tumor
 - 61. Naples, Fl. airport
 - 62. Egyptian leaders of old
 - 64. London art gallery
 - 68. Star Wars planet
 - 70. ___ Aviv
 - 72. ___ Hoo
 - 76. Clear
 - 78. Presidential monogram
 - 79. Med. to help one sleep
 - 81. Discrimination prohibition law, abbr.
 - 82. Rotating machinery piece
 - 83. Noun connectors
 - 84. Oregon evergreens
 - 85. Theragram competitor
 - 86. Evernia prunastri
 - 87. Free in Frankfurt
 - 88. Yale stainability expert and author Thomas
 - 89. Iglesias tune "___ Olvidare"
 - 93. Correct a manuscript again
 - 94. Ref. book
 - 95. Peanut butter chocolate pieces
 - 97. Hardy of Tulsa basketball
 - 100. Shakespearean sonnet no. "what is your substance..."
 - 101. Workplace protection org.
 - 102. Hagen and namesakes
 - 103. King in Portugal
 - 104. Harry Potter schoolmate Theodore
 - 105. Large lake in Ethiopia
 - 106. On-line journal term
 - 107. Get up

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The Doctors Kienle Center for Humanistic Medicine
Department of Humanities • Penn State College of Medicine
500 University Drive • Hershey, PA 17033