

wild onions



2020
THE VOICE WITHIN US

Wild Onions

The Department of Humanities at Pennsylvania State University College of Medicine publishes *Wild Onions* annually. This edition features creative expression by individuals affiliated with Penn State Health Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, including patients, students, faculty, physicians, residents, nurses, staff, volunteers, and family and community members. *Wild Onions* encourages creative writing and artistic work that seek to describe and understand the experiences of health, illness, and treatment, especially caregiving and the receipt of care.

Each year, the editorial team chooses a theme to spark creativity. This year's theme, "The Voice Within Us," refers to both singing and self-expression. *Wild Onions* sings this year by offering a rare glimpse into hundreds of experiences that culminate in a day in the life of our healthcare institution and college. In this issue, we show the drive of medical students, the heartbreak inherent in a crisis, the coveted doctor-patient relationship, the devotion of a family member, the nostalgia that comes when facing change, memories of youth, struggles in pain, and the melancholy and the joy in life.

The photography, art, and creative writing published in this issue enable us to expand and deepen our appreciation of the voices around us. The beauty of *Wild Onions* is its capacity to create a vibrant, creative, and expressive community year after year.

Selection Process:

Each year, we are fortunate to receive hundreds of high-quality submissions of original creative writing, photography, and artwork. All entries are reviewed by medical student editors, and a subset is selected for inclusion in the publication. Particularly stellar pieces are identified and sent on to the corresponding art, creative writing, photography, and theme judges for review and selection.

This year we are offering awards—one each in creative writing, photography, and art—for the following categories:

- Students and Residents
- Healthcare Providers and Faculty
- Patients
- Community, Family Members, and Staff

Additionally, we are awarding three prizes, one for each genre, recognizing work that best exemplifies the theme, "The Voice Within Us."

Lyrics and Dedication:

Our special lyrics section and dedication to Ellie Goldenberg z"l begins on page 73.

Submissions are due by January 15 of each calendar year and can be sent via email to: wildonions@pennstatehealth.psu.edu. Visit our website to download a copy of *Wild Onions* at <https://sites.psu.edu/wildonions>.

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Wild Onions, 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, fields, and roadsides. It blossoms into an unusual purple flower. The underground bulb, if tasted, yields a pungent, spicy flavor. The wild onion symbolizes the commonplace, yet surprising, beauty living and growing around us all the time. An uncultivated spice, it unexpectedly thrives and—if we take time to notice—enhances life.

Front cover

Noel Ballentine, M.D.
Department of Medicine

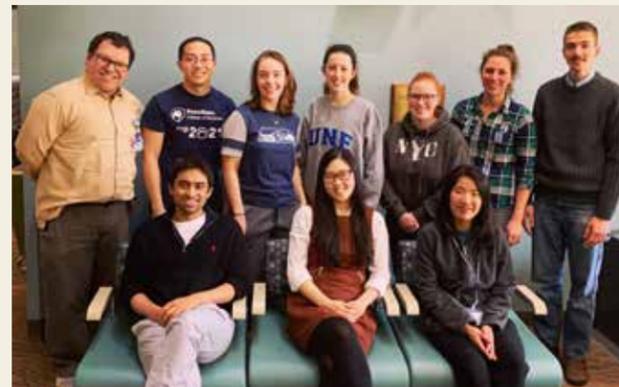
Back cover

© Take the Time to See a Moment

Robert Ganse
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Back: (left to right)

Elias Harkins, Kevin Chiang, Marisa Riley,
Meghan Robbins, Haley Hartman,
Janelle Welkie, Benjamin Watt

Front: (left to right) Ansh Johri,
Gloria Hwang, Sally Ng

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Wild Onions is published annually by the Penn State College of Medicine, Department of Humanities.

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2020 Judges

ART: Faisal Aziz, M.D., Distinguished F.S.V.S., F.A.C.S.



Faisal Aziz serves as the Gilbert and Elsie H. Sealfon Endowed Chief of Vascular Surgery at Penn State University College of Medicine. He also serves as program director for the Integrated Vascular Surgery Residency Program. He is a practicing surgeon who is passionate about patient care, outcomes-based research, and surgical education. He loves to teach the science and art of surgery. He is a distinguished fellow of the Society for Vascular Surgery and currently serves as the research council chair for the American Venous Forum and chair of the Young Surgeons' Committee for the Eastern Vascular Surgery Society. When he is not busy operating, he finds himself painting on the canvas. He finds remarkable similarities between surgical operations and painting. Before a surgical procedure, a surgeon has an image in their mind of what a successful operation should look like at its completion and devotes all energy to make it happen. In essence, this is what an artist strives to do in every piece of art. Dr. Aziz gives a part of his soul to every surgical operation he performs and every painting he paints. He finds both of these activities profoundly satisfying and soothing.

THEME: Deborah Berini, M.H.A.



Deborah Berini serves as president of the Penn State Health Milton S. Hershey Medical Center. Previously, she was the chief operating officer for the University of Texas Medical Branch-Galveston Health System. She also held leadership positions at University of Alabama at Birmingham Hospital and the University of Wisconsin Hospital and Clinics.

She devotes time to her community by serving on a number of boards, including the American Heart Association-Capital Region, Teaching Hospitals of Texas, Southwest Transplant Alliance, One Roof (a homeless agency), Alabama Department of Mental Health, and the Birmingham Literacy Council and personally volunteered as a Big Sister with Big Brothers Big Sisters.

Deborah was recognized as one of the Top 25 Chief Operating Officers in the country by *Modern Health Care* in 2018. She has been published in several journals, including the *Journal of the American Medical Association Internal Medicine*.

CREATIVE WRITING: Molly O'Dell, M.D., M.F.A., F.A.A.F.P.



Molly lives, writes, and practices medicine in southwest Virginia, where she was born and reared. After graduating from Medical College of Virginia, she returned home for her residency in family medicine and began her solo practice in Buchanan, Virginia, where she had the opportunity to practice all aspects of family medicine, including house calls. While pregnant with her second child, she was recruited to the position of public health medical officer for the Virginia Department of Health, where she served for more than 20 years. She currently serves as adjunct faculty for Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine and health faculty for Episcopal Church Pension Group.

Molly earned an M.F.A. from University of Nebraska in 2008. Her essays and poems have been widely published and her chapbook, *Off the Chart*, was published in 2015. *Care Is A Four Letter Verb: a mixed genre collection*, is forthcoming in 2021.

PHOTOGRAPHY: Daniel E. Shapiro, Ph.D.



Dan Shapiro serves as vice dean for Faculty and Administrative Affairs. He was introduced to DSLR cameras by Michael Green, M.D., and Paul Haidet, M.D., and quickly became fascinated by portrait photography. With a colleague, Richard Hammer, M.D., he started working to learn about lighting and in 2010 formed *Snapshots of Strength*, a small group who take professional portraits of more than 100 kids with cancer and their families each year. Four Diamonds generously funds the project. Deb Tomazin in the Department of Humanities edits the photos, and three photos of each family are printed, framed, and mailed as a gift to each family. One example of these photos is Emilia Dameshek, pictured here.



We heard you, and we thank you for sharing your voices.

Air moving through our lungs and vocal cords creates speech and sound, revealing “The Voice Within Us.” Human voices talk, sing, laugh, and cry. During our silence, we can also express ourselves. Our stories exist behind every piece of artwork, poem, short story, song, lyric, memoir, comic strip, and photograph. We hope that through this issue of *Wild Onions*, you continue to listen to those with something to say. Thank you to all our writers and artists who continue to dedicate their time to creating art for the enjoyment of those around them. We appreciate the Penn State Health community’s submissions and continued interest in *Wild Onions*!

Senior Student Co-Editors

Gloria Hwang, MSIV



Gloria Hwang was born in Philadelphia and grew up in Gaithersburg, Maryland. She earned her undergraduate degree at Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, where she majored in biochemistry and molecular

biology. She founded Dickinson’s first science magazine. In medical school, she became an editor of *Central PA Medicine*, which shares health news. She enjoys the editorial process as well as the artistic process of creating graphic designs, ceramic art sculptures, and pots using the potter’s wheel. She will be entering a preliminary year in general surgery at Penn State Hershey Medical Center.

Ansh Johri, MSIV



Ansh Johri grew up in Rockville, Maryland. He majored in biomedical engineering at Columbia University, New York, and subsequently completed a master’s program in bioengineering at University of

Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, before starting medical school. Ansh enjoys table tennis, basketball, and South Asian bhangra dancing. Ansh will be pursuing a residency in interventional radiology at the University of Massachusetts.

Sally Ng, MSIV



Sally Ng grew up in New York City. She earned her undergraduate degree at the University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Indiana, where she majored in the biological sciences. In her free time, she

loves to run outdoors, write poems, and travel. She will be pursuing a residency in pediatrics.

Dear Penn State Community,



David Goldenberg, M.D., F.A.C.S.

Each year, we choose a theme to spark our creativity. I have the honor of introducing this year's theme of *Wild Onions* as "The Voice Within Us."

In its most basic form, singing is the act of producing musical sounds with the voice. In reality, it is so much more. From the time we are born, human beings have the need to sing. Even before we utter our first sentences, we seem to be driven toward making simple melodies and rhythms, giving voice to our young hearts. In modern times, singing is a universal activity pervading the daily lives of individuals from diverse cultural, demographic, and political backgrounds. Singing expresses that which mere words and thoughts cannot. We sing in joy and we sing in sorrow. When we hear others sing, we can glean their innermost emotions, and when we sing ourselves, we experience release and relief.

But our voice within does not pertain only to song. Our inner voice can be expressed in so many ways: as poetry and prose, photography, dancing, sculpting, and painting to name but a few.

I urge you to immerse yourself within these pages. You will view the expression of the innermost voices of our patients, our colleagues, and our friends.

I want to thank all of our contributors for sharing their inner voices, their talent and creativity, their joy and their pain. I want to thank our guest judges for their time and commitment. Thank you to Dr. Bernice Hausman, publisher, and Deb Tomazin and Kerry Royer, managing editors. Also thank you Gloria Hwang, Ansh Johri, and Sally Ng, student coeditors. It has been an honor to serve as guest editor of this remarkable edition of *Wild Onions*.

Find your voice, sing and dance, write and draw. Find your voice and inspire others to find theirs.

David Goldenberg, M.D., F.A.C.S.

Steven and Sharon Baron Professor and Chair
Department of Otolaryngology–Head and Neck Surgery
2020 Guest Editor, *Wild Onions*

The Voice Within: Enemy or Friend

© Jaimie Maines, M.D.

Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology

ENEMY: I can't do this. I haven't studied enough. I haven't done enough of these on my own. They are all going to know that I am fudging my way through this. I got lucky but my luck is going to run out. There is definitely someone else who is a better fit for this position.

27 years of organized schooling ...
Countless hours studying,
writing papers,
taking standardized exams,
practicing physical examination skills on models,
listening and watching mentors take care of patients
emulating those found to be inspiring.

More than eight years honing physical exam and history-taking skills,
learning personal strengths and weaknesses,
providing the best patient care.

We graduated medical school and residency alongside many other competent men and women. We were one of those competent men and women. Our training and degrees tell us so. Evaluations from faculty, students, co-residents, nursing staff, and patients tell us we are not only competent, but compassionate. We agree with the compassionate. Why can't we agree to see ourselves as competent? Why do we consider ourselves not worthy of praise or of the positions and opportunities we have been given? Why can we not see ourselves as worthy of what we have worked for? Why do we feel as though we have something to prove to others, to make up for what we perceive we are lacking? Why do we feel like an imposter in the very place we call home?

It is because there is a tiny voice inside us that says we have cheated the system. Soon someone will figure this out. We are not good enough.

But what is it that someone is going to figure out?

FRIEND: I can do this. I have studied enough. I have the skills to do this on my own. I deserve to see myself as the physician I have trained so hard to become. Hard work over luck has gotten me to the position that I hold today. There will always be someone who is better than I am at something, but that someone will never be the *best me*. That's my job and one that I am more than qualified to do.

It's easy to be your own worst **enemy** ...
Try instead to be your own best friend ...
Allow yourself the grace to just be ...
You are perfect at being you...no one can do this better ...
You are not an imposter ...
You belong here.

Mount Lassen (mural)

© Micah Spangler

Brother of Mark Spangler, Department of Medicine



Of Two Minds

© Elias Harkins, MSII

I am your left brain.
 your brain's right half
It is nice to finally get to talk to you.
 do you know us?
I am involved in language.
 Image, art
I process logical thought and calculations.
 feelings, emotion

I remember August 24, 2009.
 rainy day
I remember the concert you went to on that day,
and all the words to the songs.
 melody
 music memory

I remember when you met that friend in college.
 large hall
 seat in front of you
You liked to stay and talk after bio class
 second floor, "sciences" building
 big windows
 smiling and laughing
 autumn sun shone amber above red leaves

You wrote your first poem in middle school,
 it was about love.
 but described with lions and lambs.
You've written so many poems since then
 I liked the one about being perfectly imperfect.

Poetry is using language,
 emotion
to write,
 create.
We are not just left brain
 or right brain.
We work together
 within you
So use us
 Both.
 We can't wait to help you!



Kayakers Dream

© Paul Strohm, S.T., O.R.S.
Operating Room

Sharp and Soft

© Heidi Runk, C.C.R.C.
Department of Neurology



The End of the Medical School Interview

© Joseph Gascho, M.D.
Departments of Medicine and Cardiology

At the end, after I've asked them
to tell me about any major discoveries they've
 made in the laboratory
and if they think health care
is a right or a privilege
and what they think
are the negatives of being a doctor
(they squirm in their chairs)
and, of course, why
they want to spend the next eight years
toiling away in the bowels of hospitals,
they sometimes ask me
what advice I'd give.

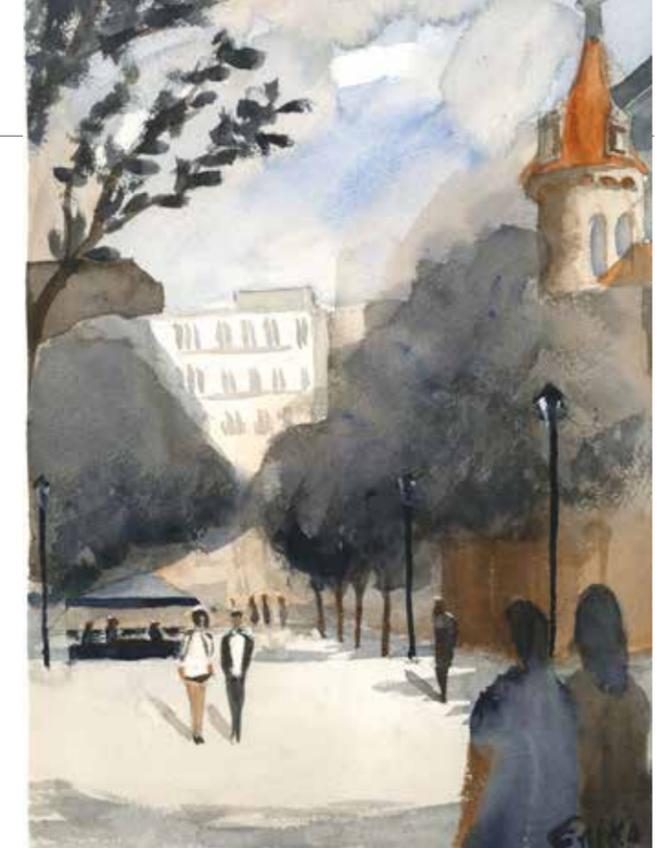
I could talk about studying hard
and keeping up their empathy
and not forgetting to play the Chopin Etudes
and keeping up the jogging

but what I tell them
is that when the anatomy professor
makes them feel as dumb as the D students
back in high school English
and the resident yells at them when they forget
the eighth medicine of the patient they

 worked up yesterday,
and when the scrub nurse in the OR screams at them
for handing the surgeon the wrong retractor,
they must know this:
the first patient they will treat,
when they have finally made it,
will, while driving home, tell their spouse
I am so lucky to have her for my doctor.

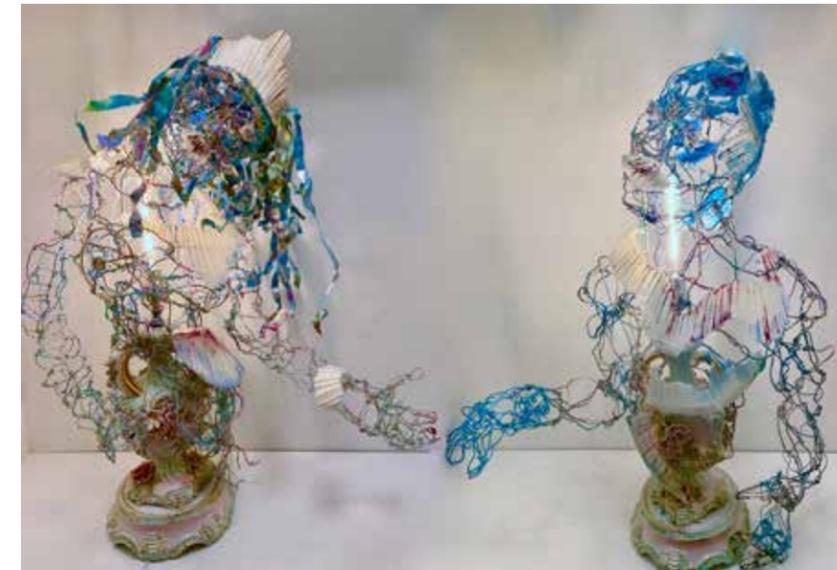
You Light Me Up

© Kate Levenberg, B.S., MSII



A Castle in Barcelona

© Cathy Paige, M.D.
Retired, Department of Anesthesiology



Dancer Girl

© J.D. Stillwater, Patient

Dedicated to my student Lily Jordan.

I am not your cancer girl,
some poster child hairless and grinning
with plaintive eyes; no,

I am a dancer.

These bespoke wheels are no “oh-poor-girl”
prison bars; they are my stage,
my dance floor, my partner,
as you can see now that
the music begins.

When you blurt like a child
“What happened to your leg?”

I brandish the brass—my guard team’s gold—
the flap and flutter, glitter and shine,
synchronous symphony
of twirl, flourish, and crescendo.

Forearms rest *en barre* for sterile steel,
the poke and prod, tape and tubes, but
given drums and strings, a rising chord,
they gravitate skyward,
palm fronds in a largo breeze,
pirouetting lilies in the air
rainbow curve at the refrain
jazz hands with sky-wide
open-hearted finale.

No, nor am I my numbers—
cell count, centigrade, pulseOx, cytochrome—
that lab-coat hip-hop carries no rhyme,
no rhythm for these itchy bones these
lungs aching so deeply
to dance.



The Girl Who Stands Tall

© Ryan Higgins, MSI



My Spirit Animal

© Jessica Matincheck (Age 14)
Patient and Daughter of Lynn Matincheck
Faculty and Administrative Affairs

Theme Art Award

Tokus Dreams

© Rosula Eng (Age 8)
Niece, Hillenn Cruz Eng, M.D.
Department of Anesthesiology



Judge's Comments

I chose this work as it reflects the child's desire to be heard and to release her voice from within.

Theme *Creative Writing* Award

The Voice Within

© Aparna Daley, M.D., Ch.B.
Department of Medicine, Allergy and Immunology

In memory of my mother, Nirmala Daley.

All the things I thought today
that did not turn to words,
like the whisper of a girl
lost in bustling herds,
like rays of the morning sun
that reach across the sky
before billowing, grey clouds
bid its warmth goodbye,
like the gleaming rainbow
that leads me to no end
but cajoles me to follow it
over and under each bend,
I feel your presence near me,
though you leave no trace behind
but all the precious memories
I guard stiffly in my mind.

Judge's Comments

The voice of a parent or individual who reared us is often prominent in our patterns of thinking and reactions to the world around us—this reflection on how the author's mother is part of her inner voice seems so resonant and relatable.

Theme *Photography* Award

Indigestible

© Suzanne Boltz, B.S.
Department of Surgery, Urology



Judge's Comments

This photograph was just so playful and fun. It sparks a sense of adventure as the child appears as a manifestation of the voice within us emerging from the depths of this large sculpture.

Cadaver Lab

© Mariam Shalaby, B.S., B.Phil., MSI

Nowhere but in cadaver lab is it acceptable
Or legal
to cut apart human bodies, touch and handle
their organs, and have conversation over them.

Nowhere but in cadaver lab
Have I felt
Uneasy about sharing a space with the bodies of
the dead.

Nowhere but cadaver lab
Have I been scared to go alone
Or worried I'm doing wrong
Or afraid of disrespecting
a body lived in, loved, and now dead.

CADAVER LAB ORIENTATION DAY:
A bubbly, short second-year student leads my
group of 4 to a table, where she happily explains
the rules.

"You have to keep the body wet with wetting
solution and paper towels!"

What a concept.

"And throw excess tissue in the tissue buckets."

Tissue?

Oh.

Body tissue.

Needless to say,
I am apprehensive.

Uneasy.

Scared.

Dead bodies should be buried, safe and sound, in
the ground.

That's what I think as I walk out on orientation
day.

CADAVER DISSECTION DAY 1:

Oh my goodness.

We have to cut open this man's chest.

He is small, pale, and frail,
He died at 87 years old.

"Let's call him Greg," says Catherine.

"Or any name ... I don't mind ..." she backtracks.

"Well, who'll make the first cut?"

Silence.

"I'll do it," says Umer.
"Okay," I say. "I'll go next."
I'd better face my fears.

Umer makes his cut.
We peel back the donor's skin,
And I'm shocked.

Shocked by the textures
Of the fascia
Fat
And muscles.

I've never seen anything
More beautiful
Than this.

The books have lied.

They never mentioned
That external intercostal muscles
Shimmer in the light.

Nor the marvelous way nerves, arteries, and veins
Run like rivers
Along the mountains and valleys
Of our posterior chest wall.

"Time is up! Group B is here. Clean up your stations
and wet down the bodies."

I can't believe it.
I have to leave?

But nowhere but in cadaver lab
Is it acceptable
Or legal
To learn the human body in this way!

Needless to say,
Cadaver lab becomes
My new favorite place.

Because nowhere but in cadaver lab
Do I learn as quickly
What a heart feels like sitting in my hand
Or how a lung expands
Like a sponge filled with air.

We're made of carbon?
Like clay and dust?
Then what keeps me alive?
What makes my mind awake and free?

Tell me, is there anywhere but cadaver lab
Where the living and the dead
Interact through careful touch?
And spur intelligent conversation?
Where we, the living, can engage with those
who've passed, in a way that is "normal," and not
sad?

I still believe a body should rest in the ground.
But some people
Choose to let their bodies
Take a longer route.

They gift us with knowledge
Of anatomy
And of mortality
And of ourselves.

Nowhere but in cadaver lab
Have I experienced anything
Like that.

A Wish

© Melissa Greene
Former Creative Writing Teacher
Penn State Cancer Institute

I wish I could inject myself with words,
find a vein
and send the music shooting through the
heart of me,
the soul of my being,
the core where the best of me lives.
I would glow
from the inside out,
capillaries illuminated
like a string of red lanterns
stirring softly on a summer's night.



Eyes Open

© Wyatt Myers
Son of Elizabeth Myers, M.Ed.
Educational Affairs, Regional Campus

Parrotii

© Iris Li, R.N., BScN
Fourth Floor Acute Care



Continued on next page

To the Nurse in the Third Floor Bathroom

© Vanessa Vides, MSIII

The distress was debilitating
The stone cold look of her eyes
There was an association
An instant guttural cut
Human kindness
Imagine if everyone made this their mantra
Deep trauma manifests as “mental health deficiencies”
They told me I had no hope, that I was no good
I supplicated, I conceded, I atoned
It was too late though
There would be no arbitration just adjudication
A dismissal with a facile disregard
I could not tell you this when you asked if I was ok
I sat for hours with an injured soul in that third floor bathroom
So many humans passed me by
For some reason you chose to pause
You came to me and put your hand on my shoulder
You provided presence, compassion
And a pager number
I wish I knew who you were
Whoever you are, thank you for your pause
Thank you for seeing me



Sometimes the Quietest Voices Speak the Loudest Words

© Sarah Stovar, M.D.
Department of
Family & Community Medicine

The Hipster, Business Man, and Farmer

© Kylee Spangler
Sister of Mark Spangler, Department of Medicine



Smile

© Kevin Rakszawski, M.D.
Departments of Medicine and Hematology/Oncology

“7213 would like to see you,” said the text page. I checked my printed list of the patients admitted under my service and didn’t see 7213 listed. I called the nurse back and asked for the patient’s name. “It’s Joann. Joann White.” My heart sank. I took care of Joann the month prior while covering the Bone Marrow Transplant service after she recovered from cardiac arrest. Her leukemia was progressing, and she was running out of available treatment options.

* * *

I had known Joann for many years, ever since I was a resident. I admitted her overnight as the medical house officer. I cared for her on the hematology/oncology inpatient service as a senior resident. And I followed her in clinic for three years as a fellow. She was treated with the standard 7+3 chemotherapy for acute myeloid leukemia, then went on to receive a stem cell transplant from an unrelated donor. She was fortunate to achieve a durable remission for more than two years.

But then, her leukemia relapsed; she opted for palliative treatment directed against her leukemia, but cure was no longer an option. As the months went on, treatment began to take its toll on her. And it also began to take its toll on her loving and devoted husband, who also was faced with his own health issues.

At the end of every clinic visit, Joann reminded me, “Quality over quantity.” That was her mantra, and it succinctly summarized her goals of care. She often told me how fortunate she felt to have been in remission for so long following her transplant. But she could no longer tolerate treatment.

* * *

I entered her room and immediately realized that she looked much different than just a few weeks prior. Death was surely days-to-weeks away, as we often tell our patients when death seems fairly imminent. I softly called her name, and she opened one eye.

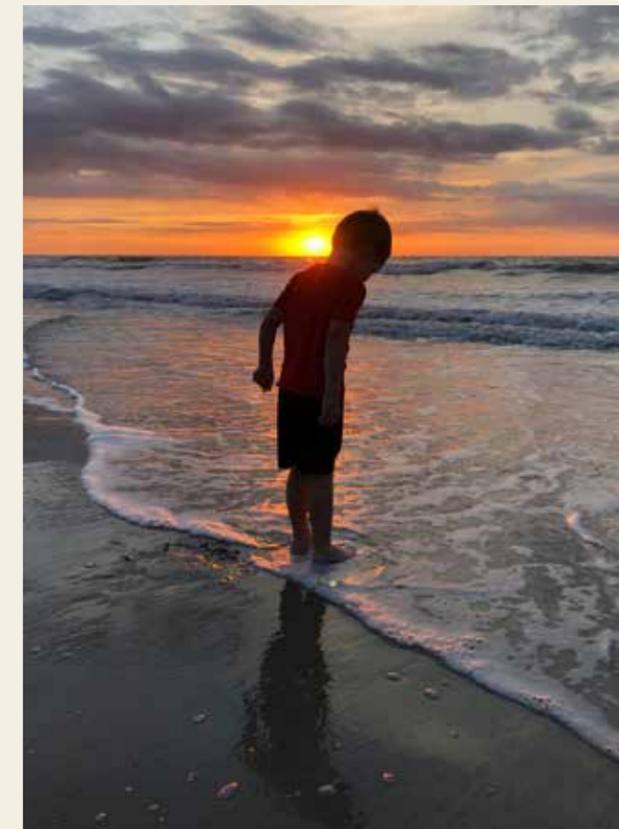
“Oh, Dr. Raks ... I just needed to see your smile one last time. I’m leaving today at 2 pm. Home with hospice.” Her primary oncologist was out of the country for vacation for two weeks. Her husband was at home, sick with a viral infection, and unable to visit the Cancer Institute inpatient unit, with most of the patients immunosuppressed. It was flu season, and as a result every patient was under droplet precautions as per floor policy. I removed my mask ... and smiled.

She closed her eyes. I saw the corner of her mouth open slightly. “And that’s the last therapy that I’ll need.”



Sunrise Surf

© Cindy Lynch
Office of the Dean



Sunrise in the Seafoam

© Kevin Rakszawski, M.D.
Departments of Medicine and
Hematology/Oncology

For Argument's Sake

© Hope Pesner, Patient

Each day of our lives
One thing has held true
The thing I love most
Is getting to you.

Once in a while
Your words I have bent
Just to hear
"that's not what I meant."

The neighbors can hear
Our voices carry
As we exchange
Verbal parries.

For all of those moments
Your buttons I hit
Knowing full well
It will give you a fit.

Who can forget
The joy in your eyes
When with a straight face
I try to lie.

With the ones I love
I'm always clashing
Sharp repartee
And sarcastic bashing.

Usually I attempt
To make you stew
A few dumb comments
Will always do.

And just in case
You haven't heard
I mispronounce
A few choice words.

Please know that
I'll never be lazy
Not take the time
To drive you crazy.

Once in awhile
I give a surprise
Out of the blue
I will compromise.

I plot my course
I have to try
While screaming and yelling
I'm laughing inside.

Time doesn't matter
It's never too late
Our arguments are a game
Of give and take.

I know if I changed
It would be a mistake
Better still
I can always fake.

So come on
Please take the bait
And let's go at it
For argument's sake.

Jumping in Ice Cream

© Devin DePamphilis

Son of Sharon W. DePamphilis, Management Reporting & Decision Support



Faster

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

It takes me 11 minutes to safely get report from the outgoing nurse
5 minutes to speak to my friendly colleague about her life
3 minutes to make sure I have my tools and resources for the day
2 minutes to walk to my first patient's room while saying good morning to those I pass in the hall
7 seconds to introduce myself with a smile
15 seconds to identify my patient by name and birthday
8 seconds to see the worry or pain on their face
9 minutes to talk about our plan for the day and address concerns
7 minutes do a thorough, gentle assessment
5 minutes to learn more about my patient's family, interests, and career
6 minutes to assist with a bedpan
4 minutes to privately address their spouse's concerns
2 minutes to verify infusions, double-checking the right dosing
3 minutes to verify allergies and give morning medications
2 minutes to make sure my patient is comfortable and has everything they need
10 seconds to make sure the call bell is within reach
12 minutes to document in the medical record
1 minute to get to my next patient

FASTER

It takes me 11 minutes to safely get report from the outgoing nurse
3 minutes to make sure I have my tools and resources for the day
1 minute to walk to my first patient's room
5 seconds to introduce myself
15 seconds to identify my patient by name and birthday
6 minutes to talk about our plan for the day
6 minutes to do a thorough assessment
5 minutes to assist with a bedpan
2 minutes to verify infusions, double-checking the right dosing
3 minutes to verify allergies and give morning medications
12 minutes to document in the medical record
1 minute to get to my next patient

FASTER

It takes me 8 minutes to get report from the outgoing nurse
1 minute to walk to my first patient's room
5 seconds to introduce myself
6 seconds to identify my patient
4 minutes to talk about our plan for the day
3 minutes to do an assessment
30 seconds to have the aide assist with a bedpan at a later time
1 minute to verify infusions
1 minute to give morning medications
12 minutes to document in the medical record
1 minute to get to my next patient

FASTER

It takes me

Miniature

© Jeff Feehrer, Patient

He parked his van on a railroad crossing.

It was white, lettering on the sides, cluttered with tools, an extension ladder on the roof. He could fix anything—electrical, gas, plumbing, carpentry—except himself.

Midnight, and the road was minor, no flashing lights or gates.

He pulled a joint from his shirt pocket. The twisted ends reminded him of those Tootsie Roll miniatures he'd bought at a little grocery store on his walk to elementary school. A penny-a-piece then. That price, the store, walking to school long gone. Dangerous these days. The old school, too, converted to a daycare center. A new one built somewhere else.

The butane lighter briefly flared his utility truck. He pulled the smoke in deep, didn't cough. Good. Good stuff.

A hemispheric dark encompassed like he was shrunk inside a snow globe like the one his parents used to have on their living room table. He'd shake it and a blizzard swirled and settled on the Capitol. Also gone with them.

He tapped the USB and heard "Highway to Hell" by AC/DC. Touching the volume louder and louder. He had to grin. His hymn. Swallowing his mind, reverberating clear to his heart. It enveloped him, farther and smaller, contained within another, tinier, globe.

Another drag and held. Starting to mellow.

Won't relive these memories if Heaven works that way, he thought, blowing a halo smoke ring. Funny. He believed in God but he didn't believe he was eternity-bound. Certainly not after forfeiting His gift of life.

Free will. He did have help—another inhale/exhale—making the decision.

MRI + CT + Chemo + Radiation + Hospice = 0.

His tools began rattling and dancing, alive, then his van was vibrating.

He took a final, long draw.

Never heard the trumpeting horn, only saw a great brilliant flash swirling the night.

Peaceful Chaos

© Lori Ricard, Department of Humanities



Student & Resident Art Award

Stillness

© Diane Jang, MSIII



Judge's Comments

The beauty of this painting lies in the stillness of the moment. It captures a time of night, where moonlight is shining upon the local neighborhood. A child, perched on the street light, seems to be enjoying a quiet moment of this night. The fascination of a child's mind with nature is beautiful. The multiple number of houses in the neighborhood suggests that perhaps during the daytime, it is a crowded place with a lot of hustle and bustle. Maybe this is the only time when she can find this moment of peace and stillness.

Student & Resident *Creative Writing* Award

Room 11

© Jane-Frances Aruma, MSI

I have often wondered what doctors do between patients. Between leaving one room and entering another, does nothing happen? Do they carry information, emotion, and whatever else from the previous patient unto the next? Or is there some ritual, like taking a long, deep breath that represents reset—a cleansing, a re-beginning, just like what I set out to do today.

Undeserving

“What type of medical student doesn’t know how to count? I give you five minutes, and that’s all you get! Have I made myself clear?”

Those words rang loudly in my ears, boldly threatening the certainty in my stride as I approached Room 11. Just last week, I had been careless enough to overstay my allotted time with a patient, inadvertently setting us a bit behind schedule. My preceptor had made it very clear that he was not pleased at all. Which is why today, my second chance, just had to be different. Today had to be better.

Having looked up my patient beforehand, I took time to learn all I could about his disease. I was armed to the teeth with knowledge about direct and indirect pathways, dopamine, and acetylcholine. I was ready as I’d ever be, to identify any item from the list of Parkinson’s symptoms I memorized before I went to bed. My right hand on the door handle, I thought, this should be quick. I gave the heavy wooden door a push to open.

Hello Patient N.

Yes, his day was good. Yes, he was just here for a routine checkup. No, he had no specific concerns. Yes, he was tolerating his medication. *Well, great!* I left the room, and delivered a flawless presentation to my attending. All under 5 minutes! *Maybe medicine is for me after all.* I gladly returned with the doctor to see our patient. All was well in the world again.

Room 11 looked different the second time around. The weight that had just lifted off me lent freedom to my eyes to caress the room in a way that they didn’t before.

They first landed on the smiling face of Viola Davis plastered on the cover of the magazine in the display cabinet. And then, they fell on the adjacent wall where a lone yellow butterfly in flight had been wonderfully captured against a blurry green background, a drop of water on its right wing. The supply cabinet was slightly ajar above where my head had been, where my attending now sat speaking to the patient. Our patient who had Parkinson’s, but who also had bright blue eyes and hair that was thinning gracefully. Our patient who had been a successful wrestler in his youth, a man of many stories and a healthy sense of humor. A man whose smile was easy to imagine even though his disease wouldn’t let me see it on his face. His face, the face of a man who had lived. Where it had just been my patient and me with a table between, the room had since become dimensional.

And so had Patient N. *Have I really done well today?*

This experience will linger in my mind for weeks to come. I will think about Room 11, the space in which I had been so focused yet so absent. I will consider the positions I occupied in this space—one where I was the almost-doctor, the person with a job to do. And the other, where I was a student, free to learn, to observe, to think. And consequently, I will reflect on what it means to be a physician, a good physician—the type I know I want to be. What makes a good doctor? Is it professionalism or humility? Empathy or competence? I will reflect very carefully, critically. I will reflect through days spent shadowing and nights spent studying; through the multitude of errors I will make during my training; through the plethora of lessons I will learn every day. And eventually, I hope I will settle on the word “balance.” My practice, a sweet mix of intelligence and kindness, of efficiency and compassion.

And then also, I will think about patient N. I will imagine the man in youthful exuberance. And will remember him fondly, as the man he is plus Parkinson’s. For he has played a part in my story. And I will wait with gratitude, for certainly, there will be more Patient Ns to come.

Judge’s Comments

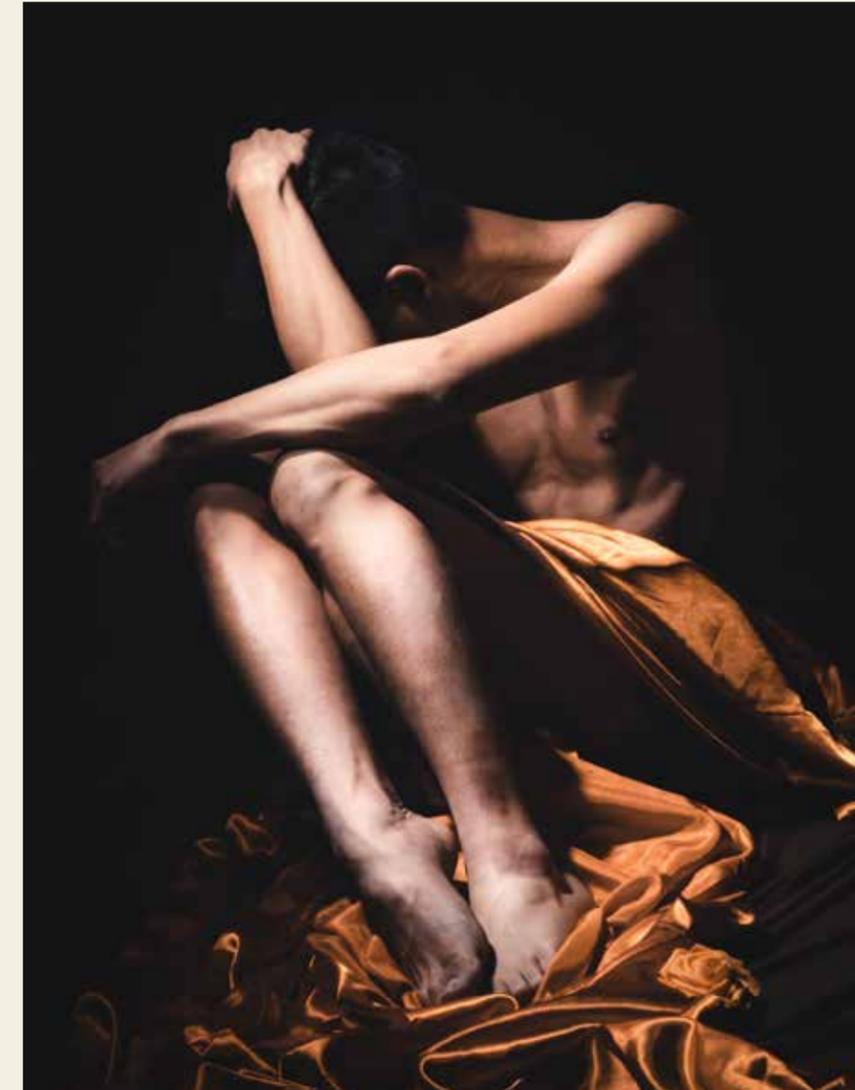
Honest prose and a reflective sensibility flame this voice, sandwiched between the demands of an overbearing attending and a human being who is also the patient.

Student & Resident *Photography* Award

Cross

© Paul Nguyen, MSII

Photo taken in collaboration with Jacob Ritts



Judge’s Comments

With subtle light and a careful composition, we are drawn into the mystery of this young man’s identity and what he’s feeling. The title of the piece, *Cross*, has obvious religious overtones, and in addition to the framing of his arms and legs (which form the cross) his naked legs and feet are juxtaposed on golden, richly colored fabric. The piece is reminiscent of Michelangelo’s *Pieta*, portraying Jesus draped, already passed, on Mary’s lap—his bare feet touching the rich fabric of her gown. The mystery is emphasized by his looking away from us, his head tucked beneath a protective arm. It also reminded me of Wyeth’s *Christina’s World*, the painting showing a young woman looking away from us toward a home in the distance, which forces us to wonder about her. The tones and composition of this work are suggestive of old masters’ paintings and defy the medium of photography, which tends toward the now and the factual.

ICU in Da Lat, Vietnam

© Gabrielle Gundermann, MSII

On my first day in the intensive care unit, a 65-year-old woman crashed in the corner closest to where I was standing. I sidelined myself, trying to become a tiny fly on the wall as I watched a group of nurses and physicians come to her aid. There were ups and downs; one minute she was stabilized and the next her body was being crushed against the bed she was lying on by a physician trying to keep her heart delivering blood to the rest of her organs. Thirty slow minutes ticked by before the command of a physician I could not understand instructed the team to stop. A nurse watched while the patient was intubated and put on a respirator. A few minutes later, a man of similar age walked down the hall toward the unit, and I knew who he was before he made his way to the physician at the middle desk.

It was time for me to relocate and give this widower, the medical team, and this woman the privacy they deserved away from my pitying stare. My translator asked me which patient I would like to see next. After debating calling it a day to process the fragility of life, I peered around the room of elderly patients hooked up to respirators, either asleep or unconscious. I had already seen the 15-year-old comatose minority woman who had Japanese Encephalitis. Finally, I spotted our next patient; fanning herself with a bright pink plastic fan in the back corner. She was a 79-year-old woman who appeared content. We approached her with soft smiles and she immediately pulled out a book that she used to write and communicate with others. She was hooked up to a respirator and unable to audibly speak.

After a slow but deliberate scribble, scribble, scribble, she handed her book to our translator who still had tears in her eyes from seeing a death for the first time. A quick smile traversed her face as she read the compliments that were housed in the last lines of our patient's book, a kind and common way to greet someone new in Vietnam. And like that, we were swept into an uncanny but natural conversation with this woman who was honestly overjoyed with the minutes of company that we provided her. This feeling was reciprocated for me as I could no longer hear the beeping monitors, the wheels of a gurney removing a corpse from the 32-patient-shared-room-ICU, the buzz of 20 respirators, the suction being used next to me, or the nursing students being trained to insert a catheter. I couldn't hear anything

but could feel a moment of connection between two individuals who could not verbally communicate because of a respirator and a language barrier and who only had humanity in common. She squeezed my hand to thank us for our time with her. I bowed to thank her for the same and I could tell that shared moment meant more to us than anyone who could have witnessed it.

I will take this shared moment as a reminder that a connection from physician to patient and patient to physician is just as important as the clinical medicine we provide and will allow me to accept moments like these as they come along and give them whenever I can. It is a profound reminder of the humanity in medicine.

Endless Sky

© Ryan Higgins, MSI



In Loving Memory of Baby Girls, Born Too Soon. 2/22/19-2/23/19, Austin, TX

© Suzanne Boltz
Department of Surgery, Urology



A Letter to My Daughter

© Eliana Hempel, M.D., F.A.C.P.
Department of Medicine

My darling Norah Noodle,

Today is the day that you were supposed to make your grand entrance into the world, the day that we would find out you were a girl. Today is the day we'd see your huge eyes framed by the longest lashes, your soft, squishy cheeks, your perfect feet for the very first time. But, my love, that was not to be.

Our 41 days with you were simultaneously the scariest and most wonderful. I wouldn't give them up for anything. The weeks and months since God called you home have been impossibly difficult. There were days when I thought I would crumble under the weight of my grief.

Yet, then I'd hear about how your prayer card sits on nightstands, bathroom mirrors, car visors, and in wallets as a reminder of the precious nature of life. I think of the incredible generosity of those who donated to your fund so that we can help other NICU nuggets like you. I see all the ways in which you've touched the lives of so many, and I remember how lucky I am that you chose me.

One day, sweet girl, I will hold you again. I will count your fingers, kiss your head, rub your back and snuggle you close, just like in my dreams.

Until then, I'll keep being the best person I can be in hopes that I can earn a place where you are. I hope we're making you proud, angel baby.

Love always,

Mama

Looking at the Water

© Barbara Sedun (Age 9)
Granddaughter of Yvonne Sedun, R.N. Retired, Pain Clinic



Self-Portrait

© **Geffen Slonimsky** (Age 7)
 Daughter of Drs. Guy and Einat Slonimsky
 Department of Radiology



Open Your Eyes

© **Danielle Sentz** (Age 13)
 Patient

I have a voice
 I still get to use it
 So many killed.
 Just innocent humans
 LGBT and people of color
 Non-Christians
 The poor
 Even our genders
 Are reasons to kill and hate and fight
 But why?
 Thousands are killed but they aren't a statistic.
 They were people with families,
 With feelings.
 They had to live in fear
 Not optimism
 Their voice was stolen
 Not even given a chance.
 How much longer will we let this stand?
 I prompt you to open your hearts
 Open your eyes to the problem to start
 Once you see we aren't defined by any god or our
 clothes
 But instead by how kind and caring we can all be.
 If you would give them a chance to speak
 Maybe you would see
 They are people just like you and me.
 No one deserves to die
 Because you turned a blind eye.

Sunny

© **Wyatt Myers**
 Son of Elizabeth Myers, M.Ed.
 Educational Affairs, Regional Campus

Forty-Four Years Later (with photos at right)

© **Chandat Phan, MSI**

March 10, 1975: My dad and his family are living in Buon Ma Thuot, an important military stronghold in southern Vietnam. Rumors of an impending attack by the communist army have been circling the village for days. My dad and his family start grabbing what they can and try to escape before the attack. As they are making trips back and forth, bombs start raining down. The village is on fire. My dad's family is injured, homeless, and scattered.

A Few Months Later: My dad's family spends the next few months separated with no method of contacting each other or knowing who is alive. A close family friend named Ba Mai lives in a farm house in the middle of the jungle, far away from the fighting. Without communication, each person eventually finds their way to Ba Mai's house and my dad's family is miraculously reunited. In the next years my dad made his escape from Vietnam to America as a refugee. When trying to escape Vietnam, you have to pack your bags and go any time an opportunity presents itself. Oftentimes you cannot say goodbye to anybody.

June 2nd, 2019: Nobody in my family has seen Ba Mai since my dad escaped. In the gap year before my first year in medical school, I fly out to Vietnam for a backpacking trip. Before leaving, my dad gives me an old address for Ba Mai's house. I take a bus to Buon Ma Thuot, rent a motorbike, and drive. I look for someone who would recognize my dad's name and story. When I get to the address my dad gave me, an old lady comes out asking why there is a strange man speaking in an American accent (me). I go on to tell her my dad's story. She looks at me curiously through the entire story, but as soon as I tell her my dad's name, she cries and holds my hand.



Pictured is Ba Mai (green) and her sisters speaking to my dad via FaceTime for the first time in 44 years.



Ba Mai's sister holding her new grandson. In more ways than one, my family lost everything during the war. If you look close enough, you can still see the old memories and emotions burning through her eyes.

Resilience

© **Michael Flanagan, M.D.**

Department of Family and Community Medicine, University Park Campus



The Voice Within Us

© Corinne Laity, Patient

We all have it
That voice that lies within
The one that knows who we are
And exactly where we've been

It follows like a shadow
Watching everything we do
It knows all our good parts
And yeah, the bad ones too

It whispers in your ear at times
Hinting what to do
Only you can hear the voice
The choice is up to you

“Did you take the chance?
Did you think it through?
Listen to me
I'm talking to you”

“Speak up for yourself
You are worth the trouble
It's a personal journey
No one lives your struggle”

“You are not weak
Do you hear what I say
You've made it so far
Admire every step of the way”

Your Inner Voice

© Lisa Schultz, R.N., B.S.N.
Pulmonary, Allergy and Critical Care Medicine

Dreamtime

© Jennifer Polhemus, Patient

At the bottom of the abyss comes the voice
of salvation. ... At the darkest moment comes the light.
—Joseph Campbell, *The Power of Myth*

Do not be afraid of the abyss.
What you think is a monster
may not be so.
Is its breath not sweet
and lifted by warmth like summer gardenias?
Fall into the break then,
obey the voice
and find what waits
even further below ...
beyond the other side ...
beneath the bottom
where creative, conscious energy pours
into space and time
and breaks in two.
Male and Female
Day and Night
Birth and Death,
every dichotomy
demanding tension
so the form will hold.
Two,
always two,
of the same oneness.
The double helix
spirals and splits and spills
across empty pages
filling them with myth
and mystery, and metaphor
and the waters in which mystics swim.
Fall into the break then,
you will not drown.

Crabapple and Hawthorne

© Tony Oliveri, Patient

Weatherworn
Crabapple and
gnarly Hawthorne
create a thicket
beside a still pool.

Their very nature
makes that area,
under and between,
a space of danger,
and of safety, too.

Larger animals
avoid the spikes,
and birds of prey
know better than to
swoop among these.

Songbirds share
the space with
chipmunks, rabbits,
and other timid,
tasty creatures.

Some humans declare
such places to be
wasteland and
want the growth
cut back and tamed.

The fruits of both
are valuable to many
who know of jams
and herbal potions
designed to heal.

Crabapple and Hawthorne
mingling in the forest
protecting and deflecting
providing and inspiring
throughout the cycle of the year.

Prison Buds: Roses Bloom Outside Eastern State Penitentiary

© Carly Civello
Patient



Glazed Cherries

© Frances Civello, B.A.
Nursing Administration



Our Names

© Daniella Lipnick, B.A., M.S., MSIII

We are each given names.

Some that make
us feel bold, that make
us feel loved and love ourselves.

Others that leave
us feeling ashamed, that make
us hate ourselves.

Both lead us to question
Is that my name?
Is that who I am?

Am I all these names,
Or none of them,
Or some.

Who gets to decide and does that decision matter?
Can I name myself
or must it come from another?

Do you or I get to decide?
For tell me my name and I'll tell you another.

Contemplative Gaze

© Angela Sedun

Daughter-In-Law of Yvonne Sedun, R.N.
Retired, Pain Clinic



Listen

© Sejal J. Shah, MSIV

Night has fallen,
light switches face the floor,
a sheet of black encompasses all.
I listen and nothing is all I hear.

Twilight arrives,
I wake to gentle chirping
and the squeaking of a faucet above.
A cue to get out of bed.

I press play and the sweet sound
of a vocalist fills the air,
the bristles of the toothbrush
moving in rhythm with the beat.

The sizzle of water boiling
signals my coffee is brewing.
The passionate belting of a pump-up song
readying me for the day ahead.

The lock click coincides with the umbrella opening,
the water pelting the nylon covering.
My boots splash the puddles,
as tires churn the wet pavement.

Paper rustles the air,
as the steady buzz of the office settles in.
Chairs swoosh as they roll on the carpet,
an occasional “achoo” adding to the dissonance.

Metal clinks against the plates,
as teeth churn its former residents.
The gulps and slurps of liquids
fill the gaps in conversation.

The whirl of the revolving door,
a reminder of another day passed.
The high-pitched yelps of children
pierce the air as school lets out.

The keys rattle as I ascend the stairs,
groans telling of their age.
A hungry stomach welcomes
the hum of the microwave.

Once again darkness swallows all
as I crawl under the bedsheets.
This time when I listen,
I can hear the silence.

Faculty & Healthcare Provider Art Award

An Old Dream

© Gary Gasowski, M.D.
Penn State College of Medicine Alumnus, 1972



Judge's Comments

Dreams may appear illogical. They depict our thoughts, fears, and desires; sometimes all in one place. The real-life may have its limitations; the dreams have no boundaries. This painting encompasses many dreams in one place: ocean with all its fury, sun with its bright light, an industrial complex, and safety of a home with a table and chair. Just like a dream can manifest so many different views of life, our lives are composed of different thought processes and points of view.

Faculty & Healthcare Provider *Creative Writing* Award

Dreamland (Lyrics)

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

Seen her walking in a dusty street
Sideways glances, shuffling feet
Gypsy queen of forgotten towns
Sleeping in cemetery grounds
Siren songs at sunrise
Whoever she wants she'll hypnotize
Seen her by the shuttered factory
Whistling softly in a minor key

Dreamland!
What do you do when you want to get away?
Dreamland!
Follow her, she'll chase away the gray!
Dreamland!
Put color in a world that's fading black!
Dreamland!
Working twice as hard every time that
she comes back!

She's flying around in a shopping cart
Pickin' off people at the Kwik-E-Mart
Seen another man nodding on the edge of town
He done and let his guard down
Headed to the capital to crack the dome
No one's safe, even in their home
Little boy tell you that his momma's sick
Just another day livin' in a zombie flick

(In) Dreamland!
What do you do when you want to get away?
Dreamland!
Follow her she'll chase away the gray!
Dreamland!
She's a feisty one, grinding hell dust out of bones!
Dreamland!
They don't understand her, like Dylan's Mr. Jones!

They're sending robots to the stars
They even got robots driving cars
They sold us down the river and they'll do it again
And wonder why we need a friend
She blows in like a candidate
Promising a better state
Reaching out a helping hand
She says "Follow me to Dreamland!"
Dreamland!

What do you do when you want to get away?
Dreamland!
Follow her, she'll chase away the gray!
Dreamland!
Put color in a world that's fading black!
Dreamland!
Working twice as hard every time that she comes back!

Description: In "Dreamland," I wanted to write a song about the U.S. opioid epidemic that also attempted some larger cultural commentary about the scope of the problem. I've had family members in rural Indiana (i.e., the "forgotten towns" referenced in the song) who have dealt with and succumbed to opiate addiction, so the crisis hits rather close to home. In fact, the lyrics to this song came to me during a drive back to the Midwest in summer 2017, and I later recorded it with my bandmates, Tim Detterbeck and Tim Snyder, in our acoustic trio Ella's Choice.

For the last two years, I've been working with the Clinical Translation Science Institute to study so-called "Diseases of Despair"—rising mortality from drug addiction, suicide, and alcoholism that has disproportionately affected people in the poor, rural areas depicted in the song. These regions of the country have not fared well in an unbridled global economy that has eliminated millions of domestic manufacturing/mining jobs. When economic opportunity disappears, despair sets in, and people are increasingly seeking chemical escape from their existential pain in self-destructive ways. I felt that personifying the influx of opioids as a "narcotic gypsy" infiltrating declining heartland towns could help illustrate the seductiveness of addiction for people who are hurting, as well as the insidiousness of the crisis that has crept into our lives over the past two decades. Later in the song, I also get a bit of a dig in on the U.S. political class that I feel has allowed the structural conditions underlying this public health crisis to fester over time. Ultimately, "Dreamland" is a dystopia that attempts—however imperfectly—to make sense of the growing "despair" of our era.

Judge's Comments

Grounded in granular images, effective rhythm and a rhyming refrain, this noble voice exposes the untenable world inhabited by too many of our patients and neighbors.

Faculty & Healthcare Provider *Photo* Award

Timecross

© Shengchen Lin, Ph.D.
Cellular and Molecular Physiology



Judge's Comments

This industrial black and white with endless marching figures is riveting. While likely an artistic exhibit—the scale and framing of the shot are perfect—we are hovering above as they march towards and beneath us, we are spared inclusion in the march but can't help but be drawn in—who are they, why are they marching, and is this all any of us do?

Recovery

© **Melissa Greene**
Former Creative Writing Teacher
Penn State Cancer Institute

With patience
you can still see the stars in the morning,
but it has to be early when
the sky is just peeking out from the night
and a lone sparrow calls for the sun
without moving a feather.
Now is when your soul tells you,
in the still of knowing,
that nothing you need comes
until it's ready.

Hope stirs,
yet if you speak to the sky about it
it won't answer.
Maybe later
when it's done busying itself
in preparation for the day
it will tell you all it knows.

What is left to do
but watch the soft light gather,
feel your dreams at rest.
Right here
where nothing matters more
than the touch of morning
to remind you
it is still time for stars.

Making Rounds

© **Judy Schaefer, R.N., M.A.**
The Doctors Kienle Center for Humanistic
Medicine, Member

The air stirs happily or so it seems
An unseen door opens
The ceiling lifts
An eagle takes flight
Or is it a small sparrow
Or a murmuration of starlings?
Yet, barely perceptible,
the stir turns suspicious.
Watchful, careful at the corners
An unseen door closes
The ceiling sinks
An eagle plummets
A small sparrow speaks
A murmur of diagnosis takes shape



Mirror

© **Lori Ricard**
Department of Humanities

Sunset in Arizona

© **Oana Bollt, B.S.**
Department of Surgery



A Pair of Carolina Wrens

© **Sigmund David**, Patient

I saw you
From my front door
Facing me

Perched on the fence
Twelve feet away
Singing so sweetly

With everything
You had

And as I listened
I saw

Another bird
With a pert
Tail

Slip under
The picket fence

Two Carolina wrens

And I knew
A nest
of theirs

Was nearby

I searched
the area

Finally
I spotted

Your nest

On a rack
Just inside
The garage

This surprised me
For the garage door
Was not

Always open

I hope
Somehow

You raise
Your young
There

And I once again
Can hear
You

Perched nearby
Singing your heart
Out

For you know
No other song

Hoodoo, Ghost Ranch, New Mexico

© **Jason Spicher**, MSIII





Frida Kahlo

© **Geffen Slonimsky** (Age 7)
Daughter of Drs. Guy and Einat Slonimsky
Department of Radiology

Imago Ergo Sum

© **Claire Flaherty, Ph.D., M.S., A.B.N.**
Department of Neurology

This poem was dedicated to my immigrant grandparents and mother, on the occasion of being the first woman of my generation to complete Ph.D. studies.

Like Kahlo's "Two Fridas" I stand juxtaposed
Between two contradictory, complementary mythologies.
Intergenerational chrysalis, stirred to consciousness
by the lure of abundancy.
Emerging from dormancy, shedding the coal-dusted, sod-encrusted
cocoon of my post-Tudor ancestors
To claim my 16th-century birthright:
Daughter of Kings, princess of Connaught, intelligentsia of Éire.
Amerikan, equality the ransom price of freedom, I live
compromised of status, standing and sense of identity.
Like Tsaravich Alexei I lament: "Who gave you
the right to abdicate for me?"
Birthright eroded by egalitarianism; knowledge and wisdom
commodities to be purchased on credit.
Intellectualism mere atavism.
I stand in Amerika, Yankee persona, cocooned still,
Queen's tongue, princess in polymers, Shanachie to my own soul.

Wednesday

© **Richard W. Ordway, Ph.D.**
The Doctors Kienle Center for Humanistic Medicine, Member

Face up, roll along
Give up, be strong
Hooked up, humatron
off like a light
Wake up, soft talk
Catch up, take stock
Stand up, wait ... walk
back to the fight

Bottom left image:

Portrait of a Young Woman

© **Jessica Matincheck** (Age 14)
Patient and Daughter of Lynn Matincheck
Faculty and Administrative Affairs



Stories

© **Katelyn Edel, MSIII**

I have always loved to hear people tell stories
And as a young child I would sit enthralled,
While a speaker's words made me tumble headfirst into enchanted forests
Or helped me explore the deep blue depths of an ocean
And at the end of the story, my favorite part
There was always a valuable lesson tied up in the happy ending
And so stories became my guide for how to live

I have always loved to tell people stories
And as I grew older I would weave complex tales
Taking anyone who would listen on a magical ride through faraway lands
Or on a perilous but noble journey to the stars
And at the end of the story, my favorite part
There was always a sense of closeness between me and my audience
And so stories became a way for me to connect

I have always loved to hear people tell stories
And as a medical student, I would listen more closely
For the data and the clues that were embedded in my patient's concern
Or buried in a symptom from their past
And somehow, the end of the story became my least favorite part
Because I no longer felt the magic of the story, but the weight of it
And so stories became too much for me to bear

I have always loved to tell people stories
And as I became more comfortable in my doctoring
I would focus less on obtaining the facts from my patient
And instead shared more pieces of myself
And at the end of our stories, again my favorite part
I felt like I had cared for my patient and my patient had cared for me
And so stories became my way of understanding
My way of giving
And my way of hoping

Öxarárfoss, Þingvellir National Park

© **Kevin Rosborough**, Printing Services



Eulogy

© Susan Osgood, Patient

Sifting through her troubled mind
She pulls from it a bloom of kind
A rose, a lily, a memory
Far distant from his eulogy
The vows they spoke
Their wedding cake

Always to cherish
Never to break
Till time took their promise
To never forsake

Rummaging through his ancient clothes
She pulls from them a scent she knows
A liqueur, a tobacco, a memory
Far distant from his eulogy
Their time was for dancing
For making love
Their time was for children
Two hands in one glove

Always to cherish
Never to break
Till time took their promise
To never forsake

Looking through their photographs
She pulls from them a scene of paths
A time, a place, a memory
Far distant from his eulogy
A time at the seaside
A day at the zoo
A book filled with life
For those after to view

Always to cherish
Never to break
Till time took their promise
To never forsake

Rifling through her jewelry case
She pulls from it his handsome face
A pearl, a ring, a memory
Far distant from his eulogy
His image in a locket heart
A love that could never keep them apart
Always to cherish
Never to break
Till death took their promise
To never forsake



One Within

© Gary Gasowski, M.D.

Penn State College of Medicine Alumnus, 1972

Buffalove (Andrea and Leo)

© Spencer Katz, M.D./Ph.D. Candidate

Gittlen Laboratories for Cancer Research



A Cardiologist Reads the Morning Newspaper

© Joseph Gascho, M.D.

Departments of Medicine and Cardiology

I skip the local politics,
ignore the baseball scores,
turn to the section
with the list of names,
new every day

Today the first one
was the 83-year-old
I was supposed to see at 2 p.m.

Fell down the basement steps,
load of wash in her arms.
Glad it was not a heart attack.

The Soldier's Wife

© Ananya Das

Department of Orthopaedics and Rehabilitation

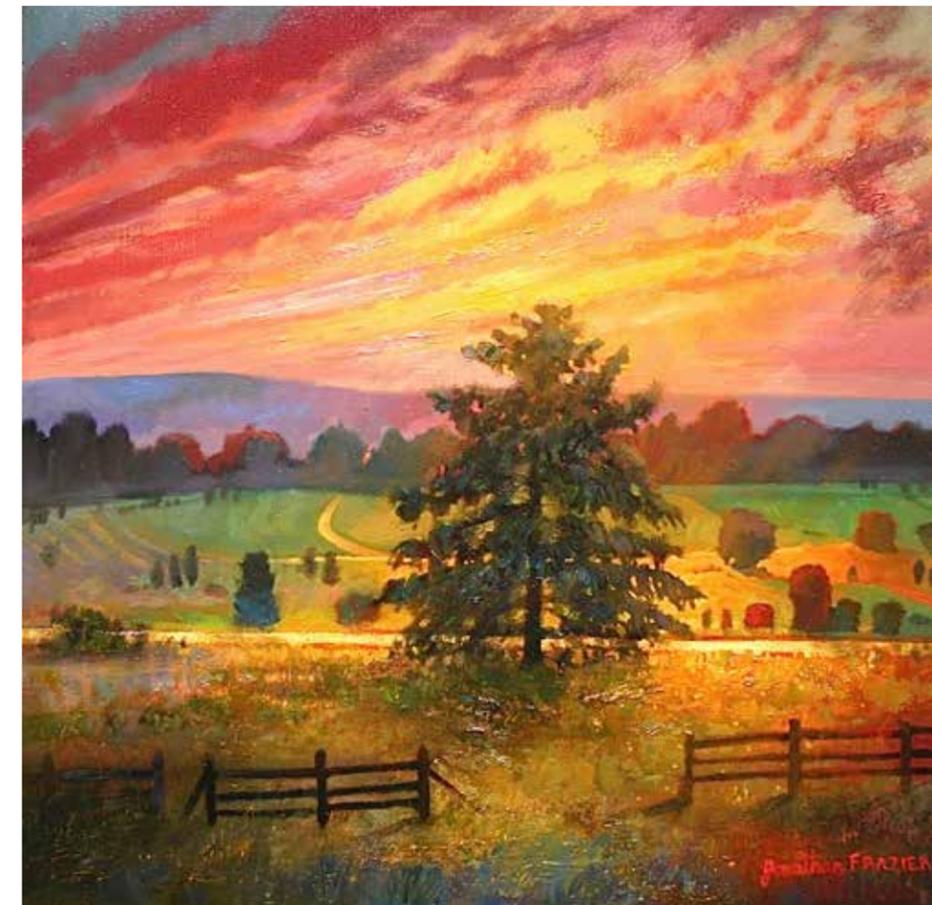
As the grief lay bottled within her heart,
her voice was silent with pain,
she needed to cry or surely she would
either die or go insane.

As the little hands sought hers,
and a baby voice sang a lullaby
a mother's heart came alive,
and the eyes were no longer dry.

Like pelting rain the tears fell,
and the grief flowed out unseen,
her heart resonated with a song,
as she found the voice within.

Tree Near the Old Bryan Farm

© Jonathan Frazier, Center Stage Arts in Health, Artist and Performer



Winter's Approach

© Linda Amos, Family of Patient

There is a rustic sweetness
To the scent of wood smoke
As it wafts across our front yard.
There is a tugging at my heart strings
As I watch a gaggle of Canadian geese
Lift up to fly in their V southward.
Winter approaches, November is almost spent.
Soon, I'll be clad in sensible shoes,
And a muffler, gloves, hat, and coat
But, on this sweet Autumn's day—
I'll drink in a bit more sunshine
And savor the breeze on my bare arms.
I cherish days like today,
Glorious Autumn days that reckon back
To my childhood, when I lived for days like today,
And give not a thought to Winter.

No Two Alike

© Mary Mager, Family of Patient



C(h)ords

© Amber Kulaga, Patient

Toeing a line,
somewhere near my edge.
Laughter to replace the tears
because they sound similar—
sometimes—
and both effect exhaustion.
Words, but not the right ones—
for here or then or anyone.
A voice, muted.
—have to, should, need, might consider, ordered—
Ties binding.
Untying the lines
because I can't be unbound
from my limits of language and bravery.
(or brain?)
Cords loosening around my words,
creaking and stiff.
My voice, moving, liquid—
like magma rising within.

I Still Hear You

© Kim Yoder, Faculty & Administrative Affairs

It was never really about loss, back then; it was about process, about processing it, about just talking myself through it. When they called at the end of the holiday weekend, in the midst of us digging through all of the junk in the garage, it was annoying. So close to being done with the weeding out process. One last space to go through. "My friends are all cleaning out," you say, "but I'm going to just let you kids do that." Thanks, mom. You repeatedly say, "Your father's tools go to your brother!" I'm thinking valuable, hard to find, craftsmen tools. Tools that had been invested in, tools that had been cared for, used properly, cleaned expertly, and put away just so. Tools to put anything currently at Home Depot to shame. Brother, don't forget, the tools are yours! He doesn't need them, has nowhere to put them, he doesn't want them, they're really not worth anything. Paint supplies, the tools of her trade. Stretched canvases, coffee cans filled with well-used brushes. Paints, pallets, oh look, her rags and turpentine. Her business cards with her name in script that went in the bottom corner of every painting. Countless paintings of lighthouses and sunsets over the bay that were for sale in the local restaurants in her seashore town. You tell me how people used to tease you because your name sounded almost like Lois Lane, Superman's girlfriend. "Never use the paint right out of the tube," you explain, "every shade has some blue from the water, some green from the grass, and some light from the sky, in it." I tell myself, remember that, so I can mix just the right colors; remember so I can blend the horizon at sunset just right. Good brushes. Name cards. Where will it all go? Set them aside.
Books. All of her treasures: mystery, biography, art. Have I read this one, should I keep this one, was this one a favorite? Make another pile. She was a librarian who shared her love for reading with me. I can clearly remember her reading me *Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH*. Only now do I appreciate the world she offered to us. Her, the college dropout who quit on my father's demand so that he wouldn't have a wife "smarter than him." I did not know until too far into adulthood how lucky I was to have Ayn Rand, Kahlil Gibran, the Bhagavad Gita, Richard Bach, and William Least Heat-Moon as some of the many authors she kept on our family room bookshelves. I

hoped she read some of that book about the moon I got her for Christmas. I think it's at her bedside. She didn't read much of anything anymore.

The grandkids had helped so much yesterday and today, cleaning out, boxing up, and taking what they treasured. On their way back to school, now calling. Putting down the load on my lap, stepping gingerly away from the boxes and refuse, "Yes?"

She was always the dutiful caretaker. I heard no complaints as she cared for Granddaddy Van and dragged me nightly to visit Aunt Emma in the nursing home. No one wanted to go there, but we did. She took in her mother and fed her, asked her if the very last green bean she'd eat on this earth was cooked enough, before the "something bad" happened. "Why wouldn't you let us take care of you like that?" I kept screaming to myself. I tried emulating you, but it didn't come naturally to me. I tried but I was "too bossy" you say. I didn't know how to do it. So when they said you were unresponsive that afternoon, I now see with complete clarity that you were leaving us. But then, with all your curmudgeonly fronting, I thought you were being difficult. Can you believe it? I couldn't hear it. "Mom, we stopped in on the way back to State College and she was grabbing her chest and we called the nurse." We'll meet you at the hospital, they said. Don't tell her we went to brunch, I told them. Another trip to the hospital? But the garage—it's all out in the driveway. We were so close to being done. Stack it back neatly, don't confuse the piles; that one stays, that one's to go. What about the tools?

We made the drive, wound through the endless deserted hallways of the hospital on Easter Sunday, where is the emergency room? Can I see her? They pulled me into a nice little room, Dr. Corn was her name. They needed a decision. But I had just been here the month before. You'd had another terrible infection, lots of antibiotics, nice large room, I brought you flowers from the gift shop. "Well, I'm not going to live forever, everyone dies eventually," you say. Yes, mother. Will you please follow the doctor's instructions? We had switched roles, I was now the parent and she was the child. I'd driven three hours, away from my own children, and was at my wits end. Sometimes, I just needed my mom. "I am coming home for brunch at Easter," you say. We'll see what the doctor says.

Continued on next page

Now the doctor was talking. She had a pretty smile and yellow blond hair, like corn, funny. Something about infection, did she say sepsis? They need a decision, move her upstairs for more care? Of course, but can I see her?

I mentioned that she was an artist. She taught me how to sketch. How to mix watercolors. How to paint individual hairs to make the fur on the teddy bear look real. Yes, and—note to self—always at least three shades of green when painting leaves on a tree. How to create perspective. It breaks my heart to the point that I can never trust myself to revisit the memory of when the intake nurse at the home asked you to draw a clock. Your pen just hovered over the paper and you looked at me to throw you a lifeline.

One hundred percent paced, is what the resident said. I grabbed your hand, and whispered in your ear. I swear that you squeezed my hand in response. A decision? Okay, I don't know what that means. I asked them to get my sister, the nurse practitioner with the doctorate, on the phone so far away. Yes, she understood it all, then why was I, the youngest, left to make the decision? My brother's eyes, the oldest of us, relinquished any ability to assist.

I still did not understand. I put on my concentration face, asked questions, listened for the piece of

information that I could grasp onto that could orient me, or move this process forward. I was watching you. Your eyes were not quite closed, yet you did not see me. It was then that I saw that you had left us. The decision had been made.

The rest was a blur, like the outer edges of your pallet where the colors mixed. Feeling numb, I listened to my daughter's anguished cry through the phone—they had stopped at McDonald's for coffee. No need to come back, son, just take care of your sister.

The piles in the garage waited. My emotions waited through that sleepless night in the shell of your house. We have to eat, my husband said. Yes, I agreed to go to the restaurant she liked for breakfast. You always said that you never believed in fate, only dumb luck. Was that what it was? When we sat down in the only open booth of that crowded restaurant? The only booth that displayed the painting done by Superman's girlfriend? Now with complete perspective, I know it was more, I hear you say, you'd gone home.

Spice Bazaar Stand, Istanbul

© Gordon Kauffman, M.D.
Retired, Department of Surgery



Patient Art Award

Gateway to the Soul

© Nicole Seacord



Judge's Comments

Eyes are the gateway to the human soul. Multiple reflections in the cornea suggest depth and dimension of someone's inner feelings. We cannot see the rest of the face for expressions, which makes the eye the only entry to this person's inner self. Despite not having access to facial expressions or having the ability to listen to somebody, from their eyes alone, we can often get a powerful sense of someone's emotions. Maybe all we need is to have a look at someone's eyes to know more about the depth of their soul.

Patient *Creative Writing* Award

Hi-Chew

© Mary Arguelles

Such a small square of purple. Still I can't bring myself to throw it out. It rests within the shallow of a chipped tea cup on my kitchen counter, where every day it strikes me as a freshly found sweet that the night has surrendered to the morning.

"That was Ryan's favorite candy," my son had told me when I discovered the purple fruit chew deep within the inside pocket of a resurrected blazer. "He got a store down there in Maryland to stock it for him. It's Japanese." I had stashed it in that pocket for later, but this later that had come to pass was not the later I had hoped for. "He knew how to make things happen," my son had sighed.

I still remember the dappled light of that October day, the kind of day that doesn't keep a record of wrongs. "Would you like one, Mrs. A?" he had asked me.

"Yes, thank you," I said, carefully plucking the purple chew from the hollow of his palm so as not to disturb his recovering hand—a hand that held no hint of its former occupants. Gone were any traces of powdered substances and glassine envelopes, burnt spoons and blackened foil. It was a hand trying to remember the paraphernalia of boyhood. I wondered what might appear next. A rock? A feather? A frog? "I'll save it for later," I explained, placing the candy in the forgotten pocket for the later that had turned out all wrong.

I think now that wasn't the right thing to say or do, as if all subsequent events hinged on the postponement of that purple chew. His unexpected relapse and untimely end fill me with if onlys. Where is the map for this?

My son came home from Maryland some time ago—his four-month stint in the halfway house complete. He washes dishes and does laundry without being asked. For this and for his very life I am grateful. Now this violet-rimmed teacup turned tomb serves as a final resting place for his friend. I didn't want to return the purple sweet to the dark pocket of my blazer—out of sight and out of mind. Instead, I touch its tacky surface every morning. As talisman to secure the safety of my own son or as tribute to a boy I barely knew, I'm really not sure.

I wonder what the teacup will yield to the littered landscape of the future. I imagine two boys playing in the back yard. One boy, digging in the dirt, will unearth the forgotten Hi-Chew.

"Look, a purple rock," he says, opening his palm.

"Let me see," calls the other.

Together they dust it off and polish it up. "Good as new," they chime.

One boy will pocket the unusual fossil for later, when it will take its rightful place in the lineup of childhood treasures across his window sill, where it will stand sentinel against the night.

Judge's Comments

A unique and simple purple item unlocks the voice of a grateful mother witnessing the overwhelming power of the chronic disease of addiction.

Patient *Photo* Award

Heritage

© Marcia Riegler



Judge's Comments

Profiles are unusual in portrait photography, probably because so few of us are flattered by them, but this is the exception. In this case, the weathered, squinting face of a Native American man, presumably in his 50s or 60s, gives a feeling of engagement, strength, and perceptiveness. The details are revealing: his braids are perfect and were created by someone experienced. The shoulder of his fringed, cowhide, jacket have been rubbed down. Perhaps this garment often hangs in a closet too tight for the width. He looks as if he's speaking, or perhaps even singing. The name, "Heritage," speaks to all of us.

On My Honor, Dear Mothers

© **Angela Sedun**

Daughter-In-Law of Yvonne Sedun, R.N.
Retired, Pain Clinic

“Do you feel you’ve wasted your talents?”
Another mother inquired at a party, to that
point replete with gaiety and winter delights.
(Did she really say that out loud?)

Having just been made acquainted,
yet already knowing our lived parallels,
she meant no offense.

After all, who has fully developed all her gifts
while being in cherished relationship to another?

(What have I chosen? What have I done?)

It seems

angst against the impetuosity of youth
and robbed at the cusp of realizing
a potential fully trained to acquire insight
from the depths of every moment observed within and without
could simply bear disappointment
failure...

so it seems.

Outside the grown-up imitation
of childish spite lies an obscure
beauty not oft-enough observed.

The conceptual performance and installation
of forming minds and souls
is the gift of presence to their days;

takes ingenuity of fitting all the moving
bodies together into one crescendo
of joy after pitfalls of accidentals and missed cues;

stretched and pinned, primed and underpainted
for the Old Master to complete the
finishing touches and send the work off
into the world.

Am I not richer than all the blue-chip artists and divas
combined?

When the talent is the
glory of another rather than the
service of self, then challenge and suffering
become easy sweetness.

“No.”



Unconditional Love

© **Lori Joy, C.C.M.A.**

Department of Orthopaedics and Rehabilitation



Railroad Reflections

© **Elizabeth Rakszawski, P.A.-C.**

Department of Neurosurgery

I Found My Voice

© **Hope Pesner**

Patient

I found my voice
Learned to speak out
Made my choice
No more doubts.

Take command
As I delve
Make demands
On myself.

Go beyond
To meet
Stand upon
My own two feet.

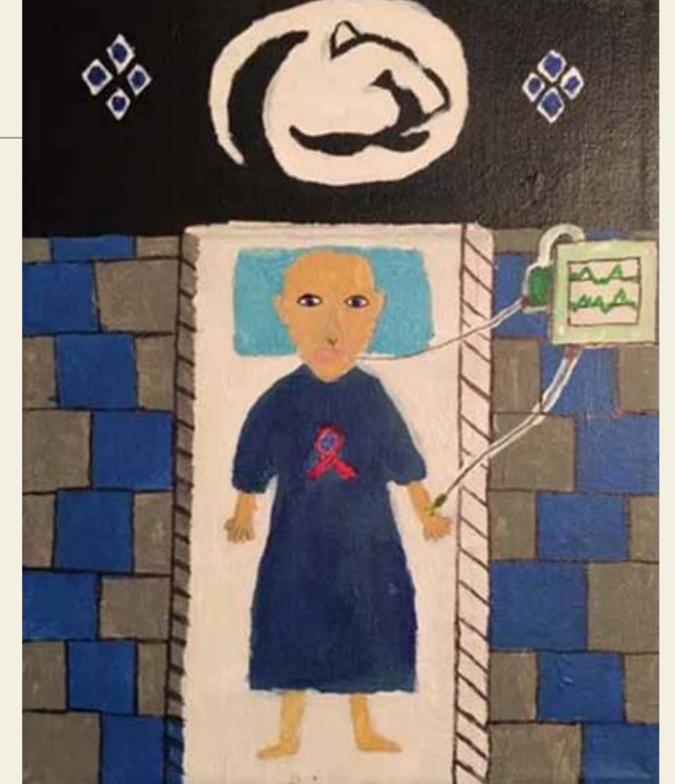
Look deep
Inside
Make that leap
Across the divide.

Challenge my fears
Look them in the eye
Go forth from here
Learn how to fly.

Try my best
See the angles
Don't get stressed
Avoid getting tangled.

Stand on the brink
Make it rock
I can think
Outside the box.

I made my pitch
Had my say
Carved my niche
Found my way.



A Moment That Has Defined Me

© **Matthew Knoster** (Age 17)

Patient and Son of Dana Knoster
Department of Psychiatry

Nice Catch!

© **Tasha Cochran**

Department of Humanities



Himself

© Baadal Vachhani, MSI

Gazing,
he stares
starkly
at the mirror
his own reflection.
Unrecognizable
feelings of
uncanniness protruding
through the air.
Who What
have I become?

Panic sets in

Desperate,
he tries
to slip on
an old
long sleeve tee.
Gingerly familiar yet different.
The flush of polyester
grazes nudgingly
against the growing hairs
of his inner arms.

Tension escalates,
he swiftly shrugs
soft curls of willow-brown hair
revealing his face
hopelessly trying
trying
to find familiarity
even just a trace.

Heavy Heart

© Mary Louise Osevala, R.N., M.S.N., C.N.S., ANP-BC
Quality Systems Improvement

Her gnarled hands,
not unlike the branches of the barren trees of winter,
rest gently in my palm.
We glance at each other,
Soft, knowing smiles exchanged.
My brain won't let me go there.
Not yet....

But it begins.
Her dance with death.
Terminal delusions,
Short, sweet smiles,
And eyes that see beyond.
With rapid breaths,
Some rattle....
Some not.
Changing abruptly!
She's gone.

Photo credit:

Adelante

© Christopher Pool, M.D.
Department of Otolaryngology

I Speak, But the Words Do Not Come

© Richard Cary Joel, P.T., M.H.A.
Husband, Maria T. Joel
Department of Microbiology

How can I make them understand?
when the words come out all wrong,
I hear what flows from my mouth,
and can hardly believe what I am saying,
for it bears little resemblance,
to that which I am thinking,
my speech, clear in thought,
yet so garbled in the world outside,
this thing called aphasia,
a cruel, isolating barrier,
between myself
and the ones I love,
an impenetrable wall,
built,
up,
in an instant,
by that devastating stroke,
which damaged my brain,
by this apoplexy,
which nearly took my life,
and has shattered, the life that had been.

But, I will strive,
and I'll endeavor to be patient,
and despite the frustration,
not lose hope.
I will persevere,
and with the help of others who care,
tear down this cruel wall of aphasia,
brick by brick,
and stone by stone,
until it no longer stands,
as a barrier,
between me,
and a world which I am still a part of.

Author's note: As a physical therapist, I've worked with hundreds of stroke patients during my three decades of practice, many of whom, have struggled with the challenge of expressive aphasia. I also have close friends and family members who've had to deal with this "cruel barrier."

Apology

© Sudhanshu Bhatnagar, M.D.
Department of Internal Medicine

I'm sorry if I didn't hear you.
I know your words came to me.
I know I answered.
I know I tried ...
I'm sorry if I didn't hear your fear.
If I didn't really shine light in your shadows
If I didn't arrest your monsters.
And give you solace.
I'm sorry if I didn't hear your pride
If I didn't listen to the person you are
The sum of you before the gown 'n' wristband
And respect the human before me.
I'm sorry if I didn't hear your shame
The loss of how you see yourself
The erosion as we "did for you" and directed
When I did not speak to you as an equal
I'm sorry.

Dr. Yellow by Mount Fuji

© Nate Hemerly, D.O.
Department of Family and Community Medicine



Fracta Aspects

© Carly Civello

Daughter of Frances Civello, Nursing Administration

To Kai: Our grandfather worked in a greenhouse his entire life, and I knew that he would have hated everything about this: A hundred dead flowers in delicate vases marking ash and bones. The room felt cold. Maybe it was the air conditioning. I guess no one ever complained about the temperature in a building in which most of the guests are dead. I circled the room trying to find a place to stand, but no one wanted to sit. I saw you alone in the corner. “You’re too young for this,” I thought. I moved past the wall of flowers and reached for a tissue. My eyes were dry; I hadn’t touched a single tissue since our grandfather died. I walked to the corner and handed the soft white square to you. The room still felt cold. You shivered, but I was still, eyes like glass. You know this story. You’ve heard this story many times, but you haven’t heard it from me.

You were three, and I was eight. I was sitting beside you on the hotel bed, and you were dreaming. I don’t know if you were actually dreaming, but that’s how my story begins. I felt my eyelids becoming heavy as I settled beside you to take a nap. I could feel myself drifting off, but then I heard a phone ringing. I sat up, and I watched our mother reach for her phone. “It’s just dad calling,” I thought. “Who is this?”

Mom started typing something on her laptop. You were still dreaming beside me. Confused, I kept my eyes on the bright screen of the computer. Typing. More typing. A banner flashed across the top of the screen: “Tampa General Hospital.” Something was wrong. I had never fallen asleep, but it felt like something had woken me up from a dream. I don’t think I realized it then, but it’s clear to me now: We were all dreaming, and I’m sorry that you had to wake up. I looked to our mother. She seemed remarkably composed, strong even. I remember feeling small and powerless, but if she could be strong, I could too. Just follow her lead. Memory is a funny thing. I forget most everything that happened the morning the phone rang. Most of the details have faded over the years, but certain images remain: shattered glass on your car seat, fragments of the windshield scattered on the ground. I felt small in this shattered world. My place in the backseat of the car wasn’t there anymore.

I don’t remember anything about the hospital, but I suppose hospitals are never remarkable. The walls were white, the floors were white, the tables were white. The hospital was probably colorful, but it remains white and lifeless in my mind. I held your hand as we walked down the long lifeless hallway to his room because I was trying to imitate Mom’s fortitude. When we saw Dad lying in bed for the first time, we all had to wake up again.

“Hi, Dad.”

I saw the car again. Shattered glass superimposed on his face. “Everything is going to be okay.”

The plane ride home only confirmed what I had known in the hospital. Everything was not going to be okay. I sat next to Dad, but I think it was just a stranger wearing a neck brace. I was still pretending to be strong, even though I felt small again. I felt small when I looked out of the windows of the plane. I stared at the buildings and the ocean below as everything became smaller and smaller. Everything except the clouds, their fractals suffocating the open sky. I kept my eyes on the tiny houses, because I couldn’t look at the man sitting beside me. I imagined that there was a speck on the landscape below where the car had been crushed—I saw the glass again, atomized on the ground, in the air. Somewhere, shards of glass, something of Dad, pieces of me. I don’t know if you left anything behind on that trip, Kai; I never asked you.

When I had to go back to school the following week, I wondered if anyone would notice the missing pieces. If they even noticed, would they care?

“How was your vacation? Did you have fun at Disney World?” I wish my teacher hadn’t asked me that, and it was clear that she didn’t notice the missing pieces. I looked around at the classroom, and I watched the colors fade away to white. The walls that were once blue became white, the tables weren’t green anymore, and the floors had no pink tiles.

“Yeah, it was fun!”

“How was your vacation?” proved to be a popular question and “Yeah, it was fun!” a scripted answer. One time I improvised and said that it was really fun, but that extra word just made me sick. Soon it became clear that no one would notice the missing pieces unless I told them, and I wasn’t going to tell anyone.

A few months later, people stopped asking about our vacation. Do you remember what comes next, Kai? You were four and I was two days away from turning nine. You know this part, but I have to tell you because it’s different in my story. We lost the only thing that was left of our dad later that same year: We lost our grandmother. I was sleeping next to you in our room and the ringing of a phone woke me up for the second time that year. You were dreaming again as Mom told me.

People stopped asking about our trip to Florida; they were asking different questions now:

“Are you okay? I’m so sorry for your loss.”

“Yes. Thank you.”

I thought I was beginning to understand what it meant to be strong. If I could “stay strong,” then I wouldn’t lose any more pieces. Somehow, I managed to fool everyone. I still saw the car and the shattered glass, but no one knew.

What was missing remained hidden when I started sixth grade at a new school. You were eight, and I was twelve. I remember meeting new people and answering questions, some sickeningly familiar, some new. My new classmates proved especially curious and asked more questions than the adults: a chorus of questions—and I was ready to answer them all.

“What’s your favorite class?”

“Do you like it here?”

“What school did you go to before?”

This was going to be easy. I did like it there. None of them knew anything about me. None of them knew about my dad. Everyone liked Disney World, and none of them had ever seen a shattered car.

There was a routine after a while: You and I took the bus to school; I answered questions that I didn’t have to pretend to be strong to answer, and then we came home, where there was a stranger in our house whom we knew less and less about each day. The walls in our house all faded to white, the tables, the floors. Eventually, we moved because everything became so faded, touched by my opaque sight.

A week before I started eighth grade, we moved into a new house with colored walls and brightly colored furniture. When I walked inside, I stared longingly at the brilliance of the colors. I stared at the untainted

rooms and the hardwood floors that weren’t white and faded. I memorized every detail of our new house, because when I look at something colorful, I forget about the pieces of me that are missing. It was a beautiful house until the stranger moved in. He shuffled through the front door with his neck brace and broken pieces. He lingered in the bed in the room next to mine as he continued to deteriorate. Before long, the brilliance of the colors began to fade, and a familiar crystal dust blighted the hardwood floors and new furniture.

Despite everything there was still the semblance of a routine. The new house had changed nothing except the place we had to come home to every day. We still went to school every day, and we saw the stranger in our house every night when we got home. At school, the questions were always the same:

“How’s your day?”

“What did you get for lunch?”

You would think that a slice of lukewarm pizza could never lead to a conversation I didn’t want to have, but, somehow, it always did.

“So what do your parents do?”

I had made it three years without having to talk much about anything outside of the school building. I think I was out of practice. The question caught me off guard, but I remembered how to be strong.

“My mom works from home. She’s a photographer.”

Easy.

“And your dad?”

I forgot what he did before we went to Florida. I couldn’t think of anything. All I could see was the car and the stranger in my house.

“He works in insurance.”

I finally remembered. Everyone sitting at that table accepted my answer, moved on—but I was stuck. I was stuck on my answer to a question I shouldn’t have to think about. I justified it to myself in my head. My dad worked in insurance, but now there’s a stranger in my house who is disabled and unable to work.

Now the story is almost over, Kai. I’ll skip to the part when you were twelve, and I was seventeen. You were upstairs playing video games, and I was in the kitchen. We heard the phone ring. It was our grandfather this

Continued on next page

time. Mom cried so hard she couldn't speak, and we hugged her because we know what it feels like to lose a father. I wished that you were still dreaming on the hotel bed in Florida. I wished that you were three years old and too young to feel another loss.

A week later, the three of us traveled to attend the funeral. We hugged family members and fielded questions from nosy aunts and uncles. The relentless inquisition was new for you.

"Heartless," you called me, accepting the tissue and noticing that I was going without. I saw the car again. I saw broken glass, the shattered windshield. Then I saw the little boy asleep beside me in a hotel in Florida. The little boy was standing in front of me, wide awake, telling me that I didn't have a heart. This is the end of my story.

I should apologize to you, Kai. I'm sorry. I am so sorry. Please don't ever be fooled by my dry eyes. Don't be fooled by the answers I give about the stranger in our house. I made a mistake when I was eight years old, and I have made that same mistake every day since. I can see now how heartbroken that eight-year-old girl was. She believed that hiding from pain was better than facing it, but she was wrong. I tried to be the best

version of myself for you because I wanted to protect you from sadness. I wanted to shield you from pain, but I failed. I have the bad habit of hiding my feelings from everyone, including you. It's the reason that I'm telling you this story for the first time.

Every time I see a black Subaru, I think that a piece of our shattered car might be there. I see pieces of myself in broken glass and cars that don't move. I hope that one day the broken glass will begin to fade instead of the walls around me. I hope that one day I can find that little girl and tell her that being sad is a part of life. I hope I can tell her that there is strength in sharing her pain. I wish I could go back and tell the little boy that I'm not heartless even if I can't cry.

I hid the pieces of me that went missing nine years ago, and hiding them from you is a mistake that I wish I could undo. If I think about those missing pieces, I lock myself in my room and feel those feelings alone. I shut you out because I thought that it would be better for you to have a model of beautiful cold and graceful steel. I thought that the only kind of model is a strong one—but I had no idea what the word "strong" meant. I still don't.

Your sister

Prosopagnosia: I Don't Recognize Myself

© Jennifer Dobson, MSIII



Father

© Emily Hess, B.S.N., R.N.
Penn State Cancer Institute

Memory tastes like this: burnt rye toast
Smearred with apple butter, Sunday afternoon,
And you're drinking beer, beside me on the couch
Watching *This Old House*.

We're barefoot in the prickly grass of early autumn,
Chipmunk-cheeked with "how many?"
vine-fresh Concord grapes,
Slurping the slime-green orbs from
Thick purple skin. You always win.

I remember, supper on the deck you built:
Garden bounty of eggplant, corn, zucchini we grew
Together. Fried tomatoes with salt and butter,
Grilled chicken and my face sticky with marinade.

Winter evenings beside you in the kitchen,
Making apple dumplings like your mother did
Before she died. Our flour-dusted hands knuckle-deep in
Sweet dough dappled with raisins and brown sugar.

Saturdays I pretend I don't have homework,
We fry eggs and scrapple in too much butter,
Singing along to 70s hits, drinking black coffee
And the flavor of lost time.

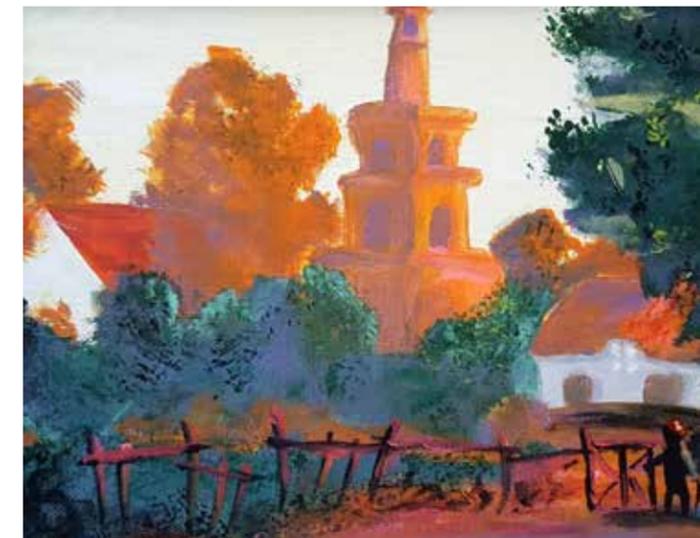
I'm older now, moved out, always busy.
Rarely taste home food except in memory.
Over meals of Minute Rice and instant oatmeal,
Your calls, your voice is the spice I savor.

I mark my textbooks with the recipes you send,
You stock my freezer with raspberries and applesauce.
And—this won't surprise you—memory still tastes
Like that burnt toast.



Mom and Dad

© Kate Levenberg, B.S., MSII



Untitled 4

© Cameron Barber, (Age 14)
Daughter of Heather Barber
Department of Health Physics

I Shall Translate

© Houda Bouhmam, MSIV

I shall translate.

This is her big day! She is meeting with her specialist for the first time, excited to finally hear that she will be cured from her annoying disease.

I am there to interpret back and forth, between her and her doctor, to eliminate the language barrier.

She has been suffering from this terrible disease affecting multiple organ systems in her frail body for a long time.

Today, she is done!

With her family, she fled from her war-torn hometown to a famous refugee camp in the neighboring country and then to the place of her dreams, to America.

She lost her older sister to this monster disease while refuging in the camp.

She was told they have a definite cure for her disease in America.

Here I am, introducing her and her father to the specialist, her first doctor ever in America.

She is shy, yet excited to say goodbye to her disease.

I translate a great deal of questions about her history, which she answers impatiently.

She wants to speed up the encounter to the ultimate cure, she is done!

After evaluating her, her doctor begins to explain about management of particular aspects of her disease and eventual involvement of other healthcare disciplines.

I translate.

« But what about the cure? I don't want to hear the in-between. I came here for the end. »

I translate.

« We still have a long way to improve your nutrition and your overall health condition first. There are many other doctors who will be involved in your care. They will decide when to send you to the ongoing clinical trials. »

I translate.

« As of this moment, there is no cure to your disease. » concludes the doctor.

Silence.

I shall translate.

I am gathering my words and this is taking me time.

My feelings are overwhelming me.

My cheeks are burning, my pupils are dilating, my ears are in denial.

But I shall translate.

I am about to start translating but her words are stopping me. Her excitement that is shouting the end, her bright look that is shining the hope, her smile that is fighting the pain, everything in her is stopping me.

But I shall translate.

Her future plans about her new life without the disease are stopping me.

But I shall translate.

Her journey with her parents and her other siblings is stopping me.

But I shall translate.

I close my eyes. I turn off my heart. I shut down my brain. I hold my breath.

I translate.

« There is no cure to your disease. »

The end.

Staff, Family Member, & Community Art Award

Follow Me up to Carlow

© Seamus Carmichael, B.A., H.Dip.Ed.
Harrell Health Sciences Library



Judge's Comments

The artist paints two roosters, who seem to be arguing with each other. The rooster standing on the rock appears to be in a leadership role, wanting the other to follow him, whereas the other rooster is slouching and seems to be arguing back. In the background, we see soldiers, perhaps having a similar argument: humans versus animals. Maybe the instinct of having others follow us is common to both animals and humans. Somehow in the process of evolution, it never dies.

Staff, Family Member, & Community
Creative Writing Award

Your Eyes Are Too Big for Your Body

© Kelsey O'Brien, M.Div.
Pastoral Services

Your eyes are too big for your body
I stand sweating body heat trapped inside
a blue plastic robe this live wire room
your mother, father perched by the window
as if to fly away from this horror

Conversation collapsing, graceless shudders
shoved in amongst promises of life eternal
false hope given by lofty gods of The Cure
tell me of fear, of hope dismembered longing
this strange, ageless dance of "living to death"
your body blaring disregarded signs of silent
exhaustion: done, so done, so done, so done
disfigured figure 25 years old and ancient
voice lost in attempts to keep breathing

I'm sorry you had to leave life's party so early
amidst the confusion of white coats,
diseased with many debates and disputes
cancer still growing, spreading like wildfire
your very bones groaning

"Mets."

Goodnight, Fire Child extinguished.

For T, whose voice was and will be missed in this world.

Judge's Comments

Compressed diction juxtaposed with word omission honors numerous voices competing to be heard at the end of a young life.

Staff, Family Member, & Community
Photo Award

Hurry Up and Wait

© Mary Mager
Family of Patient



Judge's Comments

Personifying the experience of the patient, these calm hands have been through the wars—brittle skin and bruised, they still calmly wait on a belly for what's next. The presence of the watch suggests that the owner of these hands is still cognitively intact and waits fully aware. The playful ellipses, diamonds and octagoned gown are contrasted against the wires—the monitoring leads—disappearing likely beneath the hospital gown.

When Words Fail

© Richard Cary Joel, P.T., M.H.A.
Husband, Maria T. Joel
Department of Microbiology

When words fail,
music speaks,
so go,
and sing
the song of the ages.

Sing out loud,
and with great confidence,
for you are not alone.

Carry the ancient tune
of your ancestors
that lies embedded within your very soul,

Pull the notes
from your genetic memory
where they have been safely stored,

Sing the lyric of your life
harmonizing
with a grand chorus
of all those who came before you,
and still
live within you.

Give them their voice,
and blend it with your own,
as then
it will never quaver.

Belt it out
so that all can hear,
and fear not,
for when words fail,
Music speaks!



Orient Land Trust, Colorado

© Jason Spicher, MSIII

Geysir, Geothermal Field

© Kevin Rosborough, Printing Services



Post-Op

© Marcia Riegle
Patient

Brand new morning
Brand new day
Things are different
Things are still the same

I notice things that I've never noticed before
And appreciate things I've neglected for so long

Just the beauty that surrounds me
Just the feeling I have inside

Knowing it's a brand new morning
Knowing it's a brand new day
Knowing things are different
Knowing they're still the same

Lost to Follow Up

© Faisal Aziz, M.D., Distinguished E.S.V.S., F.A.C.S.
Heart and Vascular Institute

A young intern running in the hallway
His hair messy, his scrubs wrinkled
Dark shadows around his eyes look prominent
When was the last time he saw a doctor?

The ICU doc looking at the computer screen
Blurry vision while looking at the films
So worried about the patient's CT scan
When was the last time she saw a doctor?

A middle-aged urologist sitting on a chair
Her flank pain is getting worse
Still has to do two more operations for the day
When was the last time she saw a doctor?

He's hearing a patient complain
She's having suicidal thoughts
Reasons: too much work, no time for self
He needs to see the doctor now.



Fishing at Sunset

© Arunangshu Das, Ph.D.
Department of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology

Here We Are

© Mary Arguelles, Patient

Sometimes at night, when she couldn't sleep, she would list all the golfers she could think of. Can you name forty, she would ask herself. How about fifty? Golfers were easy, actually. She had no trouble getting to fifty.

Other times, in the bathtub, just to relax, she would review all the Indianapolis 500 winners from 1960 to the present—in order. She was proud of this particular talent. Even her car-racing fanatic brother couldn't do that. She often wished some occasion would arise where she would be asked to rattle them off from memory, while bystanders, reference materials in hand, checked off her correct answers in amazement.

Her latest challenge to herself was listing Miss Americas. She couldn't do it in order, like the Indy 500 drivers, but she could get it up to fifty without much trouble. Her favorite was Miss America 1988—Kaye Lani Rae Rafka—a name she loved to say aloud, and would do so every time she got to it on her list. All others she listed silently in her mind. Kaye Lani Rae Rafka had to be spoken aloud,

She didn't really know where this penchant for listing things came from. She thought maybe it came from her childhood when she and her brother would play "Can You Name?" Can you name eleven vegetables? Can you name all the Super Bowl winners? Can you name...? The story went that her sister could rattle off all the presidents at nine months. Nine months? And when her uncle was courting her aunt, he apparently asked her to list five citrus fruits before proposing. Maybe it was genetic.

She suspected, however, that the habit sprung from her desire to manage her recently chaotic world. If she could list it, it could be managed. It could be understood. How many people who have mastectomies get reconstruction? How many don't? Is it more common to forgo reconstruction and get prosthetic breasts, or is it more common to seek silicone replacements? And what about being lopsided, like she was? How common was that? One real. One rubber.

Being diagnosed with cancer had pushed her into a world of chaotic wonder. She wondered how it

was possible for her to have cancer when no blood relatives in her family had ever had any kind of cancer at all. She wondered whether or not there would be a sequel ... Breast Cancer II. Maybe even Breast Cancer III, with the sequels getting progressively worse, and everyone wishing she had just stuck with the original. Jim Rathmann. A.J. Foyt. Rodger Ward. This is when the race car drivers kicked in.

She wished sometimes that she could return to a pre-cancerous time so that she could remember what it was like to have a stiff neck and not have it be lymphoma. She longed for the day when a sore back was the result of lifting a couch, instead of cancer running amok. What was that saying? Sometimes a cigar was just a cigar. Not anymore.

Pre-cancer she knew intellectually that cancer was a possibility in the same way she knew the earth revolved around the sun. Fact. She knew that fact, but she didn't KNOW that fact. Once she had cancer, then it knew her, like in the biblical sense. Cancer wanted to know her even better. It already knew her breasts, but now it wanted to know her bones and her brain, even. It wanted every nook and cranny. She knew cancer as an intimate companion she had spurned, but now worried that one day it would appear on her doorstep, drunk and even more out of control, looking for a second chance. Parnelli Jones. A.J. Foyt, Jim Clark. Here came her drivers, racing around the bend.

And now she found herself in this whole survivorship thing. She liked it and she hated it. It was the best of times; it was the worst of times. How many Dickens novels could she name? She liked the fellowship and the exchange of information. But she hated the gloating ... or what felt like gloating. She survived; others didn't. None of it was meant that way, but it always felt that way to her. She was superstitious enough to believe the gloating could backfire. What was it the cowardly lion said? I do believe in ghosts. I do believe in ghosts. This, to ward off the ghosts ... as if that would help. Maybe this was why she kept a Jesus head on her bathroom sink. If she took it away or moved it elsewhere, cancer would get ideas. Cancer might get horny. Graham Hill. A.J. Foyt. Bobby Unser.

More than just survivorship, she was never quite sure about all that pink. She was grateful for those

who had shone a spotlight on a closeted disease, but now it seemed to her like trinketry. Trinketry... probably not a word, but apt nonetheless. There were pink ribbons and badges, teddy bears and lanyards. Pink key rings. Pink ... Pink Frisbees, for God's sake. There was just this glut of merchandise that did what exactly? Raise awareness. Initially. Raise money? Hopefully. But now the pink, instead of "popping," just all-pervaded itself into oblivion. She couldn't even see it anymore.

She wondered when she would feel confident enough—calm enough really—to call herself cancer-free. Never, she imagined. Again, superstition. Maybe when she was ten years out. That was a magic number right? At one time it was five years out. Five was the magic number. The post-chemo pill that she had to take for five years had seemingly overnight turned into ten years. Shouldn't it be going the other way, she wondered. Shouldn't advances in pharmaceutical research take it down to three, two, one? Down to here take this one-time dose and be on your way? Don't let it lap you. Mario Andretti, Al Unser, and Al Unser!

What she wants to do is go to a mammogram and know that the technician will come into the rooms and say, "No more pictures needed. You're good to go." She HAS said this numerous times since the diagnosis, but she wants to know that she will say it in the same way she knows that Amen ends a prayer. She wants to go into a mammogram like it's routine baloney, not like a priest needs to be called in for last rites. Pre-cancer. Post-cancer. There is a huge difference. She feels like she is on the other side of a river, looking across at those who have never been diagnosed. Strangers. Stranger in a Strange Land. How many science-fiction novels could she name? Her husband could name more. Mark Donohue, Gordon Johncock, Johnny Rutherford.

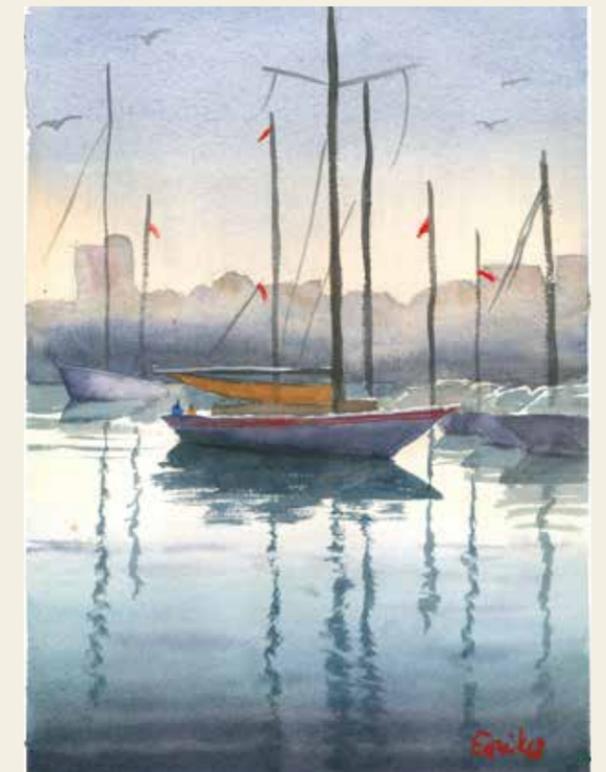
After her mastectomy, she came to learn that now she was entitled (via insurance) to one free prosthetic breast every three years and twelve bras yearly. Yes. Twelve. Yes. Yearly. This corralling of her chaos came with all manner of lace and ribbons, bras more beautiful and numerous than she had ever before owned as a two-breasted woman. Such irony was not lost on her, but she didn't know what to make of it. Breast cancer had rewarded her with better lingerie.

Her love of listing Miss Americas came from her fond memories of Septembers growing up. The Miss America Pageant—the herald of fall and the height of majesty and beauty to her six-year-old mind was a must-see-TV event at the time. That was back when television was a hearth for the country, rather than a hand-held lonely candle. Her Dad would make charts. Her siblings would root for Miss Pennsylvania. The alphabetized parade of states displayed on breast-spanning sashes captured her girlhood imagination. We are women. We are proud. We are here. And she was still here, surviving, managing, and listing her way through life. Vonda Kay Van Dyke. Debra Barnes. Jayne Anne Jayroe. And don't forget Kaye Lani Rae Rafka. Say that poetry out loud. Kaye Lani Rae Rafka. Kaye Lani Rae Rafka. Kaye Lani Rae Rafka.

Water

© Cathy Paige, M.D.

Retired, Department of Anesthesiology



Double Vision

© Kelly Tanger, Patient

Double vision. can't see clearly...
Drifting eye, nerve palsy
STROKE
Confusion, paralysis
FEAR evoked
What do these words mean?
My stomach churns nervousness
Upon exam foreign words are spoken,
melding together like swirling colors of tie-dye.
Anxious thoughts muffle sounds.
Breathing more shallow; perspiring.
Slow down, speak clearer, grant reassurance and answers I understand.
A CT scan to look inside my head and see what's going on?
Don't want to go. Don't want to know.
Tears sting and slide as I speak; my voice cracks.
Panic makes its home in my chest
My heart feels like a bongo drum
Breath becomes shallow, short and hot.
My hands are unstable, quivering with fear of their own.
My body shivers though I am not cold.
A euphoric state sans drugs.
Suffering silently through the pain this is causing.
Balance askew, cannot drive, wish I could be walking.
Another test
MRI
Head imprisoned within an unknown tunnel? No thanks, claustrophobia says.
Eye stroke, prism lens
Inside, silently asking: When will the challenge end?
(WILL it ever end?)
Fast forward.
Made it through.
Single vision. I see clearly.
Rocky roads and scary tests;
unanswered questions, at long last, laid to rest.

Photo credit:

Crash

© Terri Smith, A.S., L.P.N.
Department of Humanities



Courtyard Serenade

© J. Spence Reid, M.D.

Department of Orthopaedics and Rehabilitation

Diagnosis: Chronic Loquaciousness in Room Three

© Linda Miller, Family of Patient

The scene: any small examining room in a doctor's office or emergency room.

Two lead players: first, my husband, Steve, a quiet, accommodating, good guy with a chart full of ailments: Parkinson's, a paralyzed diaphragm, COPD, Factor V Leiden, deaf in his left ear, lymphedema present in right arm.

Second player: me. Linda. Cast in the role as official spokes-spouse, the chronically loquacious wife who tells all, explains all, offers background, histories, drug lists and doses. I am the knower of all things Steve, who can certainly speak for himself but whose answers come out too abbreviated, too thin, too lackluster in an emergency or during a routine visit with his neurologist or pulmonary specialist. How can any physician get the big picture with his small-scoop-of-vanilla responses?

Our personal responses to illness show themselves quickly during these health dust-ups. Steve's agreeable and concise, giving short answers when queried about how long his cough has been rattling around his chest, how much trouble he's having

breathing, or when he last had an albuterol treatment at home.

I'm congenial but maybe too amped up to speak. However, Steve's my husband. He's got a track record of downplaying his symptoms and sometimes avoiding trips to the doctor. But if we're in the ER, he's in trouble and has agreed to seek help. In my role as spokes-spouse, I assist his medical team with facts and background delivered in nonstop narrative.

"So," begins the doctor, "I hear you've been coughing. How do you feel?"

"Not bad," Steve replies from behind a hissing nebulizer mask and a screen of white vapor.

"Not bad?" I interject. "His cough has turned wheezy and occasionally gets so severe he almost passes out. He's had coughing syncope in the past too. We have albuterol at home but it's not helping too much and it's worse when he lies down. He's not sleeping much.

"Oh. Another thing. His normal oxygen saturation rate is somewhere between 90 and 92. That's on room air."

Continued on next page

Steve gives me a why-don't-you-shut-up look, which I shrug off. If only he'd say a bit more so I wouldn't have to fill in. Why can't he mention his nonworking left lung before the doctor leans in for a listen to his chest? He should be able to describe whether his cough is dry and unproductive or wet and gurgly. When we see his Parkinson's doctor, I wish he'd describe how his walking and balance change throughout the course of the day and how his energy levels rise and fall with his doses of dopamine and ropinirole.

I've tried to play a more subdued character in these scenes but end up feeling like I'm not doing enough. I speak because it seems like the right thing to do, the helpful thing to do. Steve's health is complicated. His history is long and complex and requires detailed chronology with some sane, economic storytelling. And now that managing Steve's health occupies more of my time, I've wrested the job from him.

It's my way, I guess, of trying to control the uncontrollable. I fight back with words, my voice, my observations. It's all I've got in the midst of this overwhelming health challenge we face each day. I can't control his nerve cells that have stopped churning out dopamine, but I can help his new neurologist understand how his stiffness and tremor started back in 2003. Using writing and reporting skills honed decades ago, I know how to keep it meaty,

yet succinct. I'm the one who can vividly remember how he stopped swinging his arms whenever we went walking or how his tremor remained hidden during times of rest but appeared when he speared a forkful of lettuce. I'm the one who knows when and why he was hospitalized in the last three years, the most dangerous and stressful health cycle of our lives.

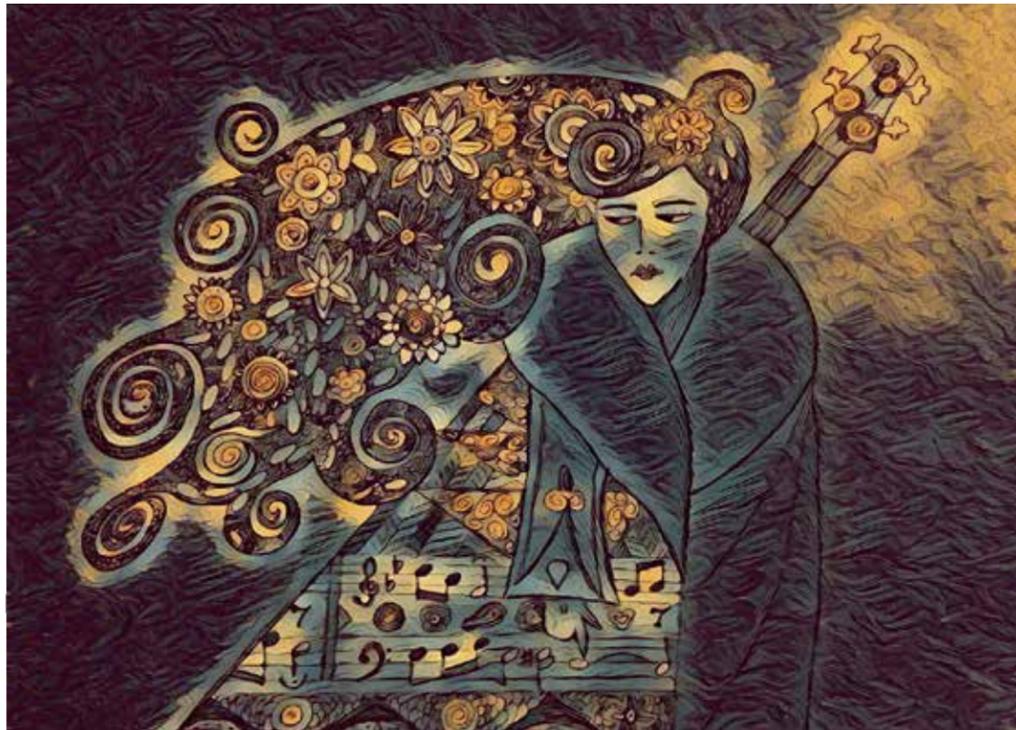
Two years ago he landed in the ER with respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), and I can summon up each tiny detail about his cough and how long he stayed on oxygen afterwards. I can offer play-by-play accounts of each hospitalization, especially during the miserable winter of 2019. He caught the flu, landed in the ICU, required intubation and then needed three more weeks of rehab before returning home. He's been on a tortuous journey with his lungs recently and the Parkinson's doesn't help. The timeline is getting muddier for him but not for me.

For 2020, I'll help my husband fight our fight. I'll make appointments, dispense meds and pull on two compression socks a day. But Steve's got to do better too. We agree he must speak up on his behalf more vigorously, volunteering details to the doctors and nurses taking care of him. I'll try to finesse my voice a little bit. Stay vigilant. Less anxious. More patient. Maybe tone it down.

I'll remain on stage but have fewer lines. Bravo.

Ella's Choice

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



Float

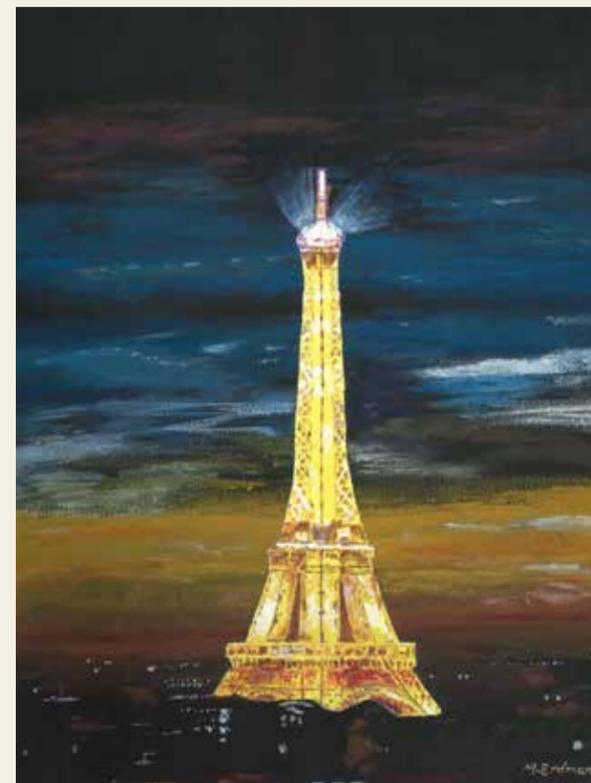
© Paul Nguyen, MSII

Photo taken in collaboration with Erin Baker

An Auroral Evening in Paris

© Michael Erdman, C.H.P., D.A.B.M.P.

Department of Radiology/Health Physics



OB GYN ABC's: GC/STI/RPR

© Jessica Poulson, MSIII

Hands writhing
in the exam room
You explain
"I was raped"
Nonchalantly
Like
those words
Just describe another day
Like
it's no big deal
As if your stomach
Is not
Twisting
on the inside
Like the hands in your lap.

On Aging

© Lynelle David, Family of Patient

Wanting more
Wanting something
Elusive
Unnamed
That awareness of beauty & awe, maybe
The feeling that things are "all right"
The confidence of youth
Knowing that things matter
That I still matter.
Oh, how difficult the life of aging
Of-spoken
Often repeated
Yet new to each one travelling the road.
Beauty, joy, high expectations
Lurk in the memory
To torment
No, you can't go back
But, how to bring them forward
To live here in the present
With me?

Medical Center Microclimates

© **Judy Schaefer, R.N.**
The Doctors Kienle Center
for Humanistic Medicine, Member

Passing small walled gardens
the cold dark mornings, evenings and nights
Green moss on stone, the occasional
iris, hedged in boxwood
Doors opening, toes first
dodging the traffic, horns, curses

*Now the hungry lion roars
Cross the street
And the wolf howls the moon*

Evolution rolling with the sea
Pebbles and granulation

Each cubicle saline moist

Fishes' fins and stethoscopes

Dreaming, confessing, learning

*Healing, whilst the heavy ploughman snores
Vital Signs*

Reporting, all with weary task foredone

Hum of a ventilator on pressure support

Obsessive gardeners with text

tending small walled gardens

Charting the course through the quiet

twenty-four hour micro climate

*Now it is the time of night
Cross the beach*

Everyone lets forth his sprite

Toast with jam, feet up, day off

Savoring a second cup

Mathematics, poetry, the occasional

poem reflecting streams of mist and breath

The cold dark mornings, evenings, nights

passing small walled gardens

(Allusions from A Midsummer Night's Dream)

Buoy

© **Evy Potochny, D.O.**
Department of Pathology

From a fishing pier,
I looked out
across the water
to think about being—

a common endeavor.
Before me, I watched
a tattered blue buoy;
it was bouncing in the whitecaps from the gale,

up, over, and down.
How deft was its balance,
through subtle adjustments.
Let me pray

I may always mimic it,
each time I encounter
the wind and the waves
while moored on this earth.

Total Relaxation

© **Michele Morrissey**
Departments of Dermatology & Ophthalmology



Endless

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



Pure Innocence

© **Joann Tucker**
Department of Allergy,
Asthma and Immunology



The Sounds at Dusk

© **Han Chen, M.D., Ph.D.**
Research Resources

Tides

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

I. Maps.

Nighttime here means the next day has started
in the land of my birth, half-way around the world.
My sisters and brother move about their day
and when they think of Eunkeyeung and me,
they are thinking like the ocean tides near our home.
Thinking. Thinking. Perhaps of a future that feels
closer than the painful past.

II. Geese.

Once when I was a teenager, I walked down the road
to the sand quarry pond near my house. Alone.
It was early spring, when the ice does not relent so easily
from the water's edge, and the Canadian geese are on the move.
I squatted by the rim of the dark water, as the sun slipped
along its invisible arc down the western sky, creating out of the bare
tree-line a silhouette of quiet witnesses, who watched me
across the wrinkled corn fields. Watched me as I wondered
again about my life and what the Lord would say about the next steps.
That's when I remember closing my eyes in prayer and hearing
for the first time the sound of geese flying overhead—all of twenty
feet or so—so close I could hear them breathe, so close I could hear
the beating of their wings through the thin, cool evening air—a
tapestry of quietude—the answer I didn't know I desired.

III. Icons.

Pilgrimage again. Mt. Macrina. Uniontown.
My family of eight—a small flock of our own—along with my mom this year.
Byzantine chant. Candlelit processions. Singing of hymns, shuffling of feet
in the dusk on the mount. Old babas and young babies, the priestly class
and the laity. My breath is like the clouds of incense swinging,
blooming toward the heavens. The twins are restless, but I know
they'll look back and remember somehow the most important things.

IV. Weeds.

They've taken root again between the patio paver blocks.
Knots of too-busy-again. But I have few regrets at seeing them.
For I am busy about the best things: marriage, kids, teaching,
and constantly mapping out the unknown constellations
among the stars the Lord sets before me. I rest assured the night
sky is but a dark, wet watery canvas, where the tides of life give
and take. Give and take. The patterns emerge and change.

V. Fields.

I am running again. This time, a new flock of kids
flock along the fields. We are geese learning to fly. We are
geese learning to let go of instincts and rise even higher
with the rising tides. Letting go of the land enough
to rise with the evening sky.
We alight, we fly—all over again.

Polar Magnetism

© Lynelle David, Family of Patient

Their relationship hiccupped and jolted its way across the years. In spasms, they communicated with one another, stopping and starting in sudden jerks. Interspersed with heavy silences, they alternately accused and stood accused. Circling and skirting, darting and retreating, they revolved endlessly on the perimeters of each other's lives and selves. Unknowingly, they were as a single unit, the positive and negative repelling and holding at bay the irrepressible magnetism that drew them inexorably towards one another. They could not meet and they could not withdraw. Together, during their lifetime stalemate, they created an abstract entity; a marriage which was more than the sum of their two selves, and which drove them to damage and repair, to demand and concede, rhythmically maintaining a balance unobvious to an outsider, who might see only discord and disharmony. Yet, this balance was not the best of themselves, they did not stimulate each other to newer and greater heights, rather, they leveled out all extreme highs and lows in order to compromise on a tolerable middle ground; a battlefield where they met regularly.



Observing the Journey

© Duncan McDermond, MSIII

Where Are You From?

© Akshilkumar Patel, MSIII

“Where Are You From?”

A very simple question,
With very different answers,
Each filled to the brim with a memory

I am from:

A decrepit apartment building, in need of love and care
A gnarled cherry blossom tree, with kids climbing on its limbs
An open courtyard, its grass eroded from years of freeze tag
An oval swimming pool, where I performed my first backflip
A childhood, although dull from the outside, filled with vibrant memories and songs of my story

So I ask you stranger, “Where Are You From?”
No, not the longitude and latitude coordinates
What places and things tell your story?

Trees

© Banan Otaibi, MSII

I kept saying I felt empty,
but no one seemed to hear.
So under the midmorning sun,
I poured my soul to the trees.
They always seem to have space,
and not once have they asked for an explanation.

Foggy

© Don Hoang, MSI

Where is my co-pilot, my navigator, my friend? It's been a while since I've had to take a road trip alone. Why did you have to leave me by myself? You were always there to keep me company, sing along to songs on the radio with me, and guide me to the correct destination. But, all of a sudden, you're now gone. You've left me to drive these Pennsylvania roads by myself.

As dusk falls upon the hills of Pennsylvania, the rain too begins falling. And, as darkness begins to take over the light, the warmth of the day is abruptly replaced by the coldness of the night. And, to make things worse, the windshield begins fogging up.

I employ headlights, but the visibility is still limited on these poorly lit roads. And, as time progresses, the windshield just keeps fogging up more and more. The wipers temporarily clear up the windshield, but, shortly after, the condensation starts building up again.

Nothing seems to work. And, I am left sitting here unsure of what direction I am headed. Scared and lonely, I just keep driving hoping that I'll eventually reach my final destination. But, on the bright side, the darkness hides my tears as I grieve the loss of my friend.

The Meaning

© Barbara Sedun (Age 9)
Granddaughter of Yvonne Sedun, R.N.
Retired, Pain Clinic

be yourself and try,
show your colors and don't give
up,
reach for the sky
until you can feel it,
believe that you can.
Don't hide the true you,
make your own path,
just be your
best



Pristine Stillness

© Adri Durant, MSIV

My Chapel

© Heath Mackley, M.D., Radiation Oncology

I walk in my chapel
Praying alone
Seeking your will
I look in my chapel
Everywhere art
Evidence of you
I work in my chapel
Lighting the lamps
Baking the bread
I watch from my chapel
Eyes of children
Their unmet needs
I work from my chapel
Offering salt
Healing and light
I walk with my chapel
My life a prayer
A song of hope

Read to Me

© Sally Ng, MSIV

Read to me the stories I've read to you before—
The Cat in the Hat, *Where the Wild Things Are*, *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*, and many more,
because you need to know how to pronounce these words,
spell them,
and learn the basic rules of English

Read to me your favorite children's novels—
Holes, *Harry Potter*, *The Outsiders*, *The Giver*, just to name a few,
because it is time for you to learn how to read between the lines,
and understand the bigger themes that resonate with you
and the reasons that you love these pieces so much

Read to me excerpts from your assigned readings
because I want to hear your voice.
As it traces over the words on the page,
let me hear how you think these lines should be read
and how they support your strong opinions
that you only express in your essays

Read to me
the poems that you've written
because they resemble you—
unfiltered, unapologetic, and humbly sincere.
Read to me the poems that you've written
because they're in your own voice
and your thoughts deserve to take up space.



Absolvere

© Sofija Chroneos, B.F.A., M.A.

Daughter of Drs. Zissis and Zyjezdana Chroneos
Departments of Pediatrics, Microbiology and
Immunology, and Hematology/Oncology

Unconditional Love

© Charles C. Lee, MSIII

"Don't worry. I'll take care of him," so my mother would say, referring to my father's diagnosis of Dementia while she meticulously chopped the ingredients of the family's dinner, making sure that every detail—the shape, freshness, and color—was perfection. I've always wondered why my mother worked so painstakingly in perfecting infinitesimal details of dinner that frankly neither my father nor I appreciated. These ingredients were supposed to be eaten, not admired for their aesthetic beauty; so what if they were perfectly cut? They were still just carrots. After one such dinner, I brought out my violin and my music stand in front of the dinner table and performed a mini-concert, which I secretly named "Nostalgia." I began to play the Hymn #542: *There's a Dream That I Dream*.

As I played and saw my father recognize the music, I remembered our winter trip to France at the end of my sophomore year. On most sites like the Cathedral St. Andre, Eiffel Tower, and Louvre Museum, there were seas of tourists who created serpentine lines, twisted in and out of numerous squares, medieval buildings and museums. I remembered holding my father's hands as we got off the bus, wandered around the sites, or gathered for a meal. Like my mother's cooking, I had wanted this trip to be perfection: I never let go of his hand.

On to the refrain, I saw my mother swaying and smiling contentedly with the music. I knew that what weighed heavily on her mind was not chopping carrots, but the knowledge of the irreversible solitude that she would deal with for the rest of her life. Whenever she returned from an errand, she forced a smile, letting me know that she was strong, but I knew that behind the façade, the sorrow of emptiness lurked behind her eyes. As I played, I returned her smile, not to pretend that everything was fine, but to acknowledge her agony and let her know that I was persevering with her.

During the repeated melody, a quick glance at the wall clock reminded me of my nightly calls home during my freshman year. At 11:30 every night, I went down to the second floor's stairwell, where a small window provided moonlight. I called my parents every night to check on how they were doing. By the end of each

conversation, my mother reminded me to enjoy my taste of college academics, so in the morning I became the studious, diligent student. But what would happen after I finished playing? Where would we go from here? With the last notes, I tried to imagine the challenges that would come across our path.

When I finished playing, my parents shouted praises with gusto and vivace claps. I could see my mother shedding a tear, as she remembered all the joyous times in the past and mourned the heart-aching loss of a husband. I could see my father, with his big eyes and a confused look as if he were trying to figure out why she was crying. As I put away my violin and my music stand, I faced truth and reality. However, looking at my parents, I remembered the lyrics of #542: *There's a dream that I dream ... and I know that my dream will come true*: an ordinary picnic with my parents at a park.

The Night Rainbow

© Shengchen Lin, Ph.D.

Cellular and Molecular Physiology



With Whom Do We Share This Bright Field?

© Ryan Kipp, MSIII

With whom do we share
this awesome place—
this Bright Field sitting beneath
the banner of Heaven?

For I have only glimpsed
into Its winding vistas
but a few times before—

always in His presence, but
never before His company.

Does Its profoundness
yearn my invitations,
or does Its solace
demand my seclusion?

For time shall tell,
I suppose,
the fate of how I chart
this small Field.

Perhaps I will be joined
by those who have opened
their windows to my soul—

and by the people I have served—
and the people I have taught—
and those who have taught me.

The illumination is experienced only once,
but the flame,
as seen by Moses atop Horeb,
remains everlasting.

With whom do we share this Bright Field?

A Little Piece of Heaven

© Oana Bollt, B.S.
Department of Surgery



**In Loving Memory of Ellie Goldenberg z"l (1994–2017)
Daughter, Sister, Actor, Singer and Friend**



Ellie cared about those she loved
like no other; she went out of
her way to do all she could
for you when you were sad,
she cheered you on when you
succeeded and most importantly
she pushed you to be your
very best self. Her love was
unconditional and so very deep.

She would go to the ends of the earth for her friends and family,
and she did no matter the cost.

She was also the funniest person in our lives. She lived to
entertain even if that meant going the extra mile for a laugh.
She had people around her laughing until no sound came out
more times than we will ever be able to count. Aside from her
G-d given talent, we truly believe Ellie's passion towards theater
stemmed from the opportunity to make other people happy
and laugh, and she always succeeded in doing so.

Ellie was humble, yet confident. She was never threatened by
another person's talent; there was more than enough room for
her to shine while helping those around her shine as well. She
applauded her peers' successes, inspired people around her to
achieve their dreams, which ultimately encouraged everyone
around her to become better performers. Her attitude was
always that she could do better, work harder, and learn more,
and as a result, she managed to get better and better each time
we saw her perform. She knew that theater and life alike are
ensemble work: the production succeeds when every single
member, from the lead to the lighting designer, are the best that
they can be.

And then there's her voice. Ellie had a voice that could stop
time. She would sing and all your worries would melt away.
Her voice had, and still has, the power to envelop anyone
listening in her essence and her love. That's the power of voice,
Ellie's voice. Therefore, the theme of this issue is "The Voice
Within Us," in loving memory of Ellie and her beautiful voice.

Dana, Michael, Renee, and David Goldenberg

The last song Ellie sang, the day before she was taken from us,
can be found here: <https://youtu.be/zJM9EdihghU>.



Brandon Holzer (left) and Ellie Goldenberg
sing "Blue Wind" in *Spring Awakening*.



Searching the Heavens for My Star

© David Goldenberg, M.D., F.A.C.S.
Department of Otolaryngology



From Times Square to Broadway

© David Goldenberg, M.D., F.A.C.S.
Department of Otolaryngology



Dance Little Sister

© **Ellie Goldenberg z"l**
Daughter of David Goldenberg, M.D.
Department of Otolaryngology

Hopeful

© **Dwayne Morris**
Office of Medical Education

I'm hopeful to be the first one
To read the things you write
To understand your darkness
And get swept up in your light
And when you write the hard words
That wrestle with your sleep
I'll hold you until the morning
Where a brand new day you'll greet
I'm hopeful we'll climb a mountain
With a never-ending trail
And camp out underneath the stars
And talk until our eyes fail
And when we see the sun rise
I'll take you by the hand
And you'll know at that very moment
God loves you through this man

Hey, You Could Smile at Me

© **Won Sik Park, MSII**

Hey, you could smile at me
Don't be afraid to show me
You've been looking at me too
Yes, I've been looking at you
I'm attracted to you
And I'm trying to see if you are too
You are walking in
8 a.m. in the morning
I am looking in
Do you have a space for me in your heart?
You are smiling and
Oh I cannot help but notice
I am smiling and
I know you're thinking about it too
Oh, please come talk to me
Oh, we'll be great together
Oh, please come close to me
Oh, right now
Hey, you could smile at me
Don't be afraid to show me
You've been looking at me too
Yes, I've been looking at you
I'm attracted to you
And I'm trying to see if you are too
You are walking in
Oh my heart for you is growing
We are dining in
Oh I hope you like this place too
We are holding hands
Oh I wish the table were smaller
You are talking and
Oh I cannot help but look in your eyes
Oh, please come walk with me
Oh, the moon's so bright tonight, oh
Oh, please come close to me
Oh, right now
Hey, you could smile at me
Don't be afraid to show me
You've been looking at me too
Yes, I've been looking at you
I'm attracted to you
And I'm trying to see if you are
Two can be better than one
Let's, uh, give it a try
Stop pretending
It's true
Yes, oh I really like you
Do you feel the same, too?
All I ever need is you

At Heaven's Doorsill

© **Belinda Collins, M.D., Ph.D.**
Department of Radiology

Capo II

I see your brown eyes sparkle in my memory; your
smile, it broadens like a symphony.
It fills my heart with joy and it makes my steps lively,
for you are always here with me.

Chorus

That chasm I feel, it's temporary; Its nothing that our
love cannot fill
With all our many fun and crazy memories, until we
meet again at heaven's doorsill.

Verse 2

I hear your soft voice whisper like a gentle breeze;
your words are so kind they encourage me.
They buttress my soul and they make me at ease; for
you do always comfort me.

(Chorus)

Verse 3

I feel your warm embrace when I tightly close my
eyes; your love so graceful flows eternally.
It brightens up my world with a lasting sunrise, for
you are so very dear to me.

(Chorus)

Yes, I will see you again at heaven's doorsill.

*Just as music touches and moves the heart in mysterious
and profound ways, music comes from the heart, inspired
by the love in, and of, life and those who are in our lives.
And so, it was natural to write a song in honor of the pass-
ing of my dear friend and colleague, Susann Schetter, D.O.,
a radiologist at Penn State Health who was a pioneering
leader of the Breast Center. Susann was a woman of exqui-
site grace and poise. Even in the grips of terminal disease,
her warm, infectious smile, as always, was guaranteed to
lighten the spirits of those around her, even if just in a brief
passing in the hallway. Her deep and sincere love for others
was evident as she served others throughout her life. It was
an honor to write a song in Susann's memory and perform
at her memorial service. She passed on Christmas Eve
2018. Please, allow music to comfort you while reading the
lyrics. All of our loved ones live on in all the many fun and
crazy memories, until we meet again at heaven's doorsill.
Go, create some memories today.*



Lake Street Dive, June 1, 2016

© **Jonathan Foulds, Ph.D.**
Public Health Sciences



© **Eiman Khesroh, Ph.D. Candidate**
Public Health Sciences

Anything

© Drew Mullins, MSI

Verse 1

Thinking about you, all alone
 Lying there in a world that you have grown
 Up all around you, from within
 The sunlight's barely reaching in
 Swallowed in darkness, all alone
 Won't you let me, let me be your home
 I can protect you, show you the light
 I will surround you, make you feel alright

Chorus

'Cause alone we are nothing, but we are not alone
 We stand strong enough to make it through
 another day
 Surviving just won't cut it, but we won't just survive
 We will thrive together, 'cause together we'll do
 anything

Verse 2

It will get better, I know that it can
 If we stick together, in this long forgotten land
 What is our purpose, for now it is unseen
 I bet we'll find out, if we remain a team
 Take my hand and hold it tight 'cause you know
 when the sun goes down it'll be alright ... it's
 gonna be alright

Chorus

'Cause alone we are nothing, but we are not alone
 We stand strong enough to make it through
 another day
 Surviving just won't cut it, but we won't just survive
 We will thrive together, 'cause together we'll do
 anything



Abstract

© Noel Ballentine, M.D.
 Department of Medicine

Escape with Jazz

© Brandon Portnoff, MSI



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