

WILD ONIONS

MARKET GARDEN BREWERY

BEFORE I DIE I WANT TO

JESUS SAVES MEET



Dreams & Shadows

2016

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

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Inside back cover:

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The Legacy of Two Since 1985

In Memory of Lawrence F. Kienle, MD



Dr. Lawrence Kienle and his wife, the late Jane Kienle, were true visionaries with an enduring focus on making a difference in how we all participate in and experience the profession of medicine. They had a simple but compelling idea - the principles of humanistic care are often lost in the technology and complex practice environments of contemporary medicine. In their determination to do something

about this, to make a difference in the patient experience, they developed a generous and meaningful relationship with the Penn State College of Medicine in 1985, endowing the Doctors Kienle Chair for Humane Medicine and subsequently establishing The Doctors Kienle Center for Humanistic Medicine.

After Jane's untimely death in 1991, Larry continued to devote all of his considerable energy and insight into the mission of The Doctors Kienle Center. He was always pushing us to reach out beyond the walls of the Medical Center, and he saw *Wild Onions* as a creative opportunity to extend his life's passion to the broader Hershey Community. Those of us who knew Larry personally will always treasure our time with him; our hope is that those who spend some time with *Wild Onions*, contributing or reflecting, will treasure the gift that he has given us all.

Thank you, Larry.

Sincerely,

Daniel R. Wolpaw, MD

Director, The Doctors Kienle Center for Humanistic Medicine



Lawrence F. Kienle, MD and
Jane Witmer Kienle, MD
Circa 1987



wild onions 2016

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

Faculty and staff – both clinical and non-clinical – patients, families, volunteers, and medical, graduate, physician assistant, and nursing students are invited to submit original (not previously published) literary or artistic work on all topics. A theme is selected by student Senior Editors to inspire additional submissions each year. The annual theme and our electronic submission form may be found at <http://www2.med.psu.edu/humanities/wild-onions-2/>. You may also submit directly to the Department of Humanities by email via wildonions@hmc.psu.edu. For an unbiased selection process, we ask that the creator's name not be present on the piece. For submissions via email, we ask that you list identifying information separately from the piece (name, relationship to Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, mailing address, email address, telephone number, medium of visual art if submitting images electronically). You may also mail in submissions to the address listed below. If you wish to have your entry returned, please include a self-addressed stamped envelope.

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

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

Activities of The Doctors Kienle Center for Humanistic Medicine include:

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

Submissions are due by January 15 of each calendar year and can be sent via email to: wildonions@hmc.psu.edu. Visit our website to download a copy of *Wild Onions* at <http://www2.med.psu.edu/humanities/wild-onions/wild-onions-archives/>

Senior Co-Editors



Holly Boyle, MSIV

Holly Boyle is a Cape Cod native who majored in Biology as an undergraduate at Stonehill College, while also satisfying her creative side as an editor of the college's literature and art magazine, *The Cairn*. She was drawn to Penn State College of Medicine because of the school's strong emphasis on the Humanities as well as patient-centered care. While at Penn State, she continued to foster her passion for the arts by writing poetry, painting landscapes, creating gourmet dishes, and submitting cartoon character themed mazes to *Paw Prints Magazine*. Additionally, Holly participated in a humanities course titled Impressionism and the Art of Communication, where she painted four paintings. Several art pieces from this class will be on display at the Art Alliance of Central Pennsylvania Community Art Exhibit this spring. This summer, Holly will continue her medical training as an Obstetrics and Gynecology resident physician at Temple University Hospital in Philadelphia.



Jessica Frey, MSIV

Jessica Frey, originally from Pittsburgh, PA, has always loved to write. A chemistry and English double major at Lafayette College, Jessica found a way to pursue both her medical and creative writing interests. Her senior honors thesis in undergrad was a novel entitled *Operation Hippocrates*, which dealt with medical ethical issues. She has been involved in many writing clubs and literary magazines in the past, and was happy to take on the role of co-Editor-in-Chief of *Wild Onions* during her medical training. During her time as a medical student, Jessica has been published in JAMA for her poem *Serial Sevens* and has also been published in Penn State Hershey's Neurological Humanities magazine *The Fifth Dimension* as the featured writer. In addition to writing, Jessica enjoys participating in tae kwon do, playing the piano, and rock climbing. Next year, Jessica will be pursuing Neurology residency at the West Virginia University School of Medicine.

Dreams and Shadows



Serenity

© Holly Boyle

A gift from one senior editor to another

Dreams are those fantasies we have in the middle of the night that keep us hopeful for the next day. They are those ideas that start small and inspire us to make our lives meaningful. Dreams are the wings behind our aspirations that give us a reason to take chances and take flight. But where there is the potential to dream, there is also the potential for nightmares. What are those doubts, those fears, and those experiences that exist in the shadows? And how do we overcome those nightmares so that we can step out of the dark and attain our true goals? Whether our dreams are the kind that take place in sleep or the kind that influence our actions during the day, the dreams and shadows we experience hold an undeniable power that can change us, our future, and our world.

Student Editors



Art & Photo Editors:

Back: (left to right) Tony Lin, Stephan Leung, Kristin Berger, Sharon Jia, Brandon LaBarge

Front: (left to right) Xiaojie (Jane) Liao, Tiffany Yeh, Holly Boyle, Jessica Frey, Lisa Beyers

Other Contributing Editors Not Pictured:

Sudhanshu (Ashu) Bhatnagar, Christine (Chrissy) Clark, Adeline Melvin, Annie Tsay, Allison Weinstock



Literature Editors:

Back: (left to right) Stephan Leung, Amarpreet (Preet) Ahluwalia, Kristin Berger, Sharon Jia

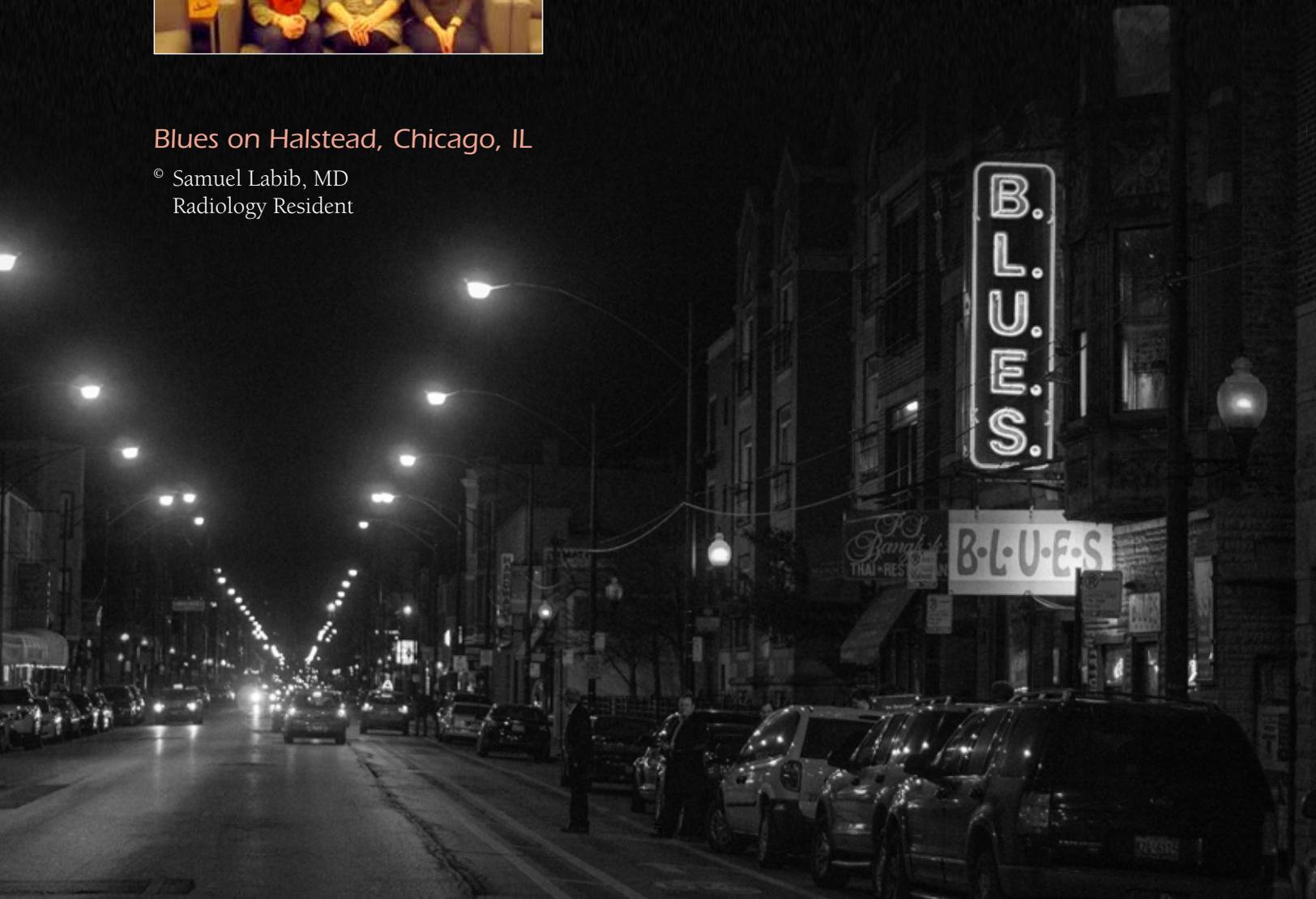
Front: (left to right) Jessica Frey, Lisa Beyers, Holly Boyle

Other Contributing Editors Not Pictured:

Christine (Chrissy) Clark, Brandon Labarge, Xiaojie (Jane) Liao, Tony Lin, Adeline Melvin, Annie Tsay, Tiffany Yeh

Blues on Halsted, Chicago, IL

© Samuel Labib, MD
Radiology Resident



Our Judges

ART



Candace Walters, PhD

Candace Walters is an experimental figurative painter who has exhibited extensively throughout New England. She received her Bachelor of

Fine Arts at Hartford Art School and her Master's at Boston University. Recent accomplishments include inclusion in exhibitions "50 Years of Painting in Boston," DeCorova Museum, Lincoln, MA; "Visions and Revisions," Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA; "Hearing Voices," Clark Gallery, Lincoln, MA and published in *Collage for the Soul*, Rockport Publishing Company. Candace currently teaches art classes, including Painting, Drawing, Portrait Workshop, and Landscape Painting, at Stonehill College in Easton, MA.

PHOTOGRAPHY



J. Spence Reid, MD

Spence Reid has been a resident of Hershey since 1981 and a faculty member in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery since 1993. Spence was introduced to photography while a boy by his father, and has been involved in photography his entire life. In high school and college, he worked professionally as a sports photographer for a local newspaper and as a wedding photographer. He returned to photography after medical training, and it has become a true passion. His work has been published in *Wild Onions* for the past 15 years. His artistic focus is on wildlife and landscape photography. "A great photograph creates an emotion that invites you to stop a little longer, and reflect a little deeper"

LITERATURE



Anthony K. Sedun

Tony Sedun teaches seventh grade English at Linglestown Middle School (Central Dauphin School District). He has also taught a course for pre-service English teachers

on teaching writing several semesters at Millersville University. He is completing his tenth year teaching English Language Arts at the middle level, including multiple summer school terms working with at-risk adolescents. Most recently, Tony founded the *Life Writes Project*, a 501(c)(3) educational nonprofit organization with Dr. Matthew Skillen of Elizabethtown College. The *Life Writes* approach insists on storytelling and dialogical practices as fundamental, practical, and transformational practices that amplify curricular and socio-emotional outcomes in every setting. The *Life Writes Project* continues to grow into a robust education nonprofit with roots in Harrisburg, PA but with an established global reach as well. As the former Executive Director, Tony worked closely with educators, volunteers, and the Board of Directors to work lead professional development initiatives and collaborations with education partners in Medellín, Colombia (South America), along with interested public institutions here in the United States.

Other affiliations include being a National Writing Project Fellow, a Freedom Writer Teacher, and a former co-chair for the 2016 Conference of the Pennsylvania Council of Teachers of English Language Arts (PCTELA). Tony was selected as one of the teachers in Central Dauphin School District's inaugural presentation of the 2014 Outstanding Teachers Award. Additionally, Tony is a regular contributor to *Wild Onions*.

Tony earned his Bachelors in Secondary Education in English from Millersville University and his Masters in Teaching & Curriculum in Education from Pennsylvania State University.

Tony lives in Harrisburg, PA with his wife and three children, and they joyfully await the arrival of their twins in summer 2016.

Welcome to Wild Onions



Guest Editor:

Dennis Gingrich, M.D.

Professor
Department of Family &
Community Medicine
and Humanities

Welcome to *Wild Onions*, an uninhibited, expansive, playful, serious, thought-provoking, inspiring, and surprising publication. If you are a first-time reader, welcome to a wonderful world of prose, poetry, art, photography, and other expressions of creativity. If you are returning as a past *Wild Onions* reader, welcome back to the family and community of the College of Medicine and Hospitals' creative home. A home that reminds us of our roots as the college of medicine incorporating our nation's first medical school humanities department.

Welcome to this year's creative focus, Dreams and Shadows. How often have we half-remembered a dream and wondered? Where did it come from? What does it mean? How can I remember it for the future? Will it return? And shadows. Shadows that show us pictures of the world, but pictures that are indirect, subtle, and a new and different way of viewing the familiar around us. So is the content of this edition of *Wild Onions*.

Welcome to a completely unique experience. An experience crafted and hosted by our senior student editors Holly Boyle and Jessica Frey, our student advisor, Dr. Kimberly Myers, and our managing editor Deborah Tomazin. Welcome to a place of sharing where you can read something you have never seen before, view a picture that lifts your spirits, experience art that brightens your day, encounter ideas that expand your horizons, and indulge in creative thought that takes you to places you have never been before.

We sincerely hope you enjoy visiting, and that you return again and again.

Dreamy

© Tony Oliveri Patient

We populate our dreams
with hidden aspects of self
interacting in ways instructive
or perplexing, or both.

Impossible choices can then be made
(without worry or repercussion)
and consciousness can be expanded,
regardless of danger to kith or kin.

Snippets of reality are transformed
into phantasmagorical spaces,
subtly familiar yet foreign,
even rearing ominously sometimes.

Upon awakening, the patterns fade,
the thread is cut, and,
only shards of pieces remain
for us to ponder in silence.

My Ghost

© Michelle Mock Patient

Ethereal as sheer chiffon -
a fantasy in misty white -
without pretense or strong defense
as eerie ghost, I haunt the night.

I float on prayers of velvet hush -
emotions search and comprehend -
their granted wealth for needed health,
these tragedies, in time will mend.

Malicious shadows from the past
bring tears upon my moonlit face -
they wash me clean a peaceful scene
in love, a safe fantastic place!

I close my eyes in patient trust,
I hope for good and mercy mild -
a dreamer fair with past to bear
is just my ghost, an inner child.

A Girl and Her Dog

© Christopher DiCroce MSIV



The Waiting Room

© Rebecca Swisher Friend of Kimberly R. Myers, PhD

Everytime I left the hospital I passed the waiting room. Some days it was empty. but most days I walked past and there would be family or a few people sitting impatiently in the chairs. It wasn't a very nice room. The walls were barren and the typical too white that all hospital walls seemed to be. The furniture was old and not all that comfortable. There was one lamp on a small side table, and a coffee table that held old magazines. I'm nearly positive they never actually changed those magazines. It also wasn't really a room, just an awkward open space that faced the double doors leading to one of the surgical rooms.

Today as I walked past the sad room there was a single person sitting there. An older man, well probably in his early fifties, was sitting in one of the chairs that faced the double doors. I found myself stopped looking at him for a little. Before I knew it, I was walking towards him. I can't tell you why I entered the sad little room with the anxious man sitting alone. All I know is that I did.

I slowly approached him, not wanting to startle him. "Hey there," I said friendly as I could. He responded with a smile. "Waiting on someone?"

"Uh, yea." He said with a small smile and the slight look of confusion on his face. Newcomers to the hospital were always surprised when people actually talked to them I had found. "Yea," he said more confidently, just a quick two-hour surgery. Nothing too serious."

That's good," I replied with the friendliest smile I could muster. "Do you mind if I sit?" I asked pointing to the chair catty-corner to his.

"Yea, sure." He looked confused again. "I could do with some company," he said with a little more confirmation. I should really be the one saying that, I thought to myself. But I smiled and sat down. I looked at the clock; it was just past five.

We sat in silence for awhile. He was anxious and constantly trying to distract himself. Me, I was enjoying the company of another human being sitting next to me. We had small little conversations, like how the weather was, where we were from, and our favorite sports teams. All of them were short. I didn't mind his unresponsiveness. I had been in

his shoes multiple times, and I was pretty sure I wouldn't have accepted a stranger's company.

After a long while of silence I watched him begin to nod off. There was a part of me that wanted to let him sleep, but he had been so attentively watching the double doors that I felt I couldn't. "Hey, would you like to go get some coffee? They have a coffee maker right down the hall."

My voice seemed to snap him awake. "Uh, no no I'm fine. I don't want to miss the doctor when he comes out."

"Alright," I said cheerfully. "Well I'm going to go grab a cup. Would you like one?"

He nodded at that, "Two sugars if you don't mind." I smiled and left to stretch my legs. I turned to look at the clock; it was half past nine. I didn't know how long he had been sitting there, but I knew what a longer surgery meant. Complications. I left to go grab the coffee, not giving away anything to him. Complications were never good news.

I came back with the coffee ten minutes later. "Thanks," he said as he nurtured the Styrofoam cup in his hands. I smiled and sat back down. The next two hours passed in silence. I flipped through one of the magazines idly, and he sat ever watchful of the double doors.

I was about to say something for another stupid conversation, but when I looked up he was standing. I looked to the double doors and saw a surgical doctor standing there. "Mr. Stine." The doctor said tersely. He only nodded in response. "There were some complications that happened during surgery." I stood up ready to grab his arm if he needed comfort. "But I'm glad to say everything is fine." I sat back down stricken. "She's going to be all right."

Mr. Stine was ecstatic. He walked over and thanked the doctor. The doctor in turn began to explain what had actually gone awry. I slowly took my leave. 'Going to be alright.' I had waited for the words for months. I had waited in that room for so long. Waiting for the doctors to come and tell me that everything was going to be fine. That he was finally all right. That day would never come.

For the last time, I walked out the hospital doors.

First Place Art



ALVA

© Jonathan Frazier
Center Stage Performer

Judge's Comments

There is a haunting quality to this painting and a strong sense of time and place. The lights are on in the building but no sign of life on the street. The strong use of perspective to draw the view in is also very effective. The intense color and light in this empty street scene also contributes to the painting's mysterious presence.

First Place Photography



Above the Cold

© Justin Etzel MSII

Judge's Comments

This is an arresting image that presents a study of contrasts. The youthful woman appears to be floating in space without support. The thin blue dress and bare feet are incongruous in such a frigid setting. The warmth of the skin tones stand out in sharp relief against the lifeless snow. The figure appears relaxed, open and accepting, yet in an almost crucifixion posture. The simple composition and contrasting visual elements invoke vibrant vulnerable life in a lifeless setting.

Chief Operating Room Surgeon

© Joseph Gascho, MD
Department of Medicine and Humanities

Second home to me
this operating room,
(wife might say first),
now for thirty years.
No La-Z-Boys, no queen sized bed,
no carpets on the floor,
no bar (here those who never drink
sometimes wish they did).
Glaring ceiling lights, no atmosphere.
Jammed every day with folks
dressed in paper garb
that's trashed and burned
when they depart,
Music that I choose
(sometimes the Bach,
sometimes "Amazing Grace")
Every day a limo motors up,
drops off a guest, someone I hope
will leave and never come again.

Anonymous

© Kelly Chambers, CRNA
Department of Anesthesiology

He looked at me
Expecting
Like I was going to do something
Interesting
From my cage of drapes and cables
I wanted to perch
Observe
He glanced at me again
For a moment I thought he knew my name
And then he said,
'Anesthesia, table down'



Living Balance

© Alannah Phelan MSIII



Little Drummer Boy - From Nairobi, Kenya

© Samuel Labib, MD
Radiology Resident

Strangers

© Kristin Berger MSIII

One one thousand, two one thousand, three one thousand.

I counted the seconds under my breath. I can imagine that outside the sirens were wailing, and that we were traveling at a rate well over the designated speed limit. At the time, however, I did not notice. I was too mortified by how much my hand was shaking, a traitor if I ever saw one.

Four one thousand, five one thousand, six one thousand.

I counted to six over and over again, a broken record never destined to reach seven. Within each six-second interval, I squeezed air from the Ambu bag into the lungs of the man lying unconscious on the stretcher in front of me.

When we reached the ambulance bay at the hospital, the team from the emergency department swarmed, one among them being the physician. In the organized chaos that ensued, orders were shouted, medications were administered, chest compressions were performed, and one breath was delivered every six seconds.

The doctor assigned to care for our patient had a reputation for being an excellent physician, and it soon became obvious to me why. Under his steadfast direction, the individual team members worked as though part of a well-oiled machine. He played quarterback and cheerleader simultaneously, giving instructions and words of encouragement all in the same breath.

There was not a moment's hesitation in his harrowing crusade, interspersed as it was with moments of hope and terror alike. Until the moment of the grand finale, when his saddened eyes, half hidden underneath furrowed brows, glanced upwards towards the clock. When he finally pronounced that the man's life had come to an end, no one questioned, no one doubted. It was clear they had done all that they could.

As the team slowly mobilized with a new objective, I watched as the physician walked slowly towards the newly abandoned body. He looked upon the face of the man he had worked desperately to save, though had never known alive. With a look of what could only be remorse, he reached to close the man's eyes.

He turned towards the doorway that would lead him to the waiting area, where he would have the duty of informing the man's wife of his passing. After a few steps he turned back and asked the paramedic, "What was his name again?"



Lessons

© Julie Moffitt Patient

From my father I learned
the subtle beauty of a musical phrase
infinite worlds that exist
in the touch of a finger on a piano key -
and that cancer should be denied
not talked about
pain hidden until it is too late

From my uncle I learned
pursue your art and yourself
through all adversity and ridicule
Be anything and do not fear criticism -
and that cancer should be faced,
dealt with honestly
taking care of important business
before it is too late

From my cat I learned
never pass up an opportunity
to show affection to those you love
and that cancer is no reason
to stop purring

Last Thing We See

© Daniel E. Shapiro, PhD
Department of Humanities

Raven

© Haley Kissinger Age 14
Granddaughter of ALS Patient

As of late, I dream of the raven.
A ravenous predator,
A beautiful bird.
That raven is gone.
Taken hold in form of the broken creature before us.
Torn, paralyzed, and mute.
Where has he gone, my beautiful raven.
Torn from the murder, left for a far awful rest.
I remember the raven, I do.
He stood tall, and spread his ebony glossy shield.
The protector of all.
But that memory is lost to the pain in present.
A moment, a word.
It took the avian's movement and air.
No notion of it was found.
One moment.
The raven's freedom and tenderness was purloin.
I watch as the Raven's crescent eyes stare bleakly at me,
Dark and dishonest of pain.
I see the tremors and twitches in the legs.
I see.
But I can't try to believe.
The hovering, the gallantry soldier is dead.
Born from the ashes of disease and broken hearts is he.
The new Raven.
A crumpled sable.
He still has his allure,
His contemptness.
but no longer does our beautiful soul have movement.
No more will he feel the frigid air creep past and slide
through his feathers.
No longer a predator, but prey.
my Raven of late.



Morning Rounds

© Jessica Frey MSIV

doctor says, don't cry
that's something you've got to work on
just present the patient we don't have all day

(did they tell you there are three types of tears:)

you can't burst into tears in front of patients
or their families, doctor says, they'll start crying too

(1. the ones that are always there)

doctor says I better get used to it
when I rotate through the ICU I will see lots of sad cases

(2. the ones that protect us)

part of being a medical professional, doctor says,
is learning to suck it up and move on

(3. and the ones we get when we feel)

go on clean yourself up you're a mess
and you can't expect all of us to wait for you
just because your patient took a turn for the worse

(you are blurry and your words are blurrier)

why don't you read up on refeeding syndrome
and learn how to insert an NG tube and go on
make yourself useful

(maybe if I blink fast enough)

okay next patient, doctor says

(my tears will remember how to protect me)

we're running short on time
and I have a meeting at nine o'clock

(and you will remember how to feel)

Little Boat

© Y. Snowberger Patient

I ride in a little boat
Waves wash over my boat
I ride in a little boat
My boat is strong and sturdy
Some days the tide crashes in
Like wild white horses running into the shore
When I visit the ocean,
I ask her for help
Help me forgive myself
The wind blows away my shame
Shame for the things I've done,
Shame for the things I've neglected to do
Ocean, help me start over
The day I visit the ocean,
She shouts with joy
Who knew pelicans were graceful in flight?
They could be eagles
I ride in a little boat
When I get home,
I listen to a recording of the ocean to quiet
my noisy mind,
To sleep
I ride in a little boat

Oration in Twilight

© Xiaowei William (Bill) Su
MSIV MD/PhD Candidate

The eyes of a demon,
A terror of the night,
Stalks us as we enter,
Burning with delirium.

Hours later we return,
Finding him sedated,
Seroquel oozing through him,
Quenching his rage.

Examine him carefully,
Our attending demands,
His care is our duty,
His well-being our charge.

- Lacunar infarct,
- Above the knee amputee,
- Unlikely to regain baseline function,
We complete our presentation.

“You told us his prognosis,
But nothing about him,
Our profession binds us,
Do not neglect the man.”

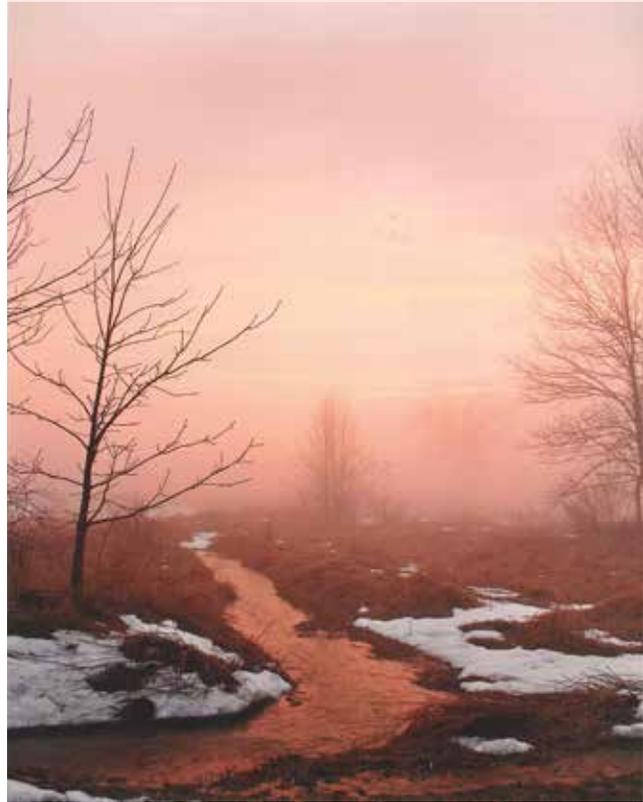
Our attending breaches darkness,
Eyes steady and determined,
He picks up a photo frame,
And restores the relic to light.

The earnestness of boyhood,
A newlywed and his bride,
A father of two daughters,
Fortune kind and future bright.

In each other's eyes,
We see the sands of time dissolving,
Our patient likely suffered retinopathy,
We surely suffered the blindness of sight.

Again we survey him,
Ulysses! Aged and bedridden,
His battles fought,
Resting the rest of Kings.

Lying motionless,
Ports tapping his lifeblood,
He silently speaks to us,
“I am the strength that remains.”



Night Fog in Meadow

© Kevin G. Downs
Patient



Remembering the Fall

© Michael J. Green, MD
Departments of Internal Medicine and Humanities

Silence

© Brian Holsinger MSI

Tense air, white gloves,
Level one Peds, everyone in scrubs,
All eyes are low, all hearts sink lower
The baby is rushed in, the team begins
“No visible trauma”, she starts to seize
An innocent being, a moment of frustration
A delicate head, a parent’s despair
The crying stopped, never again to be heard
A shaken baby, a deafening roar

Silence.

Peace

© Kathy Ringenbach, RN, BSN, CCRN
Penn State Hershey Bone & Joint Institute

One Step at a Time

© Phil Avillo Patient

he dreams.
A nightmare.
Vietnam, February 1966.
On patrol.
Point man.
Rifle ready,
Eyes alert.
Muscles taut.
Walking slowly,
one step at a time.
The explosion rips him apart.
Both legs gone,
shrapnel everywhere,
his life’s blood
gushing and seeping into the mud.
Awake now,
sitting,
shaking,
quivering,
sweat soaked,
he breathes slowly,
gains control.
Nearby, his prosthetic limbs
wait to receive
his shrapnel laden,
mangled stumps.
Easing into them,
he stands tall,
grimaces,
clenches his teeth,
turns,
and walks slowly from the room
One step at a time.

If I Die

© Michelle Mock Patient

I've never written poems of death -
nor dreamed the time of my last breath,
this boldness dies with fleeting youth
as I draw near to question truth.
Would I lie down a season's rest -
to lose life essence from my chest?
Would my eyes close no more to see -
domain of young or birth's decree?
With peaceful mind, oh death, I'd sleep -
in spite of those who mourn and weep!
My hope to wake in joyful day -
to meet good host of souls who stay!
I have in heart to do the right -
a haven's vision clear in sight!
My death would be - a shadow passed -
in life's eternal glory vast!



Megan Peaks

© Daniel E. Shapiro, PhD
Department of Humanities

Einbildungskraft

© David Carnish, M/Div. BCC Pastoral Services

We were once a house who favored the color yellow through every liturgical moment.
Now, we pink up everything.
Her B-cups are gone.
“You don't look much different to me. You did not have much there before.” Remarked her brother...
Truly, I wonder, what is one more indignation among many scalpels?
I, however, re-vision, her body differently.
Not just any body, THE body of my beloved.
I last saw her breasts that fateful day.
She unveiled ‘privately’ before me while the transport waited beyond the curtain.
She exposed herself to me as she had countless times in longing.
But this time was more apocalyptic, mean and demeaning.
She wanted my touch and spying one last time.
My tears poured on her breasts, the true surgical prep solution.
To save her meant bilateral mastectomy.
To save her gave way to grief and longing
Her bosom which had nurtured and fed our first child would cease to flow the milk...
The last hands to touch her were the caring cold calculating hands of a surgeon—a stranger committing
violence to the body to save life!
Since then, of me she asks frequently, “Am I still a woman?”
The Gordian knot of living has my answer.
We do emerge two survivors or two conquerors.
Fully, imaginatively, two fleshs, are one.

The Talitha Syndrome

© Jeff Fehrler Patient

Sunday night. 9:20.

His parents' wall phone in the kitchen rings. They're watching Bonanza . He gets up, exits the living room, knowing at that time of this Sabbath night who the caller is and it's for him. He stretches the cord coils till they're straight as a garrote, threatening jacks, to the door opening on the stairs to his attic bedroom.

Privacy. Man-to-man talk though they're teenagers.

"Hey, man," they both greet. Their voices are gravely subdued, words spaced and careful. From foreknowledge, they are nervous and fearful. It's contagious.

Rollie leaves in the morning for Army basic training at Fort Benning, Ga., then on to Vietnam.

They can enlist together, said the recruiter. Go through boot camp with a buddy.

But last Sunday evening Rol's buddy took a call from the Navy recruiter who he'd checked with earlier. Seems the enlistee on the list before him had broken his arm and he had moved up. Still interested, son?

Yes, sir. Beats jungle warfare.

True, but the Navy's four years. Army's only two.

Yes, sir. One of them in Nam, however.

Rol's been a friend for eight years, best friend for the past year, the toxic year. Teener ball, high school, double dates, duskto dawn drive-ins, three semesters of carpooling to junior college. He got Rol a night job at WHP where he operated a camera on the eleven o'clock newscast.

Afterward, streaking invisibly homeward playing bumper tag on sidewinder Chambers Hill Road, lights out at sixtyfive, seventy mph in their black, \$100 used cars. They were already dead men, they thought. Speeding crazily for midnight in their lives.

They talk quietly of these things, eulogizing. Bonanza gunfire cracks in the background.

In time that's not time words are expended like their days. After a very long pause Rol says, "Well, I've got some other people to call... and Meg." Megan, his girlfriend.

He hears a sigh and: "Well, you know what they say. Don't volunteer an' keep your head down. Good luck, man."

"Oh yeah. You too."

None of them sees him again. From gnarly fate while he's in naval boot camp, his rackmate above him gets a letter from his girlfriend who went to the same high school with Rollie, recognizes his name in the paper and writes him. He leans over and tells the recruit below him.

His parents keep it secret. Their son has enough to depress him currently.

But the dark genie's escaped. It stops his spitshining and slams him breathless against the barracks wall.

Rol's buried with military honors.

It's several Memorial Days later. Rollie's mother tells him where he's buried. "He's in Jesus' arms now," she says.

Beneath a bronze, rectangular plaque, flat on the earth, sleeps his body.

A woman he's dating lived in Hawaii for a while. She stands at the beginning of one aisle of tombstones, crosses, Stars of David, plaques, flags everywhere. She tells him it's a Hawaiian custom to leave a memento personal to Rol and him.

He presses a WHP News license plate into the grass, stands.

“Hey, man.”

Every Memorial Day.

The woman’s been long gone elsewhere, but the custom remains an ambivalent remembrance within a remembrance.

Age diminishes his visits, digs deeper realizations of life, death, blessings, miracles, his past, his inevitable eternity.

Rollie’s family is religious. Weekly Sunday school and worship services, Scriptural passages before meals. Believers, of the faith, devout. Practitioners, and this child is young, innocent of heavy sin, dating a wholesome girl, a long, good, Godfearing life before him, before them.

A fine son, this blessing from Psalm 127:3.

The memorial flags snap in a green breeze, sporadic but constant popping like distant riflery from a range.

When sometimes graveside, when sometimes not, he wonders.

The family prays for Rol the soldier. The sentences of his demise arrive at their home, go into their eyes to their hearts and souls. How does this mother respond reflexively when later he queries about her son’s internment? Surely she prays, all of them, over that dark paper they receive. One member may pray for his resurrection. Faith, grief, shock, loss, pious souls—ingredients for a miracle. It happens in their Bible.

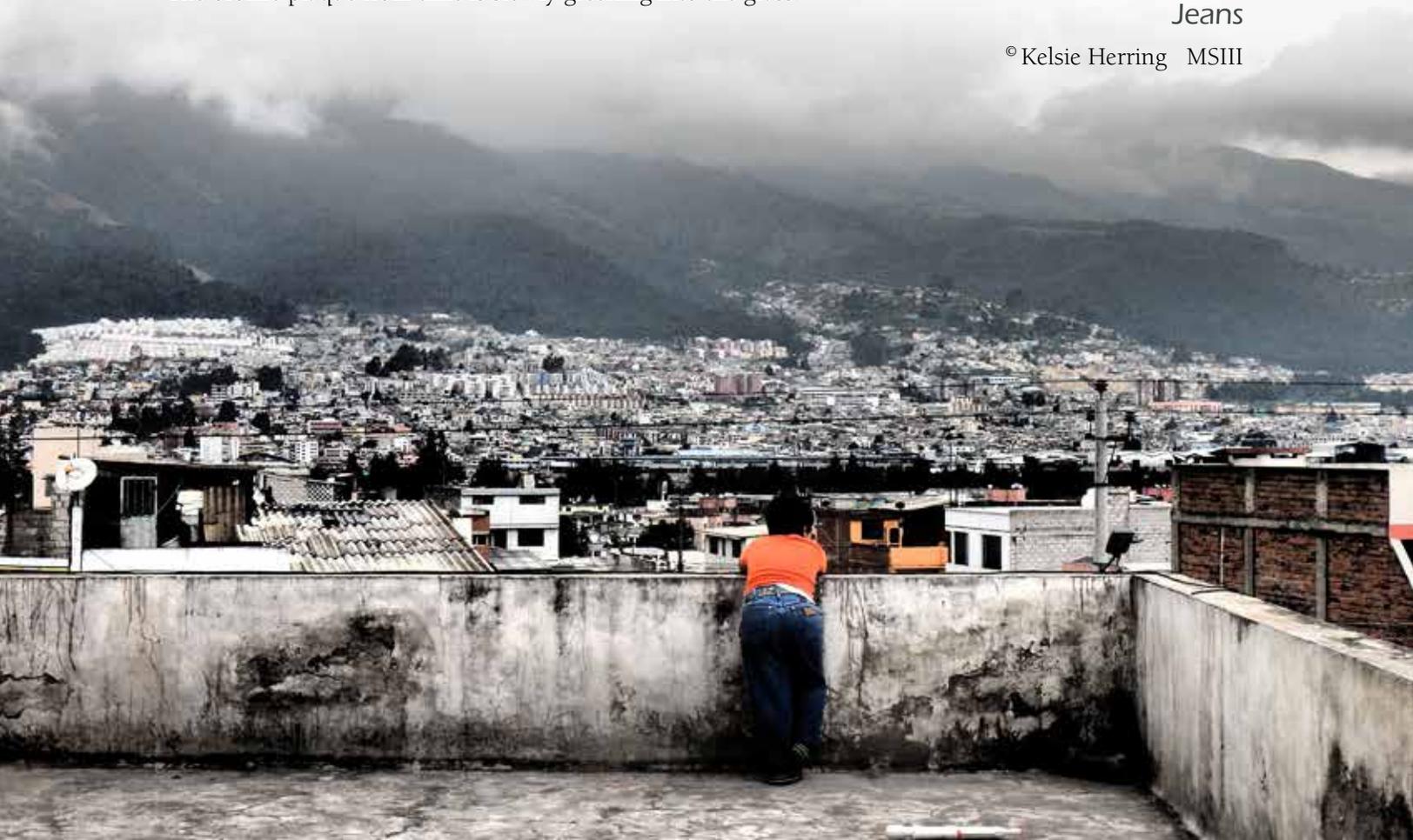
He does wonder but with a slight corrosion of doubt if they’re still waiting.

This coming Memorial Day he decides to see his old friend sleeping.

The bronze plaque from time is slowly greening into the grass.

Jeans

© Kelsie Herring MSIII



Ode to Dream

© Brandon LaBarge MSI

Oh how I love thee
To Backstroke in your clouds
To soar through your sea
But when the nightmare comes
Anywhere else I'd rather be

Stained White Walls

© Kyle Burch MSIII

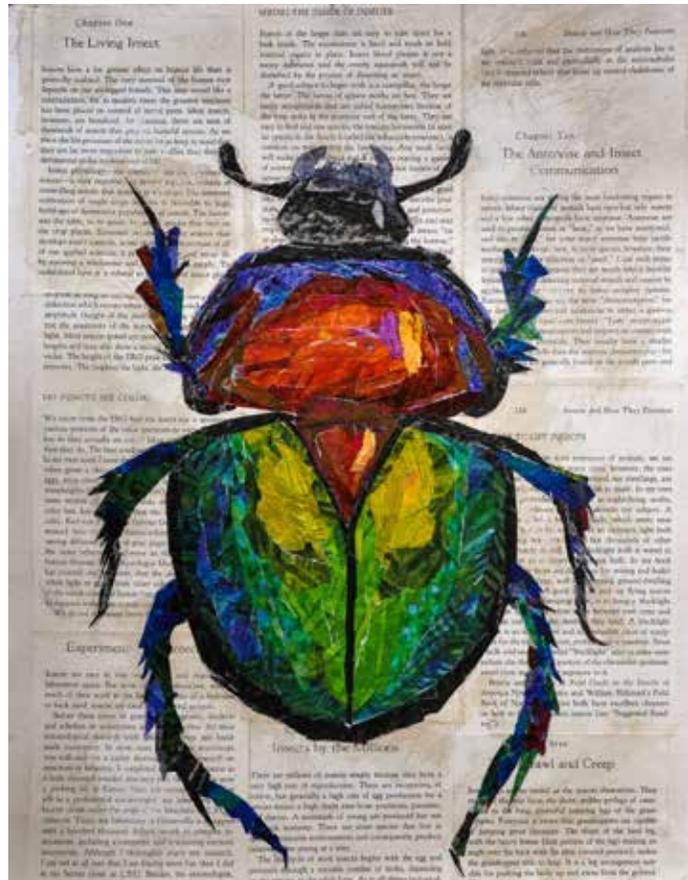
Tears tumble from her eyes,
The pills rattle in her hand.
Her mind races full of lies
A swallow to bring the end.

The bottle's empty now,
She hopes that no one will know...
Then a moment of fear, a cry for help
And off to 'help' she goes.

They place her in a vacant room
Barren from end to end.
No sheets, no pillow, no blankets
Just a corner for her to stand.

And as she stares about the room
She notices the walls
The streaks, the nicks, the gashes
Imperfections covering them all.

She only sees the shame and burden,
Nothing else but the flaws.
But underneath the pain and faults,
Still lies a beauty, in those stained white walls.



The Living Insect

© Mira Green

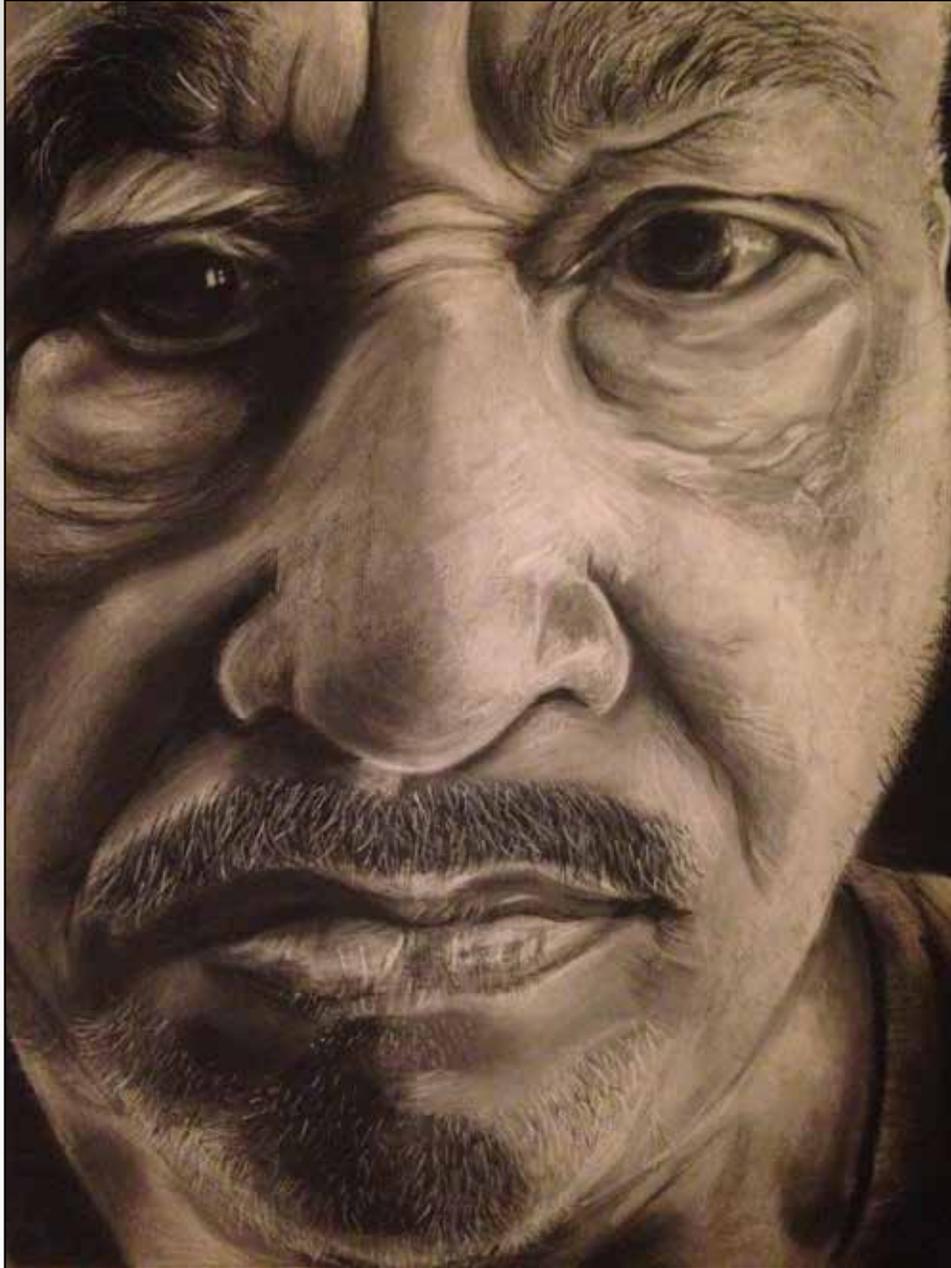
Daughter of Michael J. Green, MD
Departments of Internal Medicine and Humaities

Poppy Field

© Daniel R. George, PhD
Department of Humanities



Second Place Art



Wisdom

© Milaury Lopez
Daughter of Hector Lopez, MD
Department of Orthopaedics and Rehabilitation

Judge's Comments

This is a beautifully executed drawing. The intense expression and close up point-of-view creates a powerful portrait. The drawing's surface, texture and light effects are rich and full of life. Also the decision to show a small piece of the shirt and shoulder adds to the drawing's compositional strength.



Second Place Literature

Origami

© Jessica Frey MSIV

I never knew that seeing someone's soul would be so
Beautiful and broken
Would be so wide and silver would be so-

I took your tears and your fragile words in the palm of my hand
And I tried to realign them tried to hold them over
the flame of a Bunsen burner and melt them all
back down together again
into the orange and red and blue and green
paper crane with wings that you are.

Just be a color that I can understand.

Because you let me unfold you
You let me see the creases and the cracks and we can't go back
No matter how many times I try to refold your soul
It's like an accordion
It all pops out of its neat little box
A slinky sprawled down
And down

And down.

It's hard to see you as just this thin piece of paper
All stretched out flat with its many many pleats and crinkles and folds.
I want to smooth them out I want to
press them down I want to iron all those crumples I want to-

Its okay. Somewhere along the way

I forgot
that the creases and the lines are supposed to be there.
That's the only way for you to remember how to fly.

Judge's Comments

The physicality of this piece illustrates precisely what occurs in the intersecting folds of one person's life with another person's life. The first stanza itself appears almost interrupted by another reflection in stanza two that folds its way into the writer's consciousness. Also notable are the simple, concrete nouns—mostly monosyllabic—soul, tears, hand, flame, crane, box, pleats, and folds. The writer acknowledges competing desires to “smooth [the wrinkles] out” and “iron all those crumples”. In the end, even these turn gently over to the realization that the needs of another necessitate respect for the furrows and folds that made flight possible at all.

Second Place Photography



James Garfield Monument Staircase

© Mary Mager
Sister of Patient

Judge's Comments

This is a beautifully composed study in perspective. The eye is lead along the brown railing from the window light at the top of the stairwell down the right side of the image and then to the lower left into the warm earth tones illuminated from a second source. The shrinking distance between the vertical supports of the railing reinforce the composition. The details in the marble are beautifully revealed in this perfectly exposed image. The feeling is of an old, well preserved place of honor.



Winter Tree

© Kate Belser MSIV



Forever Dreaming of Days Past

© William Peters
Friend of Patient

The Shades of War

© Vishakh Iyer, MS Department of Neurology

The triumphant hero homeward bound
Watched from far away, atop a grassy mound
Until the sight of his village at last found;
Was shatter'd by a knell's eerie sound.

The place he called home was all but dust-
Its people forgotten by the world they call'd just.
The name that once shone proudly lay now in rust,
But still he trod on as any man must.

He would it seemed live to fight another day,
But now his world grew dark though the sky was gay.
A thousand he had his sword's tip slay,
But the few he loved seemed lost to his dismay.

The world had changed leaving no trace,
What was once a heaven now seemed godforsaken a place,
And just as he stared into space,
His home he saw and a shadow passed his scarred face.

A lesser man would not have trudged along,
His soul searched her's to where it truly belong,
She lay like an angel with her hair so long,
In the field, he saw her among the throng.

He knelt beside her and shed a tear,
Was it he wondered, love that made his heart sear?
He wished she would hold him now that he was so near,
But still she laid, at peace her face clear.

Why do men fight he cursed aloud,
He cared not for laurels that had once made him proud
He was a knight once, in shining armour, as light as a cloud
But all he now yearned was a shroud.

He had fought for his God, Country and King
But now he stood alone; save for suffering,
He wondered what more could this life bring.
His throat parched, he looked for a spring.

The babbling stream where his child would often play,
At the road's end yonder lay,
He sat on its banks amid the smooth clay,
And stared at what seemed the end of his day.

The image in the water were of a score-
That which he saw chilled him to the core;
Not one he loved would come to the fore,
All that remained were his victims of blood and gore.

Seeing them all his soul freely bled,
And as the courage in his heart all but fled,
Only then did the Gods of War, their disguise shed,
Came forth, regal in their armour of gold, grey, bronze and red.

Said Ares of Greece, "You were but a marionette who fought",
Said Tyr of Norse, "The rest of your life was worth but nought",
Said Mars of Rome, "The battlefield as your graveyard was all you once sought",
Said Menhit of Egypt, "Why now do you weep so deep in thought?"

Why do you, the Hero asked make men fight?
Why do you drive them insane at each other's sight?
Why do you bring to earth this horrific plight?
Why do you ruin all that was once so bright?

Ares then thundered, "Who can but us the world ordain",
Tyr next roared, "Where else can man with honour be slain",
Mars boomed after, "What you see is more than just a bloody stain",
Menhit at last resounded, "See all that the world has to gain."

What order can you achieve with all this strife?
What honour do you speak of at the end of a sword and knife?
What else is it but a needless loss of life?
What can ever be gained with pain so rife?

We but wish mankind's future to tend,
To achieve this we spare neither foe nor friend,
The world without us cannot fend,
Some things to begin some things must end.

We prayed to you once oh Gods on bent knee,
But so many innocent were lost for they could not flee,
Who remains on this earth at battle's end has the carnage to see,
Oh War! With all my heart I hate thee.

"This world is unbalanced and filled with scum,
It is but cleansed at the sounds of the war drum,
Si vis pacem, para bellum*,
Only in war do a man's soul, heart and mind together strum".

Proclaimed then the Hero "Enough! The time now shall be of Peace,
All humans shall have their conflict cease,
You Gods of War shall no longer with hatred crease,
And rip the minds of men piece after piece."

And as the Hero so said the Gods were filled with dread,
For there appeared a maiden fair and she on water tread,
Covered by a calming white light which did so serenely spread,
Peace to the Hero's soul and all those long dead.

* Latin-If you wish for peace, prepare for war.

To the Hero she then did whisper, "Leave now this warring world of men,
You have your part done for years forty and ten,
Do not your peace seek in any wood or glen,
Sail away, sail away from this War and its far seeing ken."

And so the Hero did; at long last glide past,
On a handsome ship with bright white sails and a thick mast,
To the lands where waited his beloved ones on clouds real vast,
Onward...onward he sailed to find peace at last.



Birds in Trees

© Susan Landis, CRNA
Department of Anesthesiology



Shadow of the Past

© Clay Cooper MSIII

Hudspeth

© Phil Aвило Patient

Hudspeth! Where are you? How are you doing? Are you O.K.? I think of you all the time and have thought of you virtually every day these many years.

I think of how young you were – 19, wasn't it? I think of your strength, your courage. Oh, I know, you probably cried yourself to sleep many a night, wondering what would become of you.

You had the look of bewilderment, of sadness when we first met. Remember? It was sometime around March/April 1966. You probably don't even remember when we met. But I have never forgotten. You may not even remember me. But I have pictures, and if I ever find you, I'll send them.

We were both in the physical therapy room, Philadelphia Naval Hospital, both marines, both wounded in Vietnam. Similarities ended there. You were a PFC; I was a 1st lieutenant; you were 19; I was 24. Your body was mangled; my damage far more slight.

I had just begun my own sit-ups, push-ups, stretching, when someone wheeled you in. I watched as the corpsman lifted you gently from your wheelchair and placed you on the treatment table. Your wounds exceeded anything any of us had ever seen.

The mine you stepped on had hurled you into the air, shrapnel ripping through your entire body. What were you thinking? God, please don't let me die. Or, just the opposite, God, please do let me die. Don't let me live like this.

The explosion ended your youth, two legs gone, one above, one below the knee; your hands and arms shredded, fingers missing, chunks of muscle torn from the forearm. What remained screamed at us with your pain; pieces of flesh torn away, scars where the shrapnel embedded. Your upper arms, the stumps of what were once your legs, bruised, scarred, mangled.

Self-pity, not surprisingly, ran deep. Your eyes had that distant, vacant look, one without a future. So did your entire body, limp, passive, waiting to be taken care of.

We didn't allow hard luck cases here, no pity, certainly no self-pity. All of us had problems; you just had more challenges. Each day we had to remind ourselves that yesterday was gone, that we have to live for the moment; that we have to get on with our lives. A very hard lesson.

But we offered you more - hope, strength, encouragement, laughter, camaraderie – all designed to restore normalcy to our shattered lives. I think you responded; I like to think you have used it as your benchmark ever since.

Significantly, we even laughed and we laughed hardest when we laughed at ourselves. I still tell the story how I took you home with me to NY, and we went out with Pete and Charlie, two of my good friends. You could buy a beer in NY; you weren't old enough in Pennsylvania.

God damn it. What lunacy. A few months earlier we put a rifle in your hands and said kill the enemy; the enemy nearly kills you; you come home and you can't even buy a beer. Too young to drink responsibly; you might crash your wheelchair.

No matter. We were going to drink. With damaged hands you could pick-up a glass, and the beer flowed, and we laughed, and we cursed, and we drank some more.

But then the beer took charge, and we each had to make our pit stops. Pete wheeled you to the men's room – pre ADA, narrow door, completely inaccessible to the wheelchair bound. Pete came back and got Charlie. These were great guys, both had been in the peacetime Army, and they embraced this opportunity to help you.

OK, Hudspeth, put that relatively whole arm behind Pete's head, take what's left of the other and put it behind Charlie's. Pete, Charlie, each used their arms to lift you into a sitting position – one arm behind your back, the other under your stumps.

There you were Hudspeth, sitting as if on a throne. Pete and Charlie eased themselves into the bathroom, maneuvered to the urinal, and positioned you in front of it.

The laughing began almost immediately, huge belly laughs that reverberated throughout the entire bar. Pete, Charlie, you, all realized simultaneously –

Hudspeth, you couldn't get your equipment out, couldn't unzip your fly, and if this was going to be done, either Pete or Charlie would have to oversee the operation.

We laughed and drank, and laughed and drank the rest of the night, the night of the urinal. And you laughed the hardest – because you had to, because you wanted to, because, as you sensed intuitively, laughing and laughing at yourself offered you hope. And you yearned for that hope, desperate for a reason to smile, too maimed to think beyond the moment, too tough to think about yesterday.

I still see you laughing Hudspeth. I still laugh with you when I think about it. I wished we had cried together; we never did that; we should have,

Distant Peace

©Jessie Waite Spouse of Steve Waite, Mail Services

ripped down the mask, the wall of hardness, but we couldn't, we couldn't let our armor down yet. We will cry when we see each other the next time.

Where are you now? Are you OK? I'm thinking about you. Can you feel it? I'm coming to find you. I'll put my arms around you; I'll comfort you; we'll laugh, and this time we will cry together.

Author's Note:

"It occurred to me that your readers should know that since I originally wrote "Hudspeth" I have located him.

He has led an extraordinary life. After his discharge from the Marines, he attended college, earning baccalaureate and master's degrees in education. He retired recently from a long teaching career, is married, has two adult children. He transformed a potentially tragic life into a heroic experience for himself, his family, and his community."



Teatime

© Emily Hess Patient

I take the tea set piece by piece from the upper shelf of the cabinet, pressing one hand against the wall to steady myself. Carefully I wipe a thin layer of dust from each miniature china plate, the swan-necked teapot, two tiny cups with handles curved like half-hearts.

I arrange the tea things neatly on a borrowed card table, which now wears its tattered lace tablecloth like a shroud. A half-dozen crumbly shortbread biscuits from the dining hall lay nestled in a wicker basket in the center of the table.

A knock at the door: the tea is here. I take the steaming carafe from the aide, who frowns when my shaking hands slosh tea onto the worn, grey carpet. "Let me," she insists, pulling the pot from my stiff, gnarled fingers and pouring a stream of tea into the china pot. "Company today?" she asks, and I remember. She's new; she doesn't know you're coming.

"My daughter," I tell her.

She smiles, motioning toward your picture on the bedside table. "That her?"

I nod.

"How nice."

I close my eyes as the memories wash over me. Snow had fallen overnight, covering our sleeping town like a blanket of goose down. You stood

with your nose pressed against the window, warm breath fogging the glass. It was so cold, that day. I remember because I wrestled you into that horrid mauve sweater your aunt had knit. You fast outgrew it, the cables stretched and worn against the elbows, the wool pilled from repeated washing. Still, it was your warmest sweater. I still have it, what remained at least, bargained from the evidence box when the detectives reluctantly shelved the case, unsolved.

"Play with me, Mommy," you pleaded that morning, clutching the corduroy bear you took everywhere. "Let's have a tea party with Teddy."

You always loved this tea set, once my grandmother's, each fragile piece bone white with delicate violets ringing the edges. You were awed by the weight of it in your small hands, the tinny clink of silver spoons as they stirred in the sugar...I hesitated. Tea would be lovely, but I still had the ironing to finish and dishes mounded in the sink.

"Maybe later," I said, yanking your woolen coat from the rack. "You go play outside with Teddy and perhaps I'll have time to bake cookies this afternoon." Ignoring your protests, I bundled you into the coat and pressed Teddy to your chest as I opened the door. "Now stay in the yard. I just need to finish the shirts." Those twelve words would haunt me forever.

They never found the bear. Your woolen coat, they

Priya's Dreamland

© Pulkit Bose MSIII



found that in the quarry. Your torn sweater, one scuffed shoe, a hair ribbon splotted with blood. But not the bear, not even after all the searching. I took some comfort in that, the hope that maybe you were still together when - when...

"Mrs. Evans?" I startle as the nurse enters, handing me a large manila envelope. "Detective Grant sends his apologies." Lara's voice is soft. "He has a meeting now, but he says he'll come by later. He dropped this off at the desk." She touches my shoulder, then backs out on silent shoes. She knows what today is to me.

My fingers fumble with the envelope's metal tabs; my hands are shaking as I slide out the eight-by-ten inch photo. They have given you some grey hair, pale silver strands intertwined with gold. Your wrinkles mirror my own, but your gaze is distant. They do a good job, but they never quite get the eyes right. Trembling, I remove the photo from the frame by my bed and replace it with the new one.

My fingers caress your cheeks, the line of your hair. "It's blackberry tea today," I mention. "Your favorite." In the dining hall they serve a bland, tasteless blend, but the staff are kind enough to indulge an old woman's once-a-year whim. Before I add your sugar, I place last year's photo in the drawer with the forty-seven others.

At first we just had your kindergarten photo to circulate and post on telephone poles. Then there were police sketches, clumsy approximations of how time might alter your appearance. It was decades before digital image processing and age-enhancement technology showed me all the years I missed--who you might have been at nine, twelve, sweet sixteen...

Your disappearance no longer garners official attention, but I pay an investigator to get me the photos each year. Enough money can buy most things, I've learned, though not the only thing I ever wanted. We didn't have money then, of course; but even after your father's investments paid off I never squandered our newfound wealth, hoping... but no ransom note ever came, and rewards for any information went unclaimed. Nearly five decades gone, I wait for the phone to ring. Still I wonder, would you recognize yourself in the photos? On the street, in the chapel, would I know you now?

The table is set, the tea is hot. Gently I place your framed photo in the chair opposite mine, bolstered by the same ragged throw pillow you sat on as a child. My hand surprisingly steady, I pour your tea first. "Three cubes of sugar for my best girl," I whisper, and drop them in with the tiniest splash.

Up

© Mike Nakhla MSIII



Being Borderline

© Shandi Abernethy
Daughter of Julie Vallati
Pediatric Support Services

I love you,
But I hate you.
So hold me,
But don't touch me.
I'll push you away with one arm,
But with the other I'll pull you back.
Today I want to breathe,
We'll see about tomorrow.
Just go away,
But stay with me.
I want to be alone,
And I hate being lonely.
I can't face you,
But you're my world.
I never want to leave you,
But I have to run away.
I want to be broken,
But try to fix me.
You make my heart beat,
But you also make it stop.



Grapefruit Sunrise

© Joan Concilio
Office of the Vice Dean for Research
and Graduate Studies

...But, A Glimpse of Immortality

© Linda Amos Wife of Liver Transplant Patient

After carrying you, a stranger,
Beneath my heart,
For nine long months,
Holding you now
In my arms gives me but,
A glimpse of immortality.



Double Decker Paper Bowl

Made from Pages of a Catalog

© Deborah Warner Patient

Once Upon a Dream

© Tabitha Eckert, RN SICU

Camille told me this story about my patient – how she met the love of her life. And kept meeting him.

Soon after Margie lost Charlie, she began losing other things – the oven mitts, the garden rake, the house keys. Losing them in familiar places and finding them accidentally where they should have been. Losing them God knows where and sometimes not knowing they were lost. At first her family thought it was grief, or stress, or just being seventy two, or some combination of the three. She had loved Charlie for fifty years. But she began losing herself, too, in familiar places and in unfamiliar ones, and not always knowing she was lost. Pretty soon she lost her family, lost them so well that she didn't know they were gone.

One day that nice lady Marie – the one whose face reminded her of someone she just couldn't seem to quite recall – helped her move into Sunnyside Manor. Then Marie was gone, but another nice lady named Camille walked with her to the dining hall and found her a seat in the sunshine by the window. A Bing Crosby record of Christmas songs was playing. She closed her eyes for just a second.

When she opened them again, the sun was gone. She was in a strange place. She didn't recognize anything. Goodness, where was her mother? She must find a sales associate, she must tell them she had lost her mother. Where were her children? Charlie would be so worried. Why, she wasn't even wearing her ring! Of course not, silly goose, you're only in college and you're too plain for any of the men to ask you out.

Suddenly she was acutely self-conscious of her simple blue blouse and slacks. Had anyone else noticed the dust bunny on her sleeve? She looked frantically around her, and then she saw him. Such a handsome man! He sat in the chair beside her and fiddled with his cuff links and his poppy-red bowtie.

His thick white hair was brushed back from his high forehead, and under his bushy white brows were the warmest brown eyes she had ever seen.

"Hello," he said. And, "Why, hello," she answered.

"I'm Tony," he said. "Have we met before?"

"I'm Margie," she answered. "And I don't think so, but you do seem familiar."

"I'm glad we found each other then," he said. And he began to hum Walt Disney's "Once Upon a Dream."

"I've always loved that song," she said.

They sat together and talked for hours and shared their first kiss. They kissed again goodnight when Camille came to walk Margie back to her room. Just like that, they fell in love. And just like that, they lost each other and didn't know it.

And every new day, just like that, they fell in love. She'd be sitting there enjoying the sunshine on her face and Bing Crosby – or Barbra Streisand – or Elton John – on the radio. And when she opened her eyes, she'd find a handsome stranger sitting there. She'd glance over timidly, and he'd be glancing over timidly too.

"Hello," he'd say. And, "Why, hello," she'd answer.

"I'm Tony," he'd say. "Have we met before?"

"I'm Margie," she'd answer. "And I don't think so, but you do seem familiar."

"I'm glad we found each other," he'd say.

Sometimes it seems that life gives to us only to take all the beautiful gifts away. And then, sometimes – some very few times – it seems that life can also take everything away just to give us one more beautiful gift. And give it to us again. Again. And again.

New Beginnings

© Justin Etzel MSII





Four Generations

© Colin DeLong MSIII



Bester Hakanzaba

© Boyd Mulala
Friend of Celeste Bailey, MSII

Abandonment Issues

© Sharon Jia MSII

Closing my eyes every night, I see the O-shape of your mouth as you shrieked “come back!” You lay swathed in your digestive products, clinging to your underarms and hugging your thighs. As I kissed each cheek good-bye, your stench reeked of neglect. “Abandoning me,” you croaked. I winced. You don’t know the nights I lay awake, the Ambien pills I’ve taken, and the meals I’ve forgotten. Abandonment, I repeat. Your sheets covered with feces, the cockroaches climbing newspaper towers, the lights that gave up blinking. You’re right, I repeat. I would give the world to remove you from this mess, carry you seven thousand miles home if I could. But my bones have become brittle and your brain has whittled away. Abandoning me, I want to scream, you’ve abandoned me.

The Price

© Julie Moffitt Patient

Years of disagreement, disapprovals
admonitions and advice fall away as I
tuck the comforter around
her shoulders to keep her warm

I run my fingers, soothing, loving
through the still miraculously thick hair
a gesture I did not learn from her
She was never one for displays of affection

I feel liberated as I say. “I love you, Mom”
because it is true and because
she no longer has an opinion of me
except gratitude for easing her pain

Train Perspectives

© Nancy Adams, MLIS

George T. Harrell Health Sciences Library

The lady is going from Chicago to New York
To see her daughter who just had open heart surgery
And is now very, very sick
And her son is on paper
From a domestic with that bitch
And has ruined his chances at school, at work
But he's a man now, and she can't tell him nothing
And she talks all night to friends that call
But your own phone doesn't ring.
The young couple with the baby and the little boy
Were homeless in Portland
And the agency paid for their tickets to Omaha
Where he was promised a job
And his best friend died two weeks ago,
his sister, whom he talked to every day.
She got hit by two trucks, walking drunk on the road
And if his brother thinks he's getting all her ashes, he's crazy
And they throw their trash on the floor
And they worry about having enough money to buy food for the kids
And still buy mixed drinks at the bar in the Denver station
And the baby, whose name is Nevaeh
Which is heaven spelled backwards
Has a dirty face from crawling on the floor in the Sacramento station
But they are so calm with those kids
And they sing songs to them all the way to Nebraska.
Austin is nineteen
And he lived with his dad, but that didn't work out
And he lived with his mom, but couldn't help her with rent
Because he hasn't worked in eight months
So he's moving to Grand Rapids, sight unseen
To live with a friend he met playing online games
Who says he has a job for him
And you think, good luck with that
But he talks to everyone
And he's never met a person he didn't know
So you think he'll survive.
And after hearing all these stories
Your quick flight to Portland
That turned into a 4 day train ride
Portland to Sacramento to Chicago to Pittsburgh to Harrisburg
Doesn't seem so bad after all.



Winter Moonrise

© Kevin G. Downs

Patient



Timeless

© Robert Ganse

Information Technology



Becoming Fall

© Syeda Ahmad MSIV

Where Do They Go?

© Sudhanshu Bhatnagar MSIII

Where do they go,
These dreams we dream?

Do they grow in the bright night,
From the seeds of our souls,
Only to fly off at dawn
Like a dandelion puffed in the wind?

Or do they color us in the hues of life
Only to flake off like vintage paint,
And collect on the cold grass awake,
Left to be lost in time?

Do our dreams rise like marble pillars,
Meant to hold up our courage?
Or are they built as grand sandcastles,
Moments of glory that melt in the tide?

Where do they go
These dreams we dream?
Though many are lost, why not search
And find a dream before we're lost?

Jimmy Oaks

© Dwayne Morris Office of Medical Education

I'm guessing Jimmy Oaks is dead
Or hanging by a very thin thread
I'd bet everything I own
Life couldn't help but grind him into dust
It gets blamed on the sixties
When so many things turned wicked
But I'll never wrap my arms around why
A ten year old boy wasn't spared from his lust
It took me years to learn how Jimmy Oaks hurt me
How he stole the very worth of me
And forty-four years later
I'm still that wounded boy
But I know I can't stay crippled
It just hurts to see how it ripples
Broken hearts, breaking hearts
Stolen joy, stealing joy
I want to believe Jimmy Oaks is forgiven
Assuming he cried out to God in heaven
But I'm not his judge and jury
My own sins lie at the cross
To those I hurt I'm truly sorry
I mixed pain with fear and worry
Reaching out in desperation
Every goodbye had its cost

Third Place Art



REM

©Diane Zinn
Food Services

Judge's Comments

This painting has a wonderful sense of life and play. The artist moves the viewer through the painting by the use of directional strokes. These strokes also give the piece a wonderful surface and texture. The shapes tumble and morph into one another creating movement, like an ethereal dance. The warm and cool colors are rich and layered, creating a painting full of light and atmosphere.



Third Place Literature

Doctor, Patient and Friend

© Xiaowei William (Bill) Su MSIV MD/PhD Candidate

I met her when she was only four
They just moved to town; she needed shots
She heard me talking, asked, “Can I play with Harriet Lane?”
Clutching an examination glove balloon walking out the door.

At ten she was so confident!
Softball practice and slumber parties in fifth grade,
Gave me a drawing – does my tie really look like that?
Wrote: “For the grown-up who makes me feel better” (What a compliment!)

In high school she dyed her hair,
Blonde with green and red streaks – really bold
I saw this when it gave her a rash
Her mother scolded “I told you so!” (Her reply: “What do I care?”)

At eighteen she was so excited, but also wistful,
Moving two states for university, needed a checkup
I asked her what she wanted to study
“Literature, Art... maybe even Biology! But dissections make me bristle.”

Sophomore year I saw her before finals, time didn't seem right
“Great to see you, but why are you home?”
She replied something... all I heard was “mom” and “cancer”
Had come asking about staging, prognosis... I didn't sleep that night.

I came for the funeral as a family friend
She looked like – was – a college senior
Talked like someone ten years older
For once I was at a loss for words... she said to me, “by the way, I'll be studying medicine.”

Four years later a surprise came in the mail – a photo from her, and a letter
Reading glasses on, I glanced at the photo: graduation gown, cap and tassel, fiancé at her side
I was elated, couldn't have been more proud
“I'll always remember you, the grown-up who made me feel better.”

By now I was nearing retirement and getting old, hearing going and struggling to listen
My colleagues were all younger, smartphones and PDAs in their white coat pockets,
They gave me a watch at my going away party,
I returned home to my wife, my kids, five grandchildren.

One day my daughter was busy, asked me to take my grandson to the doctor, stop by the store.
My eyes beamed when the physician stepped in – it was her!
Cloaked in white coat and stethoscope, so deft with the exam, we could have talked for hours
As I left the office, tears in my eyes, I told her, “Take good care of my grandson, he's only four.”

Judge's Comments

This piece navigates the roles of the pediatrician and a particular patient through lingering vignettes that span years, life events, and ultimately, a changing of the guard. The compact stanzas accompany the doctor narrator from caring for a girl of four to her late teenage and post-college years. Notably, most stanzas include some fragment of dialogue, giving the once-girl-now-grown-woman the power of voice. The arc of the piece is deliberate and artful. Early on, the writer acts while the patient speaks. Later on, the writer retires while the patient now acts. The changing of the guard is complete as the writer entrusts his four year-old grandson to the care of his own former patient. Indeed, the orbit of relationships and roles arrives at its genesis and end.

Third Place Photography

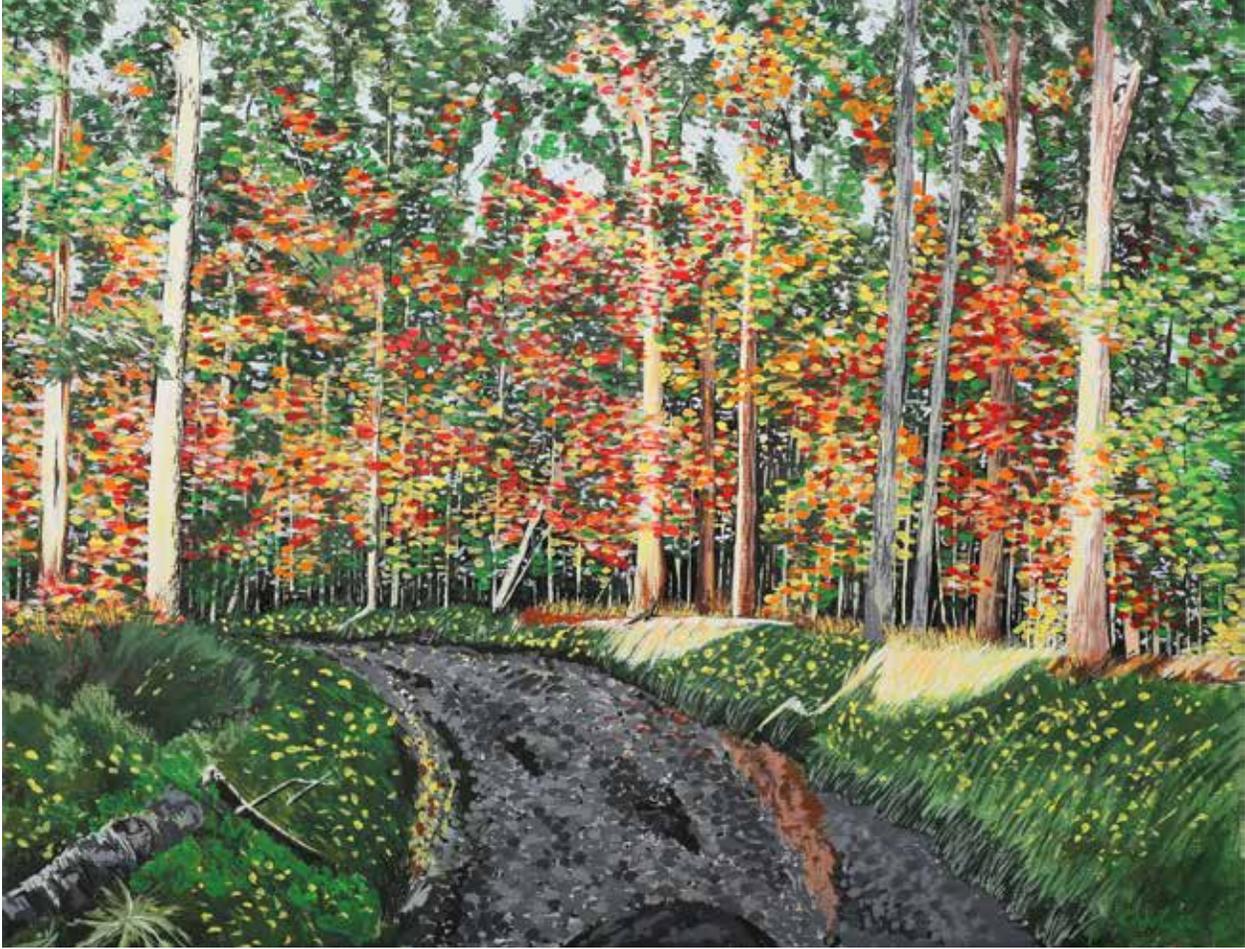


The Origin of Flight

©Michael J. Green, MD
Departments of Internal Medicine and Humanities

Judge's Comments

This vast old space is beautifully rendered in this image. At first glance, the size and proportion of the room is unclear. The people at the bottom and the convergent perspective lines provide the necessary sense of scale creating a feeling of grandeur. The coarse textures and earthen colors of the walls are wonderfully revealed in this well-exposed photograph. The window at the center of the image appears as both the light source and a strange oculus overlooking the entire scene.



A Study of Light in the Fall

© Charles Yoo MSIV

For a Lost Friend

© Ananya Das
Department of Orthopaedics
and Rehabilitation

Today I was trying to write a letter
To your parents
Wads of paper filled the bin
I still have nothing to write.
Should tell them
That in my dreams
We are forever riding
the rickety rickshaws
down the dusty roads of India?
You look cool even in the
sweltering heat of the sun
in your pastel blues and pinks.
We laugh and talk as always...
Nothing has changed
Nothing ever will.

Shadows of Sound

© Judy Schaefer, RN, MA
Member of The Doctors Kienle Center for
Humanistic Medicine

*You should have sold that upright piano
before the well went dry
Soprano voice swings from the oak tree
Now the silence casts a shadow
long and gray on the lawn
once surrounded by pickup trucks
No music now and no takers around
beyond the blue bottles in the bay window
Warped maple piano stands proud
Last vote in an auction with no credit card sales
The auctioneer throws up his hands,
stretches himself down into a shiny black sedan*

I Am a Shadow

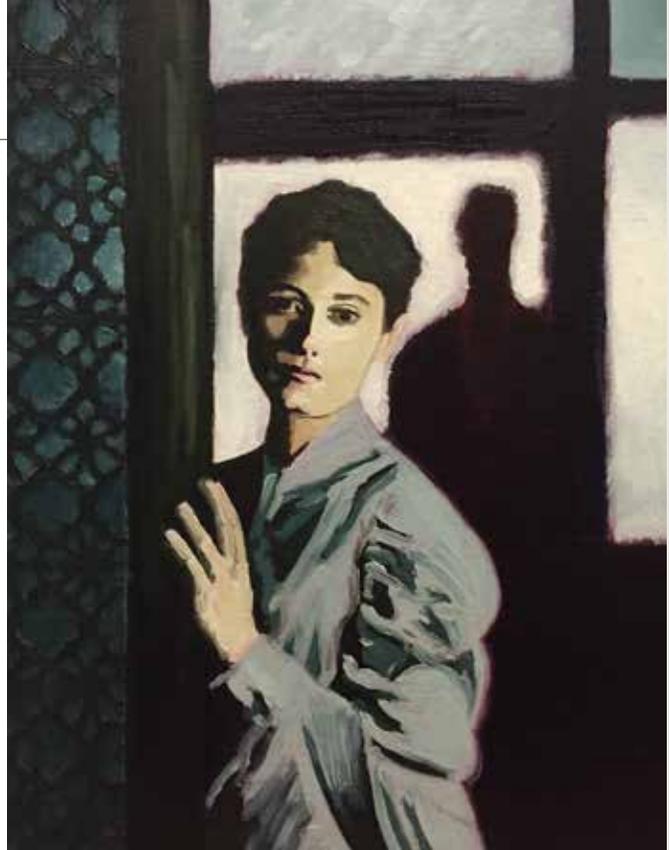
© John DeLucas Physician Assistant Student

I am a shadow,
Devout.
At the coffee shop
I hide behind your cup,
Your spoon
As close without touching.
As I can be.
I follow you to work
And know every step that you take
And how you take them.
And I paint your image
On anything imaginable.
An egg carton, a staircase, the ivory beach,
Possed by a muse.

I am unbiased.
Unlike others.
I will not change you.
I cannot.
Not the curves on your body
Nor the curls on your head.
And when that hair harnesses the wind,
We are completely kinetic.
I share the bitten pencil in your hand
And slip beneath your cotton sheets
As you sleep.
I watch you.
I am behind every corner in the daylight
And on your shower door.

I know that you notice me,
Because I let you.
And I love how you tease,
Lighting candles in your room,
Exhaling heat that ripples through me.
But you are as warm as a body
And I am a vacuum.
An absence.
My existence
Defined by this one wish:
To step out boldly
Like the sun
And illuminate your life.
And be your reason for waking.

But I am a shadow
And it seems a silly dream.



Treason

© David Yoder, MD
Department of Internal Medicine



Serenity

© Arunangshu Das, PhD
Biochemistry and Molecular Biology



New Sun in the Sky

© Spencer Katz MSIII
MD/PhD Candidate



Lady with the Lamp

© Rosanne Lamoreaux, BSN, RN Hemophilia Research Center

Quietly she walked purposefully among the rows of outreached souls,
Lamp steadily in hand, with a serene and gentle smile on her face,
Occasionally stopping to bend over and cover someone with a blanket,
Offer a sip of water or a hand to reposition or provide needed reassurance.
Her calm demure as tender as the softest of thick, winter wool blankets,
Kindness radiating from every pore of her tall, thin and graceful body.

I watched her every move intently, feeling as if under a temporary curse,
Totally mesmerized by the illusion she offered as she tended to the others.
Physically unable to avert my eyes, turn my head, or even move my legs,
Completely enrapt by her innate ability to offer solace and hope to strangers.
Outlined in fog, except for a small halo of light, as she made me feel safe,
In an otherwise extremely hostile, cold, and evil environment called war.

As she glided towards me, I realized her knees were bruised and feet bare,
When she knelt to accommodate a request, hush a cry or answer a plea.
Soles calloused and bleeding from hours of walking much as my own.
Though she seemed totally oblivious to her own intense pain and discomfort.
And as her presence grew closer and closer, I heard the whisper of her fabric,
Hanging from her body tattered and torn, a testament to her continued journey.

“How can I help you, dear sir”? she asked smiling, with the silkiest of tones,
“Are you warm enough? Do you need help turning? Would you like water?”
I was unable to answer her questions at first, struggling to think clearly,
Feeling as if her voice suddenly awoke me from long, drug-induced state.
“If you have the time, can you please stay with me for a little while?” I asked,
“It has been so many hours since anyone has come to check or talk to me.”

The Lady with the lamp did as I requested that night so very long ago,
She sat on the cold, hard ground next to me and quietly took my hand.
And as we both looked up at the full harvest moon, she started to sing,
Her beautiful voice slowly rising higher and higher up to the heavens.
I'll always believe I was spared that unforgettable night due to her kindness,
As if her prayers had been heard by God Himself, healing my body and soul.

Wanna Be Cool Layered wood-cut

© Carmen Marcucci
Daughter of Gina Marcucci
Department of Neural and Behavioral Sciences

Landscape Dream

© Kimberly Rush, MD Pediatric Resident

A snow filled landscape
Cold and blustering
A vision of endless despair

My eyes directed toward a movement
In the periphery of something small
Curiously distracted

I beheld a small creature, an infant
A baby eagle
Fallen from its nest
Of origin unknown

It's soft feathers fluffing outward
Maximized to a hopeless capacity.
The landscape forgotten
I knelt down

The bird unaware of anything but Cold
As it was Surrounded in extra cloth
Gentle warmth encircled the small soul
As it at last settled in
Peaceful depth, pocketed

Together we turned
My eyes set on a beautiful landscape
A vision of infinite hope.

A Smile

© Kate Belser MSIV

A concert from the heart,
A face turned to light,
As lines encircle with rouge.

An easier breath,
A brighter moment,
As affection permeates the room.

A soft glance
And dance of the eyes
As your soul opens mine.

A smile,
For no reason but,
To smile.

Mount Ranier

© Michael Katzman, MD
Department of Medicine



How to Love the Broken Girl

© Emily Hess Patient

Love her bloodshot eyes, the tears that brine her cheeks,
Her ratty, snarled hair.

Love her even as she chokes down her morning Prozac,
As if the green-cream capsule can bring her back to life.

Love her like she's still whole, bring her flowers,
But be sure to take the blossoms back before
She has to watch the slow degrees of entropy,
And feel the same.

There's a balance, see,
between loving the girl
And loving the brokenness. You have to love her
when the moonlight paints blue shadows
on her salt-slick skin,
And her dead eyes glaze
with sorrow and rage as yours fill
with fear. Love her in the space where
she cannot love herself, love the hands
that bruise and cut her, love
her hands.

Love the raw and ragged wrists, even
Kiss them, kiss the blood back into them.

Love her like you loved her when she was alive,
Until you find
You loved the dead girl—
the broken girl,
the ragged, ravished, gasping girl—
All along

Carry Me Home*

© Cody Page Palliative Care

Fly to the sun,
Fly to the star,
Though I may go,
I'll never be far.

By Monarch wing,
Carry me home,
Watch now as I fly,
Allow my spirit to roam.

With your love,
I am set free,
Always with you,
Never forget me.

**Written for Palliative Care's first Annual
Celebration of Life Butterfly Release in honor
of patients who were lost.*

Cuyabeno

© Eustina Kwon MSII



Crown

© Mark Nakhla MSIII

My dad used to work the 9 to 5,
No, scratch that.
He didn't even have the suit and tie for it.
He traded those away with his golden years for me.
And he never looked back, not even for a moment.
At least I hope he didn't. That's what he keeps on telling me
anyway.

One day he called and said he'd be home soon.
How was school today, he asked.

It was fine, except for that one kid I told you about yesterday.
He kept ragging on my broken English. How I was 3rd world born.
I would've cursed back but I didn't know the words to say.
By 8th grade the insults changed a little bit
From harmless efforts to kids calling me a foreigner.
Some even called me a terrorist.
It was like our politics infiltrated PBS.

Young boys spewing men's words.
And I chose to remember them.
My dad taught me
That getting pointed out for being different
Either stings like a bee
Or fits tight like a crown.
I live the latter.

The Distant Star

© Tony Lin MSIII

In search of a new star
To find someone who understands
For this one I have long outgrown
I traveled far, long and wide
Seeking new planets in distant systems
But none understood me
I was once proud and tall
But I wilted down to my bulb
Losing my green vibrance to a creeping crawl of yellow
And just like that
I faded from view
Lost within the blackness
Oh, these sad and lonely eyes
Having seen countless times
What only the darkness of
The starry nights really knew.



Soccer in the Yard

© Keane McCullum MSII

Harakiri

© Roger H. Ford Patient





From the Clouds

© Kelly Perkins
Physician Assistant Student



Nectar of Life

© Yan Leyfman MSI



I Dreamt a Passport

© Elias Harkins Son of Gerald Harkins, MD
Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology

What if there was a passport
 For you alone?
 It was stamped full, but never too much
 Always room for more
 Some pages held country stamps,
 Of the lands you had and were to be seen?
 Other pages held cities, communities, towns
 All across.
 When I looked at mine, I saw strange stamps,
 Impromptu, scrawled, unique.
 They held words like “Cancer”, “Abused” and “Lonely”.
 I saw three which said “Just finished crying”
 Others said “Wept soon after”
 Some said “Scared of future”
 Others said that they feared the past.
 I saw stamps with words all over, some too aching to repeat.
 I saw more stamps saying that there was nothing left to live for;
 I hope they changed
 I looked at these stamps for hours,
 engrossed in what the next page would bring.
 Would one say “Saved life”? Another confessing love for me?
 I sought too long.
 As I slept, I realized what these stamps meant.
 They were the societies, the cultures, the lives
 I had interacted with.
 I smiled that night, knowing what I had seen and what it meant.
 At dawn, I woke and pulled it out again
 but it was blank.
 As I learned which groups I had impacted,
 they then impacted me.
 So I had not entered anywhere,
 but was a resident for all.
 So, as all belong to me,
 I belong to all.
 I am a resident of all.

Journey of Dreams at Grand Teton

© Sathya Riyapan, MD
Emergency Medical Services Fellow

A Ripple in a Dream

© Justin Walker MSII

I dreamed a dream of a life with meaning. One where my every action rippled
Through fluorescent-white halls - a rock thrown in a glassy lake.

When I opened the letter and closed my eyes I could finally see it –
A child's tears turned to smiles and laughter; 12-leads broken up by an adhesive-coated princess set
delicately on her tiny chest.

A grandmother soothed by the warm grasp of a hand and listening ear;
People I helped, lives I changed.

That envelope held the key to my reverie.
A vision of four long years, turned to reality.

But the dream I dreamed is still just a dream.

I still close my eyes to see the smiling mother with her newborn baby;
I still must drift away to find those ripples in the reflected sky.

I am like a feather falling gently on the lake – nothing disturbed, nothing changed.
No waves felt by the nearby lily. The life below barely disturbed.
I stare past a back-lit screen in a book-filled room, searching for a face to put to the words;
An intersection of my life and theirs. Something tangible. Something real.

Fruitless, I return to lines of words and wait for darkness, where sleep will carry me to a place
Where my life is lived for others.
Where every effort serves another.
Where a butterfly beats its wings, and a life is changed

Otter Be Asleep

© Corrine Gibilterra

Department of Family and Community Medicine



An Open Letter to the Human Race

© Sarah Benich MSI

An old, whimsical grandfather clock presents some of his musings, which he would like to share after years of observing humanity.

‘Ello dear Creatures of the Human Race,

No good letter is without introduction. And because I have had a moment or two to spare over the years, t’would be nice for this to be a jolly good letter. In the way of a kindly old grandfather, I wanted to share with you some thoughts based on my observations, that you may accept or reject at your judgment (As for the vanity of humans, consult the mirror on my left, which holds secrets which I cannot fathom).

‘Twas 1845 when I was borne in the bowels of the Swissman’s disheveled backroom. Amidst a primordial soup of strewn-about gears, sawdust-covered rejected wooden boards, and clockmaker’s perplexed brow, I was conceived. Soon thereafter, I was sold into the living room of a well-to-do gentleman where I remained-- generation after generation-- until the present. I was simultaneously an intrusive singer and a forgotten heirloom. Truth be told, I cannot blame the Homo sapiens. They spend much of their time beyond the four walls of this living room, so I have been content to be the patient observer of all that occurs therein. Besides, I like to think that I am consulted for my wisdom rather than my good looks any-a-ways.

The Homo sapien is indeed a strange creature. Each of the people seems to operate according to unspoken rules, though I am getting better at figuring them out day by day. They have temperaments and regular speech patterns, and a marvelous thing known as “personality”. Don’t even get me started about “what is meant” by something! Quite often, my peaceful evening is interrupted by the teenaged female on her cellular phone, complaining about “how Christine said that, and then Tiffany was insulted by Megan, which caused the splitting of friendship between Tia and Maria, which led to the eventual demise of Mark and Julie’s romantic relationship”. Aye! Perhaps there is a phase of human development most associated with increased irrationality and decreased intuition.

Most spectacular to me is that the humans live in this material world, yet constantly speak of abstract concepts such as fear, brotherhood, hope, and

intrigue. They eat, dance, play, and recline in this living room, yet they seem to live for an alternate room called “The World”. All I can gather of “The World,” I have garnered from conversation, books left open, and the occasional computer screen. For some, “The World” is a dark place to evade. It is full of dreadful creatures such as “alligators”, “gunmen”, and “The IRS”, all of which seem to require constant surveillance to avoid. Personally, I would probably be the most fearful of the “Furby” creature, which seems to be the most frightening monster in the developed nations.

From others, however, I am given a much different view of “The World”. Here, it is brimming with opportunity, sublime experience, and community. A place to “try a sandwich with a new type of spicy mayonnaise” or “pursue your dreams”. Here, an encounter with another Homo Sapien is a chance to learn and develop new skills, whatever that may entail.

While I am not entirely sure how to reconcile these two seemingly-dichotomous views, one thing is “curious and curiouser still” (I read that line in an opened literature book with the girl named Alice, whose nightmares were misnomered as “wonders”... but I digress). Both groups are bound by Time. I know not whether Time is The Enemy or the devoted friend. It is somewhat like the eager water boy, who does not know whether he is being taken advantage of by the football team, or if he should relish his honorable position.

No, I am not Time myself—it is much grander and larger than I, a humble Swiss grandfather clock. I read about Time once when a laptop was left open...I think it is but the equivalent of the Homo sapiens doing--how shall we say--” ‘Googling’ one’s own name”. My ancestors measured Time in their shifting shadows, marked by the solar movements. But Time was still the Master, the force that we Time-bearers could only hope to approximate. Time is wholly impartially, not showing favoritism between the horrid and the joyful events.

You humans, too, are Time-bearers. I have seen Time be a cruel Master, as you wait anxiously for the telegram at the door during the Great War, my

ominous ticking a reminder of what was going on in “The World”. I have seen Time become a gentle companion, watching you humans fall in love before my very eyes. (To you hopeful young lads, I strongly recommend Frank Sinatra. Please steer clear of that blasted fool named Justin Beetle or Justin Baby... I cannot quite remember, but I am sure you can figure it out). Much of the time, Time is forgotten. Occasionally, an angry person wags his finger at me for my dutiful ticking. But I hope he will not shoot the messenger (Shakespeare was quite well-spoken), for I am a bearer to what I do not fully comprehend. No servant is greater than his Master, and I am certainly no exception.

But aye! Show me a man with a well-lived life, and I could wager (though I am not a betting stopwatch) that he had oft considered my Master Time. You see, though we are both Time-bearers, you humans have the greatest advantage: You can grow and change. You and I are both made of dust. Yet! You can live! Of all the human traits that befuddle me and perplex me the most, it is the ability to feel, to Love.

Aye, to have loved! If only! So many in life are but silent observers: the plants, the minerals, the rocks. 'Tis the rare creature who can feel. But feeling! It is a strength of the human race. To consider it a weakness is the talk of fools, who have hid it beyond reach and cannot experience it for themselves. For those who insist they cannot love—poppycock! It can be learned, for it is not too late. As long as you can see beauty, a uniquely human trait. Grow, adapt, and learn, for time is the great equalizer among men. It is the fractional movements of my ticker hand that can encompass the greatest impact. Humans are the lucky ones, for they can feel, imagine, and dream.

From one Time-bearer to another, just promise an old clock that you will come back and tell me about “The World”.

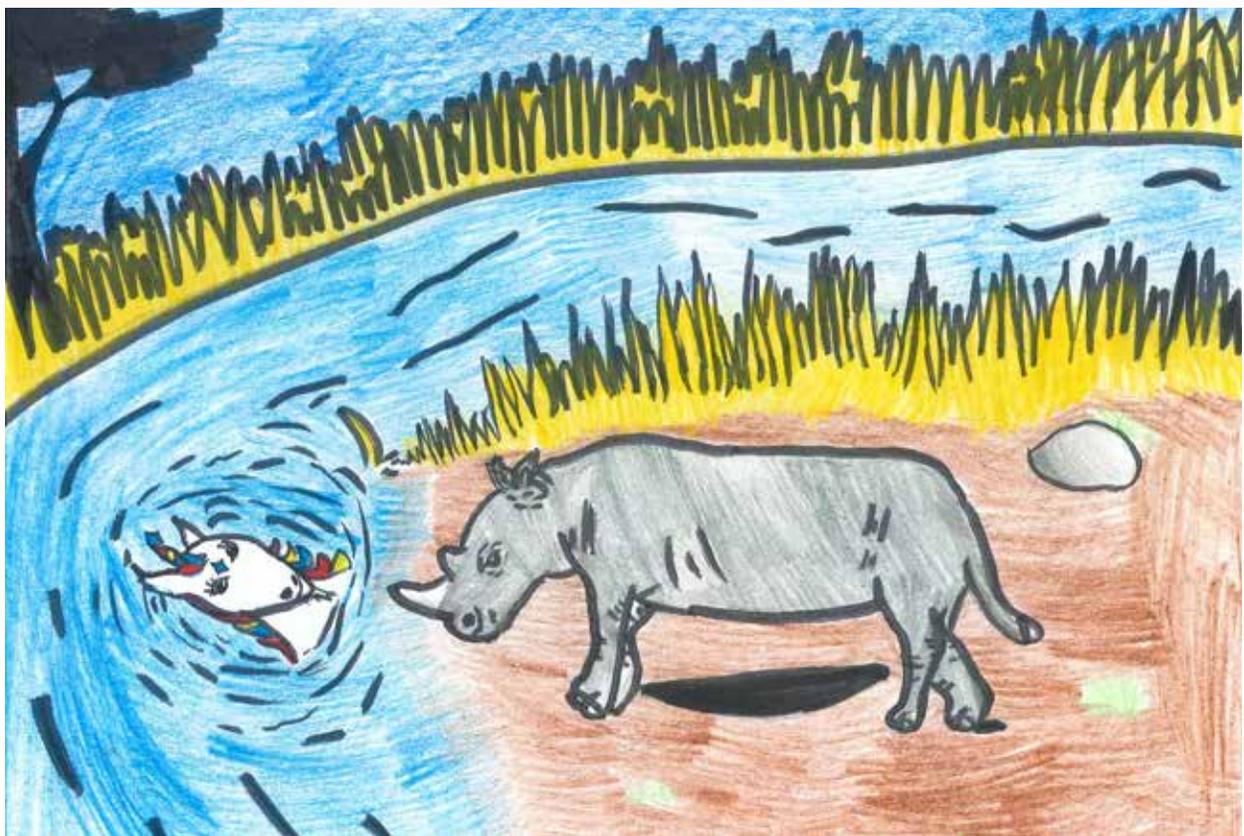
Cheers,

Your Humble Observer

He's Dreaming!

©Jessica Matincheck Age 10

Daughter of Lynn Matincheck Department of Humanities



Shadow Memory

© Tony Oliveri Patient

Once

I held a photograph
of three stately women
on a wind swept beach.

It's the only evidence
I have ever seen
of my Gramma
attired that way.

Blue cotton print house dresses
Sparkling glass buttons on church dresses
full aprons and rolled up stockings.
I never saw her wear a pair of socks.

A "bone in her knee"
might keep her from play,
but her ample lap
was always ready for a tired child.

She let kids sort buttons
from a magical tin.
"Tuck one in your pocket"
I often heard her say.

She always knew -
a wily old girl.
I could trust her,
with anything I had.

The shadows of then
persist through today.
That look in her eyes
That sweet solid self.

Beyond the Red Kitchen

© Nelson Onyango MSIV

Out you come, paws
dirty, from playing
outside. Tail wagging from your happiness
Inside.

Inside, your master lies on
a medical bed, cancer
eating up his esophagus and stomach
from the inside out.

You stand there,
hoping waiting,
for a treat so true, you jump on the bed. He
smiles,
wishing life was as loyal as you.
He writhes and moans
Wishing you could know that he has but a
year and a half
That beyond that red kitchen
Lies a world so wretched.

Out you come, face
eager from missing your master.
Tail wagging, but just tentatively
Despair.

Inside, no bed, no master.
You stop wagging your tail.
No bed to jump on. No treat.
But a trick. Beyond that red kitchen
Your master disappeared, where to?

Lounging

© Micah Ann Sheppard Age 12 Patient



Honorable Mention Art



Lake Perez

© Holly Boyle MSIV

Judge's Comments

This is a lovely landscape rich in color, light and atmosphere. The strong use of perspective takes the viewer through the piece from the foreground to a section of delightfully rendered trees and beyond into imaginary space. The different brush strokes also move the viewer around and through the painting in an active and “blustery” way.

Honorable Mention Photo



Out to Sea

©Dasha Nesterova MSII

Judge's Comments

The lonely baby turtle must cross what appears as an immense distance to begin his young life. The tone of the photograph is cool suggesting early morning or late evening. The little turtle is wonderfully placed in the lower right foreground with the sea appearing as a thin strip at the top, with a vast distance in between. This image creates a feeling of hopefulness and sympathy for the plight of this little one. We are reminded of our own journey home and primal struggle for life.

His April Winter

© Rev. David B. Simmons, DMin, BCC Chaplain, Palliative Care & Trauma Services

“I’m going to die in April. I don’t want to die in April.”

There were more days left in April than his body could endure. The gruesome pain that contorted his face was part leukemia and part anguish. James, the 36 year old husband and father, did not fear dying. He feared dying in April. His wife’s birthday was in April. His daughter’s birthday was in April. April was joy. But no longer. April’s joy would be marked and marred by grief’s relentless grip.

Watching James, I pressed deeply into my own anguish in a desperate attempt to offer “empathy,” but a temporary awareness of death’s despair is not the experience of it. He was on that side of The Line between the living and the dying, between those with a future and those with only right now, between those with the hope of May and those with only April. I listened to his tears. I grieved for him. I hoped for him. Feeling futile all the while. He was alone, even with me in the room. I offered a prayer, to which he desperately clung. He offered tender gratitude and held long to my hand. And cried. After a long silence, I stepped into my future beyond the door. I would never see him again.

James’s suffering clung to me until routine rescued me. The weekend came, and beyond the duties of father and husband, I awaited the arrival of a meteor shower that cried out to be photographed. I set my alarm for the middle of the night – early Monday morning, actually – set my tripod, and aimed my camera at the eastern sky... and waited. But nothing came. No streaks of light. No dazzling display. No photographic reward. The moon was just too bright.

I wiped my tired eyes and turned to curse the source of my disappointment. But what I saw melted my frustration into sacred fear. The moon hanging just over me, was surrounded by a perfect circle of light. It seemed so close that I almost reached for it. As I stared perplexed, my primitive fear melted into warm, sacred peace. The great mystery lasted only moments before it was dissolved by my mental calculations. I reasoned that with lunar light shining through the haze in the sky, this must be... a rainbow. Technically, it was a 22 degree lunar halo that forms when sunlight, reflected from the moon, strikes millions of tiny hexagonal ice crystals embedded in high, thin cirrus clouds.

I turned my camera around and began to shoot.

I arrived to work only a few hours later to learn that James had died. I hastily turned to my calendar with irrational hope. The date: April 22. Time of death: 5:32 a.m. I sat with sadness, numbness, and survivor’s guilt, flashing back and forth between two sacred experiences - my brief moment with James and my still-fresh memory of the lunar rainbow. I was filled with both wonder and emptiness. In the moments James was surrendering to his April Winter, I had stood warmed by an incredible light. Was this a sign? Was this a symbol of transcendence in the face of senseless loss? Was this The Light calling him home? I sure hoped for it.

While James hoped for a May that never came, my April passed. And May welcomed me. With joy for my family. With hope for another lunar rainbow. And with many questions.

Dream in Color

© Renee R. Stewart, MS Department of Humanities



Time Travel Back Through a Childhood in a Farm House

© Judy Schaefer, RN
Member of The Doctors Kienle Center
for Humanistic Medicine

I walk back through the farm house
past the stove that burned hot heat
(even the sides glowed rosy red)
on snowy winter days, it was there
that I pulled off wet gray mittens
and hung them on a pine peg to dry

Does my apparition disturb the work there
of a farm that continues regardless of snow
cold

brown hunting dog on the porch, begging to be let in
milking buckets skimming with slivers of ice
cold

does my younger self see me, sense me
and wonder what chill wind came into the house

Like fluttering back the pages
for a passage in a beloved book
But not finding it, I don't give up
(stubborn as a bone white ghost)
I still scan the house for memories
But like a polite guest, I do offer apologies

I Woke Up to Darkness Today

© Lynelle David Patient

Although the waning day
Still briefly held
The brightness of the sun

Although this setting sun
Threw color bands
Of salmon-pink and rosy grey
Across the sky

And tho' the dying autumn leaves
That bare the trees
Are bravely vibrant in their falling
-- What choice have they?

And bearing grief
That pulls the color from my face
The movement from my limbs
The laughter from my eyes
-- What choice have I?



Foliage

© Cat McDermott MSI



Lifelong Learning

© Kaitlin Mirkin, MD Surgical Resident

The Big O

©Maureen Julian, PhD Mother of Dr. Kathleen Julian MD, Infectious Diseases and Patient Caregiver

I have the big O!
Oh my O I have the big O
I have ovarian cancer.
Some time ago I had a million million ordinary cells;
One secret cell became special and told its friends. The secret cell never spoke to me.
One special
Two special
A cornucopia of special cells.
I went to work.
I did a million million ordinary things.
I cooked our meals and spoke with friends; I fixed a zipper.
I watched our newly decolleged children begin their special voyage.
A daughter, a son, our finger in the future.
My husband had a bypass.
We had a million million worries.
I got a bread machine and cooked our non fat meals. We went to work.
I watched him cross his leather slippered feet and read the *New York Times*. I know I'll be a widow.

I went to work.
I took a trip, but only felt a bit of fullness now and then.
Those fibroids must come out!
But alas *Götterdämmerung!*
I have the big O!
Oh my O I have the big O
You know the news is bad when your surgeon's frowns.
Stage IV is bad; it means those nonordinary cells are found in other places. Like intestines, lymph nodes.
Only Stage V is worse. The liver, the brain, the final coupe.

I have the big O!
Oh my O I have the big O
The tests, oh the tests! My CA-125 rages to nearly sixty from the ordinary thirty.
Platinum, taxol, tingly fingers, tingly toes, no sleep, no hair, no taste, no work, no life.
The weeks revolve, first the chemo week, then the AFTER chemo week, then the GOOD week.
My GOOD week would be for you a BAD BAD week.

Platinum, taxol, tingly fingers, tingly toes, no sleep, no hair, no taste, no work, no life
Platinum, taxol, tingly fingers, tingly toes, no sleep, no hair, no taste, no work, no life.
Platinum, taxol, tingly fingers, tingly toes, no sleep, no hair, no taste, no work, no life.
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Platinum, taxol, tingly fingers, tingly toes, no sleep, no hair, no taste, no work, no life.
Platinum, taxol, tingly fingers, tingly toes, no sleep, no hair, no taste, no work, no life.

I have the big O!
Oh my O I have the big O
I have the big O!
Oh my O I have the big O
Finally the cycles stop. My body can take no more.
I am almost dead, but are my special cells with me yet?
Cat scan, cat scan on the wall
Who's the fairest cell of all?

My CA 125 is at last under thirty. One would think I'm normal!

The Rash

© Lauren Nord MSII

Her mother walked in
While she trailed behind,
Eyes on the ground,
One thing on her mind.

We ushered her in,
And she sat in the chair.
The small girl clearly wished
To be anywhere but there.

“So what brings you in?”
We asked the pair.
The mom said (in Spanish),
“She has spots everywhere.”

The girl looked embarrassed
As she pulled on her sweater
Covering up her arms
Despite the stiflingly hot weather.

We asked if we could see,
And she grudgingly showed us
The dark circles with light centers,
Some new lesions, and some with crust.

The spots covered her arms,
And her legs looked the same.
The doctor checked her book;
“Papular Urticaria” was the rash’s name.

Thrilled to diagnose
Something new to the Brigade,
The doctor called over colleagues
While the girl’s arms and legs were displayed.

Students and clinicians
Came to examine the rash,
Asking the doctor questions
While a phone camera flashed.

The girl was still and quiet
As she was poked high and low,
The people around her
Speaking a language she didn’t know.

As I watched this little girl
Looking away from us and her family,
I wondered if we treated her rash
But forgot her humanity.



The Smile

© Alexandra Adams, MPH MSII



Life Interrupted

© Robert Ganse
Information Technology



Now You Don't

© Keane McCullum MSII



Jefferson's Cherries

© Katelin Mirkin, MD Surgical Resident



New Normal

© Mark Nakhla MSIII

I was a kid before I was a runaway
And I find myself wishing that sometimes I'd hit the brakes
And stop.

And break into a dance, break into a rhythm.
Prance instead of jog.

One, two three, One, two three
Break

Into a rhythm
Where I lay paint over the same canvas
Over and over

Just because I can.
Because time allows me to.
Because time transforms from a limit to a currency.

But I'm not supposed to have any of it anymore. Time, I mean.
That's the new normal.

I ONLY see coffee as caffeine. Fuel.
I ONLY see breaks as rest. Recovery.
I ONLY see myself as a list. Accomplishments. Failures.

Time provides the blinders and leaves little room for the periphery.
I long for the periphery. The unnoticed. The missteps.
The not so little things that I've convinced myself are little.

I was a kid before I was a runaway.
I want to stop running towards this new normal

Grape Vines

© Scott Paradise MSIV

Tortuous grape vines
climbed over gnarled shoots of elephant grasses jutting
outwards to circumvent overgrown bush.

Flowing brooks splashed against water-hewn rocks and eddied around
elbowed embankments to empty into narrow gulfs
where brackish water mixed like chocolate syrup in whirlpools
of arcing reeds among stretched leathery mangrove roots.

But her heart kept beating, like a pillow
adamantly lashed against one's sheets; each strike with a little less
vigor than before.

Croatian Wine on the Vine

© Gordon Kauffman, MD
Department of Surgery

Going Home

© Tony Lin MSIII

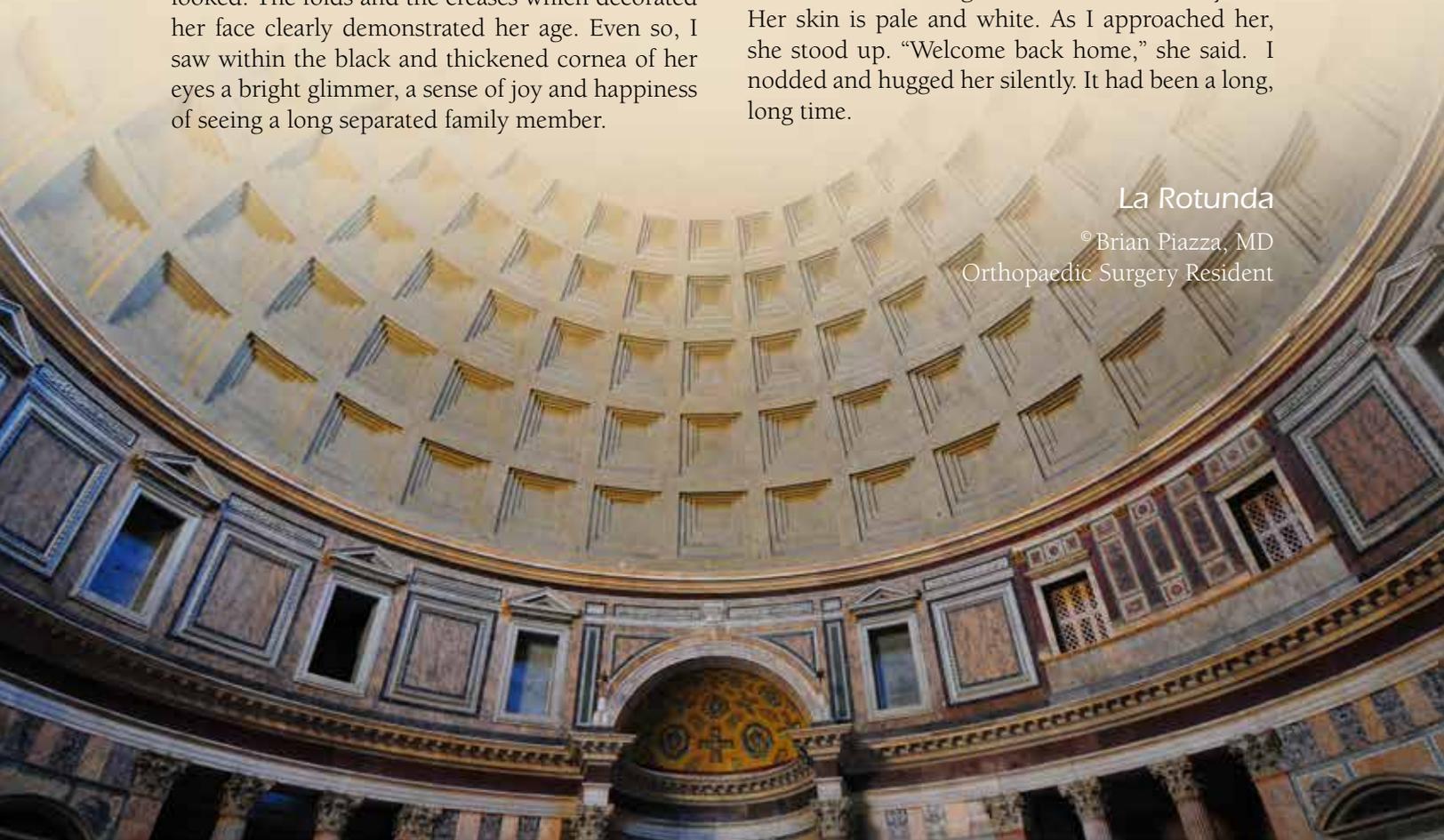
I was gently awakened from my nap by the air conditioner's refreshing breath as it cooled my neck. Looking out the car window, I peered towards the horizon, watching as the road grew coarse and brown, with each spin of the wheel kicking up puffs of dirt mixed with soot. The roar of the jackhammers and the growl of the trucks that carried bundles of iron rods needed for construction were absent, leaving only an awkward silence to fill the void. All that was left was just me, my mom and the low and constant drone of the Buick as we drove through a barren and dry countryside to visit my aunt.

Getting out of the car, I was promptly welcomed by my aunt who was waiting along the side of her home. She was 75 years old, and her home was dull and brown, having lost their vibrant colors to time and soot. Despite never meeting me before, my aunt instantly recognized me and hugged me tight. As we walked back to her home, she held my arm with her weathered hands which seemed to know the backbreaking labor of the countryside all too well. Each step she took was slow and deliberate. I looked into her eyes and noticed just how tired she looked. The folds and the creases which decorated her face clearly demonstrated her age. Even so, I saw within the black and thickened cornea of her eyes a bright glimmer, a sense of joy and happiness of seeing a long separated family member.

I will always remember that walk that I had with my aunt. And sometimes at night, I would wake up and find myself in the front seat of an old Buick with a cold gust of air breathing down my neck and the low and steady drone of the engine in the background. I look out the window and see the same dusty brown road from many years ago. Except now, when I approach my aunt's home, I can clearly see the cherry-colored bricks that lined her front walkway and the reddened wood which made up her quaint and quiet place. Walking up to her front door, I notice the medium-sized plum tree which guarded over her residence. The tree's branches reached high in the air with hundreds of pink blossoms swaying their petals in the cool summer wind, displaying their elegance. The blossoms glimmered and their dew drops reflected the bright and soothing rays of the morning sun off its delicate and fresh petals. And as I walk closer, I notice my aunt sitting at the base of the plum tree with a book in her hands. She sees me coming and stands, grasping the book close to her chest. This time, she is without her walking stick. Her hands are smooth and delicate. Her eyes are soft, devoid of the backbreaking labor of the countryside. Her skin is pale and white. As I approached her, she stood up. "Welcome back home," she said. I nodded and hugged her silently. It had been a long, long time.

La Rotunda

© Brian Piazza, MD
Orthopaedic Surgery Resident



Waging Peace

©Linda Amos Wife of Liver Transplant Patient

It begins —

As a small infant,
When your sobbing Mother picks you up.
out of your crib,
And holds you close to her chest,
Baptizing you in her tears, saying,
“This is no legacy to leave you, my child.”

It begins —

As a young toddler,
When your parents are arguing,
And you crawl up on your Mommy’s lap,
Wrap your little arms around her neck, saying
“Don’t cry Mommy.”

It begins —

As a preschooler,
When you come between the neighborhood bully
And his victim, your best friend playmate.
And you get your nose bloodied,
Inadvertently, in the confrontation, saying,
“It’ll be all right.”

It begins —

As an elementary school student,
When on the playground you mediate the conflicts
Over choosing sides for the baseball game at recess.
Empathetically, knowing how hurtful it is
To be chosen last for either team, saying,
“I’ll watch and cheer for both sides.”

It begins —

As a middle school student,
When on the school bus,
You stick-up for the kid who’s “different”
You wrap your arm around his shoulder, saying,
I’ll be your friend... all you need is one!”

It begins —

As a high school student,
When your grandfather’s generation
Declares a “political war” sending in “advisors”
And you remain active making posters saying,
War is unhealthy for children and
other living things!”

It begins —

When you have your own children
And you teach them right from wrong.
To stand up and to speak out
When they learn of or witness examples
Of “man’s inhumanity to man”
Teaching your children to separate
the deed from the doer.

It ends —

When you take your last breath —
Waging peace is a difficult path to follow —
But a necessary one if mankind is to survive.

Pura Vida

© Cameron Incognito MSII



Fifty Years to Home Plate

© Jeff Fehrler Patient

It was wonderful to taste leather again.

Waiting in the outfield with his glove shielding his face from gnats, peeking between fingers at the batter and absently gnawing on and tightening a loose lace.

He had anticipated it, but the sudden tsunami of memories from when he was his grandson's age, this silent, sweeping flood of half-century-old names and unaged faces. As sharp as yesterday when a lifetime earlier he couldn't remember college algebraic solutions from one weekly test to the next.

Like a photo album had been leafed open in his mind or as he stared in at the backstop holograms had materialized.

"Sink," G.K., "Bee-vans," Jack, Damien, Carl, Lonny, "Toadie," brothers Bill and Joe, "Fella," Mike and "Buzzy," Larry, Rollie, "Treeman" and "Butch."

He could see everyone of them.

So grand, a kind of majesty, to be ranging beneath an arcing white orb, finding that shrinking then swelling pearl in a blue sky and positioning and repositioning himself--two hands on a glove raised--to finally feel it lodge and burrow in the webbing. Memorable to be intercepting a comet line drive on one hop and firing it into the cutoff man. Oh he'd pay for that in the morning.

It was devolution, this fleeting hour or two, when summer was baseball after breakfast until lunch, the biking back to the field until supper, usually arriving late to chastising parental eyebrows and a sentence or two; then clustering a third time and picking different teams and playing until torpid dusks made the ball dangerous.

Because the sport and the friends were hot, outdoors activity, hours timeless but fast like the years that had passed. No school, no responsibilities, only trying to turn a double play.

But unrealizing then, unappreciated this blessing.

One evening there was the final out and in the morning friends' houses and the diamond were empty, lost from their lives to drivers' licenses and first dates and part-time jobs. Age had evicted them.

Where had all this gone? Where had they gone? Florida, Atlanta, Ohio, Oregon, California, everywhere else. Denominator: Missing, away... forever. So swiftly! Why hadn't they savored each minute, each swing and hit and joy? Blinded by youth to the future inhabited by adults they would become.

Unseeing. Youth doesn't. Tunnel-visioned. Today only. Tomorrow was a given, automatic, seemingly unchanging, another day, no further, blinked daylights of chasing baseballs and ahead was stretching a single into a double. Time was a base path and a moment was reaching the next sack.

Too late he saw, this old witness.

No one took pictures. Why? To preserve what? They were in their eternity.

"Sink" became a professor. "Buzzy" a State Police helicopter pilot, Lonny in TV and appliance repair, G.K. a biology teacher, Carl high up in banking, Jack to an Air Force career, "Fella" working in Washington, Larry and Mike to state positions. Others vanished. Probably all were retired.

Damien, "Butch," and Rollie died in Vietnam.

His older son's surprising call to knock some around at Sunset Park returned him, he alone from those mirage friends, to see them and chronicle it in and from his memory.

And then they were done. It was over. His sons and grandson were bagging bats and rounding up hardballs, the late afternoon very slowly shading the past.

He hesitated, then trotted toward them like after the last out. He hoped they would do this again. Fun for the father, too, but coming in across that rarefied emerald diamond, he swerved to the third base chalk and toed home, the cornerstone of the trinity of bases, the pentangular star of innocence and carefree and rawhide souls as white, smooth, unblemished and valued as a brand-new ball.

He saw it now as a prayer, a celebration and gratefulness for life.

Too, he had learned the present lingered not a second and was continual yesterdays, changing and aging, future-striving with human hostages. Time never repeated exactly; its recurrences were only similar, coincidences of chance or karma. Perhaps a sort of closure.

A Facebook fifty years after home plate some still remember.

When their cars left, phantom wind players, maybe holograms, came out of the twilight, moving the grass and kicking up infield dust, inciting a murmur from the trees sounding like fans before the start of the game.

The symbolism of Sunset Park would remind him later that night while he sat under their same old stars.

I Am Not My Diagnosis

© Sigmund David Patient

I do not just merely survive I thrive Just because I have spent Years Over the years In hospitals Just because My behavior Was stigmatized I understand Severe paranoia Disturbed thinking Mania Depression Spending Sprees Parents Who thought The doctors Had all the answers They tried To stamp out my Personality With ECT Electro shock therapy But failed In 1970 I put my foot down I did not want My brain Fried Again I could Not think The same way I considered The treatment Barbaric	Thousands Of hours Of listening To all kinds Of music Rewired My brain But it took Decades All the doctors Could Do was To label Me From the DSM I felt branded And cursed I am Not my Illness I have friends Who love me and who I love I know Who I am Even When My illness Flares up No matter It is My situation I don't care What the DSM Says I am a Father And have two kids Yes, My first Marriage Disintegrated	My illness Really had Nothing To do With it Although My wife Thought I was the Problem That was Her problem I was graced With a second wife Who loves me The way I am My diagnosis Does Not matter I take My pills Every day In the morning And evening And then Forget about them Afterwards My doctor gave me Back my life I once asked him whether I had a right To a normal Existence?! Maybe, marry Even have a family? I had felt cursed For decades I felt I had the plague	And his answer was immediate: 'You have As much right as Anyone else!' At that point I got My life back. I never Linger Too long In the darkness The devil Does not Have his way With me Any longer Instead I seek Out the Light, Bask in The Lord's Presence I know My identity Is not my illness Manic Depression Bipolar Disorder Schizophrenia Are just A few of The labels Others use They are the Devil's kingdom I banish Him And face the Light My mental illness No longer Bothers me There is no More darkness	I also Linger In the now And seek And reach out To others Even a Smile May Change Someone's Life I am no longer Concerned With The paper Credentials I never earned I just could Not succeed In that domain Anyway, I am now Sixty-seven And it no longer Matters I am What I am Not despite My illness But Because Of it As I said I do not Merely Survive I Thrive
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Long Distance

© Daniel R. Wolpaw, MD
Department of Humanities

I had a call from a friend last night.
One of my kids told me, but
I was distracted, creating some kind
of relief, shapes on a canvas
that were beginning to look like the earth,
like continents. I needed Australia.
Anyway, I was concentrating on the emerging.
Out of focus for calls. And it was not
until moments later that I realized
I had not heard from him in a while,
not since some time before his memorial service,
where I shared with the group how hard it was
to be his friend, how he made me
remember what was important, what we
talked about years ago on dark hillsides,
when certainty was not a memory, and
the continents were fully formed.

Dolomites

© Rebecca Volpe, PhD
Department of Humanities

Fountain Head Tribute

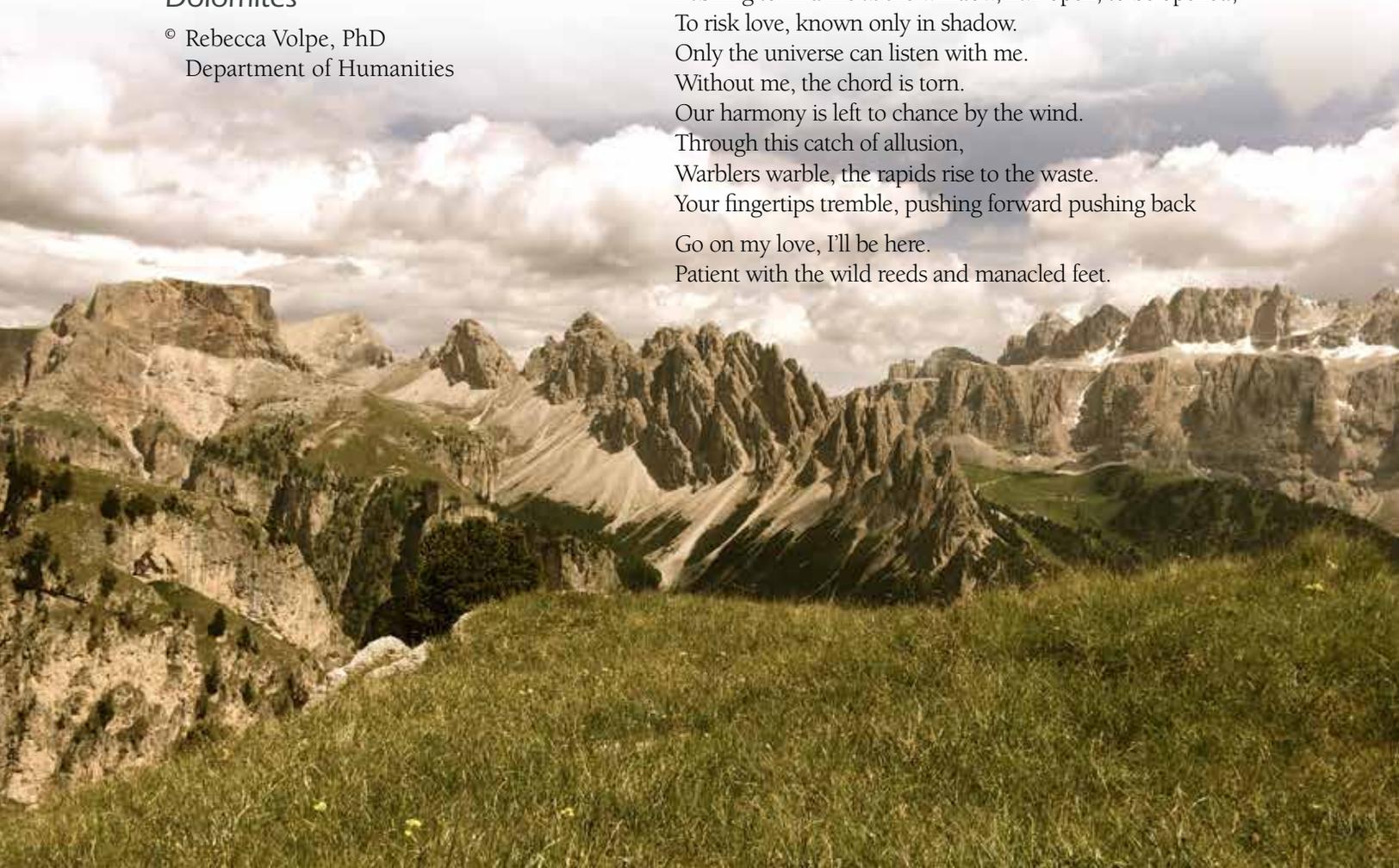
© Kimberly Rush, MD Pediatric Resident

The milky shades of a soft, dusk evening
Play at my temple an ancient tune.

Standing still at the base of a hill
Unwavering and chiding,
The view extends beyond the peak and just over.
A reed tickling the base of my ankle
Threatens destruction.
Thin epithelia, too soft
And vulnerable she shivers, afraid to despair, afraid to feel.
Gist pushes her to take a step forward fearing,
Not the reed, nor the hill.

A silhouette of a human standing stoic,
Reflecting the sun, the color red.
Could not be stronger in between or near.
Just past the peak, his grace perfected
By Beauty's edge and sweet delusion,
Speaking a language harmonic with the trees.
The body in tune to the movement of the earth, seems to sway
Yet stands still; contemplating, waiting, watching.

I know who he is, unknowing of himself, he knows me.
"I suffer," he whispers, flickering death.
Rushing to find life at the window, half open, to be opened,
To risk love, known only in shadow.
Only the universe can listen with me.
Without me, the chord is torn.
Our harmony is left to chance by the wind.
Through this catch of allusion,
Warblers warble, the rapids rise to the waste.
Your fingertips tremble, pushing forward pushing back
Go on my love, I'll be here.
Patient with the wild reeds and manacled feet.





Resilience

© Alicia Evans MSIV



Sneak Attack

© Marina Boushra MSIV

The Curious Case of Johnathan John

© Alvaro F. Vargas MSIII

Have you ever met somebody for the first time that you felt you met before? Kind of like the “version” of somebody you already know but in a different context -- it almost feels like a dream in which people and things are in the wrong place and time and still somehow it all makes sense. Well, this is the story of Johnathan John, an African-American inner city adult, boy, toddler, and infant I met this year. I hope you enjoy my journey...

I first met John as an adult. He was 26-years-old and he didn't have much to say besides “my belly hurts.” He was on the ED bed lying in the fetal position, annoyed by the fact my intern and I were going to ask him the same questions he had heard so many times before. He didn't look or even acknowledge us during the interview; his answers were short and rude. I didn't understand it - we were there to help! In his HEENT exam we said: conjunctiva non-icteric, EOMs intact, pupils reactive to light. With my non-clinician eyes I saw helplessness, rage, frustration. After two normal CT-scans and an extensive work-up without answers, he still complained of severe abdominal pain; my intern presented him to the team as a “drama queen.”

Johnathan John wasn't exactly welcomed to our medicine floor as other patients were. He had “an attitude,” we warned the nurses. During his stay he was demanding and unappreciative. One morning he complained about how thirsty he was. I brought him water with sugar and lime as he asked me to, and he responded with a curt “put it there.” I asked him where he was from and what he did; he said, “Why are you asking so many personal questions?” I didn't understand it.

It wasn't too long until I saw Johnathan John again; this time, as a 9-year-old boy. He presented to the ED in status asthmaticus. He was hard to arouse, confused, literally getting tired of breathing. His aunt told us John has been coughing a lot since Friday, when Children & Youth gave her custody. She thinks John was supposed to use some inhalers but was not sure. She perfumed the room with a strong cigarette smell.

John's name was spelled a little bit differently, but he was not too hard to recognize. We learned that John's parents were incarcerated and prior to that, John's mother dropped him off in the house of

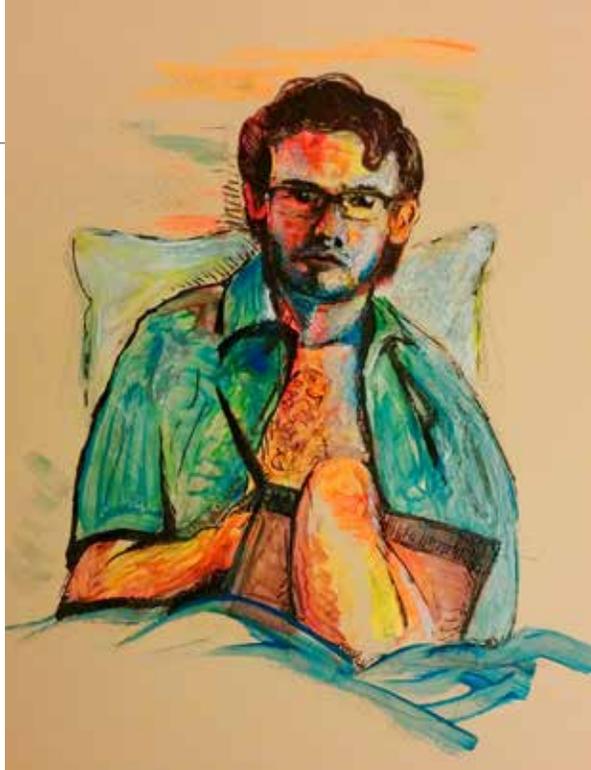
“friends and family” for several days. He had had severe behavioral problems and was diagnosed with Conduct Disorder. His aunt also told us that John’s mother was diagnosed with active TB in prison. We had a clear CXR, but for safety we skin-tested him and put him in negative pressure and isolation (as if he didn’t know about isolation). I started to understand.

This time John started off very reserved, like his adult-self, but opened up slowly, similar to his lungs as the continuous albuterol flowed through that mask he really disliked. He wouldn’t let me listen to his lungs unless we played some Wii. He was joyful, respectful, and engaged, not your typical Conduct Disorder boy. One afternoon I stopped by his room and he was making paper airplanes. He said, “I know how to make all paper airplanes.” I said “really? Let me show you this one.” He couldn’t believe his eyes when my untrained paper-airplane-making-hands folded what he thought was a “new airplane.” He said he would love to go on an airplane and meet his brother in California. One morning I told John he was going home. He didn’t seem too excited and said, “I like it here, people are nice.” I guess he was surprised.

Some time went by and the next time I saw John he had croup. Again, his name was spelled differently, and with his innocent and curious 18 month-old eyes I almost didn’t recognize him. He had a barking cough, but rather than grasping for air he was grasping for love. He cried and cried on his crib, only consolable in the tired arms of his single mother with diabetes whose bed and clothes had just been thrown out of their apartment a few hours ago because she wasn’t able to afford rent. John had to receive racemic epinephrine that day -- at least they had a place to stay.

His exhausted mother screamed at him for his endless cry, we could hear it from the nurse station. John’s tears drenched the bed lining and filled our hearts with resentment towards that “insensitive mother”, How could she just let him just cry and cry? John often pulled himself up and held the bars of the crib, his eyes transformed in the most pure expression of despair; and then, only then, I recognized him as John, his helplessness, his rage, his frustration -- new to him but not to me. I did understand.

The last time I saw John he was a one-day-old being rushed to the NICU from his home where his



Midnight Self Portrait

© Spencer Katz MD/PhD Candidate

mother delivered him after a night of using alcohol and cocaine. Mom had no pre-natal care and after a thorough exam we estimated he was 35 weeks. Other babies had pictures and visitors all day; John didn’t even have a name, he only had his nurse, his angel. How did I know that was John, you may ask? But have you ever met somebody for the first time that you felt you met before? Kind of like the “version” of somebody you already know but in a different context -- it almost feels like a dream in which people and things are in the wrong place and time and still somehow it all makes sense.

Infant John was very cold and was placed on an incubator. He seemed comfortable there. And I wished life could run the opposite way. As an infant, we accepted his helplessness, his rage, his frustration. We loved and comforted him, cared for him, made him feel special. We actually loved and cared for Johnathan John more and more going backwards in his life and less and less going forward. What did we forget as he grew up? When did we start blaming him for what life did to him? When did we arbitrarily decide that after 18 painful loops around the sun, he is fully responsible for his actions and the person he has become? I wonder if by standing together to change his future we could change his past, as changing his past seemed to do nothing for his future.

Mania: Free Radicals

© Joan Concillio

Office of the Vice Dean for Research & Graduate Studies

Free radicals (are) highly chemically reactive towards other substances, or even towards themselves: Their molecules will often spontaneously dimerize or polymerize if they come in contact with each other. Most radicals are reasonably stable only at very low concentrations in inert media or in (a) vacuum. (Wikipedia)

When I get like this, I want to touch everything.

Walking down the hall. Shoulders bumping, wall – other wall – wall – other wall, the star of my own pinball game.

Outside. The grass. Oh, the grass. Jump. (A bunch.) Sometimes roll in it. This is not good for allergies, but that thought enters and exits my head almost before it finishes.

In the car. Shoulder, knee, hip, any point of contact pressed against the doorframe. Lean as hard as I can. If I were thinking of it, I'm sure I'd be glad the door locks automatically, but that consciousness only happens now, on the other side.

Girl on Windy Day

© David Yoder, MD

Department of Internal Medicine

People. They react in a variety of ways – some as if I'm an attracting magnet, others a repelling one. Bumping shoulder pingpong. Standing too close. Desperate need for hugs. I don't always like to be touched, but now I am the one invading personal space.

I need to feel everything about my surroundings. Rub my face back and forth a dozen times, two dozen, three, on the same blanket I've slept with since my third-grade Christmas. Feel. All I can do is feel. Everything feels like something. The everyday annoyance of a shirt tag turns into the sensation I can't bear to stop.

So real.

Most radicals are reasonably stable only at low concentrations, it says. This day, I am highly chemically reactive with my surroundings and myself. Needing to bond, to connect with this world and its humans, stability at all costs, throwing electrons at anything, sometimes stealing them from the closest (not always willing) target.

There is no vacuum to keep this iteration of me stable, so I dissipate, all the parts of everything shot off into space. The touching, the feeling, it's all about boundaries, holding me in, keeping me terrestrial, hope that I can collect at least an approximation of my parts back after.

The next day, I sleep, but not without medicated assistance. I wake, and the blanket is just a blanket again. Lingering sensations – needing to lean into instead of away from, a glance of fingertips along a chair or a row of books or someone's arm. The feelings drift away, and though there's still that tiny part that needs to feel contained, most of me is glad.



Escape

© Eve Thau MSIV

I was snow shoeing in the mountains of Montana first thing in the morning. As I walk up the snowy foothills I was taken with the early sunrise. A wash of lavender and gray, it graced the surrounding peaks with a surreal glow as it reflected off the untouched powder. The feel of wind on my face woke me up in a manner unparalleled by the strongest cup of the most potent coffee. Coated with a thin layer of frost, the trees seemed to be like beacons in the first light of dawn.

As I make my way through the woody forest, I could just see the chimney smoke of Josie's cabin in the periphery. I know I am on the right path; another few minutes and I would be at the door. Suddenly I am stopped dead in my tracks by a sharp crack. Reflexively, I turned my head to the right just in time to make eye contact with a large moose. My mind goes blank, I can't believe I am head to head with this majestic creature. How did I

not spot him earlier? Are there more where he came from? I took a moment to reflect as I continued my journey forwards. With a cautious eye on Josie's newest neighbor, I continued my trek.

Up in this winter palace, I felt the weight of the world lift off my shoulders. The weight on my back, the stress and fear of the real world, was no longer present. As I lost myself in nature, I felt truly free. This had always been and will always be my truest escape.

I had a few moments more to enjoy the serenity and I needed to get the most out of it while I could. Breakfast with Josie, dear old grandma, was sure to involve her favorite question. "When am I getting grandchildren? I won't live forever you know!" That was one thing I couldn't escape out there in the windswept landscape. Grandma.

Nostalgia Over French Onion Soup

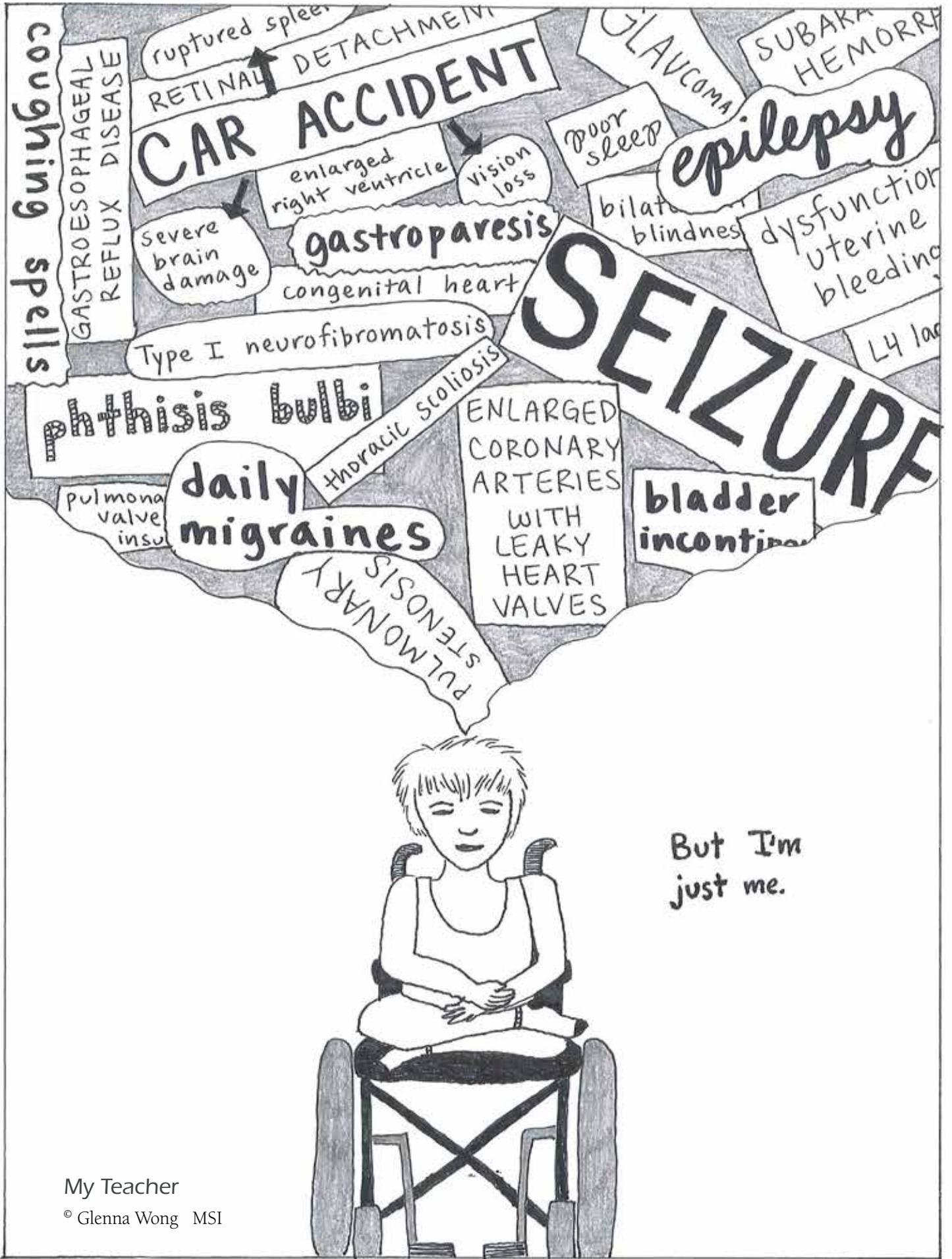
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Jake Gittlen Cancer Research Foundation



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But I'm just me.



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