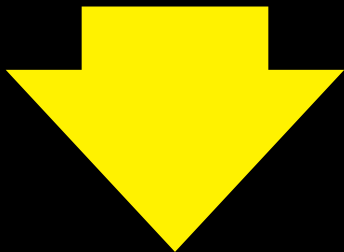


6 ft



From the Editors

In sheer absurdity, heartbreak and human calamity, 2020 was a year that feels to have surpassed all others. For many of us, it was a year spent in fear that a cartoonishly disturbing political climate might disrupt and upend the shape of our lives. For more still, it was a year of painful retraumatization. We watched and experienced agents of privilege unleashing brutal violence on people and communities they deemed deserving of such treatment. For all of us, it was a year of loss: of loved ones, of time, and of togetherness, to a foe unseen with a destructive capacity that humbled even those parts of the world that we thought were the most prepared. What is more, we were called upon to experience these things alone.

Through all of this, though, we have lived. We planned, rescheduled and finally made it onto the Zoom call with the friends we hadn't seen since high school graduation. We went on a hike, and found a new trail we really like, that's lined on both sides with trees and ends in a little stream. We discovered the cozy joys of sourdough bread, plant propagation, and whipped coffee. Dogs and cats everywhere rejoiced. We listened to every song on our daily Spotify playlists and found a ton of new songs to dance to in the living room. We didn't go home for Christmas, but the family groupchat was *lit* on the 25th. We took all of this home and wrote, drew, sang and painted about it. It is our goal to capture this—our resilience, our love and our endless capacity for joy—through this, our celebration of Unity in Solitude. We hope to do justice to these treasures.

November

I saw two swans and shivered. The pair in the lake swam within a landscape of marshes, stone walls, lovely houses—quintessential New England. I remember the loons from the story and the blessing of peace around, even if not within, me. From inside the train car, I cannot feel the wind that sets the American flags waving and leaves the water grey with ripples. The trees twist themselves, leafless, against this wind and before a faded pink sunset. Long-ago glaciers left boulders; this explains the embankments of the forest around us. The clouds above are nearing periwinkle, solid but protective. There is strength in this peace, in this decision for peace despite an ever-shattering earth.

AMS

Lukewarm light flickers
From the corner of the room
You stare at the TV screen
Though the volume
Is nearly mute
Running peripheral lines
Chase gravity
Gently, to your bed
Spirometer knocked over
The cannula askew on your head
A distant, dry tear
Frames the corner of your eye
Your sons, sit slouched
Bible slipping from a hand
Altered Mental Status
Alludes your chief concern
But “she got cold”
Is what one musters to share
And I stare at the once warm blanket
Now, very much old
And I nod, in helplessness
Hoping to find an answer
In a metal chamber, a tech, or nurse
But as I slip out
Grasping the doorknob
Your glassy eyes
Reflect the hallway light
And you utter
Two words
“Don’t go”

Like pulling a shower curtain
I enter the small bay, to meet
Whispered gasps, mild coos
Clutching a stuffed bear
Legs dangling from that adult-sized chair
While a kidney basin rests
At your mother's bedside
To meet the eyes
Of a little brown girl
And tell me
How can a reflection
Be so simple
And yet inspire?

~ *Black Woman, Teal Scrubs, White Coat.*

Hypoxia

He is leaving this world with the same bright,
startled eyes he brought when he arrived,

A reaching, searching gaze that grasps,
indiscriminate, for shelter in a human heart.

The same soft, downy head.

He is an open vessel for the new world
Unfolding its arms to accept him.

...

Hypoxia is a delicate, distant word.
It stings my nose like antiseptic and gleams,
bleachy-white like a hospital hall.

It wafts a seemly sheet over the image of the man
Gritting his teeth and gripping the bars of the gurney,

Thirsty for air.

Pipes

I walked down the canal trail, hunching my back
against the breeze.

I read the notes the construction workers leave each
other on the concrete,
secret messages only they understand.

But if I spend a while reading, I can decipher
them too.

“A7Y OK” with white spray paint, “CAL BK”
in green.

An arrow points out the buried pipes, marked with
red and yellow flags.

I walk on, the buried pipes slowly rise out of
the ground
and into the sky, bursting open as they twist through
the stars
filling the little dipper with gas, dripping off
Orion’s sword.

It falls back to earth like rain, drenching the concrete.
The painted arrow starts to dissolve in the wash,
it points forward so I walk on.

زعر
Za'ra

There is an intensity in you,
A crackling energy from eyes as hard and bright as
wave-beaten stone.

There are other worlds in those eyes.
Other worlds (and far from mine), that, at first too
small, were called to wander
Landscapes and frayed pages, promises
and preparations,
I want to track your gaze across the planes
you've seen.
I find myself wondering if it ever really falls to me.

Your smile is a slap to the face.
I feel the warmth and urgency, hear the sting, before
it cuts my cheek.

I am squeezing my eyes tight and falling back
With steaming skin, I cut my teeth on your body,
watch the blush rise beneath the arc of my bite,
But you can't get blood from a stone.
And though we're lost in the same mist, we're
both alone.

Letter to Jean

You never showed the hurt,
In your face.
Or the slow steadiness,
Growing in your gait.
Your chicken salad,
Is a recipe I know by heart.
But somehow, I vaguely can decipher,
The rules of rummy and bridge apart.
A living matriarch,
Right before my eyes.
Forever present at John's,
Baptize,
The baby blanket you stitched,
25 years ago,
Looped and swaddled,
Me and my siblings, like a cloak,
A surrogate mother to my
Mother.
A god mother to my
Brother.
And a surrogate grandmother,
To Me.
We'd visit every summer,
Without question,
A cherished routine.
But my mother never let us see you,
In the hospital.
Of all places,
And yet,
Your memory is ever pristine.
I think she did it to preserve

Your kindred spirit.
All I remember is playing piano for you
Every year,
I can hear it.
And your life,
You lived it simple,
and true.
And for that, I'm thankful.
My only regret
Is never being able
To properly
Say goodbye
To you.



A Prayer for a New Humanity

sarve bhavantu sukhinah
 sarve santu nirāmayāḥ |
 sarve bhadraṇi paśyantu
 mā kaścid-duḥkha-bhāḡ bhavet | |
 aum śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ

Living in a time of turmoil, we feel alone,
Nowhere a sigh of relief to claim our own.

Listen to my plea; gift us your grace.
Give us a sign that all will fall in place.

I know that you are teaching us how to bear hardships and suffering that give us a scare.

**Bless us with strength of heart and soul
to build our faith in your precious goal.**

You show the path of global humanity.
You ask us to wholly embrace unity.

When you ordain catastrophe,
You usher in a new world to be.

In this world, you set us free
from the shackles of vanity.

*For more information on the Sanskrit prayer,
see page 136.*





mr. northside

Northside MZZZA, what it do?
Northside MZZZA, what it do?
Northside where they ain't no rules
If they say it, better get it understood
Northside, that's my only home
Northside, all I've ever known
Northside, where I'd rather be
I left the North but see it never left me
The memory feels better than the real thing
The real thing had my homie tripping off a bean
I thought I loved it and that's the shit a nigga still think
But I be wondering if the shit love me
Please, why won't you believe?
I said please, won't you believe?

My Dad's Search for Meaning: A COVID-19 Story

There is a Turkish saying: “The healthy forget about the gift of health”. You don’t anticipate anything in your life to change, until you become sick. This is exactly how my father felt during his hospitalization due to COVID-19. Just talking to him, I could sense the PTSD and feelings of sadness, fear, and shame rise up inside him. He got sick with COVID-19 right after my brother was hospitalized, again, due to COVID-19. My brother’s hospitalization and his ever-worsening labs put my already sick dad into a state of helplessness. He identifies this helplessness as a result of the many unknowns around the virus. As a medical doctor, my father kept up with COVID-19 scientific findings throughout the pandemic. There are many other diseases that are deadlier than what he had but the medical personnel were as informed or uninformed as he was. My father and my brother’s cases were among the first 15 to be diagnosed in Turkey, hence the uncertainty and fear around their state of health. When I asked my father the main reason for why he felt anxious throughout his hospitalization, he stated that especially at the time, the medical world didn’t know how the disease would proceed until recovery or death. Throughout the course of most diseases, doctors can provide anticipatory guidance, but for COVID-19 this was not entirely possible. He likened this to driving on a road that you don’t know without a map, AND during a thick fog where you cannot see what is in front of you and even if you do, the next step is still

a mystery. This unknowing, created a more strained doctor-patient relationship. He recalls that the doctors in the COVID-19 specific wards were extremely overworked and completely in shock in the presence of this novel coronavirus. In a conversation later, the doctors themselves admitted to not being able to care for their patients the way they usually would have. Thankfully, my dad had really devoted doctors regardless of the hurdles they had to overcome.

Furthermore, my dad's outlook at the disease was shaped by my brother's experience which was a nightmare. While my brother was in the hospital without visitors, my parents were watching from afar, getting his lab results and becoming more and more worried every day. During this time, my dad was not only worried for my brother's health but also saw the progress of the disease. The virus they had shared had done this to my brother and this caused him some anxiety. Most of his doctors agree that his worry and anxiety probably reduced his resilience to the disease. This makes the importance of mental health and stress even more prominent in disease progression and severity. During his recovery in the hospital, he says that he had lost all control over his health and events around him except for the things he could do to follow doctors' orders. Finally, both my brother and dad fully recovered after a few stressful weeks.

Now, 5 months later, he reads about survivor's guilt. I asked him when he started doing this, and he mentioned another patient who was in the same ward as he was in during his recovery from COVID-19. This patient was a neurologist, so he was a doctor as

well; he stayed at the same ward as my dad; but this patient did not recover. After a long time in the hospital, my dad's COVID-19 ward companion (I should make it clear that they never actually interacted which I think makes my point even more interesting), died. My dad started having "survivor's guilt". He says that he understands that there is no logic behind it: my dad didn't cause the other patient's death, he didn't take up any medical equipment that would have helped the other patient; their cases were completely independent of each other. Yet, he still has feelings of shame, guilt, and sorrow whenever he thinks about his fellow COVID-19 companion, especially knowing and having experienced how difficult the fight against the disease was. Even months after having experienced this disease, I can see the aftereffects that it has on my dad, from guilt and shame to fear and a newfound appreciation for time to spend with loved ones.

The Tracer

“Hi. My name is Eva and I’m working with the Newville Public Health Department. May I please speak with Yvonne Sherman?”

My heart is pounding, and I feel sweat prickling at my hairline the same way it does when I sit down to take an exam or when I walk into a new patient visit. I’ve always hated making phone calls and these are more intimidating than most. Phone calls lose an entire language of communication. I can’t read their face to sense what they need. They can’t read mine to understand that I really do care about their needs.

“Excuse me?” *The male voice on the other end is clear, deep, and rumbling. I picture a broad-shouldered man in his late thirties who works as an account executive who commutes to his office in a tie and expects his team’s assignments to be submitted with exact one-inch margins. But, of course, I could be completely wrong. I have no idea who is on the other end of this call.*

I clear my throat. “My name is Eva. I’m working with the Newville Public Health Department. I’m hoping to speak with Yvonne Sherman.”

A long pause. I check my phone to make sure the call is still active. I read the number from the spreadsheet with my assignments for the day again to make sure I have dialed it correctly. The address listed is 34 Pleasant Drive. Sounds like a nice place to live.

“No, I’m sorry you can’t,” the voice finally grumbles. “She’s dead. She died yesterday.” *I pause, speechless for a moment. This is the first contact I’ve ever had with a patient’s family after they’ve just died. I had always pictured my first time as by a bed side, reaching*

out a hand, with an attending or resident with me for back-up so that we would be sure to say the right things. I picture the account executive and do my best to mentally create a bedside.

“I’m so sorry,” I say. He’ll never know how much I truly mean it.

“Where did you say you were calling from again? And why were you looking for my mother?”

I take a deep breath. At least the script we were given covers this portion. “The Newville Health Department. I am helping the city with contact tracing for people who have tested positive for COVID-19. We were hoping to get in touch with your mother because she tested positive. We’re asking questions to try to understand who she was in contact with in the past during the course of her illness so that we can hopefully prevent the spread of the virus further.”

“I see. Well, I don’t know how much I can help you. My mom was inside, isolated for the past three weeks. She hasn’t even stepped foot out of the house. And then a week ago she starts getting sweaty, coughing, having a hard time breathing. Two days later she’s in a hospital hooked up to a ventilator.”

I check my spreadsheet. She was 67. In medical school all of the professors kept saying that life expectancy is so high these days that they don’t even really start thinking of patients as old until they reach 80. It’s unsettling that a virus could rip through a 67-year-old like it was nothing. Months ago, I would have put my money down on Mrs. Sherman having had a complex list of pre-existing conditions. But not with this virus. This virus takes the models of disease we were taught in med school and tears them to shreds.

“I really am so sorry to hear that. That sounds really difficult.” *In the back of my mind I try to stamp out the thought that I’m using a technique med school taught me about empathy. It feels wrong to me to use an academic, sterile model to support another’s pain.* “And your mother lived with you? Is there anyone else in your household?”

“Normally she lives on her own, but with this pandemic...” Mr. Sherman clears his throat. “I just thought she would be safer here. Obviously...well, anyway. It’s me, my wife, and my son.”

“I see,” I say. *My cheeks burn with the discomfort of asking any questions of a man going through such pain. But I have to finish the call and stick to the script. I have to assess the risks, to the rest of his family and to society. Right now, it’s the only thing I can do.* “And how old are you all? Are any of you experiencing symptoms like fever, cough, or difficulty breathing?”

“I’m 38. My wife is 41. And my son is 10. We’ve all been isolating in our house for weeks now. My wife and I are working from home and home-schooling my son. None of us are sick. When my mom was sick, we isolated her in the basement of our house and bleached every surface we could find. We read the news and we’ve been following all of the recommendations. I just don’t know how this happened.”

“So, none of you have been outside of the house in the past two weeks?”

“We take walks sometimes. There’s park near our house and we just needed to stretch our legs, but we’re careful. Other than that, I can’t think of anything. I’m sorry I can’t be more helpful.”

“No, no, this was very helpful!” I say quickly.
“Thank you for providing this information. I’m sorry for your loss and I’m sorry that I can’t be more helpful to you at this time. Have a great day.” *I wince. Have a great day? It’s hard to think of a phrase that would be less helpful than that.*

I hang up the phone. I’m a second-year medical student. I’ve spent a total of three months in the hospital on clinical rotations before they were suspended due to this pandemic. But here I am, having to make the decision of whether this case is a high priority. Absolutely nothing in my training so far makes me feel qualified to do this. The best I can do is recognize that there’s no alarm bells going off in my head about this case. Limited exposure, limited contacts, no red flags. Logically, this case is low priority. But how can it be low priority when someone died?

I scan down my list to the next name. Rekha Ramamurti, age 45. Address: 35 Pleasant Drive. Did someone make a mistake? Or is Mrs. Sherman’s neighbor sick as well?

A couple rows further down catches my eye. Thomas Greenberg, age 33. Address: 38 Pleasant Drive. Further down. Maria Velazquez, age 19. Address: 49 Pleasant Drive

Science imbues a certain level of respect for random chance. The random chance of genetic mutation. The random chance that a new drug is creating an effect when there is, in truth, none. But these cases on Pleasant Drive can’t all be due to random chance. I pick up the phone.

“Hi! My name is Eva and I’m working with the Newville Public Health Department. May I please speak with Rekha Ramamurti?”

“This is she,” the woman on the other line has a faint accent. She sounds polished and professional, like a woman who spends plenty of time on the phone. I picture her as petite with shiny dark hair perfectly styled.

“I understand you have recently tested positive for COVID-19. Are you aware of this diagnosis?”

“Yes,” the woman on the other end of the line sighs and the coughs lightly. I hear children playing in the background. “I am very aware.”

“Okay. I’m calling to get a better understanding of you might have been in contact with during the course of your illness.”

“I haven’t been in contact with anyone other than my family. I’m working from home. We’ve all been isolated for weeks and no one but me is sick. My husband has been taking our kids’ temperatures regularly and they’re all fine.”

The rest of the interview yields no useful information. No contacts. No red flags. No reason to reject the null hypothesis. I hang up and try the next name.

“Hi! My name is Eva and I’m working with the Newville Public Health Department. May I please speak with Thomas Greenberg.”

“How did you get this number?” The man on the other end already sounds angry. I decide not to picture his face.

“I am volunteering with the Newville Public Health Department as a contact tracer. We are aware that you have recently tested positive for COVID-19 and in an effort to get ahead of this pandemic, we were hoping to get some information from you about people you might have been in contact with.”

“Make this number unlisted,” he growls. “I don’t want to talk to you people.” He hangs up.

I take a deep breath and tell myself not to take it personally. I’m just a volunteer and I’m doing my best to help. He doesn’t know that, and he doesn’t know me. I give myself a few moments and then I dial Maria Rodriguez. Maybe she’ll have some piece that makes everything fit together. Maybe I’ll be able to help stop the spread of COVID on Pleasant Drive. It would be nice to do something for people during this pandemic, instead of just asking them for information. It would be nice to do something that matters.

The phone rings three times. Voicemail. I follow the script I’ve been given and leave a message. “Hi! My name is Eva and I’m working with the Newville Public Health Department. I am trying to reach Maria Rodriguez about an important health matter. Please give me a call back at this number as soon as possible.”

I check the time and know I have to stop for the day. I have to go back to studying the musculoskeletal system and preparing myself for exams I have no idea when I’ll be able to take. Somehow each thing I do during the day seems to be even more useless. Before this pandemic, the time I spent on the wards was the first time since I decided to become a doctor that I felt like I was home. Now I feel like my legs are ripped out from under me and I’m back adrift in faceless diseases and facts without any of the human connection that makes it all feel like it matters. I open my textbook and try not to let the uselessness swallow me whole.

That night I have a dream about Pleasant Drive. It's the type of neighborhood I always wished I had grown up in. Houses with nice square green lawns that open onto cul-de-sacs. Neighbors that organize picnics for Labor Day and coordinate decorations on Christmas. Kids find their best friends for life in the house across the street. But even as the sun glints on the manicured lawns, a silent wave is creeping down the street, casting each house successively in shadow. The shadow spreads in all directions, its origin unknown. How do you stop something with a start impossible to trace?

I check my phone immediately when I wake up. No call from Maria Vasquez. I wait until late morning to dial her. Three rings and then to voicemail.

I check my spreadsheet and find three new cases.

Joshua Valdani, age 44. Address: 26 Pleasant Drive.

Xui Tong, age 72. Address: 41 Pleasant Drive.

Ally Gomez, age 9. Address: 29 Pleasant Drive.

“Hi! My name is Eva and I’m working with the Newville Public Health Department. May I please speak with Joshua Valdani?”

Kind man, sounds very fatherly. Says they’ve all been isolated for weeks. No contacts.

“Hi! My name is Eva and I’m working with the Newville Public Health Department. May I please speak with Xui Tong?”

Difficult to understand because she is short of breath, coughing, and soft-spoken. Probably the sickest of the cases I’ve spoken to. Says she’s been isolated for weeks but occasionally likes to take walks around the neighborhood because the doctors have been telling her to exercise to help control her diabetes.

“Hi! My name is Eva and I’m working with the

Newville Public Health Department. May I please speak with the parent of Ally Gomez?"

Ally's mom sounds tearful and exhausted. Says she's been carrying a bottle of Pine Sol with her everywhere she goes. Ally has been isolated in her room for a week now and is begging to come out. Mrs. Gomez misses her daughter.

None of them have outside contacts. No red flags. No answers. "Low priority" cases. I have other names on my spreadsheet that I'm supposed to be calling. I'm supposed to be studying how to be a doctor, not a detective.

Still, I pull up Google Maps and search Pleasant Drive. Merriman Road winds along the edge of a small park and then curls into the middle of Pleasant Drive. I check my spreadsheet: six cases on Merriman Road. The positive cases of COVID poke out along the edge of the park, beginning to resemble the electron microscope images of the virus itself.

"Hi! My name is Eva and I'm working with the Newville Public Health Department. May I please speak with the parent of Richard Dowd?"

"This is she," an exhausted woman sighs into the phone.

"I understand Richard recently tested positive for COVID-19. Could I possibly ask you some questions about other people he might have been in contact with during the course of his illness?"

"We've been isolated for weeks," the woman snaps. "We read the news and follow it. There's no way my son spread this virus to anyone."

I take a deep breath and remind myself that she's tired. I'm tired. The whole country is tired. But I really only need to know one thing.

“I’m glad to hear that you have been isolating and I understand that this is a stressful time and that answering these questions is the last thing that you want to do right now. But, Mrs. Dowd, has your son been going on walks lately?”

She pauses and clears her throat. “Well, yes. But just at the park near my house. The kids have been getting stir-crazy. I have to let them stretch their legs just so I can get a little bit of quiet.”

“I understand,” I say, feeling the small surge of confidence that comes with knowing the answer to the next question even before it’s asked. “Just one more question and then I promise I won’t take up any more of your time. Has your son been playing with any other kids in the park?”

“This is embarrassing,” Mrs. Dowd says. “But I have been letting him ride his bike around the park with his friend, Ally. Ally Gomez. They were outside the whole time. But now that I think about it...I might have seen Ally coughing once or twice.” Mrs. Dowd’s voice becomes panicked. “Is Ally sick? Is this my fault? I didn’t think the virus could spread that easily.”

“It’s okay, Mrs. Dowd,” I try to make my voice sounds as soothing as possible. “This is an unprecedented time. You’re doing the best you can. We’re all just doing the best we can.”

I pull my car up along the side of Merriman Road and turn off the ignition. It’s a narrow country lane, but the roads are empty these days, so I don’t bother to move my

car up on the grass. I tie on the surgical mask I luckily found in the pocket of my scrubs the other day. I must have left it in there before clinicals were suspended. I'm just going to watch from a distance, but these days you can never be too careful.

The park is only about the size of a couple of city blocks, but it's lush and green. There's a circular paved walking path that winds its way through the trees. At the far end, the pavement darts up into the neighborhood, connecting with the sidewalks of Pleasant Drive. The neighborhood is silent, the perfect picture of suburban quarantine.

But, to my dismay, the park is teeming with life. Families walk side-by-side. Groups of people congregate along the curves of the path, chatting amiably as their dogs play. Children race one another on their bikes and kick soccer balls back and forth. No part of this resembles a community in quarantine.

Yet, I know that if I called each one of these houses, the residents would tell me they had been quarantining for weeks. I'm sure in their minds they have. They've lost their daily office commutes, their restaurant date nights, their quick trips to the drugstore for soap and a candy bar. Their lives have lost the signals throughout their days that tell them where to be, when to be, even who to be. Like a heart that loses signal from the atria to the ventricles, they are left quivering and searching for some impulse to re-establish a rhythm. I'm sure to many of them losing this park, this bit of human connection, will feel like the final block that triggers the flatline.

But, the heart of this neighborhood is diseased. A virus is traveling from cell to cell, spreading insidiously along its arteries until it has infiltrated every chamber.

The only way to stop the spread is to cut off the supply, to put it on bypass and hope that it will be able to spring back to life once it has been repaired.

I dial the number for my supervisor at the Health Department and wait as it rings. I'm still standing next to my car on the side of the road hours later, after the park has emptied and dusk has fallen, when the city's trucks pull up and block off the wound with Caution tape.

Several days later I'm sitting in my room trying to work through a set of practice questions when my phone rings. It's a call to the Google Voice number I set up for contact tracing.

The number of cases on Pleasant Drive has only been increasing in the last few days. It has taken over my entire call load each day. By my last count, there are now twenty confirmed cases on Pleasant Drive. Three deaths. One was Xui Tong. I never even met her, so a part of me felt wrong for wanting to mourn her like I had.

"Hello."

"Hi," a young female voice snuffles on the other end of the line. "Is this Eva?"

"Yes," I say brightly. "May I ask who is calling?"

"This is Maria Rodriguez." *It takes me a moment before I remember that she's the young girl I called on my second day, just over a week ago. It feels like a lifetime ago. I spoke to people who lived and died in that amount of time.*

"Oh yes, thank you for returning my call!" I log into our contact tracing database on my laptop and pull up her record. But before I can begin reading off

the scripted questions she begins to cry.

“I didn’t know,” she wails on the other end of the line. Her voice sounds like my friend Sonia’s from high school. I picture her: a friendly, young girl with wavy dark hair tumbling down her back and a lively sparkle in her brown eyes.

“Maria, it’s okay,” I say, caught off guard. “What didn’t you know?”

“I knew better,” she continues, mumbling through her tears. “They told me not to see Ali, but I snuck out and did it anyway. Sure, he was at school before this and his friend was sick. But he wasn’t coughing and I made him take his temperature. He wasn’t sick! Neither of us were sick.”

“Maria, can you tell me what happened?”

“I had to come home from college because they moved everything to online. My parents have been so freaked out about this virus. It’s annoying. My dad basically sprays everything with a bottle of bleach. And they get worried when I even leave the house. The only thing they’ll let me do is walk in the park sometimes, but that’s boring. I went from college in New York City back to boring life in the suburbs stuck in my parents’ house,” Maria’s crying has now subsided, but she still sounds sad.

“All I wanted was to see Ali. That’s my boyfriend. He had to come back from college too. I just wanted things to feel okay for a little bit and to get out of the house, so I snuck out two weeks ago to see him. He wasn’t sick. I made sure of it! I made him take his temperature and made sure he wasn’t coughing. I just saw him for one night and then I checked my temperature every day after that and I was fine.”

She pauses for a few seconds and I realize I should probably say something. “This virus is a particularly difficult one because even people who have no symptoms can still have it. Are you saying Ali has the virus too? Has he tested positive?”

“Yes,” Maria begins crying again. “He has it. He got it from his friend at college and then he gave it to me. And I had no idea because I wasn’t sick. But I was watching some of the kids down the street one day while they were playing so their parents could take a break. And now I just found out that they’re sick too. And my abuelo has been sick for days too. He’s been coughing and he has to lean forward all of the time just to breathe. He just got tested today but I already know he has it. I already know I gave it to him. This is all my fault.”

“It’s okay, Maria,” I try to say soothingly.

But there’s a part of me that wants to ask how she could be so selfish. Maria is the source of the outbreak that is ravaging Pleasant Drive. She took risks that ruined other people’s lives—that ended other people’s lives. As frustrated as I am though, I remember that she also just ruined her own. She’ll have to live with the guilt of this for the rest of her life. Right now, she’s like a patient, coming to me for help. I can’t turn back time and change her choices. All I can do is help her heal.

“It’s not okay, it’s my fault,” Maria continues to wail. “What if he dies? My parents will never forgive me! I’ll never forgive me.”

“I’m sorry this is all happening,” I say. Tears prick my eyes. “But we’re all still learning just how bad this virus is. This is all hard and it’s scary. We’re all scared right now. But you have to remember that

even though you made a mistake, you're doing the best you can. You didn't know this would happen. We're all just doing the best we can."

I'll never meet Maria. I'll never be able to put a face to the girl who called me in her hour of need. I'll spend hours analyzing what I said but I'll never know if it was enough.

I've read all of the news stories about how unprepared we all were for this pandemic and all of the things we should have done differently. But no matter how many ventilators we produce, how many healthcare workers we graduate, how much we rebuild our broken systems, we will never be fully prepared for death and tragedy. All we can do is our best to block the wound, mourn the loss, and try to find beauty in the next heartbeat.

Like everything, the COVID pandemic finally came to an end three months after my call with Maria. Adults returned to work, children returned to schools, and the country grew used to only seeing each other's eyes over the tops of face masks.

I was able to return to clinical training. I saw my first COVID patient on the first day I went back to the clinic. I still see COVID patients every day. The virus will never disappear. It has become endemic. It has woven itself throughout the fabric of our culture, but the terror has now subsided. People are still dying from COVID, but the country has moved on from the pandemic and is no longer captivated by their stories.

A few days after graduating from med school, I pull my car up once again to the edge of the park on

Merriman Road, although now the lane is bustling with cars, so I'm forced to drive up onto the grass. I decide to leave my mask in the car this time.

Remarkably, the park looks almost the same as the last time I saw it. Families walk side-by-side and groups of neighbors gather along the path to catch up with one another. Children ride their bikes and roll through the grass. Everyone is wearing a mask and I can't help but chuckle to myself quietly about how they're probably better protected now than they were during the pandemic.

I spent many months of quarantine feeling useless and longing for the feeling of being part of a clinical team that COVID stole from me. But I became part of a different team. Somehow, despite the isolation, I became a small part of a community in crisis. I assisted on procedure that saved the heart of Pleasant Drive and gave it a chance to once again live up to its name. As I lean back on the hood of my car, I smile knowing that I did the best that I could do and though it was small, it was enough.

To Zoom, Perchance to Dream?
An Inside Look into Six Medical Students'
Life in Quarantine

As preclinical medical students during the initial wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, we were outsiders pressing our noses to the glass. We heard the news; we read daily updates from our dean and the hospital staff. We observed, with open eyes and ears and hearts, and offered up what we could: time and encouragement. Yet, more often than not, those days were permeated with a palpable sense of helplessness. The realization that whatever we learned, we have not yet learned *enough* to help on the front lines. Confronting this helplessness alone was daunting.

Yet when we came together on our group chat, we bantered in the language of memes, we flippantly tried to schedule times to video chat, we lamented our forfeiture of normal sleep schedules... all in stark contrast to the constant backdrop of what we knew was going on outside... and perhaps before too long what will be occurring again. I hearken back to those nights spent in the library with my friends, where we were plugged into what felt like an endless feedback loop of drive and motivation, where the mere sound of someone else's fingers clacking on a keyboard was a comfort. We won't be going back to those days any time soon. These days we still snap open our laptops for hours of solitary study. But perhaps there is something new to be cherished here. Even when we find ourselves thousands of miles apart, we still remain connected by threads of technology and camaraderie.

This a documentation of the loss, or rather transformation, of the spaces in which we share together as medical students, as friends, and as human beings. I am grateful for these moments with my friends—they are the lights in this ongoing darkness.

5/6/20

Scott Grubman, 11:01 PM

If during the day, you are free,
Play then we will, believe you me.
If later at night, you'd rather do,
I'd gladly zoom then, this is true.
Skribbling with you would be a perk,
Would sometime Thursday/Friday work?

Hanya Qureshi, 11:25 PM

Good sir! I must say,
I did not quite expect such eloquent prose today.
Thursday evening I am afraid to admit,
I may have already committed myself a bit.
Friday afternoon I too must forego,
I promised my time to a review of GI with Joe.
Perhaps Friday evening at a time quite late,
I can Skribbl myself in on that date?
Though alternatively and perhaps even better there is
next weekend,
during which I can guarantee an afternoon for skrib-
bling with friends!

Scott, 11:29 PM

Late Friday evening works well for me,
Now I have to ask: Is anybody else still free?
All the weekend I could certainly do,

Aside from one afternoon of hiking—or maybe two?
Either way, the next Skribbl should be very fun,
I can't wait to win yet another one.

Lauren Smith, 11:37 PM

I suck at rhyming,
Haiku is best I can do,
Can zoom anytime.

Scott, 11:46 PM

How about we do Saturday afternoon?
Thankfully that seems to be fairly soon,
It looks like the weather on Saturday will be yuck,
So indoors I will most likely be stuck.
A round (or 5) of Skribbl would be pretty rad,
I just hope I don't beat you all again too bad.
Oh and Lauren that was a good Haiku,
I have but one word for you:
Refrigerator.

Lauren, 11:47 PM

Saturday is good,
I'm impressed by your po-ems,
Refrigerator??

Hanya, 11:50 PM

Saturday I shall have to confirm,
once another zoom timing I do learn.
Some very old high school friends,
may have planned to Skribbl with me then.
Once I learn their plans I shall profess,
whether or not I can say yes!
If not, next Saturday it shall be,

and Scott shall lose for all to see!
As for you Lauren, refrigerator is 5 syllables.
A helpful line for your Haiku goals!

Hanya, 12:04 AM

Also I claim Scott failed,
Rhyming refrigerator?
His poem left derailed.
So as you can see,
Even rhyming haikus are for me.
If my poetry can pinch,
Then beating him at Skribbl will be a cinch.

Amrita Singh, 12:05 AM

I love you guys
This made my night

Pranam Dey, 12:11 AM

Hours late, I open my phone,
To find what I'd never known.
I thought I was in medical school.
But no, oh no, we are too cool,
For mere study of the molecule.
Instead I have come to find,
We have goals of another kind.
Seeking to organize a Zoom,
We find our creativity in full bloom.
At this late hour we turn to rhyme,
And deeper into night goes our bedtime.

Scott, 12:29 AM

I thought it prudent to take my nightly shower,
Now I must defend my rhyming honor with all
my power.

@Hanya I was merely trying to give my work an
artistic touch,
And to help a fledgling haiku-ist out, if not by much.
While haikus have never really been my thing,
You've forced my hand, I must now enter the ring.
It's pretty challenging to make them rhyme,
But it's nothing compare to learning about chyme:

I'll rise the bait
I'm so cool you see
I refrigerate

Oh and Pranam I appreciate your style,
On this one you've really gone the extra mile.
Finally Amrita, glad to make your night,
But I'm afraid on Saturday we must still fight.
And there you have it, though I must now sleep,
I'm afraid I've already begun counting sheep.
Refrigerator.

Hanya, 12:34 AM

There are many bones I have to pick with this style,
Listing them all would take a long, long while.
Your Haiku pales, as mine roasts,
Put simply, you are toast.
Rest your head and leave chyme to me,
I must finish eating an hour or so past three.
Tonight, Pranam has thrived,
And Amrita has jived,
Yet I remain the queen of this beehive.

Scott, 12:36 AM

Is that buzzing that I hear?

That peculiar sound in my ear?
Not a queen, I don't think,
Although that low I didn't think I'd have to sink.
This anthill's leader is not clear.
But for me the top seems quite near.

Hanya, 12:39 AM

A mere fool you are,
To think that you'd get away with this attempt at spar.
Alas, you have made a grave mistake,
Let's hope for tunnel ant X Æ A-12 it is not too late.

Now away to bed with you! Boards and Beyond I
MUST do!

Scott, 12:41 AM

I don't know this tunnel Ant X Æ A-12 of which you
speak,
That comeback was, admit it, pretty weak.
I do agree it's getting late,
So maybe we'll suspend the spar to a later date.

Refrigerator.

Pranam, 12:42 AM

I never thought you'd be an ant,
But let me ask that we recant.
Were things so bad, before we sought,
Poetic competition in every thought?

Hanya, 12:42 AM

Alas my fault I forgot,

Your lack of culture continues to rot.
A simple Google would reveal,
Elon Musk's offspring's name I did steal.
In conclusion, I have to say,
I did win this poetry competition today.
Thank you all and goodnight to Scott,
Unfortunately his poems were not very hot.

Scott, 12:50 AM

Hard to be hot when you're this cool,
My rhymes could be considered quite the jewel.
If insist you've won you feel you must do,
Then I will concede defeat and bid goodnight to you.
Refrigerator.

Pranam, 12:50 AM

What Elon does is entertain,
To which we cannot complain.
But of Musk, let me say this,
His rockets bring but little bliss.
But writing in verse with y'all,
I found my studying in downfall!

Hanya, 12:54 AM

My poetry skills speak miles on their own,
Approval from you I disown.
Alas with Pranam I concur,
I find myself rhyming Anki cards all in a slur.
As to your word refrigerator,
Allow me to settle it like a rhyming liberator.

Scott, 12:58 AM

This time of day is not for cards,

But for lullabies from well-known bards.
That you all go to bed is my desire,
As my head rests on the pillow I so admire.
I'd say close to your rhymes, mine would rate,
Alas, refriga-haters gonna refriga-hate.

Refrigerator.

Hanya, 1:01 AM

Now this poem I too must confess,
Was significantly better than all your rest!
Unfortunately I spent most of my day,
Admiring my pillow, so I'm afraid I must stay
Hard at work; but, for your sake,
I promise I shall not stay up too late!

Pranam, 1:05 AM

I do not accept that we must race,
For at Yale we learn at our own pace.
We see Hanya's poetry skills galore,
Yet Scott's too are worthy of lore.
But I must confess,
There will be no little stress,
If we must continue to rhyme,
While we should be studying at this time.
We wonder why Lauren learns so fast,
And we find ourselves surpassed.
Let me propose a hypothesis:
Would not our anatomy be faultless,
Were we to learn leg from arm,
Instead of trying to poetically disarm?

Dan Grubman, 9:48 AM

Roses are red,
Violets are blue.
I'm pants at poetry,
Also I can't rhyme.
Mornin' cub-scouts.

Hanya, 3:08 PM

Hear ye, hear ye,
I've an announcement for all to read.
You wished you may, you wished you might,
Skribbl with me one of these nights.
Well I've confirmed my plans, and I'm here to say,
We shall spar on Saturday!
Kindly confirm, so we all can see,
Scott's dethronement. Please RSVP.

Scott, 3:14 PM

Of your presence tomorrow, I'm glad to hear,
For the time for your defeat is drawing ever near.
Skribbl we may and Skribbl we must,
Otherwise our brains will surely turn to dust.
Studying all this GI is sucking my soul,
Thus defending my Skribbl title is a commendable
goal.
What time shall we zoom on that fateful day?
My hunger for victory I can no longer allay.

Pranam, 3:19 PM

As I try to learn all the GI,
I find myself wanting to cry.
Let's do something else,
A topic with nary a pulse,

And Skribbl seems more than fine.
On Saturday we shall draw the line,
And for me at it's any time,
To avoid the pain of chyme.

Hanya, 3:27 PM

I have many thoughts, all are sad,
First off, GI is truly bad.
It seems that in this chat I could not find,
A reprieve from Anki for my weakened mind.
Somehow it seems I remain behind,
Please pray for my duodenum if you are kind.
As such, skribbling is probably not the stuff,
I should be doing... but life is rough.
So for a time, it seems latest would be best,
Though I suppose that shall depend on all ye rest.

Scott, 3:38 PM

Ye' ole Anki is certainly a formidable foe,
But as far as to say "behind," I wouldn't dare go.
You've had an eventful week, that much is certain,
So why not Skribbl with friends, it'll lessen
your burden!
What say-eth you all to meeting at 9:30, or maybe 9?
(Of course I speak the language of "Eastern time")
Sufficiently late that I might get some studying done,
Or maybe I will instead relax, possibly go for a run?
Regardless tomorrow my day is free a whole lot,
And that's quite the understatement, or my name
isn't Scott!

Hanya, 3:45 PM

Excuses, excuses they are all lies,

Alas I'm truly afraid they will be my demise.
But that is my worry and should not be yours,
A time must be set for all in due course.
So let's say-eth 9:30 or possibly 10,
I shall definitely be finished with iftar and dinner
by then.
And as for my studying, relaxing, and fun...
We shall see if I can't miraculously get them all done.

Lauren, 4:51 PM

I still suck at rhymes,
But I like all these references to chyme.
Saturday eve does work for me,
When the winner of Skribbl will be clear to see.
And friends, do not despair about GI-
With Boards and Beyond and maybe Pathoma too,
Prevail we will as we learn about poo.

Please be proud of my feeble creation,
It's as much creativity as I can muster in my
current station.
Now I must end with one of Scott's favorite lines:
Refrigerator.

Pranam, 5:10 PM

Whether the structure of the heart or merely that of
poo,
It's so much better to be learning with all of you.
Peristalsis can surely wait,
As we take take time to appreciate,
Even the limited social life,
That exists while pandemic is rife.
So this Saturday at 10 PM,

Look forward to Zoom-driven mayhem.
And as for refrigerator,
I'll snack after Zooming my principal investigator.

Hanya, 5:13 PM

A beautiful and epic conclusion,
Refrigerators,
investigators,
Skribbl this down as the perfect poetic resolution.

DOCTOR BAG

IN MY NEW WHITE COAT I THREATEN TO FAINT IN
THE HEAT.



MY FAMILY
LEAVES THE TENT.

IN MY COOL NEW HAVEN HOME
A LEATHER BAG MAKES ME CRY.



MY GRANDMOTHER PRESENTS
IT WITH A SMILE.
MY GRANDFATHER'S, FILLED WITH
HIS TOOLS, EVERYTHING I WILL
NEED.



MY COSTUME
IS NOW
COMPLETE.

WITHIN A
YEAR I WILL
LEARN HOW
TO MAKE THE
TUNING FORK
SOUND, AND HOW
TO HOLD MY
STETHOSCOPE
SO I WILL NOT
HAVE TO LIE
ABOUT HEARING
THE HEART BEAT.

I WILL LEARN
TO PRONOUNCE
"SPHYGMOMANOMETER"
AND PROMPTLY
FORGET.

I WILL LOSE
AND RECOVER
MY BEAUTIFUL
WOODEN PENLIGHT.

I WILL NOT LEARN
ABOUT THE TYPES OF LIGHT
MY OPHTHALMOSCOPE
CAN CREATE.



I WILL TEST THE ROD, THE GRID, THE PALE
GREEN FAINTLY PERCEPTIBLE ON MY PALE PALM.

I WILL NOT LEARN A LOT OF THINGS, AS I
SIT AT MY DESK UNDER A PAIR OF PRAYING
HANDS CARVED FROM WOOD BY MY GRANDFATHER'S
PATIENT.



IN MY NEW DOCTOR COSTUME I WONDER



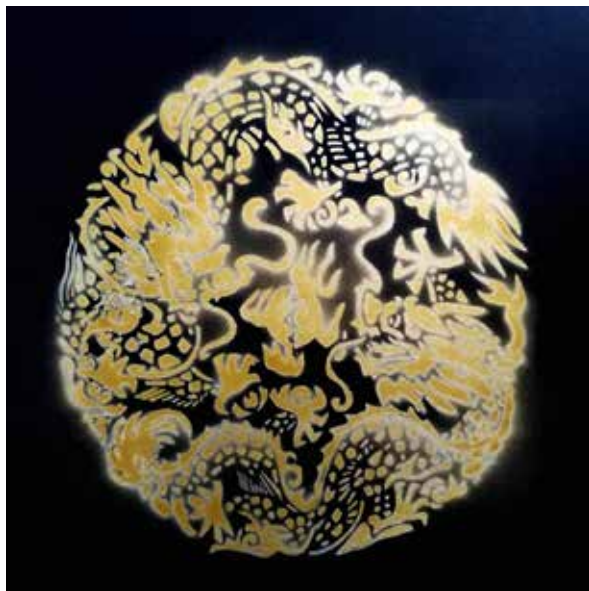
WHAT TOOLS WERE USED TO MAKE THIS HEART
SO THANKFUL



AND CAN THEY BE FOUND IN MY LEATHER BAG



AND WILL ITS BUCKLES HOLD?





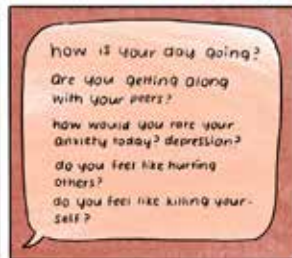
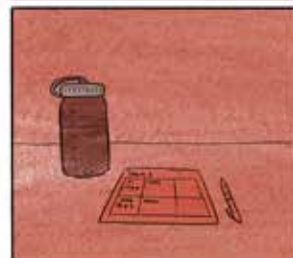


Un hommage au technicien du laboratoire
(*Hommage to the Laboratory Technician*)

Here works my friend the lab technician,
who prepares and reads slides day by day.
He taught me the fundamentals of
preparing the microscope before the day's slides
and how to centrifuge and freeze our blood samples.
He showed me the way home in the dark,
and paid for my taxi that first late night.
His eye can identify helminths and protozoans,
and we will be searching for Plasmodium.
So he showed me how to make blood smears,
thick and thin,
and to stain the slide with purple Geisma.
We first talked about his fiancée in the West,
and my significant other back home.
Many evenings, we shared grilled corn on the
way home,
as we troubleshooted our protocols
and mused about our dreams and plans.
He helped me hone my own untrained eye,
for monocytes, neutrophils, and lymphocytes,
and especially those ringed trophozoites in
an erythrocyte.
(We both felt pride and joy when I found
a gametocyte.)
We waited for a supply shipment
in the dark at the bus station
and shared beers some Friday nights.
He has often changed jobs,
(even this hospital cannot pay him a salary),
so he works for commission off the slides he reads,

or even sometimes without pay.
Many things he taught me in this place,
the parasitology department.
For the moment,
a makeshift workspace in the coed bathroom,
which added visitors throughout the day.
A window in front.
Two stalls to the right.
And to the left,
a hook,
where our two white coats hang side by side
at the end of the day.
Here works my friend the lab technician,
I did but pass through,
but here he will stay.





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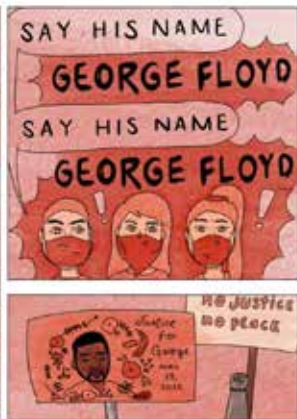












Words

p. 4
Olivia Dixon
Herrington
YSM '22

p. 6, 16
Joana Andoh
YSM '22

p. 10, 14
Christina Lepore
YSM '23

Hypoxia was inspired by a real patient interaction.

p. 12
Niroop Rajashekar
YSM '24

p. 30
Idil Yazgan
MS-1
YSM '24

p. 36
Alexandra Kimmel
YSM '22

I'm a second-year medical student at Yale. My

classmates and I had just started their clinical clerkship rotations in January 2020 when the clerkships were suspended on March 16, 2020 due to concerns about lack of personal protective equipment and ability of faculty physicians to precept students during the pandemic. I have been volunteering with other medical students to perform contact tracing for the city of New Haven beginning in April 2020. As of May, the team has interviewed hundreds of people who have tested positive for COVID-19 and have elicited their contacts. All of the cases in this story are fictional.

I have been making contact tracing calls from my parents' home in the suburbs of Philadelphia, which happens to overlook a park in my neighborhood. While people-watching, I noticed

that more people than ever have been using the park during quarantine, which gave me the inspiration for this story. I have a background in creative writing, having written a novel as child and also minored in creative writing in college, so I felt like writing a short story based on my experience of contact tracing during quarantine would be a good way to express my feelings during this experience.

p. 66
Pranam Dey,
Daniel Grubman,
Scott Grubman,
Hanya Qureshi,
Amrita Singh, and
Lauren Smith
YSM '23

Foreword by
Amrita Singh

Glossary of terms

Anki:
A spaced-repetition flashcard program popular amongst medical students

Boards and Beyond:
A medical education website with video modules

GI:
Gastrointestinal medicine, a first-year course

Pathoma:
Fundamentals of Pathology, a board review textbook

Skribbl:
An online multiplayer drawing and guessing game

Zoom:
Video conferencing app

Songs

p. 20

Shreyas Panchagnula
YSM '21

Translation of the
Śānti Mantra
(*Prayer for Peace*)
May all be happy;
May all be free from
infirmities;
May all see good;
May none partake
suffering;
May there be peace.

For more info, visit:
bit.ly/3pPdpM6

Given the turbulent
times this year has
offered, I decided to
write a prayer for the res-
olution of the problems
that face us and for the
upliftment of humanity
as a whole. I start the
song with a traditional
Sanskrit Santi Mantra
(Prayer for Peace), and
then sing a poem I wrote
titled “A Prayer for a

New Humanity”. I will
be uploading the song
as an mp3 file, and
the words to the song
as a reference word
document.

p. 24

Anishaa Sivakumar
YSM '24

For flute and piano

This piece portrays a
sudden storm in the
midst of a gentle warm
spring night. I wrote
it as a necessary and
reassuring reminder that
everything, including
this difficult and unprec-
edented time, will pass.
Though it will be diffi-
cult, we will continue to
move forward, stronger
and better for weathering
the storm.

p. 26

mzzza
YSM '23

written, produced,
recorded & mixed by
mzzza

Images

p. 90

Doctor Bag

Simone Hasselmo

YSM '22

(Rush Lerner, 1st Place)

7 × 11" ink

on Bristol board with
digital shading.

A comic about becoming.

p. 98

龙蟠橘井

Long Pan Ju Jing

Chang Su

YSM '21

(Rush Lerner, 2nd Place)

Spray paint on paper,
made from carved stencil.

This artwork both
juxtaposes & merges
the Chinese & Western
symbols of medicine
into one piece.

Since the ancient
Greeks, medicine in
western culture has been
symbolized by The Rod

of Asclepius, from the
Greek god of healing.
The symbol consists of a
staff with snakes coiling
around it.

Chinese medicine on
the other hand is com-
monly symbolized by “
橘井”, an orange well.
The dragons wrapping
themselves around the
well represent guardians
of medicine. The origins
of the Chinese symbol
for medicine comes from
the legend of “龙蟠橘井”
originated from Liexian
Zhuan (Biographies of
Immortals), a Chinese
hagiography dating back
to the Western Han
Dynasty. According to
the legend, Su Dan was
a master of the health
practices of the gods.
Immediately before
becoming a god himself
and ascended to Heaven,
he told his mother there
would be a plague. He
said the water from the
well in his courtyard
along with leaves from

the orange tree should
be used to cure the
people. An epidemic
spread the very next year,
and as word spread that
people were being cured
by the well water and
orange leaves, thou-
sands of people traveled
thousands of miles for
this miraculous medi-
cinal treatment. Once the
epidemic passed, people
witnessed two golden
dragons emerging from
the well in Su Dan's
courtyard, and flying
straight up into the
clouds. The people came
to believe the dragons
were the incarnation of
Su Dan, protecting the
well until the plague
passed. Over the years in
China, the term “orange
well” evolved to be
synonymous with medi-
cine, with the encircling
dragons representing the
guardians of medicine.

In the joining of
the symbols of “龙蟠橘井”
and the Rod of

Asclepius, I want to
transcend language
and cultural barriers to
represent medicine's uni-
versal common goals: to
cure, to relieve,
to comfort.

p. 100

A Legacy of Representation

Keyuree Satam

YSM '22

(Rush Lerner, 3rd Place
tie)

This piece was aimed
at highlighting the well
known phenomenon of
“dude walls”. Seen in
many academic insti-
tutions, the hallways
and lecture halls will be
decorated with paintings
of white males who have
contributed to a field.
Surrounded by these
examples, many students
do not see themselves
represented in a specialty,
often discouraging them
from pursuing it. This
painting shows a female
surgeon with her child

staring down one such hallway, the portrait of herself at the end representing her legacy of paving a path for others like her to enter a male dominated field.

p. 102
Gratitude
Rosie Zhang
YSM '22
(Rush Lerner, 3rd Place tie)

In the wake of the COVID-19 outbreak in China, Weibo, a Chinese Twitter platform, filled with comments from everyday people expressing their gratitude towards the medical personnel who carried out their duties amidst the uncertainty of the rising epidemic. One post that stood out to me in particular shows a photo of a two-year-old patient from Zhejiang province thanking the nurse who had cared for

him by offering a deep bow, which she returns. To me, this interaction exemplifies the mutual respect that exists between patients and their medical caregivers—a special relationship that transcends time and culture.

p. 104
Un Hommage Au Technicien Du Laboratoire (Hommage to the Laboratory Technician)
Daniel Z. Hodson
YSM '21
(Rush Lerner, Honorable Mention)

p. 110
Spring on the Beach
Sophia Gamez
YSM '21
(Rush Lerner, Honorable Mention)

p. 112
Day In Day Out
Dana Loo
YSN '22

p. 114
places i can't go
Nancy Park
YSM '24

Acrylic on canvas.

p. 116
Shay bil Na3Na3 (Mint Tea): An Egyptian Post-Call
Aminah Sallam
YSM '21

I painted this watercolor piece for one of my closest friends, an Egyptian like myself, who was going through her MS3 rotations at the same time I was completing my sub-I. While we were miles apart (she is doing her training in Chicago) and feeling isolated from our classmates due to COVID-19, we found that our post-call ritual was the same: after coming home from the hospital, we both relished in the opportunity to rip off our face masks and

enjoy a hot cup of shay bil na3na3 (mint tea). This shared ritual helped me feel connected despite my relative solitude. I used reference images to paint this, but the composition is entirely original!

p. 118
Kitchen
Sumaiya Sayeed
YSM '24

Together in the kitchen, lost in their separate thoughts.

p. 120
Pizza Margherita
Sumaiya Sayeed
YSM '24

Making pizza from scratch together with fresh basil—our favorite—brought us closer.

p. 122
Crack in the Sidewalk
Christina Lepore
YSM '23

Crack in the Sidewalk is dedicated to a friend I made through a volunteer program at an assisted living facility. We were simultaneously brought together and prevented from ever meeting as a result of COVID-19. Our friendship grew despite the isolating environment of quarantine life.

p. 124
worlds to escape to
Nancy Park
YSM '24

Acrylic on canvas.

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lost celebration
Nancy Park
YSM '24

Acrylic and paper
on canvas.

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Seashells in the Snow
Hannah Carson
Yale PA Program '21

I maintain a love for the practical in my art. Thus, I tend toward wearable pieces. I also enjoy contrast, including the contrast presented here between the beaches of California where I grew up and the snow of Connecticut where I now find myself.

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Lockdown
Dana Loo
YSN '22

Murmurs is the student-run creative journal of health professions students at Yale University. Started in 2012, the journal publishes voices in poetry, prose and art. *Murmurs* accepts submissions regularly over the academic year from the Yale Schools of Medicine, Nursing, and Public Health.

Please send submissions, comments and corrections to murmurs.ysm@gmail.com

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