

# MIND TO MIND

Creative writing that explores the abstract side  
of our profession and our lives

*Carol Wiley Cassella, M.D., Editor*

## Anesthesiologist's Lament

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After a day of keeping up the *shtick*,  
As a colleague calls it, all the backslapping  
And one-liners that put the staff at ease,  
Dodging comebacks of passing gas and napping,  
The old clichés of caring for the sick  
While saving lives and stamping out disease,

I settle in for an all-night case on call  
And let myself consider the surreal:  
Some sorry bastard known as *Stat Unknown*  
Who passed out, I am told, behind the wheel  
And managed to steer straight into a wall  
Of the courthouse, no less, has now been flown

Here to purgatory, his position  
Suspended somewhere between life and death.  
That colleague told me once *a good physician*  
*Is sometimes right, sometimes wrong, never in doubt.*  
Sobered with that thought, I draw a breath,  
Hold it for a moment, let it out,

And bow my head to pray with all my might,  
One sinner for the next, that I am right.

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