

MIND TO MIND

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

Stephen T. Harvey, M.D., Editor

To My Mother in Surgery

Karen Paul Holmes

You're under anesthesia's spell,
and I'm in the Appalachians.
Won't let my movie-mind play
what's happening,
can't second guess
the Plan for an 85-year-old,
so I'll think of us last week—

shopping, lunching, sampling key lime pie.
In your Florida garden, I recited my new poems,
you clapped, believing in me as always.

My brother just called: You made it through.
I know what you look like in ICU, so tiny
in a trap of wires and tubes,
hardly my mother at all.
I'll change the film to us on the beach:
You grasp my arm, lean into me.
We watch sanderlings sprint
from white-hot sands
to the brink
of receding
seas.

This poem is one of the finalists of Anesthesiology's first annual creative writing competition, The Letheon.

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