

# MIND TO MIND

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

*Stephen T. Harvey, M.D., Editor*

## Judas and the Magnetic Resonance

Bill McCabe

He tells me to hold her down, to pin her arms  
tightly against her sides and lean myself  
across her legs. I do as I'm instructed  
and he holds the hissing mask over her nose

and mouth. She looks up at me. Her eyes are flooding.  
She's not quite two and her sobbing helps ensure  
she'll breathe in deep the anesthesia. When  
she's still, they'll start the imaging of her brain.

I'm here because she trusts me most to keep her  
safe. She struggles hard against my hold  
learning her first lesson about betrayal.  
She's screaming *Daddy!*, pleading for me to stop.

She kicks hard at my ribs so I lean more heavily  
upon her. I can smell the gas she's breathing—like candy—  
and then she stops, her breathing slows, her eyes  
roll up inside her head and she slumps, open-mouthed

and limp, in my tensed arms. Thirty pounds  
of inert weight the tech slides easily into  
position inside the chamber of the machine.  
I'm escorted from the buzzing room, but

before I go I make sure I see her chest rise,  
her chest fall. I sit down on a folding chair  
out in the hall. The technician tells me, smiling,  
*You did real good in there, Dad.*

This poem is one of the finalists of ANESTHESIOLOGY's 2018 annual creative writing competition, The Letheon. [wmcc1112@gmail.com](mailto:wmcc1112@gmail.com)

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