

# MIND TO MIND

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

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

## ***Primum Non Nocere***

Sarah Whelchel

I  
I no longer remember his face yet  
it's ever ready to appear. I wince  
at the imagined scar from a small  
laceration—a complication of  
my first intubation. I failed to find  
his vocal cords but it's the mangled lip  
I found later that reproves me. I caused  
that. Medicine is not without her risks,  
to the doer and to him who under goes.  
To slide the tube in neatly, and make  
an insensible man breathe, satisfies  
both souls; but the learning and the harm  
are twined. The old oath suffers me to look  
my mistakes in the eye and try again.

Downloaded from [http://asaz2.silverchair.com/anesthesiology/article-pdf/130/6/1078/453259120190600\\_0-00036.pdf](http://asaz2.silverchair.com/anesthesiology/article-pdf/130/6/1078/453259120190600_0-00036.pdf) by guest on 21 February 2024

This poem is one of the finalists of ANESTHESIOLOGY's 2018 annual creative writing competition, The Letheon. sarahwhelchel@gmail.com

Permission to reprint granted to the American Society of Anesthesiologists, Inc., and Wolters Kluwer Health, Inc., by copyright author/owner. Anesthesiology 2019; 130:1078