

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.

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

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