

MIND TO MIND

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

Stephen T. Harvey, M.D., Editor

Images I Will Never Forget from the First Year of COVID-19 in Messina

Anna Teresa Mazzeo, M.D.

A solitary waltz by my parents—mother in long red dress and father in black tailcoat tuxedo to celebrate my mom's 80th birthday on March 8, 2020—the first day of national lockdown.

Mass celebrated by Pope Francis televised at 7 o'clock daily.

JP initials on her hand—immortal love of her husband—poignant Indian mehndi, the day before her goodbye.

Frightened face of the patient I had promised that the progression of the disease was waning and his death a few days later.

My namaste blessing gesture before entering the COVID-ICU the first time.

Zoom parties celebrated with cousins—the pop of a cork from the Champagne bottle feeling like a stab in the heart.

Medical procedures conducted under foggy face-shields.

The psychological breakdown of colleagues—tears and silences.

A prayer recited in front of my first dying COVID patient, the paper with the text already crumpled by overuse.

The arrogance of people denying the virus.

A hundred thousand euros offered by a patient waking from sedation, his fear we were holding him for ransom.

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Our hospital director donning PPE to help with the intensity of the ICU at the height of the pandemic.

The sweet faces of my parents and their loving hello from the balcony when I left groceries at the door of their building.

Chocolate cake offered by my neighbor after a long night shift.

Hope kindled by trucks transporting the first COVID vaccine doses.

Acknowledgments

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