

MIND TO MIND

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

Stephen T. Harvey, M.D., Editor

The Haunting Revenant

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Because you were discovered in time,
Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos regrouped.
Back from rehab, your travail continues.
A skein of glances looms the story
as you navigate the hospital corridors.
The past surges and eddies through the present,
with a logic, texture, and tenacity of its own.
Uncomfortable and remote, colleagues
remember the lies, all the lies....
The tensile strength of that rebarbative web endures.
Silence hangs heavy like musty tapestry.
Overlooking pathognomonic signs,
we were complicit in denial.
Suspensions, slight as dandelions, became puffballs,
dispersed on a gentle breeze.
Until we forgive ourselves, we cannot forgive you.

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“Gifts of imperfection,” an oxymoron
puzzling to physicians, morph into recognition of,
if not empathy for, your suffering.
Gradually.

A graphic reminder of our vulnerability, so finely threaded,
you bear witness to stark and savage reality.
Wearing a darkness both sooty and soft,
lofty aspirations become straitjackets
until we can acknowledge that
doctors get sick, too.