

MIND TO MIND

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

Stephen T. Harvey, M.D., Editor

Alarm Fatigue

Jefferson Dryden, D.O.

The room was small
where we first met.

Fluorescent bulbs above
droned their dull hum.
An alto timbre warbled from the
corridor at my back,
and near-avian chirps
crooned from the ventilator
as it cycled in support –
somewhere between loon &
whip-poor-will.

A susurrant of roller pumps
muted by line pressure caterwauls,
joined the plummeting pitch of oximetry
and all coalesced
into a confusing cacophony
of misery too familiar –

one that beckoned my focus
and heralded quietus.

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We stood, unnaturally,
Your husband nested
between beige bed rails.
Your hand held his,
mine cupped a stethoscope –

heard silence.