

Poetry

A Body Now, Perhaps Once Someone

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Abstract

Description

Personally driven by compassion in hospital medicine, I can't help but pen down certain emotions we experience as caregivers. It feels too selfish to not share some of those emotions, as profound as they are, though we seldom are aware that such feelings exist, even as they become palpable during adverse outcomes. Most of the time, thankfully the sick patients we encounter, recover and are discharged home. There are smiles of relief and gratitude to our profession as healers. But at times, with certain incurable conditions, we only can treat and try our best as doctors. There are tears, broken hearts, feelings of dread towards an approaching, certain end that we bitterly fight against, but lose. Commiserating with a patient in pain and with their loved ones is natural as a physician. And in this work, I share one of those unfortunate moments.

Keywords

poetry; medicine in the arts; frail elderly; widowhood; physician-patient relations; attitude to death; compassion

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A Body Now, Perhaps Once Someone

Skin so pale, a bare lamination,
to osseous matter, garbed in a hospital gown
Cadaverous, perhaps once someone

wearing a smile cemented
Stark now, a while ago perchance articulate
As ice was she, but not cold yet

For he stood beside her
Off the cuff, somber,
forever her buddy, paramour,

of decades now her husband
Breathing in torment
Warm was he, yet frozen.

A dead body of a frail old lady
Saw we all, but he
As his youth, love and happiness,
dreams and fulfilled until the past hour promises,
everything called life, to him was she

the person, beneath the skin so pale, a bare lamination,
Transparent osseous matter garbed in a hospital gown
cadaverous, perhaps once someone!

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares she has no conflicts of interest.

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