

HIPPOCRENE

Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis | 2017



HIPPOCRENE is an arts magazine by and for the students, staff, and faculty of the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis (WUSM). We accept submissions year-round and publish each spring. Issues are freely available to all current medical students, graduate students in the Division of Biology and Biomedical Sciences (DBBS), and medical school and DBBS faculty.

Download an electronic version of this issue, browse past issues, and learn more about our organization as well as local arts events at hippocrene.wustl.edu. Please send submissions, comments, and questions to litmag.wustl@gmail.com.

Thank you for supporting the Hippocrene and the arts in all its forms within our community.

Editors: Samuel Brunwasser, Andy Wiegert

Cover image: Alex Padovano

Inside image: Thomas Hong, "The Bay"



Visit us online at artscomm.wustl.edu

To foster a formalized arts tradition at Washington University in order to add richness to the medical school community. To provide a resource for students and groups in the cultivation and representation of art—in all its forms—on the medical campus.

The Arts Commission supports these events and programs:

ANNUAL ART SHOW. Displaying visual arts created by students, staff, and faculty of the School of Medicine in the atrium of the Farrell Learning and Teaching Center.

COFFEEHOUSE CONCERT SERIES. A relaxed and informal setting for classical, jazz, and other musical and spoken word performances by members of the medical community.

WINTER CAM CONCERT. An annual medical campus-wide concert held in January for musicians to perform in the medical school community.

Editor's Note

I'VE BEEN AT WUSM two years now and have seen two editions of the Hippocrene. However, this is my first year having the privilege of editing one. It has been a real pleasure to read and see all the pieces submitted this year. Yet as I went through them I couldn't help but consider the purpose that the arts serve us. Those who submitted come from a variety of departments and backgrounds, yet are united by a common attraction to the arts. I think it is because art allows us to consider what it means to be human. The human experience is complex - ranging from love to hate, inspiration to discouragement, or sometimes consisting of emotions we can't ourselves process alone. As people surrounded by medicine and healthcare every day, we are frequently reminded of these complexities. The arts offer a forum to consider our humanity in a way that complements our professional work. One of the submissions I received this year especially struck me as it seemed to particularly capture this idea. Thus we break with the alphabetical tradition to place this piece first, hopefully setting the tone for the rest of this year's edition. I cannot thank all the artists enough for their submissions. I hope that you all continue to nourish your artistic talents throughout your careers, and that you continue to explore humanity in all of your creative and professional pursuits.

Samuel Brunwasser



“And medicine, law, business, engineering, these are noble pursuits and necessary to sustain life. But poetry, beauty, romance, love, these are what we stay alive for.”
— *John Keating, Dead Poets Society*

Hippocrene

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Practicing Medicine can be Grimm Work

Today, after four arduous years of examinations, graduating medical doctors will report to their residency programs. Armed with stethoscopes and scalpels, they're preparing to lead the charge against disease in its ravaging, chimerical forms. They carry with them the classic tomes: Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine and Gray's Anatomy. But I have an unlikely addition for their mental rucksacks: Grimm's Fairy Tales.

Fairy tales have always fascinated me: fishermen and talking flounder, siblings wending their way through a shadowy forest, seven brothers transformed into ravens. Although I always wanted to be a doctor and took the requisite courses to be admitted to medical school, in my undergraduate years I majored in English and studied Victorian fairy tales. Immersing myself in period documents, I saw tenuous connections between the worlds of fantasy and medicine, between fairy dust and consumption.

But when I started medical school, I packed up my youthful literary indiscretions. I reordered my bookshelf, moving my well-thumbed but now irrelevant Brothers Grimm stories behind a biochemistry textbook. Within weeks my desk was crammed with printouts on fractures of the humerus and the intermediates of oxidative phosphorylation. I was thinking in terms of proximal and distal, instead of hither and thither. Then I started my third year of medical school, when students rotate through the different specialties, crisp white coats venturing into the grime of clinical medicine. I felt I was prepared with my color-coded pharmacology flashcards and issues of *The New England Journal of Medicine*.

But soon I came across an elderly woman with hyponatremia, a low sodium level. I knew what treatment she needed. But my textbooks and articles let me down. They couldn't tell me why her adult children had been neglecting her and denying her food. They gave no answers to the mysteries behind the physical symptoms, or how to process them.

In pediatrics, my team discovered long, thin scratches on a child's back — made by metal clothes hangers that someone had dug into her skin and pulled.

In physical medicine and rehabilitation, we supervised occupational therapy for a 10-year-old who'd shot himself in the head. He shrugged when we asked why: "I dunno."

In neurology, a stroke patient went off life support on his daughter's birthday, and the sound of her convulsive weeping went up and down the hallways, knocking against other patients' doors.

In internal medicine, I cared for a woman who had been so badly beaten by her late husband that her eyes pointed in different directions. She came in for trouble swallowing, and I had to hold her down during an endoscopy to see if esophageal cancer was the cause.

In surgery, a handsome young man was being eaten alive by cancer. From above the operating table, I could peer inside him and see tumors wrapping themselves around his vital organs.

In psychiatry, a waifish princess look-alike — mascara dripping down her porcelain cheekbones — was committed to our ward for hearing voices not of this world.

The practice of medicine bestows the sacred privilege to ask about the unmentionable. But what happens when the door to Bluebeard's horror chamber opens, and the bloody secrets spill onto your aseptic field of study? How do you process the pain of your patients?

I found my way back to stories. The Grimm fairy tales once seemed as if they took place in lands far, far away, but I see them now in my everyday hospital rotations. I've met the eternal cast of characters. I've taken down their histories (the abandoned prince, the barren couple) or seen their handiwork (the evil stepmother, the lecherous king).

Fairy tales are, at their core, heightened portrayals of human nature, revealing, as the glare of injury and illness does, the underbelly of mankind. Both fairy tales and medical charts chronicle the bizarre, the unfair, the tragic. And the terrifying things that go bump in the night are what doctors treat at 3 a.m. in emergency rooms.

So I now find comfort in fairy tales. They remind me that happy endings are possible. With a few days of rest and proper medication, the bewildered princess left relaxed and smiling, with a set of goals and a new job in sight. The endoscopy on my cross-eyed confidante showed she was cancer-free.

They also remind me that what I'm seeing now has come before. Child endangerment is not an invention of the Facebook age. Elder neglect didn't arrive with Gen X. And discharge summaries are not always happy; "Cinderella" originally ended with a blinding, and Death, in his tattered shroud, waits at the end of many journeys.

Healing, I'm learning, begins with kindness, and most fairy tales teach us to show kindness wherever we can, to the stooped little beggar and the highest nobleman. In another year, I'll be among the new doctors reporting to residency training. And the Brothers Grimm will be with me.

This article originally appeared in the *New York Times* on July 1, 2011.

Valerie Gribben / Division of Hospital Medicine
Department of Pediatrics



Turtle / Diane Aum / WUMS

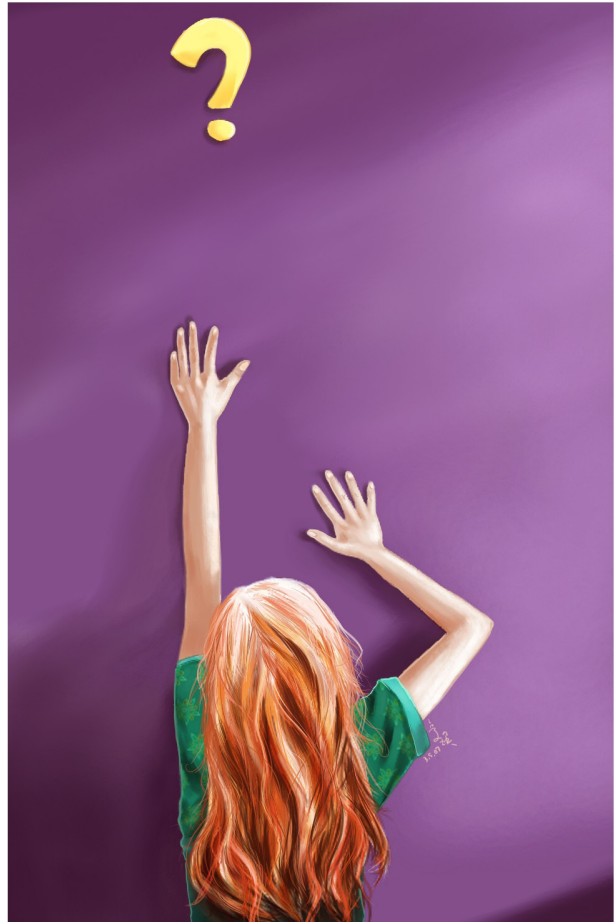


“And Still, I Rise”, I Survive / Water Color
Lauren Berman / Occupational Therapy



Fragmented and Exposed / Oil Painting
Lauren Berman / Occupational Therapy

Reaching for what? / Corel Painter and Wacom tablet
Vivian Chi / WUSM



Hello? / Corel Painter and Wacom tablet
Vivian Chi / WUSM

Admiral Casey

you were five years old
off color coded contents of Broselow drawers
accumulating in confusion

you were twenty years old
two Greyhound tickets from home
worrying Social Work

we obsessively washed our hands
hardly ever cleaned our stethoscopes
let our white coats fall from the backs of our chairs

you were thirty years old
wide eyes and wiry veins
trackmarking every route

you were fifty years old
parched forgotten in the hallway
keeping your losses to yourself

we check-boxed chief complaints
schemed to automate our charts against audit
scurried in lead aprons from the X-ray's morguish light

you were sixty years old
aged infantry tattoos salute defibrillation
waving STEMI_VF__line_____

you were eighty years old
Alzheimer's dementia shouting
"I'm Admiral Casey and I'm in charge around here!"

we silenced monitor alarms
mistook windowless fluorescence for dawn
signed out normal lab values,

a half-dictated note.

Heal Thyself

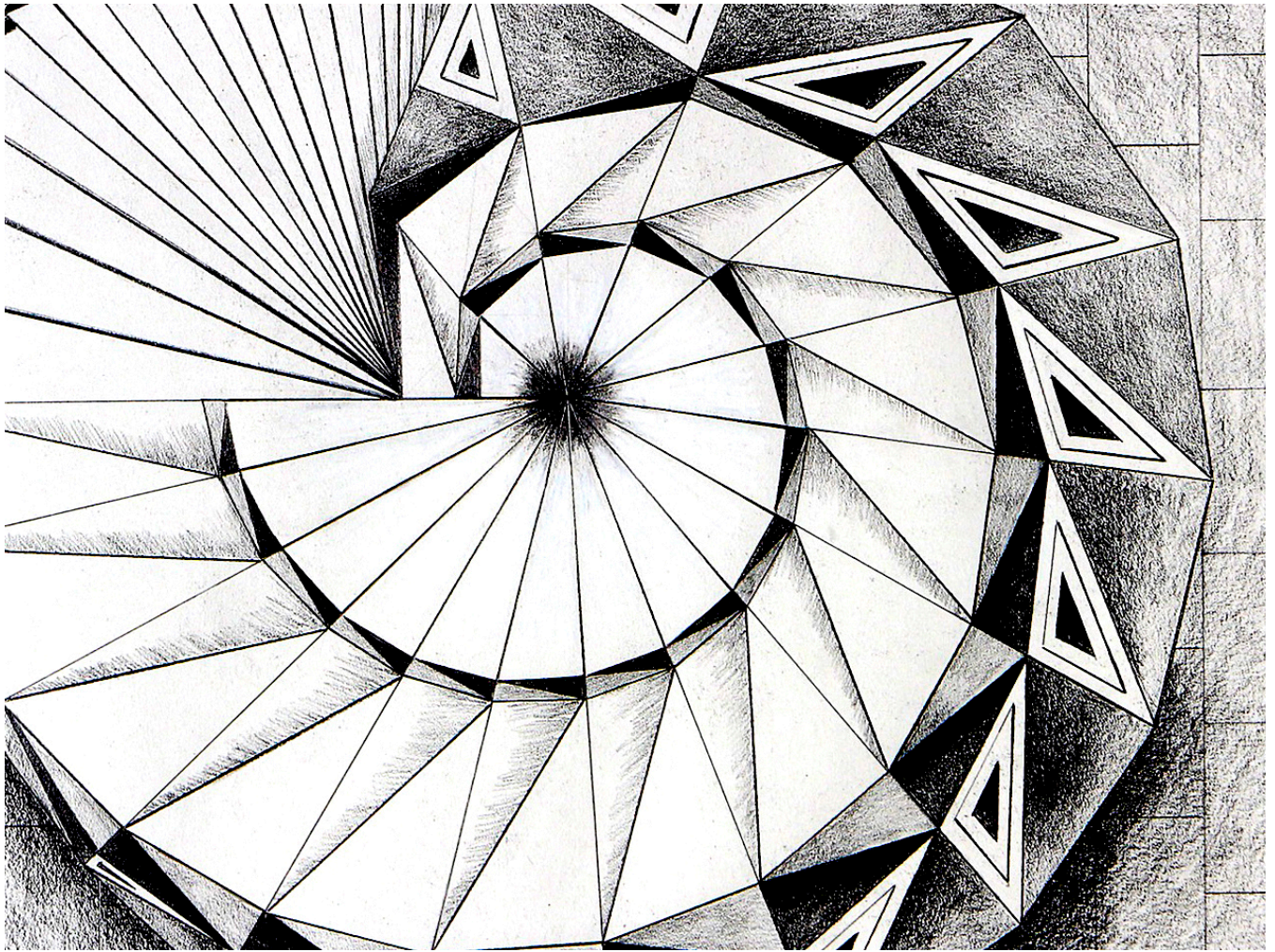
The physician knows first just what to fear
when questing fingers first brush something new.
The paths ahead are straight, the endings clear—
remaining minutes speeding, fleeting, few.

Armor can only guard from foes without;
a sword of knowledge fights its sheath in vain.
Yet deeper knowing, this, the only route:
empathy dearly paid for, wrenched by pain.

The emperor's clothes, it seems, were none at all,
for snow and rain cover us all the same.
Pride burgeons best, they say, before the fall,
as we succumb to what we cannot tame.

What irony, when everything is lost,
and wounded healers learn to count the cost.

Gregory Fox / MSTP



The Art of Mathematics / Denise Graham / DBBS



Bioluminescence / Thomas Hong / WUMS



Hong Kong 2012 / Thomas Hong / WUMS



Hummingbird 1 / Scratchboard
Leah Jensen / WUSM



Hummingbird 2 / Scratchboard
Leah Jensen / WUSM



Hedgehog / Scratchboard
Leah Jensen / WUSM

Sarah

The girl did not speak any English. Her tattered white dress, smudged with the omnipresent red dust of Uganda, flowed in the evening breeze.

She was unlike the others who jumped and ran, letting their boisterous shouts ring out. She did not clamor for my attention or grasp at my camera. She simply stood in the radiance of the sunset, with a humble half-smile forming on her lips, posing and waiting with expectation for me to notice and photograph her each time I gestured to move the lens to my eye. Her silent beckoning captivated more intensely than the shouts and requests from the others; her humble yet prominent presence unwittingly commanded the scene. And then I began to wonder...

What was her story? Who were her parents? Her siblings?

Did she have enough to eat? Would she have the opportunity attend secondary school, let alone university?

Did her family need her to work in the home, selling produce, growing food, hauling water, laboring to survive? What did her future hold?

Was her demeanor in this moment a reflection of how she approached each day of life? Not struggling or grasping, but steadfastly hoping; awaiting and ready for an opportunity to be seen and to be given a chance at a better prognosis; deep down knowing that there are opportunities for a girl's future greater than harvesting plantains, greater than dropping out of school to earn money for her parents and siblings, greater than contracting HIV.

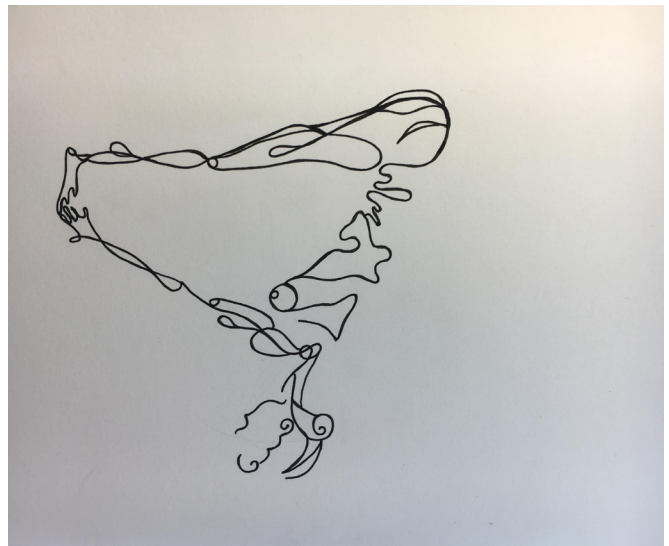
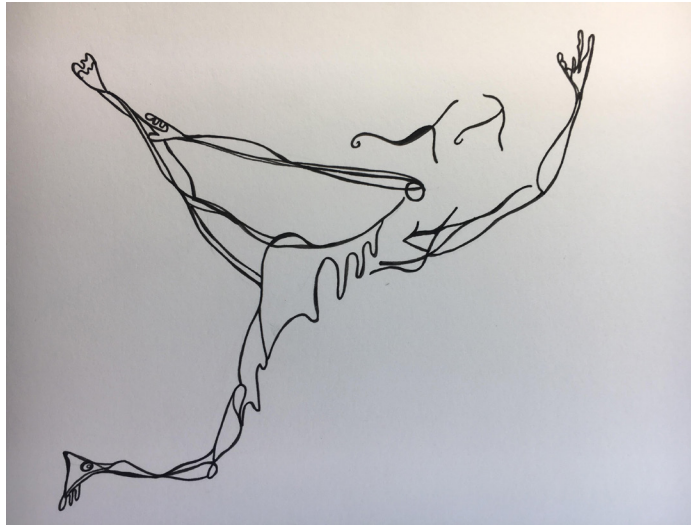
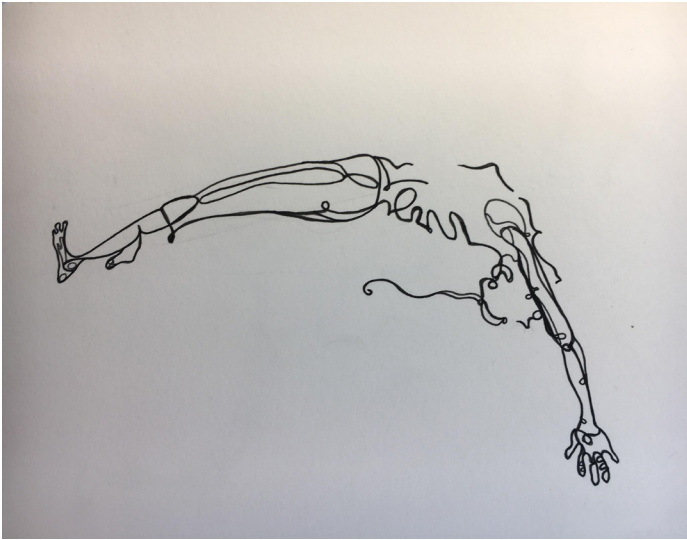
Yes, she was humble, but she was no wall flower. In her eyes, I saw a fearlessness ready to greet the day, and a hope it would bring better tidings than the "norm" she was living.

I managed to catch her name, Sarah, through the chasm that seemed to gape so far beyond a language barrier in that moment. She wrapped her nearest friend in embrace. As her half smile transformed into a whole, I gave one in return. Her gaze met mine, and did not shy away – as though to travel to the depth of my soul and back in that instant.

And she continued to gaze, waiting patiently, as with one click I captured her image.



Jacqueline Kading / WUMS



Yoga / Sonia Kim
Audiology and Communication Sciences



St. Louis Skyline / Cardstock Cutout over Watercolor
Zuzana Kocsisova / DBBS



Bactrian / Origami
James Lucas / DBBS



Kaonashi (No-Face) / Origami
James Lucas / DBBS



The Golden Age / Film Photography
Yuntong Ma / WUMS



Venice:Stockholm / Film Photography
Yuntong Ma / WUMS



View of Summer from Winter / Richard Nagel / Physical Therapy Department



Train to Whitter / Richard Nagel / Physical Therapy Department



Alexander Padovano / WUMS

Patty Rascal

The elderly Patty Rascal appeared, through rays of sunshine, at a stop sign over the crest of a hill just surrounding the parking lot of a grocery store driving her 1959 Ford Rambler, custom painted blue with silver flake. The sun shown down on the busy parking lot from behind Patty so that the sparkle and glitter of every chromed object in the area was reflected back at her, brightly. Gilded metal shopping carts moved towards each other, and then away, in parallel lines. All she could see was the glare of wandering shapes in her eyes, as if she was staring at the sun, and not some parking lot. Captivated by the beauty of the radiant white blaze, Patty drove down to get a better look, stopping at another stop sign in front of the entrance to the store. From here she could see all the people. People pushing overflowing carts full of food, people knocking on big green watermelons, people behind the steering wheels of cars of all sizes. Colors pulling themselves around her as if in some celestial eddy, and children, skipping, with light up shoes flashing up, down, up, down, up, down on each beat of their skip.

“My, my.”

“Look at all these peop’ e.”

She said, not fully pronouncing the ‘l’ in ‘people’ but instead leaving her mouth half open, letting out only a shadow of the word itself, something no one could have really made sense of. A periwinkle SUV streaked across the glossy picture leaving traces and fragments of itself in her eyes like children laughing and waving sparklers in the nights.

And there Patty was, bent all the way over the steering wheel, firmly gripping ten and two with wrinkled, pale, weathered hands, drooling at this delicious scene before her as she sat there on the bench seat of her vintage car falling into the brilliance, slowly losing the connection she felt to her body and relaxing into a state of overwhelming joy unattached from any desire she felt except to be exactly where she was now, in the most crowded area of a grocery store parking lot watching movement and color collide in a thousand revolving patterns.

A honk from behind brought Patty back as she looked around quickly from side to side multiple times, wide eyed and furiously cranking the steering wheel to the left. She parked and began walking towards the entrance. Patty shuffled across the asphalt and she saw the towering structure of a supermarket, large and boxy, imposing itself on her, drawing her up into automatic doors. She came closer and could see a pair of escalators leading up to the florescent white entry. Approaching the black belts, she paused and could not help but to delight in the upcoming sensation of movement without effort. The hum of electric motors rolled in her ears and she could see the dusting bristles dance along the edges of the ridged black surface moving up and away from her. Patty saw this and was drawn to it, and drawn to the destination which the moving sidewalk would eventually take her. So she stepped onto the conveyant machine, braced herself with a hand on one rail, leaned back slightly, and al-

lowed herself to come close.

Near the end, a confusion swept over her mind. She furled her brow and touched her lips, pondering an idea that was not yet fully formed but was now entering her brain and calling her into the two automatic glass doors ahead. Something lay beyond those doors.

The day was ending, and the sun was not as bright as it once was. The sky turned a deep royal blue and the glow from the fluorescent lights inside the store came through the glass and a luminous bloom appeared around the recessed opening. She entered, bathing in incandescence and rejuvenation. She slowly turned her head to one side.

There sat a fully charged black and grey electric mobility scooter partially surrounded by many generic shopping carts. And she approached it, touching the back of the wide, grey, pleather seat and running the tips of her yellow, cracked fingernails across the armrest. She stood next to the scooter, gripping the two black grips separated by a feeble and narrow chrome handlebar and looked at the charge meter reading all the way through red, yellow, and green. She sat down in its chair and was comforted by it, lulled into slumping, letting her feet slide forward and her butt sit farther and farther towards the edge. She held the throttle in one hand and slowly backed the scooter out of its parking spot, then pulled forward through the second set of automatic doors to see rows and rows of fluorescent lighting. The inside of the store was magnificent, a cathedral of all that Patty desired. And as she came through those doors she could feel the wheels of the scooter turning, and the bounce of the plasticky seat, and the weight of the machine pushing her forward. She held on, tighter and tighter, as she accelerated past the JambaJuice and the pharmacy. Soon the throttle was locked all the way back and Patty was hunkered down in a tuck position, wind in her hair, as she pressed her face farther and farther forward with a subtle grin reaching across her face, as if trying to reach beyond the edge of the scooter for more of this sensation known as speed. Now she was flying past aisle after aisle, each time the tubular, artificial lighting flashing in her eyes, each time separated by a hazy grey between the open lanes.

Patty slowed down and straightened up as she approached the last of the rows, she could see a towering structure of five-gallon water containers that was built at the end of one of the rows. Making a huge sweeping right into the aisle after the blue jugs, she could see that behind the watery pillars was a silver mirrored background in which she saw the image of herself, through the jugs, rotating her head as she rode by to see the reflection. The liquid twisted and pulled her face as she drove by, each angle revealing another distorted face. With each new image the smile on her face was dulled until the edges of her lips were sunken to her chin and her eyebrows hung down through her eyes.

The aisle into which Patty had turned happened to be a frozen food aisle and it was packed with people. It was filled with colorful bags of carrots and cauliflower, microwave dinners and halibut fishsticks, sugary frozen juice cock-

tails and large green men inviting patrons to partake in the consumption of packaged goods. Indeed, the many people occupying this aisle stood apart, faces to the glass, peering inside, considering what cardboard box they should eat later that night. Patty came closer and cracked a disheveled smile, ear to ear, letting out a crusty "Hello" to the first person who looked her in the face. Yet, after that first "Hello" Patty could no longer speak, all she could do was smile and stare at every single person in that aisle. And when she did stop to smile at all the people, her eyes would close so far together that tears ran down her cheeks and filled up her eyes so that all she could see were shadowy outlines in front of white lights. This happened with every single person in the aisle and even though she could barely see she felt that there never was a better friend than the amorphous being standing before her.

Soon Patty had made it through the crowd of people and was at the very end of this frozen food aisle, so she decided to check out the next one.

She turned into the second to last aisle, another frozen food aisle but this time a frozen dessert aisle. Patty meandered along, swerving from one side to the other, looking around for nothing in particular. This aisle was deserted. In her state of quiet jubilee, she began to think on where exactly she was. Patty realized that she was in a grocery store, but she had no recollection of how she had gotten there, or even where she came from. Patty could not even recall her own name. Her mind seemed to be empty of any previous experience; she was directed only by impulse and affection. These thoughts did not startle her, however, she was conscious of her having the thoughts but in such a colorful and brightly lit store she could not be bothered by such trivial incongruences.

About three quarters of the way through the aisle, Patty noticed a container of strawberry ice cream. This, she knew, was a necessary purchase, so she stood up, opened the large glass door, and grabbed the container. She put the container in the basket of the mobility scooter and sat down and looked at the item. She noticed now that its logo, the brand's logo, was a newborn girl, wrapped in a pink quilt with its eyes closed. Patty instinctively reached for the child, slowly over the handle bars and into the basket. The babe opened its eyes and crawled into her outstretched arms and Patty brought her back to her bosom to cradle it. Closing her eyes, the little babe snuggled up and slept. Patty's heart melted. Never had she come into such close contact with another life and this one, begging to be nurtured, was ecstasy. She smiled, closed her eyes, and began to cry. She could now see colors and patterns in her mind's eye. Large purple circles in the middle, poorly defined, surrounded by smaller organic shapes of every color imaginable. The visions were not produced by external input, but rather, they came from deep within her. Though she could not describe this feeling inside her, it seemed to fulfill every desire Patty ever had. So she sat there, in the middle of an empty grocery store aisle, with a mobility scooter parked crookedly and the handle bars cocked dumbly to one side. Her foot slid off the edge of the scooter

and rested on the ground and she leaned back as if she were sitting in a rocking chair.

Suddenly, Patty knew that her trip was over, that she had found what she was looking for and that it was time to leave. She regained some composure and hurried to check-out.

She waited in the line of a checkout woman behind several people, staring at the child on the box of ice cream she was about to buy. Eventually, Patty reached the front of the line and the woman scanned the item and looked at Patty and said, "That will be four seventy seven."

Patty looked up from her the seat of her scooter into the face of the cashier. She could see this woman's face more clearly than anything she could remember and as she looked into the face of this woman she could see not one face, but many changing features of many different faces. Her chin went from rounded to chiseled, here nose was thin then fat, her ears were pointy then rounded, and her eyes constantly changed color and shape. Patty saw this and was terrified. Never had Patty seen anyone's face so clearly and now, suddenly, she saw the faces of thousands of different people for the first time.

Patty did not hesitate to leave. So she grabbed the throttle of the scooter and left without a word and without the ice cream. As she exited the first set of automatic doors, she could hear a baby crying.

She went down the moving sidewalks and out into the parking lot. It was very dark out now but the stars clearly shown in the sky, the brightest of which were over the ocean. This grocery store happened to be very near the coastline and on this night the ocean was wafting in the air. Patty, in such a fright, forgot all about her car and about returning the scooter that she rode straight across the asphalt and onto a sidewalk where she noticed the stars in the sky. She saw the stars and reached for them.

Patty kept on driving down the sidewalk, following stars and the smell of the ocean. Soon she could see the coast and was headed straight for a nearby pier.

The scooter jumped and bounced over the old and warped planks of the pier as Patty accelerated, looking up towards the bright stars over the ocean. The small points of light were clearly visible to Patty. She had no idea how far away they were, and that the light had traveled millions of miles just to empty themselves onto her eyes. The edge of the pier came closer and closer, Patty held down the throttle and aimed for the star directly facing her. All she could see.

Aaron Shaver / Department of Physical Therapy

Hospice

She's in room 8
on my first night
"24 y/o WF, agitated"
Dark eyes glare
over sunken cheeks
The gauze is torn
Her blood pools
on the skin
between scars

I sit down and wait
and wait. and wait
watching the clouds
roll across her face
Finally: "I'm not crazy
I'm dying." I nod.
Everyone is, after all
But her morethan most

Her words follow me
as I slip out the door
tugging at my sleeve
like a forlorn child
At the nurses station
no one wear black
The techs gossip
The clock ticks
The world moves on

Michael Slade / WUMS

Words Unspoken

I watch the reruns of the memories you gave me only to find they were now flooded behind eyes dripping. Drowning in the sea of my own tears and contemplation: if I could do it again, would it change your mind?

No.

I now fall deep into the arms of my bed that hold me not tightly enough to suffocate the memory of your body and your lingering smell.

In, out, in... out.... in.....

I hold this breath just a bit longer hoping to break free of incessant memories which bombard the walls I'm now futilely building to keep you out. I sabotage the plan to protect my heart because the pain of feeling you rip apart the pieces of my soul is better than feeling nothing at all.

Like tattered paper, you set fire to each piece. Lighting the way deeper into the dark parts of myself which I had cleverly covered with padlocks -the ones you so keenly swept away with the touch of your lips long ago. I was so eager to let you in that I forgot, just maybe, you never wanted to be invited. A guest who felt more like a prisoner sharing the jail cell of my pasts forgotten.

Choking on words unspoken, I trusted you with the key. You fled, too selfish to consider locking away my love for you. Through the open cracks in my heart, I still hear its screams.

Drowning in the sea of my own tears and questions: if I could do it again, would it all turn out the same? Maybe...

Avery Strong / WUMS



Spring at Barnes Jewish Hospital / Kevin Tamadonfar / WUMS

Flames / Kevin Tamadonfar / WUMS



Hospital Hospitality

Welcome to our wonderful hospital
Full of crisp sterile sheets as white as can be
Be our patient, little by little
And enjoy our amazing hospitality

First, take off your dirty outerwear
And stay awhile, perhaps take a nap
For we have nice cooling gowns for you to wear
With buttons conveniently located to unsnap

Now here are some monitors, I hope you like the beeps
And for measure, let's get some bloodwork, a poke should do
Now that you're our guest, you better get some sleeps
Well, maybe more than a poke, we'll need an IV access too

And, while we have you here, can you pee in a cup?
Because if you can't, that's fine too, we'll just stick a Foley in you
As long as you're here, you get the full check-up
And oh no, you're hungry are you?

Well, that's too bad, because you're NPO in case of procedure
And, surgery is taking their time deciding what to do
Oh no! You went ahead and spiked a fever
So maybe NPO tomorrow too

And since you're not eating, I guess we'll use that IV line
And tethered to a pole for the rest of the day, you'll be
Laying in our comfy air bed with load distributed evenly over spine
For how much longer, we'll have to wait and see

But now that you can't get up and out of bed

Injections to prevent a clot, in your belly three times per day, you'll get
And from that IV, for labs we'll keep you bled
In a windowless room, with a roommate, and no internet

And we still don't know what wrong with you
Let's send you for a scan down to radiology
For a scan couldn't hurt, let's add some contrast too
And then when that's done, we can prep you for a colonoscopy

And when we're done with that, we've blown through too many IVs
So time to call the PICC team and get you better access
Oh why or why! You keep running a temp of 39 degrees
And oh no! You're losing weight and failing to thrive with all this stress

Let's get you some supplement shakes, or a nasogastric tube
Which gags you, and smells of plastic as it goes down your snout
Despite our excessive use of lidocaine lube
Of course, at night you'll inadvertently pull it out

And, oh you've been in the hospital now so long...
We can't just send you home.
"You need help", "you're not strong"
We know all about your syndrome

It's time for some rehab to regain your vitality
I'm sure you'll appreciate their wonderful hospitality.

Ethan Tobias / WUSM



Spring's Ahead / Sally Vogt / DBBS

Apposition

Bride and groom
A simple aisle
Families, friends choosing sides
Yet proximal

Arms extend across
At Capitol Hill
Once aisle, now chasm
No longer apposed

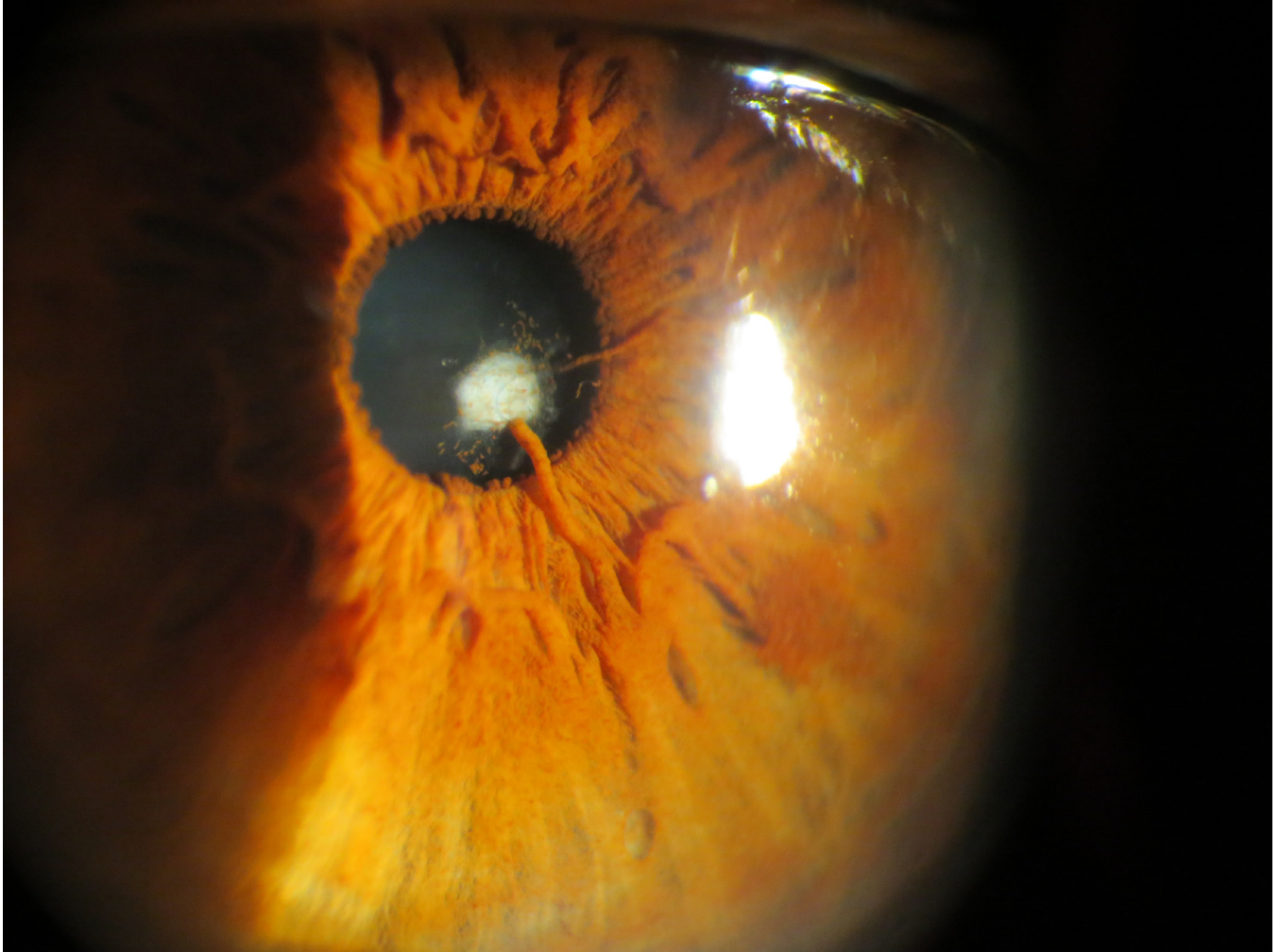
Whether laceration or incision
Politics form opposition

The collagen of compromise
Who will be the sutures?

Austin Wesevich / WUSM



Grand Chasm / Austin Wesevich / WUSM



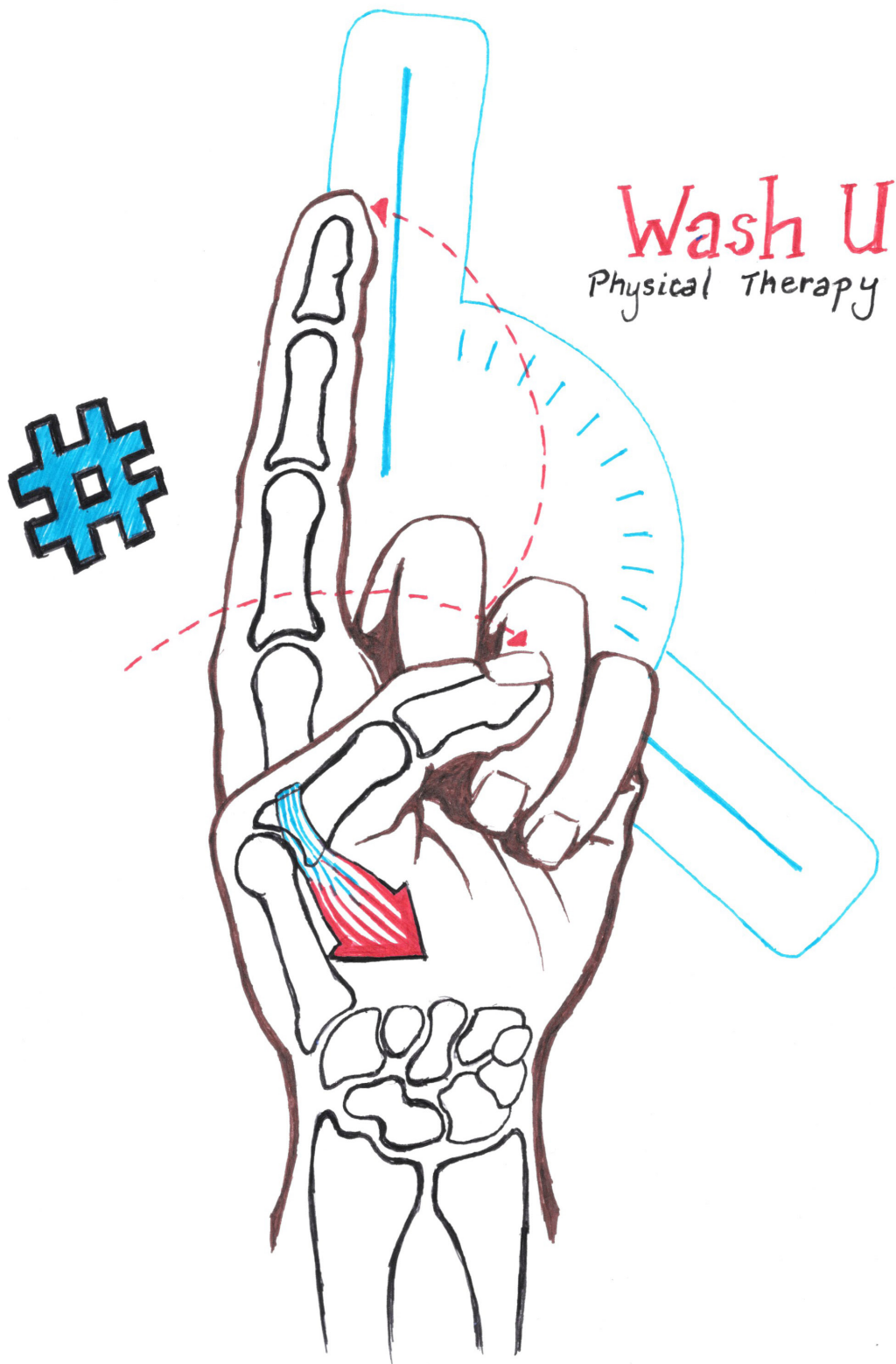
Relics of a Previous Career / Richard Whalley / Occupational Therapy

Dying

Until I spent my Mother's last seventy-two hours with her I did not know that dying could be graceful. I did not know that death was not always the shocking result of violence ever present in the news, or the cruel snatching of an infant from his nap by SIDS. Or that it didn't have to be a painful cancer like the one my Father battled for years, declaring at the end that he was not ready yet. I did not know that it could be a gentle drifting into an endless sleep, pausing only once to turn ever so slightly to the sounds of our minister singing to her accompanied by his guitar - Singing the hymns she had long ago selected for her memorial. Hearing, they say, is the last sense to go. I never knew that holding her fragile cooling hand in my sturdy warm one would be such a comfort. I did not realize that my immediate response to hearing her last breath disappear into silence would be joy. Joy that she had at last escaped the tortured prison of Alzheimer's.



Patricia Winkler / Department of Genetics



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