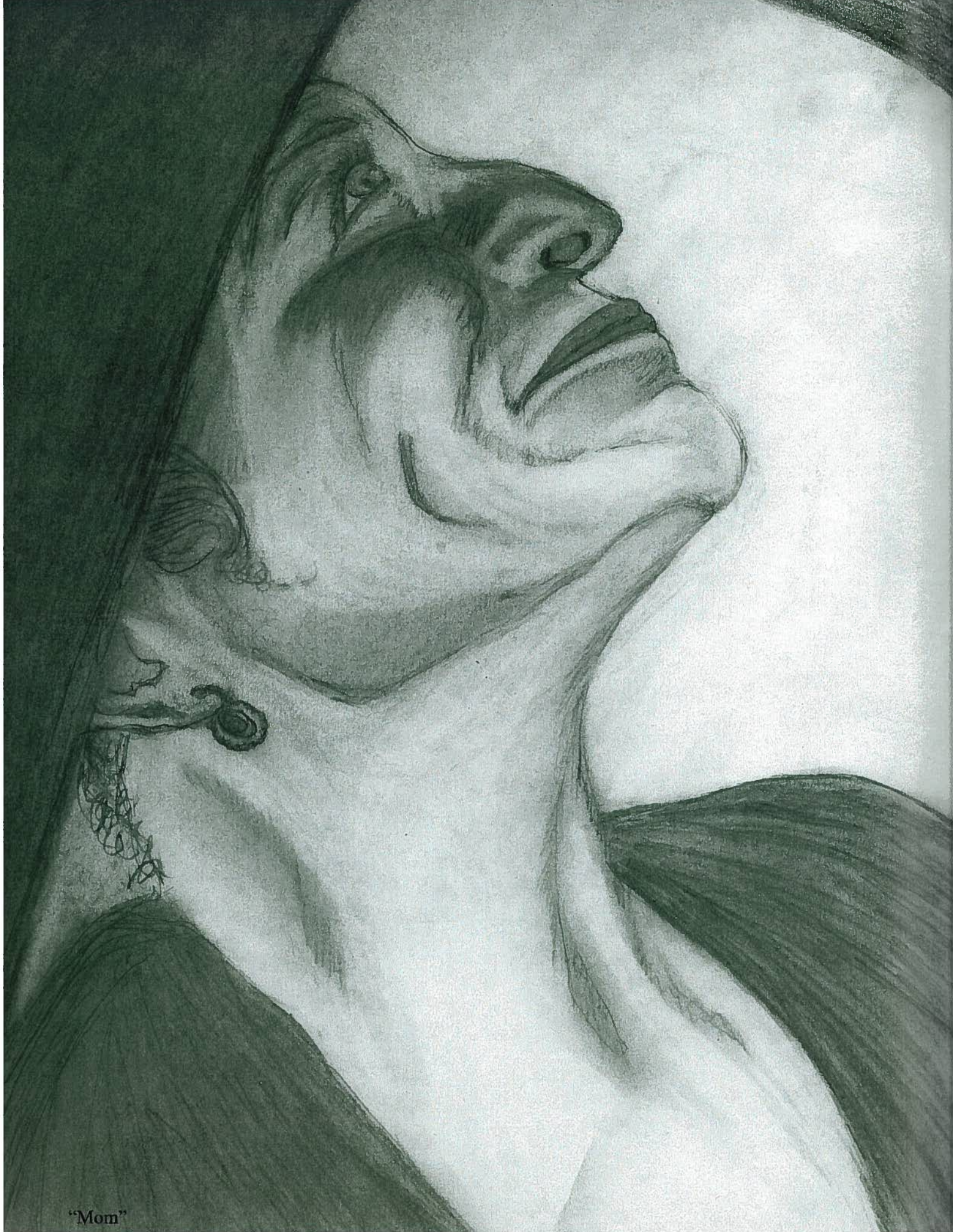


CUENTOS

A full-page photograph of a sunset over a beach. The sky is filled with dark, dramatic clouds, some of which are illuminated from below by the setting sun, creating a vibrant orange and yellow glow. The sun is a bright, glowing orb just above the horizon line. The ocean is dark, with a small, dark silhouette of a person in the water. The beach in the foreground is wet and reflects the colors of the sky. The overall mood is serene and evocative.

A Literary Magazine by
GW Residents and Faculty
June 2009



“Mom”

Cuentos 2009 (Vol. 2)

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Railay, Thailand

Cody Benthin



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Acknowledgements

Dedications

We dedicate this edition to two special people who have touched our lives: Cheri Camacho and Joyce Pauig.

We grew up with Cheri as co-interns, and we will always remember her smile and uplifting spirit.

Joyce gave us a positive perspective with her generosity and laughter when we rotated on 4-South.

We miss them both dearly.



Letter from the Editors

Transitioning from Sueños to Cuentos, dreams to stories, was seamless from our debut to this second issue. The talent from our attending and resident community is extraordinary. Enjoy the following stories from an amazing group of contributors!

-- Mary Reyes, Mary Ann McYat,
Homan Wai, David Ni

The Editors thank the generosity of Dr. Alan Wasserman and Dr. Jehan El-Bayoumi for making this magazine possible. We also thank all the contributors for sharing their work with us.



This is an eight year old boy, Daniel, who I met in Montana Verde, Olancho, Honduras on a medical mission trip. I first met him in 2007, when I went to his village to do a health screening. I heard a heart murmur when I examined him and my heart sank. I knew there was no way he could see a specialist even if his family could afford to take him into Catacamas (the closest town with a clinic) because pediatric cardiologists don't go to Catacamas. His family told me he had asthma and that is why he got short of breath when he ran, but I knew better. I took this picture last year when I went back to his village. He is still small for his age and so serious, as are most of the children in Montana Verde. He doesn't understand what I say to him or why I pay so much attention to him, but I know he has a little piece of my heart.

-- April Barbour, M.D.



“Untitled”

Shirin Madad, M.D.

“Untitled”

Silver scale on paper thin skin.
Every moment leaves parts of him behind.
There’s no hiding the scales on his scalp,
But there’s some hope for the patches on his arm.
30ish and male – he’s come up with
creative ways to hide his scale trail.
Light colored shirts, longer hair at the nape of his neck.
“It’s hard to find a date when you’re worried about looking like a reptile”
he says as he leaves the office.

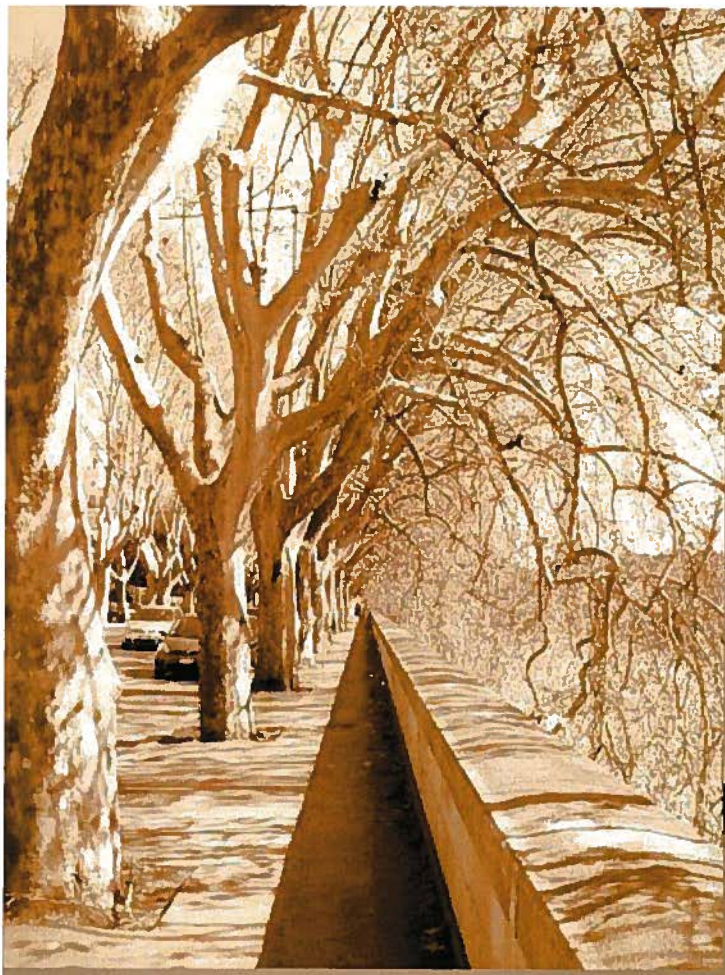
-- Shirin Madad, M.D.

“Untitled”, Yellowstone National Park

Homan Wai, M.D.

“Untitled”

Jahan Tavakoli, M.D.



“Untitled”

Jahan Tavakoli, M.D.

“Untitled”, Yellowstone National Park

Homan Wai, M.D.



“Untitled”, Il Colosseo, Rome

Homan Wai, M.D.

“Untitled”

Sound of beeps – “Keep your arm straight!”

Noise all the time, “Honey, don’t expect to get peace and quiet here.”

Yellow gowns that make my family look like Easter peeps –

“This is so that other patients don’t get MRSA.”

Vampire phlebotomist, waking me up at 5,5,5,5,6 –

“This is a teaching hospital after all.”

Finally, seeing my attending at 10 am for 5 minutes.

Then staring at the wall or

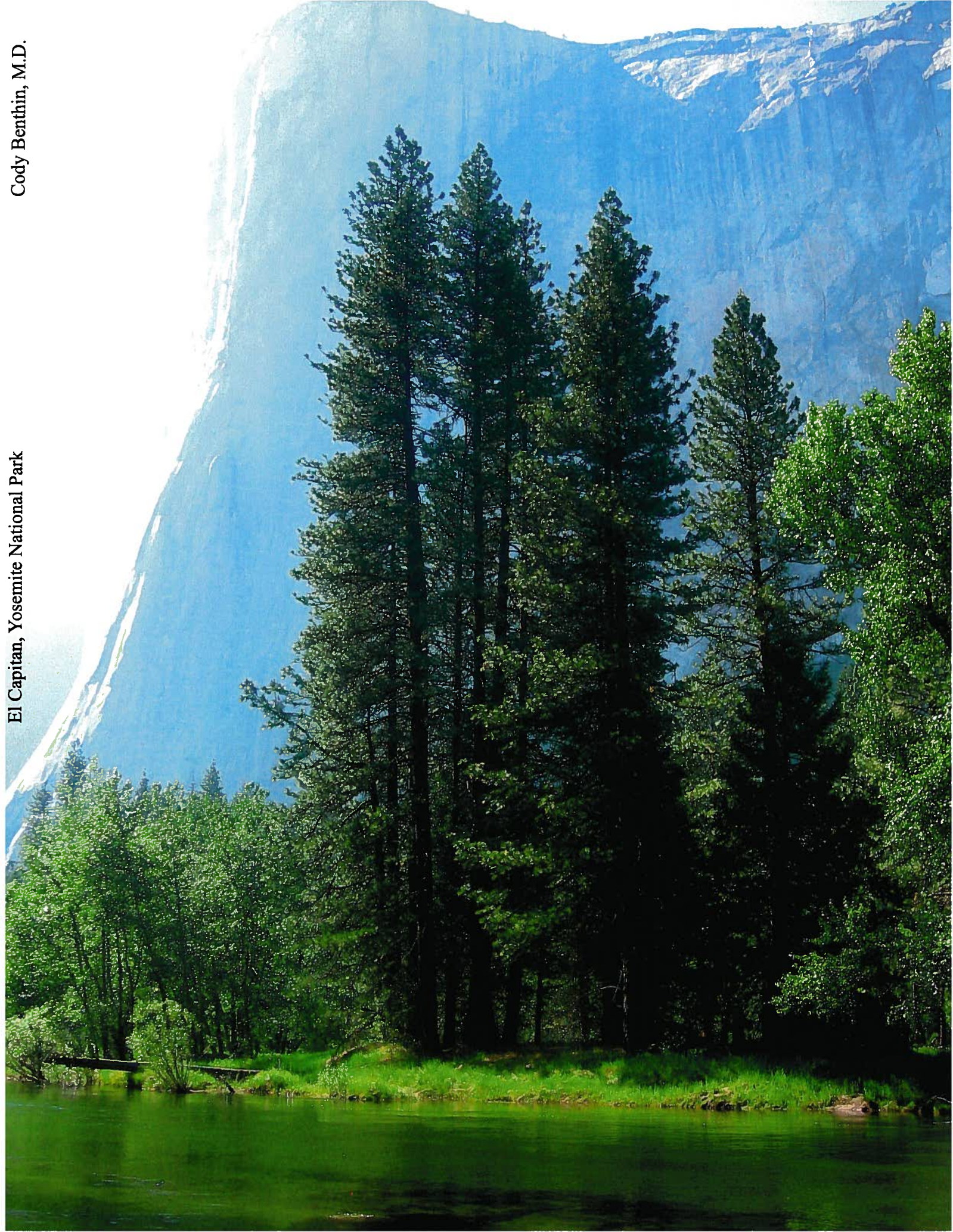
Watching Oprah every day.

Can someone get me out of here?

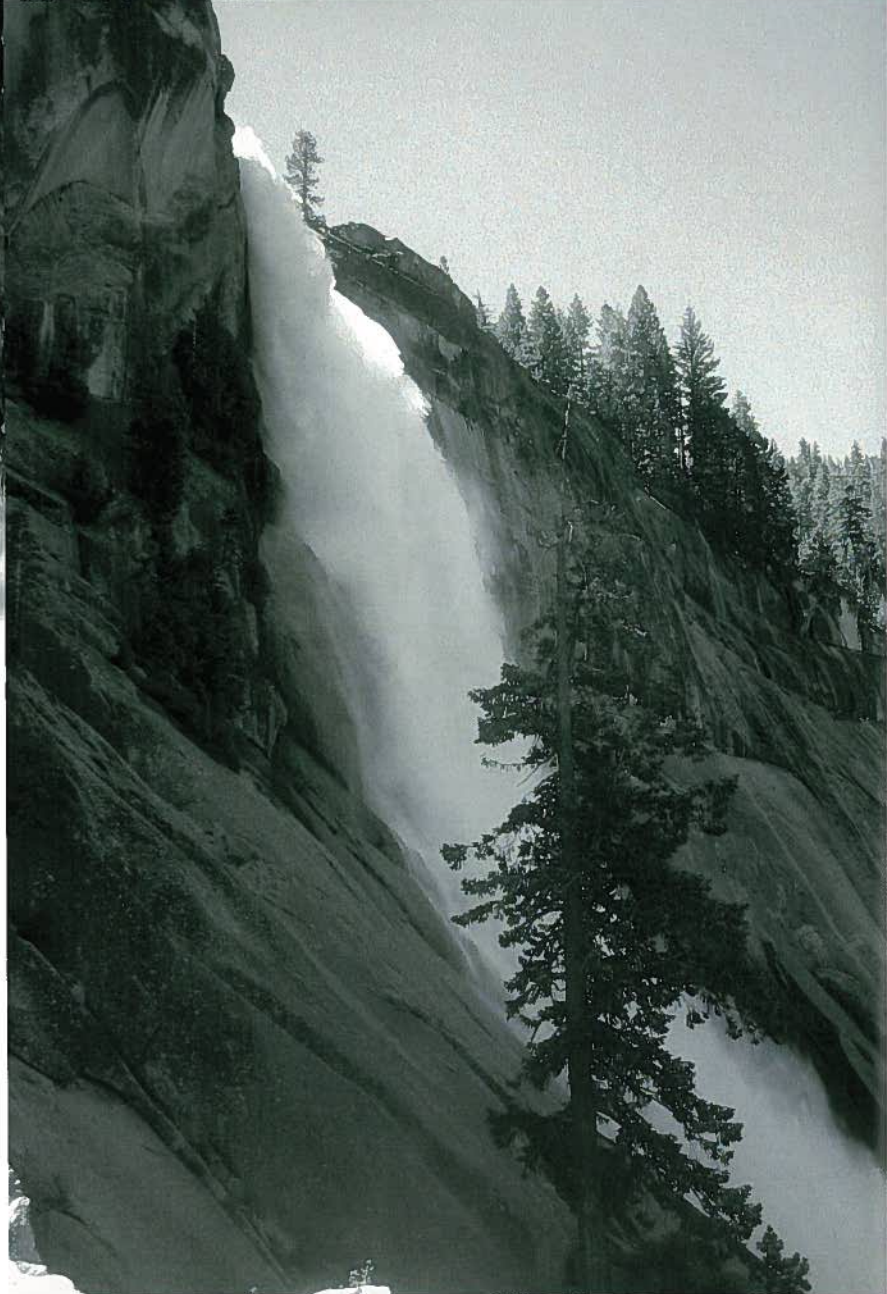
-- Mary Ann McYat, M.D.

El Capitan, Yosemite National Park

Cody Benthin, M.D.



Nevada Fall, Yosemite National Park
Cody Benthin, M.D.



“Untitled”, Yellowstone National Park
Homan Wai, M.D.



Cathedral Peak, Yosemite National Park

Cody Bentin, M.D.



“Untitled”, La Jolla, California

Shari Flowers, M.D.

“Untitled”

A sick patient's body...
A ship at sea, weathered, beaten, aflame.
From bow to stern,
Patchy areas of corrosion, oxidation and twisted metal.
Long abandoned by its crew, it is adrift-
Communication channels dead. Now radio silent.
What must have been a celebrated vessel at its launching...
A ship of the line proud, gleaming, port and polished.
Now obsolete, falling apart.
Salvage crews stumble upon it and examine the inner workings.
The generators barely function. This ship is taking on water.
Unfortunately, despite valiant efforts, it is simply too far gone.
An empty vessel- a relic- a reminder of an era long gone.
Perhaps it could be retrofitted but to what degree?
With each replacement, when does the old ship become a new one?
The fires have been extinguished but all that is left is a charred shell.
The salvaged reflect once more upon the once mighty vessel
Pays their last respects.
One last look before the ship disappears into the abyss.

-- David Ni, M.D.



“Untitled”

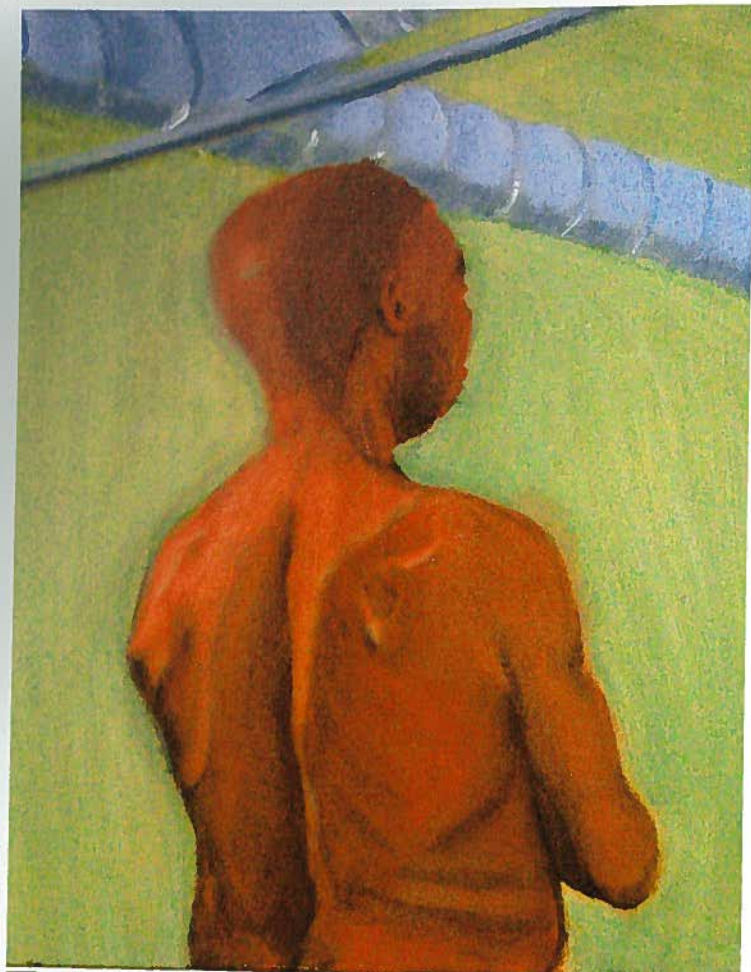
Jehan El-Bayoumi, M.D.



Overlooking Railay Beach from Thailand Wall, Thailand



Cody Bentlin, M.D.



Shari Flowers, M.D.

“Anatomy Lesson”



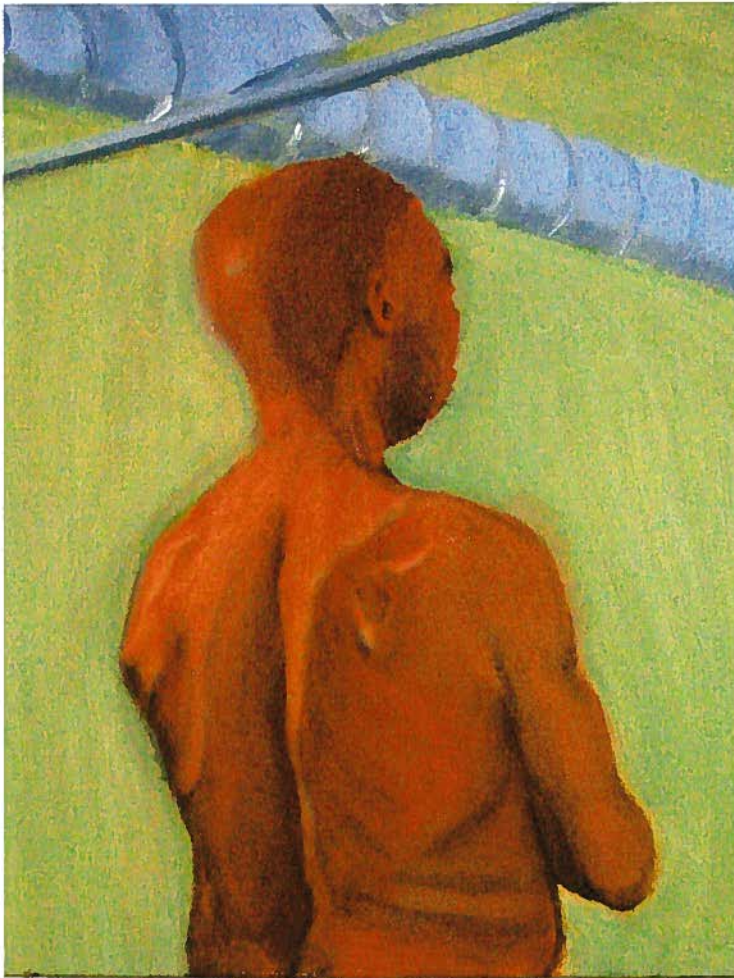
Nitin Sardana, M.D.

“The Market”, India

Bridging the Gap

If I tell you that you're dying,
Am I contributing to your death?
Am I stealing your hope?
Or questioning your faith?
Will you appreciate my honesty
And make necessary preparations?
Or will you call into question my
Judgment and competence as a
healer?
Can we agree to disagree
And move forward together?
Hoping for a miracle
But accepting we both
have limitations.

-- Aimee Welsh, M.D.



Shari Flowers, M.D.

“Anatomy Lesson”



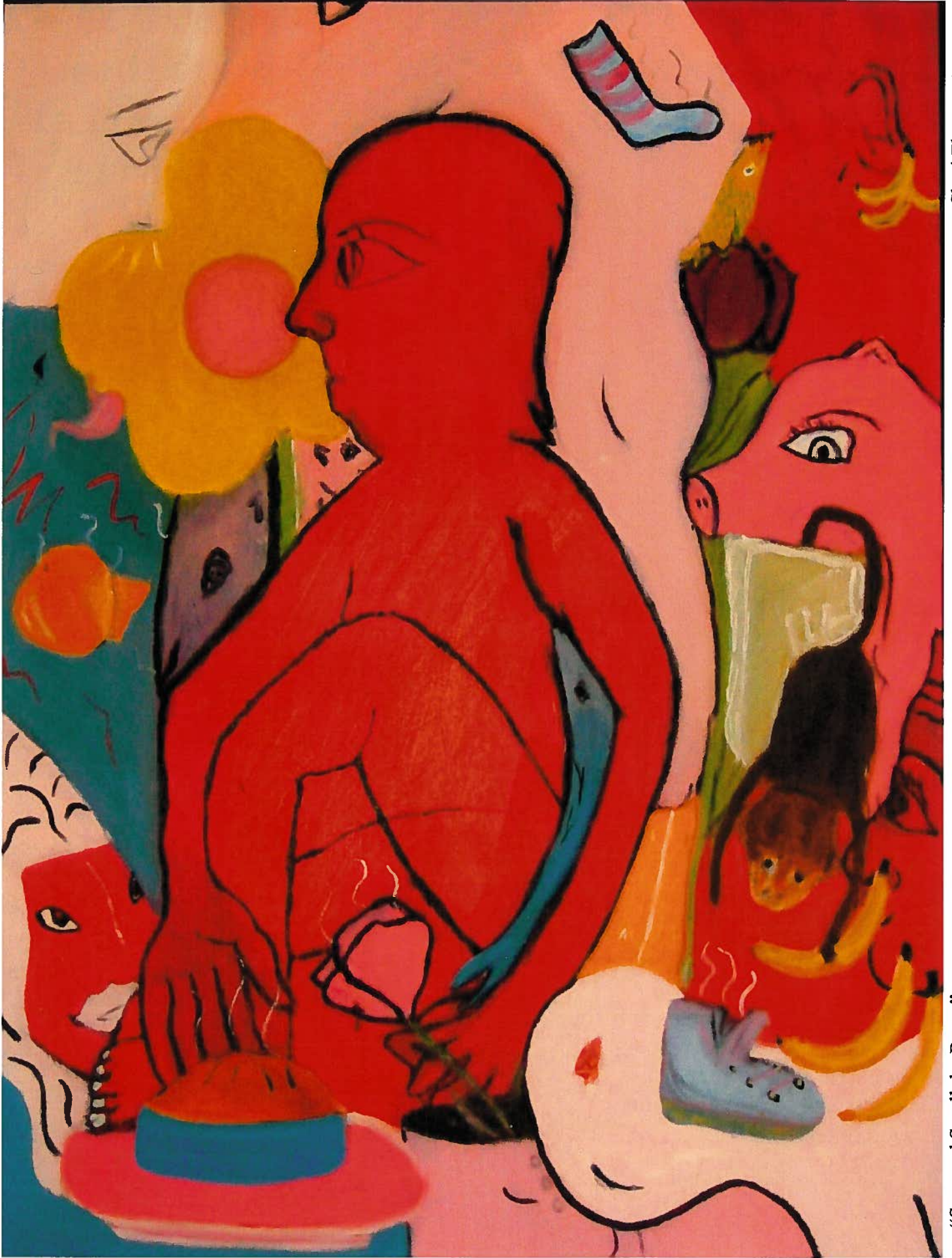
Nitin Sardana, M.D.

“The Market”, India

Bridging the Gap

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But accepting we both
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-- Aimee Welsh, M.D.



Calling the Trauma

The path of staples
Gutted a crass and ribald familiarity
Of the decaying tracks where he battled
For one more howl against the knife.

*Sterile gowns quipped about redemption
For mama's baby boy
No name
No matter
Because someone wanted him dead
The surgeon said
And he was.*

Someone wanted blood for blow
Simple, really
And there was sweat, wet,
In static beads suspended
Above cold and pliant flesh.

*They learned once
Youth could be funny
And serve a curious criterion for
resurrection
So into the heart of the trauma bay
Saviors poured
And descended.*

A knife again
Immaculate, conceived to open the cage
Close a broken pericardium
And redirect rivers through empty tributaries
Bathed in red, bathed in darkness
He might have seen the locusts
Through pupils fixed and dilated
Toward fluorescent skies.

Mama's first born son
Relaxing in a lifeless drama
Of plastic tubes and tentacles
The horrifying vomitus emerging
Only to remind
In death
There is no gag
There are no pulses
And no data to suggest that
Eleven minutes of cardiac massage
Breeds miracles
Death is calm.

*But the crowd still wondered
In the collective shadows of their faith
As one casually recalls a bedtime tenet
If G-d would understand
"a ruptured left ventricle, status post
penetrating trauma."*

So came the staples
To hide open indiscretions
From his Jesus, his Allah
Each push of the gun burned a new letter
Offered a false eulogy
While voices lost in logistics
Ushered him toward whichever heaven
Mourned him.

-- Pamela Kasenetz, M.D.

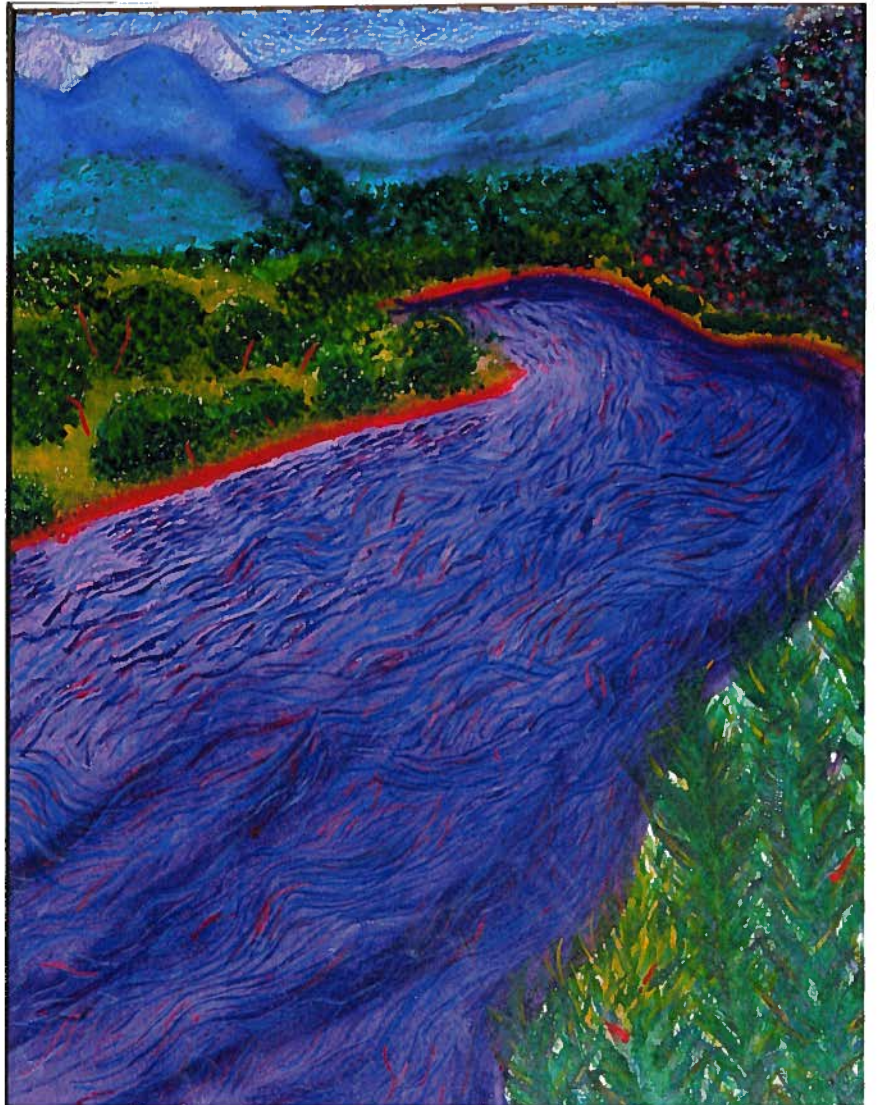
On Considering Magritte's "Le Empire De Lumieres"

We've been there before:
in the spurious trance of alpha
waves
where electrical pulses
fuel a sickly mustard glow
others
in life
in Bayeux, perhaps,
with the quiet rusted lamps
that hide a trail
of blood and thread

The eye tracks familiar glimpses
of logic in shadows
of comfort in corners
until
it catches an oily reflection
slicked atop lost ripples
we can not trust
and the woven waves on canvas
mimic palpitating hearts.

We have no choice
but to turn to windows:
diaphoretic and impossible
they beat gaseous
in vermillion dreams
and we pray our sleepy psyche
remembers Bayeux at its dusk

What light that highlights gesso
raped the swords of breathless
horsemen
lost in madness and in darkness
pushing taut toward the yarn...



"River"

Shari Flowers, M.D.

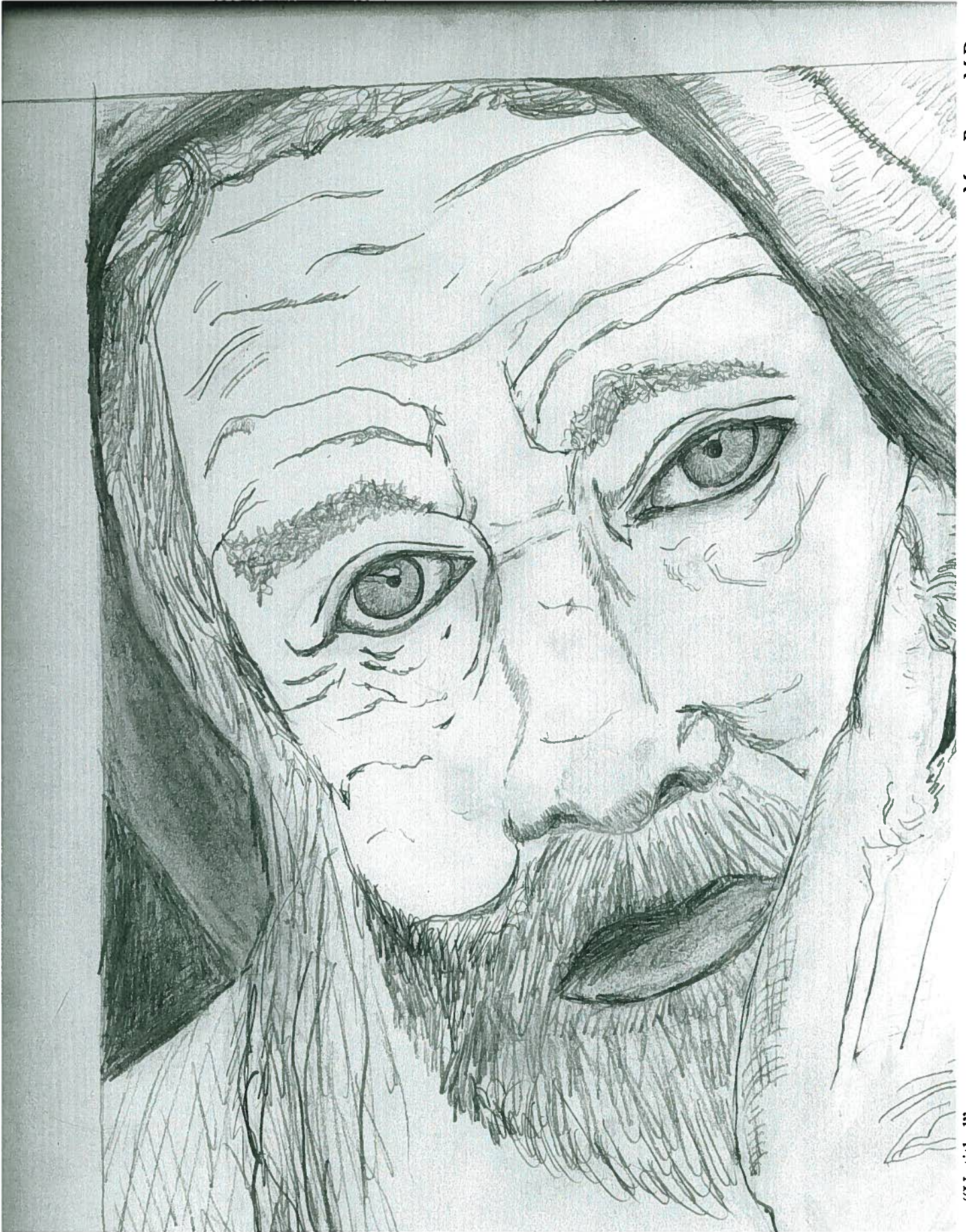
Wincing at the Empire,
I resolve
the power of misplaced color
in dreams
in men
crying promises of light
as they charge the spears
at their dark end.

-- Pamela Kasenetz, M.D.



Mary Reyes, M.D.

“Untitled”



Mary Reyes, M.D.

"Untitled"



“Jamaican Sunset”

Shari Flowers, M.D.



“Untitled”, Salt Lake City, Utah

Homan Wai, M.D.



Yeni Cami, Ortakoy, Istanbul, Turkey

Dost Sarpel, M.D.

Thomas Jefferson Monument, Washington DC



Dost Sarpel, M.D.

“Untitled”

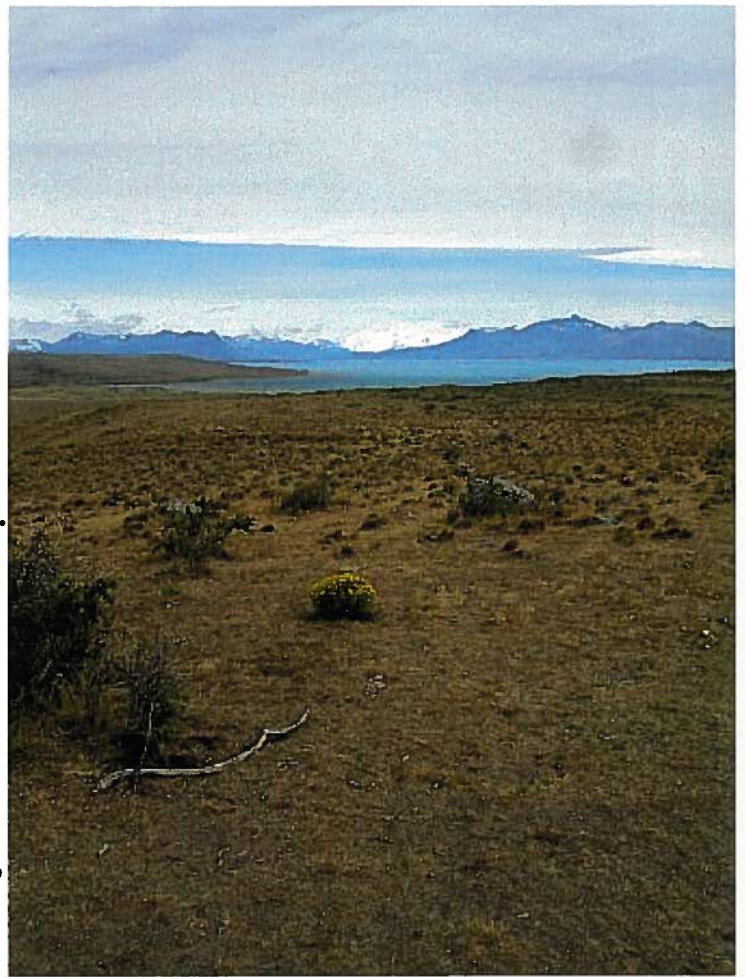
I am an 85 year old man who suffered
an anoxic brain injury
during a cardiac catheterization
about 6 months ago.

Before this happened to me,
my wife suffered an event
which led her to be in a coma for 3 weeks.

She miraculously awoke.

I had my children promise
to never give up on me
if something similar should happen.

Now 6 months later I am unresponsive.
I have had several infections in my blood,
urine and lungs.



“Patagonia”

Mary Ann McYat, M.D.



“View from an Egyptian Bathroom”

Jehan El-Bayoumi, M.D.

My breathing is controlled
by a ventilator.

Whenever my doctors try to
take me off the machine, I fail their test.

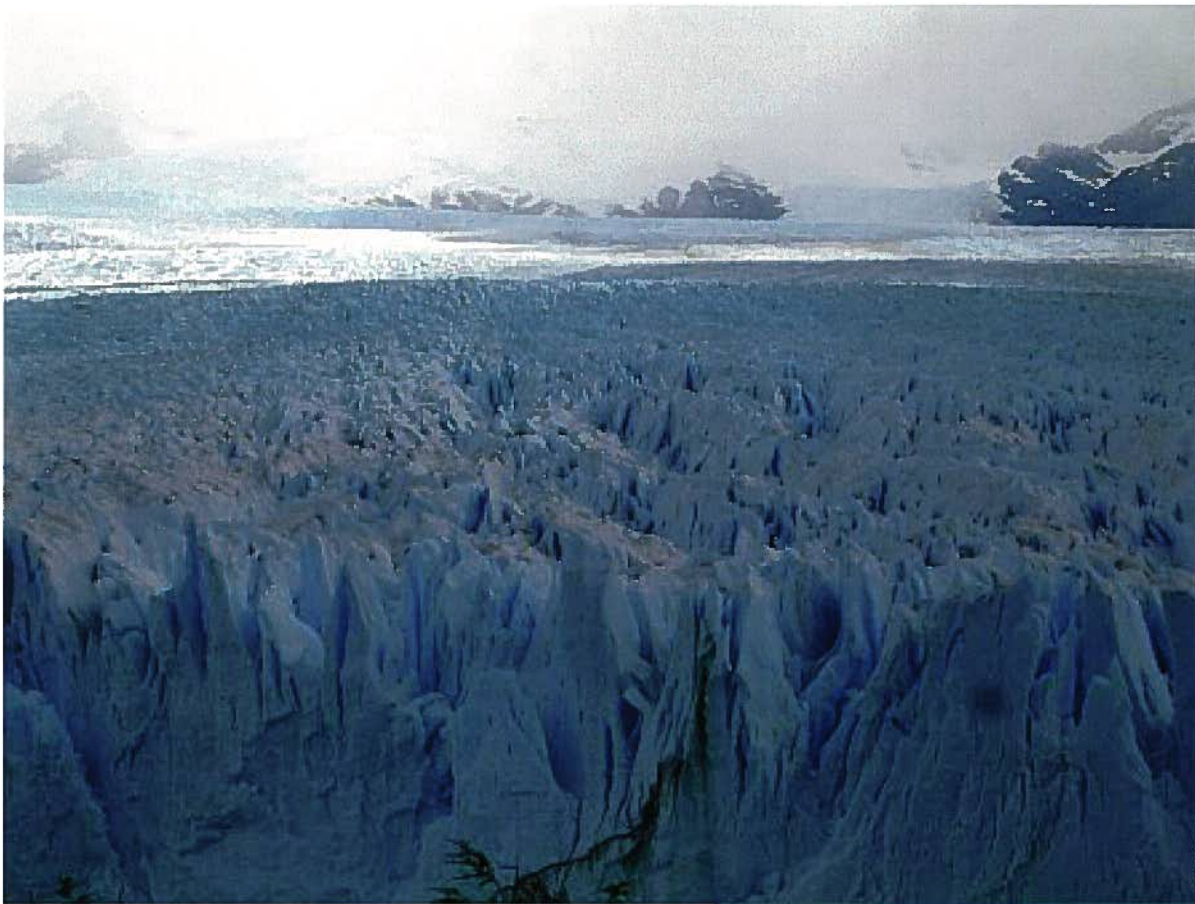
My kidneys no longer work
so my blood is detoxified by dialysis.
My body no longer works on its own.

I am only being kept alive
by artificial means.

The neurology doctors have said
I am brain dead and I am
a risk for giving other people infections.
My kids have not given up on me, but
now I think I have changed my mind.

How can I let them know?

-- Leigh Bornstein, M.D.



Mary Ann McYat, M.D.

“Perito Moreno Glacier”, Argentina

“S.”

Shiny pockmarked discolored skin
Covers her sagging face
I have never seen her smile.

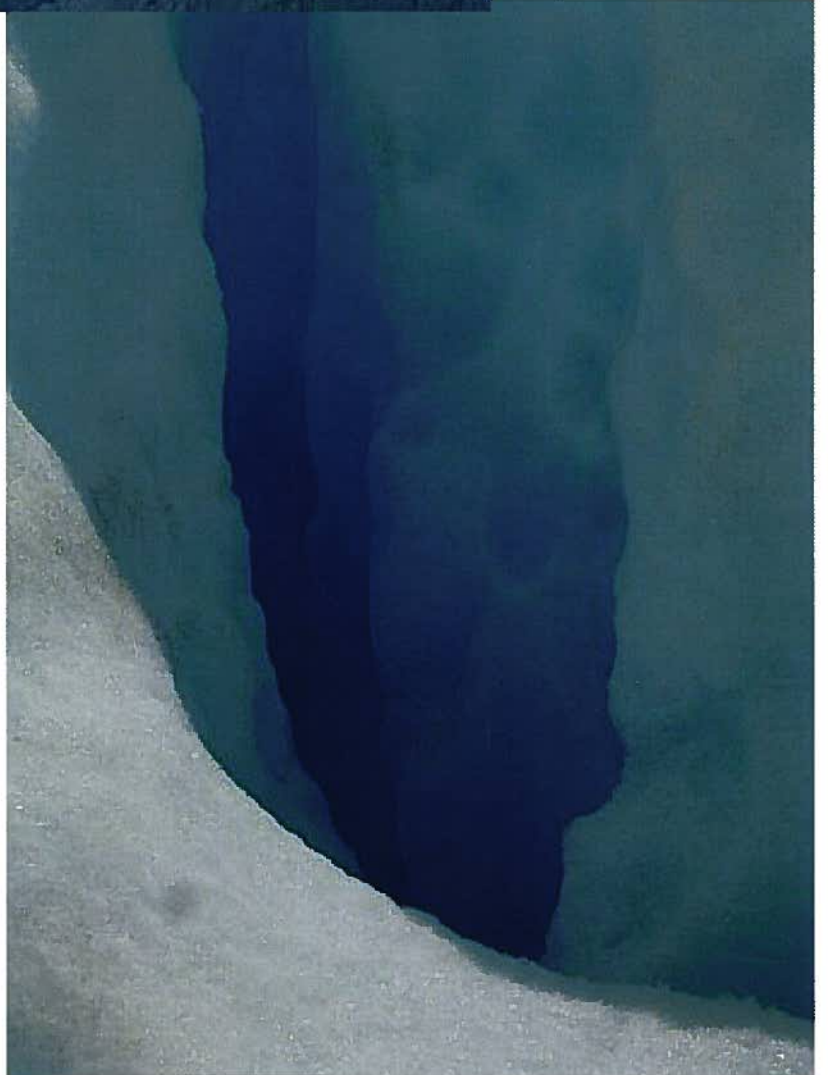
A toothless mouth
that ages this 50 year old woman
20 more years.

Her sagging breasts rest on her
bloated abdomen.

Her large swollen legs
are too weak to support her.
Her husband patiently sits in the
electric wheelchair.

He drove here just for her.
“Doctor, my hands are always
so cold.”

-- Zayn Copeland, M.D.





"Hannah"

Katrina Hawkins, M.D.

"Untitled"

David Ni, M.D.



