

nightfloat

SPRING/SUMMER 2021

NIGHT FLOAT

ISSUE II



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EDITOR'S NOTE

To The Reader

Thank you for reading our second issue. Contained within you will find the talents of the MacMed community in the form of their artistic expression. The students have told their story in a variety of creative ways, and we have been amazed by their outputs.

Night Float is McMaster Medicine's arts and creative writing publication. This title was chosen by our predecessors because it represents an aspect of medicine that is grueling yet rewarding, and brings forth a change in perspective, has an air of mystery, and fuels the imagination. Night Float serves to celebrate and showcase the creativity of our community, which can be easily forgotten when we are consumed by clinical or academic medicine. Medicine is, after all, an art.

We hope that you enjoy the pieces our classmates have worked so hard on. Perhaps they will inspire you, push you to reflect, or simply fill you with a feeling of awe and satisfaction. Whichever it be, we hope that this will help to connect you to the MacMed community.

Please enjoy this second issue of Night Float.

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梦

D R E A M BIRDS

Yu Fei Xia

Dreams perched on a dream

Multi-colored fantasies

The soul wide awake.





untitled #17

before our bodies crossed,

heaven spoke to me in tongues that
pricked skin,

but never opened eyes.

i scampered alongside hibiscus calyxes
grasping at the

blissful tremble in my touch.

my own body pined me beneath

endless crimson sunrises.

lilies shrieked, and i witnessed the sky
fragment

into staccato blues.

when we first touched,

there was a moment where your lips

drowned me in the fragrance of jasmine.

you whispered sunlight into the

gaps between my teeth,

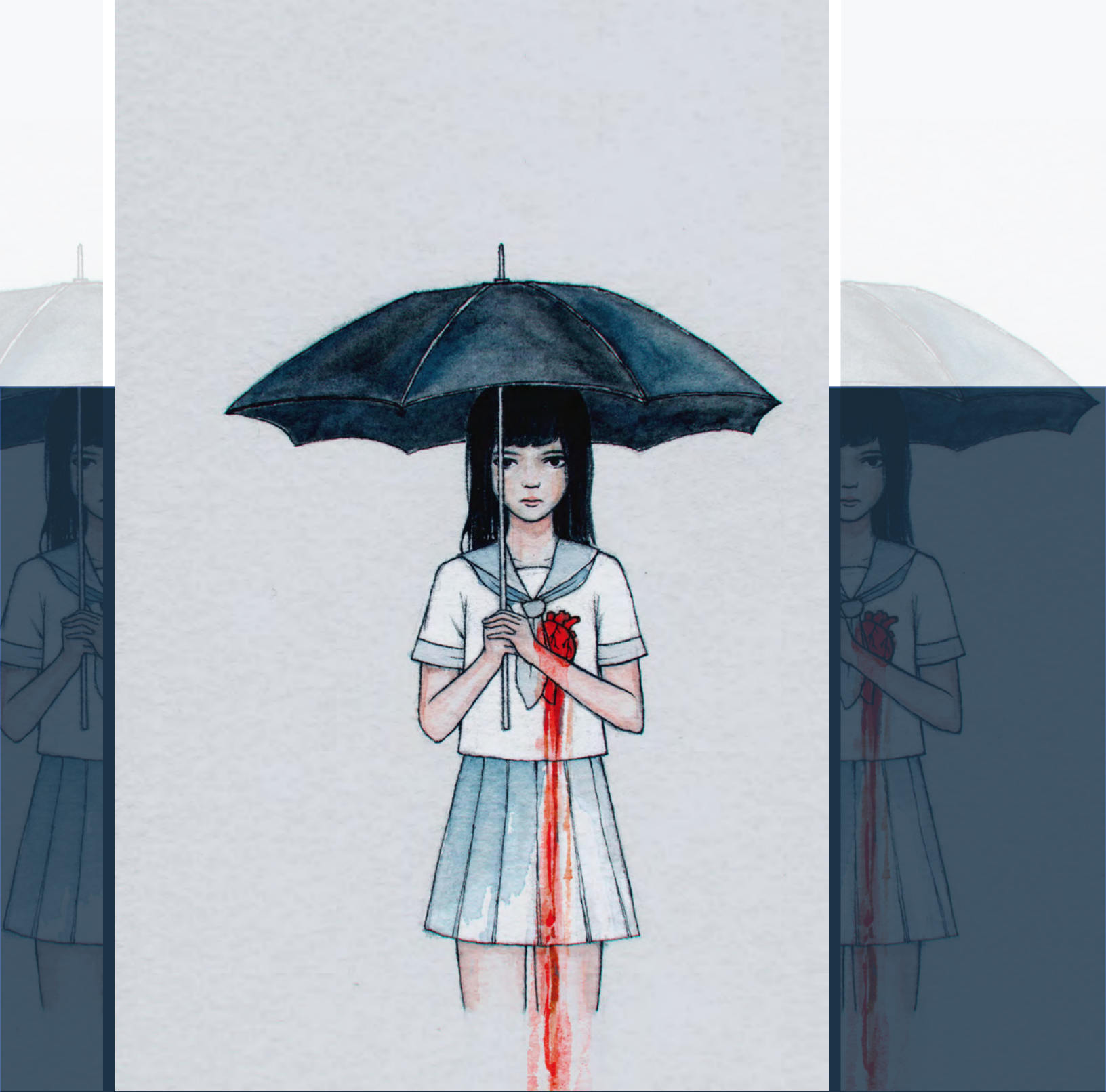
and gave space for my fear to unfurl its
chrysalis.

if anything,

you've reminded me that each hour

carries a machete in its smile.

Kika Otono



Envi | Kay Wu



Tending



Lily Xu



AUTUMN I

Charlotte McEwen, c2021

We're chatting on a park bench
And you say "Well now I've seen it"
I've seen death and it was not gentle
It was rough and too fast and brutal

It was there in the chaos of the trauma bay
Under an oxygen mask and the careful watch of fourteen eyes
Six pairs of hands, gloved and rushing
In the chaos I couldn't help, I still knew nothing
But I could see that it had happened when the team turned away

I share "I saw this once before"
I saw this, but it was gentle and quiet
A sunlit room, an old cassette player
A family, smiling, tears leaking down their cheeks
A final soft sigh tucked under a homespun blanket
And I didn't know much either, but it was peaceful
There was no panic
And I could hear that it had happened when I listened to her heart

Our teacher said "You'll feel this again soon"
Death will be your most frequent colleague
It will be there every day beside you as it was today.
A teacher once said to me about death, "Even this is a lesson that the patient gave to you"
"Next time, you'll know more than you did today"
"Go home, rest up, come back tomorrow."
And I share this with you on the park bench
As we sit and watch the leaves-in-trees
And it's a moment between us; I think of this the next time
This moment of peace among trees
Tomorrow, we'll know more than we did today



a healthy heart | **Kay Wu**





TO THE MOON AND BACK

Shannon Gui



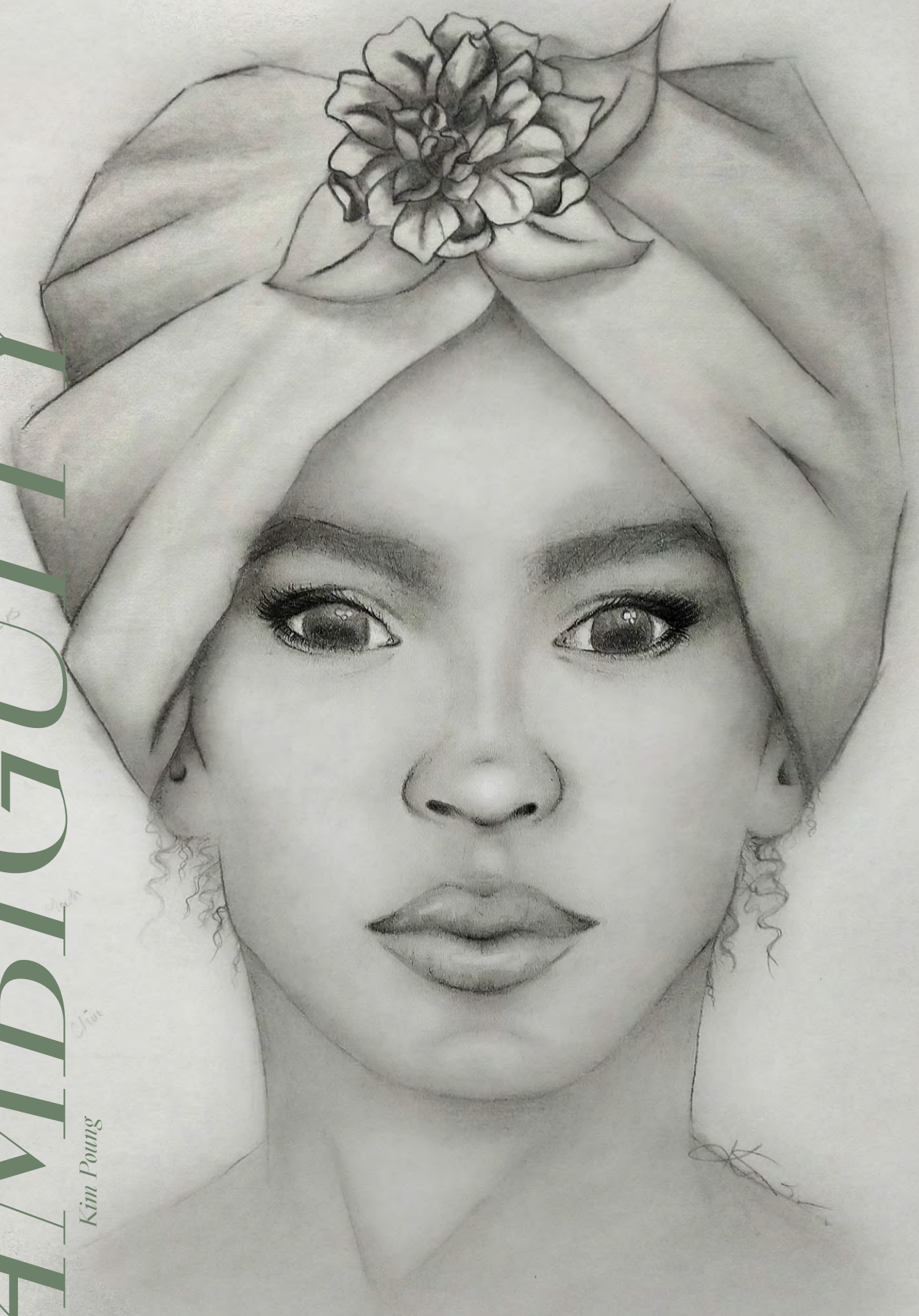
Conor Donnelly, c2021

HERE'S WHAT i'm thinking...

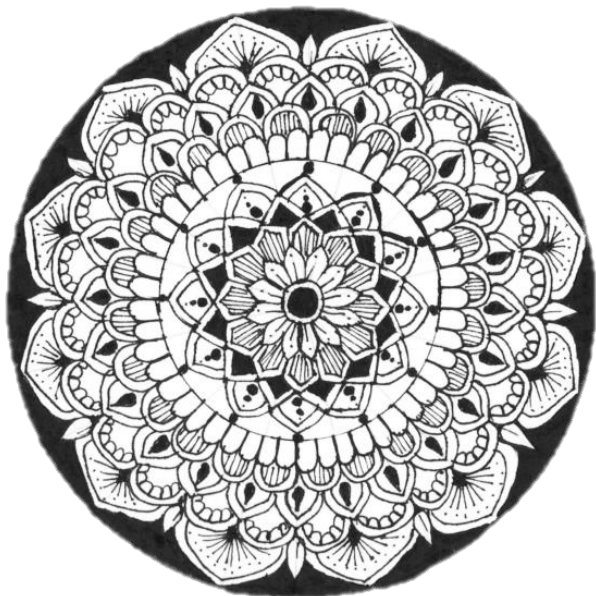
It's my first time in an operating room and
I'm not sure how I got here
It's my first time in an operating room and
The air is cold and my body is cold but my face is warm
That's how I feel before fainting
Oh I hope I don't faint now
It's my first time in an operating room and
I'm wrapped in plastic like one of the nurses is about to sous vide me
I wouldn't be surprised- I already pissed them off earlier
When I came into the room without a mask on
I wonder if I fainted would they toss me in the pot
Oh I hope I don't faint now
It's my first time in an operating room and
It beeps and clicks and whooshes and whistles
An atonal symphony set to minimum volume
So as not to disturb the patient
I don't know what the noises mean but
They make me feel excited and mortal
I don't know who the patient is but
I care about what happens to them
It's my first time in an operating room and
The surgeon lets me cut the sutures and
In that moment
It's the most important thing I have ever done
The nurse gives me a nod and
I hope that means I'm no longer disliked
It's my first time in an operating room and
I'd like to come back a second time and
I no longer think I'm going to faint, which is nice

AMBIGUITY

Kim Pong



MAKIBALAS



Melanie Wong

Conor Donnelly, c2021

LIMERICKS

of a first-year medical student

I thought that the Foley was in
When I let go it started to spin
The Foley flew out
Urine like a spout
Doc says, “you hit the prostate” and grins

The resident tried teaching me Meditech
We both thought it would just take a sec
One hour later
Resident’s now my hater
And how swamped do I feel? Just call me Shrek



Look Ahead
janhavi patel

Danya Malhotra, c2021

METROPOLITAN ZOETROPE

I can be lonely anywhere

Yet loneliness bred in a city

Is of an entirely different persuasion

Surrounded by thousands of people

It reaches its apotheosis in a crowd

So easy it is to feel desolate,

Unfrequented within oneself

Perhaps being surrounded by so much light

Makes even lonelier the darkness within –

A city of empty glass towers

I look up yearning for

The quiet company of stars

I can be lonely anywhere

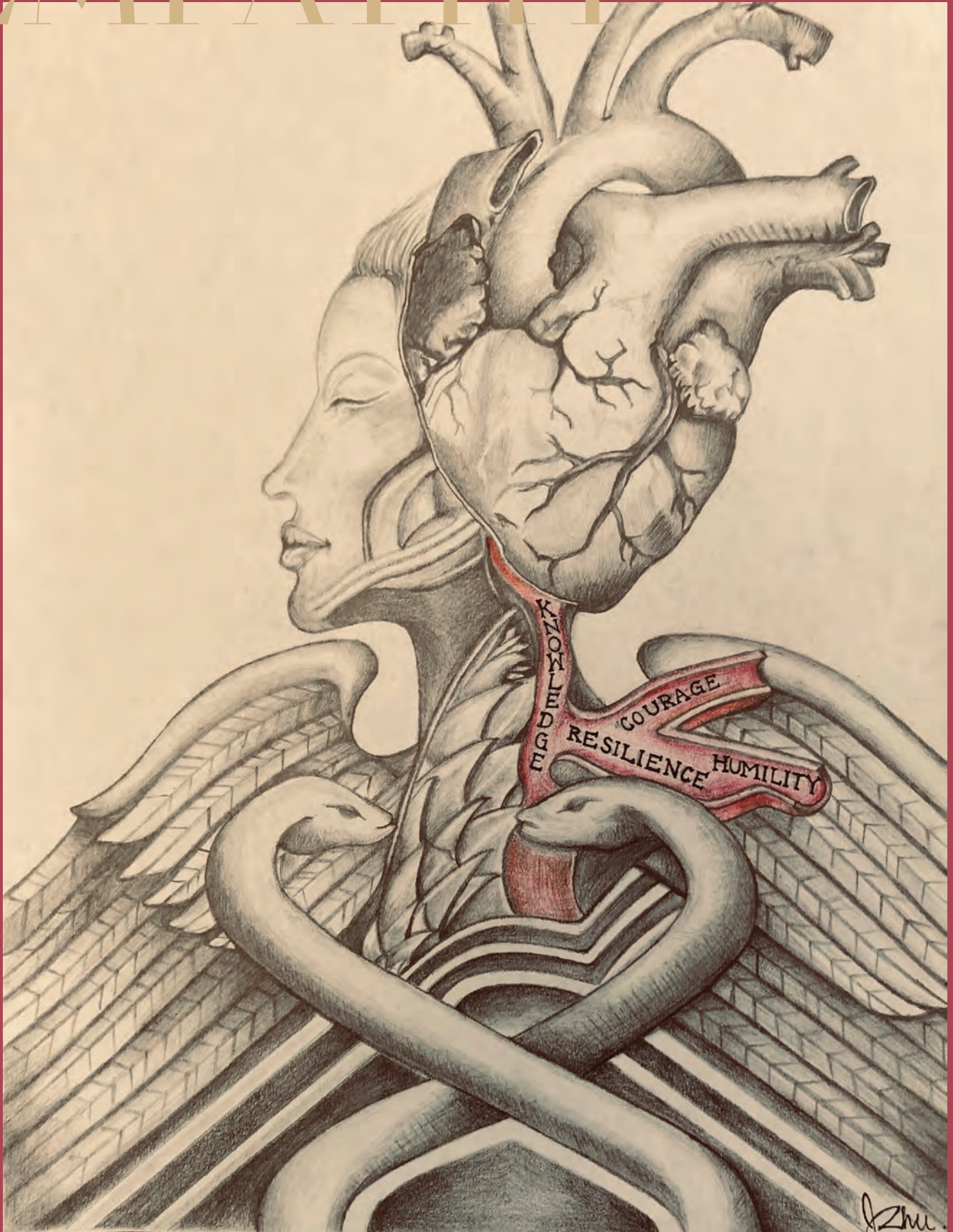
So easy to feel desolate

A city of empty glass towers

The quiet company of stars

EMPATHY

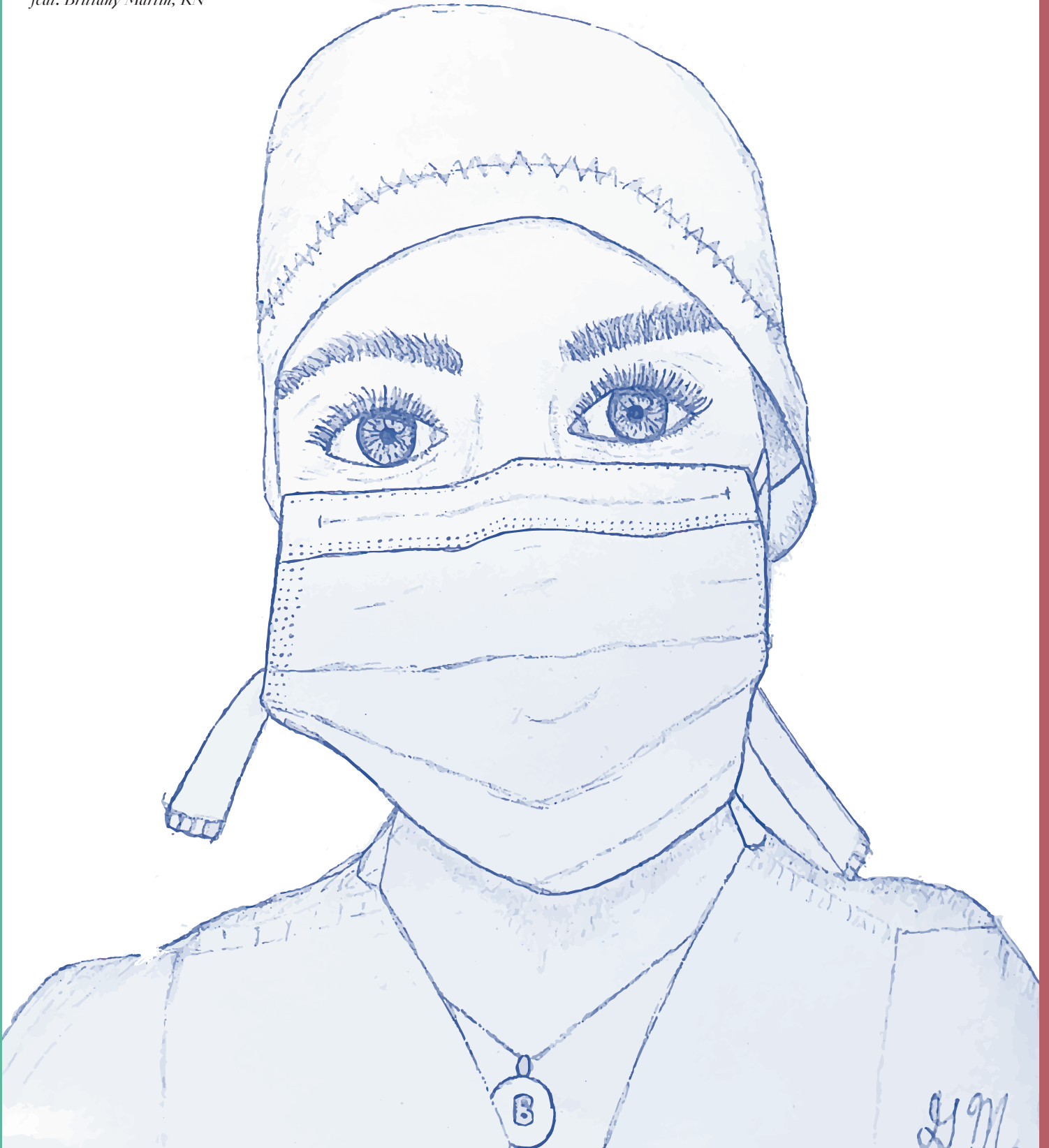
the beauty of medicine personified



Jerry Zhu

THE FACES OF THE *Grace Martin* FRONTLINE

feat. Brittany Martin, RN



THE BUS RIDE

Karim Jazwaria, c2021

I wanted you to take my sadness, to take away my pain.
To replace my dead heart with your beating one, to remind me I am sane.

But I realize that is selfish, because sadness doesn't just disappear.
It finds another victim, to capture and to commandeer.

I would die if you ended up with my sadness, I think it would break my heart.
So that's why I leave you with cruel words, and on this bus I part.

I ride the bus in sorrow, as seasons drift and change.
I ride it until the landscape, it becomes all rearranged.

Mountains turn into valleys, valleys into streams.
I think a lot about life, I think about my dreams.

I think about how one day, I'll leave my sadness on this bus.
The bus driver said he'll bury it, and do so without a fuss.

Maybe one day I'll be free, and we can be together.
Maybe things will be okay, I hope these feelings won't last forever.

So I ride this bus indefinitely, hoping I'll see you soon.
I'll ride this bus until the tides fade, my never ending sadness monsoon.

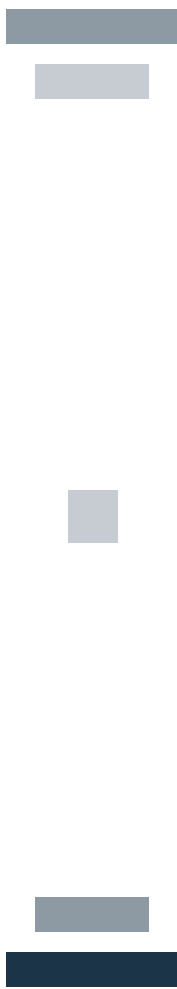
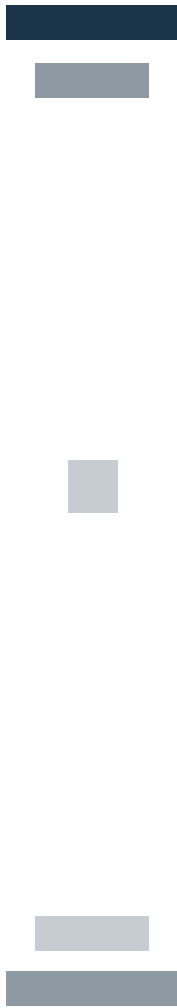


UN FINDE EN EL SUR



Prince Asare-Agbo







untitled #21

when the first nightmare came,
it traipsed before me with frenzy.

i pressed forward.

my breath swelled in the impossibility
between love and strife,
and i begged for him to see the intimacy in that breath.

to be a witness to the topaz in my smile; the requiem in my step.

i craved only for an earnest kiss,
but the earth yielded none.
and even as regrets crowded into my mouth,
wet and callous,
it did not soften the blow.

Kika Otioko





nandini bansal

thoughts



in DEPENDENCE

Serena Ho, c2021

He said

He's better now – that

He's got a new job, new friends.

“I don't crave them now. I just need them.

And these are the right ones.

They'll help, not hurt,”

He said.

He was pale and thin,

But smiling – holding a book

On drugs and the brain in his hands.

He tapped it, once, twice.

“I'll be okay,”

He said.

I didn't know what to say back.



introspection *Kay Wu*

A decorative graphic consisting of several overlapping, stylized arrow shapes pointing to the right. The shapes are in shades of light blue and white, creating a modern, geometric design.

HUNTINGTON BEACH

Raveena Kapoor



things to forget.

since you left,
my Memory is wicked and whimsical.

she invades my waking hours with elegies
and the ghost of your gossamer lips.
reminisces about the days
when i baptized myself in the warmth of your tongue.

Memory holds my heart in one fist and my throat in another.

i thought sleep would protect me from her claws,
but every night my bones rattle with the dance of your pulse.
i try to follow the rhythm but every movement i make is
cacophony.
in my slumber, i dream in the tempo of your laughter.

Memory reminds me that
even through the shadows of the midnight hour,
her grip on my throat never loosens.

Kika Otieno



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