

MIND TO MIND

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

Carol Wiley Cassella, M.D., Editor

The Metronome

Richard J. Novak, M.D.*

To Jacob's mother I say,
"The risk of anything serious going wrong ..."
She shakes her head, a metronome ticking without sound.
"with Jacob's heart, lungs, or brain ..."
Her lips pucker, proving me wrong.
"isn't zero, but it's very, very close to zero ..."
Her eyes dart past me, to a future of ice cream and laughter.
"but I'll be right there with him every second."
The metronome stops, replaced by a single nod of assent.
She hands her only son to me.

An hour later, she stands alone,
Pacing like a Palace guard.
Her pupils wild. Lower lip dancing.
The surgery is over.
Her eyebrows ascend in a hopeful plea.
I touch her hand. Five icicles.
I say, "Everything went perfectly. You can see Jacob now."
The storm lifts. She is ten years younger.
Her joy contagious as a smile.
The metronome beat true.

* Stanford University School of Medicine, Palo Alto, California. rjnov@yahoo.com

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