

MIND TO MIND

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

Stephen T. Harvey, M.D., Editor

I'm a theater artist...

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Anesthesiologist: So, where do you work?

Actor: (modestly) I am a theater artist.

Anesthesiologist: Oh! It is a small world. I work in a theater, too.

Actor: (asks politely) How long have you been working in a theater?

Anesthesiologist: Well, it was years of initial training, then years of further training, and now full time for almost two decades.

Actor: (looks elated) That is awesome! Tell me more about yourself; what are your favorites: classics, drama, or comedy?

Anesthesiologist: I prefer classics any day; they are the safest. Sometimes though, I admit, the whole thing shapes up into a big drama; and often some turn into a hilarious comedy.

Actor: (looks confused) Are you generally in the lead role?

Anesthesiologist: Well, I lead by supporting the whole team. You see, it is like this in our theater; the supporters are actually leading the leaders.

Actor: (now looks more confused) Hmm...

Anesthesiologist: It is tricky sometimes, awkward in fact....But we always have to work as a team, and we kind of manage to do that.

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Actor: (looks bemused) Is it stressful?

Anesthesiologist: That is an understatement.

Actor: (looks curious) What kind of audience do you face?

Anesthesiologist: Well, they are generally cooperative. Most of them fall asleep very fast, and they wake up when everything is over.

Actor: (shocked) I am so sorry for that. It must be difficult for you.

Anesthesiologist: Oh no, we are fine with it. We can do our part very well while they are asleep. Believe me, it is better that way.

Actor: (looks suspicious) Do you get paid well?

Anesthesiologist: Yes, very well....The overtime is particularly lucrative, I must say.

Actor: (bewildered) Overtime?

Anesthesiologist: All those calls in the night, sometimes all night long.

Actor: (flabbergasted) You work all night long?

Anesthesiologist: Yes, quite often, actually.

Actor: (quite in desperation) You must be inebriated?

Anesthesiologist: (chuckles) I have a fairly high threshold. I have always been surrounded by narcotics, hypnotics, and all those gases... (winks).

Actor: (now completely maddened) I don't understand. Who are you?

Anesthesiologist: Didn't I tell you, I am an anesthesiologist?

Acknowledgment

This is a tribute to all our colleagues who endure the daily drama in the theaters and yet play their roles so well.