

# MIND TO MIND

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

*Stephen T. Harvey, M.D., Editor*

## The Waiting Room

Delvon T. Mattingly, M.S.

I can gracefully afford this trip  
to the ER. Sick son in my arms,  
his dark skin pale and discolored,  
approaching the waiting room.  
Far from desolate, persons wearing the  
same face as my boy, both infirm and  
full of viral shedding. A wait much  
longer, I reason with a young intern  
who exhibits more empathy than White  
eyes of distaste coming from the lobby,  
exuding self-righteous precedence.  
A notion my son and I must sit and wait,  
skipped. Again. Gunshot wounds,  
rotting lives. White savior and then  
our privilege to service, yet we all share  
health and impartial care. All I want is  
my boy to receive the same love and  
priority; he is as deserving. Though  
when his name is called, I gaze upon  
my only child, he inanimate. Cold,  
like the sick people encircling him.

From the University of Michigan, Department of Epidemiology, Ann Arbor, Michigan. delvon@umich.edu

Accepted for publication June 11, 2019. Published online first on July 12, 2019.

Permission to reprint granted to the American Society of Anesthesiologists, Inc. by copyright author/owner. *Anesthesiology* 2020; 132:598. DOI: 10.1097/ALN.0000000000002901