MIND TO MIND

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

Stephen T. Harvey, M.D., Editor

Intensive Care Psychosis

Brenda Yates

Egged on by the televisions across the hall,
walls taunt, threaten to close in. Hoping they
won't hear, you whisper. That Mardi Gras
parade in your room at 2 a.m. should be reported;
sleep black behind your eyes has been stolen,
replaced with electric blue. Masks—and other
evidence—are in the closet marked supplies.

Atmosphere presses against my ears as if we were
diving too deep. Pulse thunders; I grab the arm
of a passing nurse, sputter clotted panic. She
spins in a slippery grace, clicks: "temporary,
not uncommon in ICU," and whirrs away.

Your fitful hand trembles and leaps in mine.
Hallucinations bubble like nitrogen in blood,
escape your skin into the water we breathe.

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