

MIND TO MIND

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

Stephen T. Harvey, M.D., Editor

Objectifying

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A milky white syringe carried you
and all your thoughts off,
pausing your life
as you ascended into the void.
I easily discarded it, as a matter of routine—
just cleaning my workspace.
I had taken it from a crisp, neatly folded blue towel
and didn't want any clutter.

That syringe, and many more besides,
lifted, pulled, nudged, and belayed
you through a temporary oblivion
so that, at some length for us but in no time
at all for you, you could discard us
and un-pause your
interrupted
life, taking your time with us as seriously
as you might a trip to the DMV—
a necessity, but only because
someone else said so.

You threw away your black and white wrist band
and bright-colored tube socks.
From the look on your face, you'd half-
forgotten them, and us with them,

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before the trash bag finished rustling.
They served their purpose and we ours.
Time to start the important work of the day.
You said it was coffee
and a chalk-stained crack in granite
less than an hour away.

That seems like a bad idea;
may your protection hold,
and your partner be vigilant.