



Dolores Jean Lavins Center for  
Humanities in Medicine

# The Tempest

The annual creative arts publication of the  
Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine  
2025

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Cover:  
**Whispers of the  
Horizon**

**BY KATHRYN XU**



# Foreword

The emotional burden of medical training is immense, and in time, many students will find themselves searching for untapped sources of strength. Some find it in their relationships with their mentors; others turn inward in thought and reflection, and still others are inspired by the natural world and the man-made elements contained therein.

For eleven volumes now, The Tempest has documented the student's journey through medicine and the world. In committing emotions to paper, art provides us with relief and catharsis – sometimes before we've realized ourselves what those words and pictures represent. The artists featured here are undergoing a unique period of growth and learning, and we are pleased to offer this glimpse into their journey towards becoming the physicians and scientists of tomorrow.

Sincerely,  
Your Editorial Team




**Gordon Xie**  
Editor-in-Chief



**Taylor Witter**  
Co-editor, Writing



**Sapheya Elhadi**  
Co-editor, Writing



**Annika Hiredesai**  
Co-editor, Writing



**Krishna Sinha**  
Co-editor, Visual



**Krishna Unadkat**  
Co-editor, Visual



**Jackson Bloch**  
Co-editor, Visual

# Introduction

Mayo Clinic's historical link to the Sisters of St. Francis in Rochester is well known. The impact of Franciscan values continues to endure and offer guidance to those who learn, teach and practice within the institution. It is fitting, then, that my mind turned to the French prayer often associated with the spirit of St. Francis as I read through this year's issue of *The Tempest*: "Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:/ where there is hatred, let me sow love;/ where there is injury, pardon;/ where there is doubt, faith;/ where there is despair, hope;/ where there is darkness, light;/ where there is sadness, joy."

There are reflections of darkness in this issue, including stories of life transforming diagnoses and struggles with a sense of imposter syndrome. Pieces by contributors such as Hiredesai

and Kind offer a punch in the gut. Witter shares nostalgia for easier times lost. Sometimes it seems that the learners who share these stories are standing at the precipice between dark and light, a place of uncertainty. This is not a place they can stand for long; eventually they must decide which way to turn, whether to flee or to lean in. Again and again, they decide to lean in. They express a common commitment to being instruments of peace, healing and hope.

Not all is dark. Many pieces show learners experimenting with novel artistic and clinical skills. Several pieces come from a new medical illustration selective. Other pieces remind us of the value of activities and landscapes that bring learners reprieve and renewed perspective. Learners also share gratitude for mentors who sowed the seeds that enabled them to thrive.

In all the pieces, we hear echoes of humanity – of being a human who cares for humans. Witter shares, "Studying could not prepare me for this,/ It could not carry the weight of her words in the silence before us,/ Only my humanity could."

I am honored to share this work with you. I invite you to spend time reading intently and looking carefully. I invite you to reflect on what the contributors to this issue share with you, and on how you too might lean into the world around you.

**Katie Van Buren, Ph.D.**

Director, Humanities in Medicine,  
Mayo Clinic

To step into modern medicine is to enter a storm—one of unrelenting challenge, profound self-discovery, and transformation. The *Tempest* is more than a student literary and art journal; it's a testament to the emotional landscapes that shape the journey of becoming a healer. It is a space where science intertwines with art, and where the quiet, often unspoken moments of medical training find a voice.

This year's 11th collection is one of contrasts—light and shadow, certainty and doubt, resilience and vulnerability. In his poetry, *You* explores the myriad emotions that can accompany death and loss, not all of which are bleak. *Noblesse Oblige* by Witter wrestles with the tension between duty and humanity,

reminding us that while medicine demands structure, it's the moments of connection that truly define us. *Blessed Hands* by Abdulwadood honors not only the hands that heal, but those that tremble, that learn, that try.

There is also beauty, wonder, and gratitude. The photographs, paintings, and digital art that fill these pages reflect the world through the eyes of those who have committed themselves to understanding both the frailty and magnificence of medical training. From the quiet serenity of Sinha's *The Journey* to the background behind Hiredesai's *Passing the Scalpel*, these works remind us that even amidst the storm, there is always space for reflection, creativity, and wonder.

Let us all, as these students do, lean into the tempest.

**Shelley S. Noland, M.D.**

Humanities in Medicine Enterprise  
Chair, Mayo Clinic

Medical Director, Center for Humanities  
in Medicine, Mayo Clinic, AZ

In this creative arts journal, we celebrate the diverse voices and unique expressions of our contributors. As such, we acknowledge that intentional deviations from conventional grammar rules may occur within the works presented. These deviations are a deliberate artistic choice made by the creators to convey their intended messages, emotions, and styles.



R&D

BY LINDSEY TRINCHET

Digital



Dawn

BY ASHLEY BATTENBERG

Photograph







## Tear in the Sky

**JACKSON BLOCH**  
Photograph



## Black Swallowtail Butterfly

**STELLA MA**  
Photograph



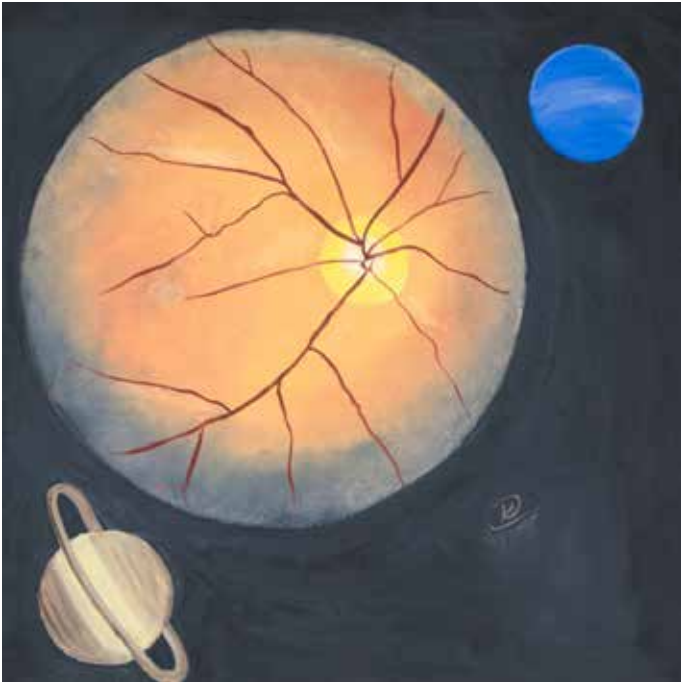
# Noblesse Obligen

TAYLOR WITTER

I am nostalgic for my youth,  
For being unafraid of the sequalae of my actions,  
Getting in trouble for hugging too many people on the  
playground,  
Or repeating my Uncle's obscene Airplane Quotes in the  
sandbox.  
I am nostalgic for the times,  
When I lived without abandon.  
Unaware of my next move but knowing it will originate  
from a place of wonderment.  
I didn't know what came next but couldn't wait to find out.  
Yet as I grew,  
The curious fire that fueled adventures and doing things  
for the heck of it,  
Was doused by the need for structure,  
For fitting my achievements into a box,  
Wrapping the box in enticing paper,  
And presenting it to the people I assumed held my future  
in their hands.  
My school's motto Noblesse Oblige,  
"To whom much is given much is expected",  
Brought deep gratification and responsibility,  
but weighed heavy on my chest.  
The obligation to fulfill my academic potential  
superseding any passion  
For the days absorbed in books,  
Or nights engrossed in conversation,  
My rigidity and need to succeed,  
Outcompeting my need to get lost in creative works.  
Being disciplined led me to medicine,  
Medicine led me to structure,  
And now I have trouble seeing the forest for the trees,  
Where the forest is impactful patient relationships and  
healing,  
And the tree is the resident I still haven't emailed back  
with paper edits.  
Medicine allows me to be with others in their most  
vulnerable state,  
But instead of fully appreciating their humanity,  
I can't help but return to my studies,  
I am the magnet and the curriculum the magnetic field,  
My internal compass has no choice but to submit.

One day in a patient room,  
I listen to an attending discuss cancer recurrence with  
their patient,  
The patient continually asks how long she has to live.  
The attending avoids the question until he can't,  
"Why is it important to know how much time you have  
left?"  
The patient says,  
"I am the primary caregiver for my granddaughter,  
I need to find someone to take care of her before I die."  
The patient's declaration hangs in the air.  
Her mortality shadowed by the concern for her  
granddaughter's future.  
A testament to being a human  
who happens to be sick,  
And just so happens to love someone too.  
The words wash over me,  
Whirl in my head like wine before a tasting,  
Dizzying me.  
I realize then,  
Studying could not prepare me for this,  
It could not carry the weight of her words in the silence  
before us,  
Only my humanity could.

I don't know what the Latin is for  
"whom much is taken, much should be given back."  
Whatever it is,  
My career will revolve around that.



## Planet Fundus

**KRISHNA SINHA**  
Oil on canvas



## Home is Where?

**GORDON XIE**  
Digital

## Gravida I & II

**ASHLEY BATTENBERG**

Acrylic on canvas



## Who's That in the Looking Glass?

ANNIKA HIREDESAI

Imposter syndrome takes on many forms.  
Mine is a mirror  
a portal  
a timeturner  
a glimpse

at the version of me who possesses  
endless time for my craft,  
bountiful emotional reserve,  
the vampiric ability to forsake sleep.

This I acknowledge as fiction fantasy foolishness.

There are other versions though  
who wave at me through the looking glass.  
women two

five

ten years down the road.

Their existence fuels my ecstasy insanity tenacity but some days  
I forget –

Today they are not me,  
and I am not them.

And no amount of determination or drive changes that my imposters are myself.



## 蝶 & 海

**KEVIN CHEN**  
Photographs



## Paper Cranes Take Flight

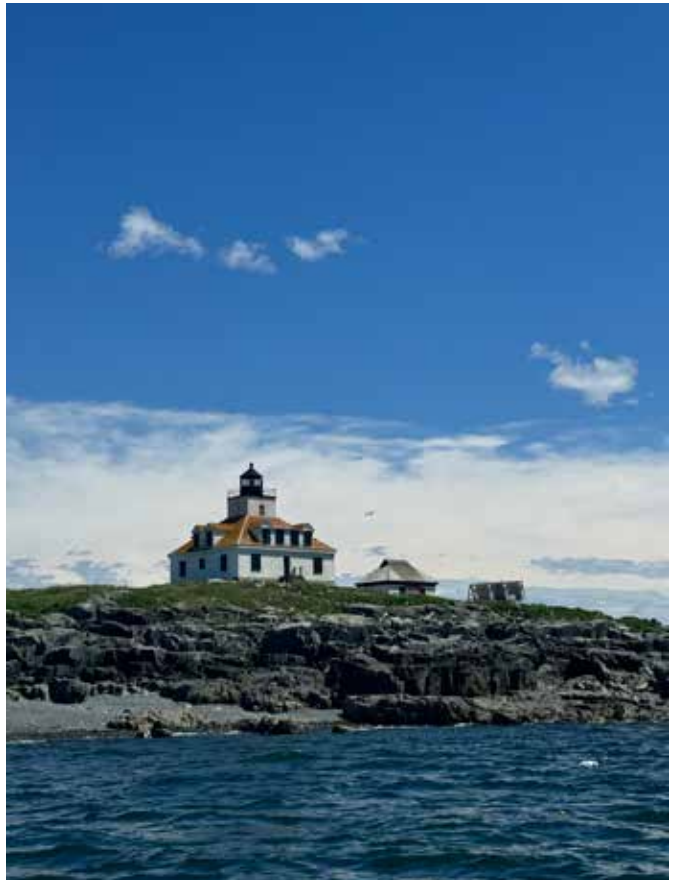
**JACKSON BLOCH**  
Watercolor





Paws and Portals  
&  
Egg Rock

ANANYA PAPPU  
Photographs



## Student Evaluation of Faculty

**GORDON XIE**

Who can count the times your gentle  
Ear has known a tale of sorrow  
Like the crumpled leaf has known  
And skittered over winter snow?

Who could float so unaffected?  
Mired deep and still unwetted,  
Inundated, undetected,  
You just never let it show.

Name a greater treasure than your  
Own that once was lost and found  
As other songbirds jettisoned  
The melodies that weighed them down

- That for which you tend this orchard,  
Beckon us to spread our wings,  
Temper thus our joy of summer,  
Knowing what the winter brings:

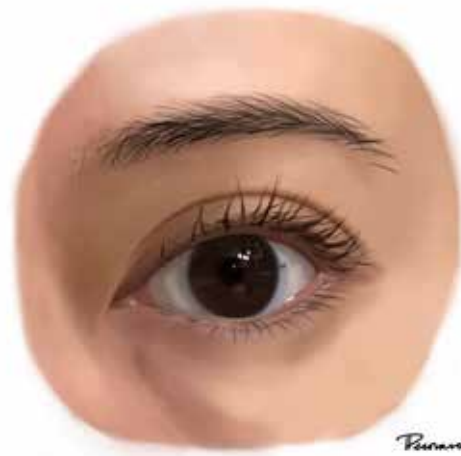
Shivers from your somber season  
Sowing now - can't bear to stop,  
Premonitions past and present  
Planted in this coming crop,

A calculus of meeting every  
Mouth to feed and hand to hold;  
An avalanche of apples  
Who are dusted now in gold.



### The Beholder

**LINDSEY TRINCHET**  
Digital



### Left Eye Study

**TRISHA PECORARO**  
Digital





Mojave

&

Dusk

**ELIZABETH FARKOUH**  
Photographs



# Racing

LAURA BUDVYTYTE

## Racing

My mind is in flux.

Thoughts loosely slipping from one thread to another  
like the water trick snake I toyed with as a child.  
Never learning to pause and take hold with steady hands.  
From stopping a project mid –  
Multitasking is an excuse of a word.  
As if something truly wonderful grows from fragmented foundations.  
as if each new interrupted wave of work could pick up...  
Filling me with the type of concentration and dedication and will  
for one.  
singular.  
thing.  
What is that like?  
Monotasking would be a wonderful relief.

To stop fighting the internal pulls of ?  
Not sure what.

... exactly where it all abrupted.  
But the tide of productivity has already receded  
and with it, the details that had made the first attempt so brilliant.  
Replacing construction crew after construction crew,  
Forcing me to scrap the mess and start all over again.

– sentence.



# Head in the Clouds

CATHLEEN HUANG  
Photograph



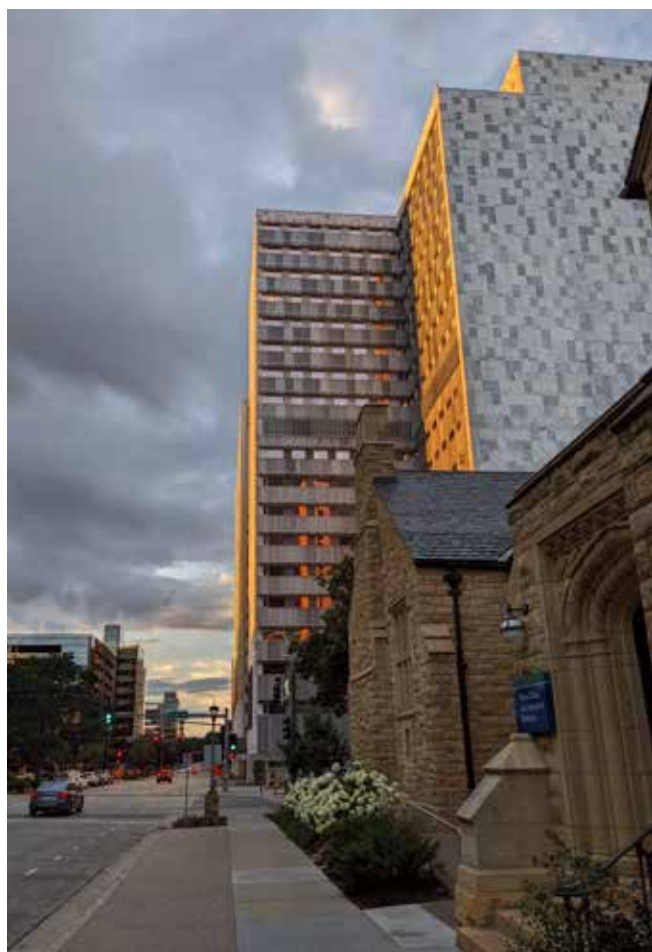


Sunset on Cascade  
Creek

✂

Untitled

**JEFFREY BUSH**  
Photographs



## Prosopagnosia

**MELODY WU**

Digital



## Scott Monument, Edinburgh Scotland

**KYNDRA LONG**

Photograph





## The Journey

KRISHNA SINHA

Photograph



## The Cave

ZILIN XIANYU

Photograph



## Life Out There

**ADDISON SMARTT**

Photograph



## Sound

**ADDISON SMARTT**

Embroidery



## Lost in Purples

**EVANI PATEL**

**Digital**



## Cotopaxi Mountain

**KYNDRA LONG**

**Photograph**





## Cracked Mirror

**SARAH KIND**  
Digital



## Pushing Daisies

**SARAH KIND**  
Digital

# Blessed Hands

ISRA ABDULWADOOD

Blessed be the hands that heal, they say.  
Blessed be the hands that percuss and palpate,  
the hands that press and prescribe,  
the hands that palm and probe.  
Blessed be those hands.

But what of the hands that shake?  
What of the hands that hesitate and tremble and slip?  
What of those weary, uncertain hands that worry threadbare sleeves  
the raw, cracked hands that rummage for hope (and a pen) in pockets too deep  
the fatigued, dutiful hands that race the tines of the ticking clock?

What of those hands?  
Those battered, worn hands that rise up in prayer  
begging for both health and a miracle in the same breath?

I say:  
blessed be the hands that try.  
Blessed be the hands that wipe tears from glistening eyes.  
Blessed be the hands that hold another pair in comfort and care.  
Blessed be the hands which may not cure every time but do return,  
day in and day out.  
Blessed be those young, desperate, determined hands  
that try and try again.



## Providence

**XIANYU ZILIN**  
Photograph



## Waves

**KYNDRA LONG**  
Photograph

Despite decades of improvement in representation, pursuing a surgical subspecialty as a woman remains challenging. From the complexity of family planning to adjusting ergonomics as surgeons and learners with different statures, there are countless nuances to being a woman in surgery that I continue to encounter as a learner. I am fortunate to have mentors – attendings, residents, upperclassmen – who are deeply committed to having these conversations and guiding other women by sharing their own experiences. I was inspired to create this piece because of those who have been so generous in “passing the scalpel”.

## Passing the Scalpel

ANNIKA HIREDesai

Ink Pen on Paper

I think about how meaningful it was when a resident patiently taught me to suture during my first clinical elective or when a surgeon happened to see my sketches and invited me to illustrate for her paper.

Experiences like these welcomed me to the field and empowered me to pursue my passion for surgery as well as the intersection of humanities and medicine.

I look forward to passing the scalpel to those to come.





## Dimensional Analysis

**JACKSON BLOCH**

Watercolor



## A Saguaro Takes 50 Years to Grow an Arm

**CATHLEEN HUANG**

Photograph



## West Nile Virus-Associated Chorioretinitis

**JACKSON BLOCH**

Watercolor



## Composite Skyline

**KEVIN CHEN**

Photograph



# I Drink Coffee Black

LAURA BUDVYTYTE

I stemmed from sunlight.  
Rays once penetrated even the lowest of  
leaves  
with all parts of me uniformly budding.  
Those elemental seasons have long passed.  
As overwhelming demands grew, I shunted  
my energy  
toward the pursuit of something grander  
than my roots had seen—  
to the parts that I thought would bear the  
most fruit,  
leaving the other facets of me  
overshadowed and wilting.  
Neglecting the foundation that had once  
sustained me,  
I became lopsided.

As the years of rebellion passed, my  
aspirations outgrew my native soils.  
I shipped out to novel places; college.  
It took all my efforts and distributed my  
supply thinly  
and, like all insurmountable stacks of stress,  
I gave way.  
I was a coffee bean that had cracked under 4  
years and 1 degree of pressure,  
split unevenly into two halves:  
PROFESSIONAL and personal  
A dense body of black COFFEE with thin  
milky froth atop.  
Learning to first finish harsh realities before  
reaching the sweetness,  
personifying the mantra: delayed  
gratification.  
But I did not know then that straining coffee  
endlessly takes time;  
it allows for foam to dissipate.  
Until I stopped drinking cappuccinos.

New chapter, new city, new degree, new  
challenges... same refinement.

The drips of coffee shop brew count down  
the minutes left of my weekend.  
I drink my coffee black.  
Letting the acidic caffeine artificially fill my  
cup  
while replenishing stresses enter ceaselessly,  
making my mug never truly empty.  
Caffeinate, concentrate, comprehend,  
conquer, culminate.  
I sit surrounded by textbook words and the  
chatter of strangers  
that both relay the interconnectedness of  
being human.  
But I so utterly alone.

Sometimes the aroma catches me anew,  
I wane from ovarian carcinomas to the  
conversions of others.  
Hearing a college bible group announce how  
“Ezekiel hits”  
or the unburdened laughter two sisters  
invoke from the depths of childhood  
stirs my memory.  
When did I last do more than grind?  
I stop to percolate. To think of the last time  
my lips touched cappuccino.  
Forcing down the black  
to see my reflection at the bottom of dregs.  
Bitter pangs of regret make me miss the  
balance that fresh foam brings.  
Am I chasing ambition or exhaustion?





Eclipse &  
Autumn Glow

**GRANT WELK**  
Photographs



## A Reminder of Warmth in Winter

KATHRYN XU  
Photograph



“ ”

### ANONYMOUS

The body is abused from itself so even to take things in stride is a discomfort. The day passes in delirium, anxiety, intimations – trains of thought are cliff-side pursued then abandoned, everyday experience impinges on the senses unconvincingly, half-heartedly, it thumbs its nose, and I return its salute; it falls on the senses with unbearable lightness, lighter than the real thing or without the inertia we expect of it. There is nothing good to be said or noted. Every morning before morale decays, I aspire to a fascist imaginary of modest proportions: a middle-class dream divorced from waking horror, a wife to present at all the functions and a home we can after speed to with alacrity. Children to eclipse their father, without the growing pains in our better natures we'd expect and encourage; a psyche anhistorical, neuroses with ease exorcised; meals prepared without a sink teeming. Patients and casework worthy of reprise at the dinner table without the excess, without the corpuscular granularity of description that causes indigestion amongst polite company. Patients worthy of what will surely be a rigorous education but who are eager for treatment, who are pliant and patient and without protest, who trust in the doctor's judgement like a sinner to their Father and even comport their ailment in compliance with the diagnosis, who are severely tried yet ultimately rewarded by my administration. A medicine begging for televised broadcast. A family life of the same. Sensibilities imported from that very medium and arranged by its tropes—fascism manifest. A denial of life. Corporate and scholastic ambition. Emotion trafficked in a virtual economy, attention partitioned by its every Planck and sorted for optimal absorption. Cashmere on the skin in a room perfectly warmed then cooled in cycles. Images of the dream and death. A mother and father who tarry until their departure is less ruin and more hardship, or perhaps even inconvenience. A milquetoast dream logic to make g-d vomit.

# The Whimsical Doctor

SHERRY ZHOU

Mixed media





## Caput Medusae

**KRISHNA SINHA**  
Photograph



## Ascent

**GRANT WELK**  
Photograph

## The Songs in the Depths of Silence

### HYO-BIN YOU

In the crisp dawn he awakes,  
smiling ear to ear in silent glee.  
Parading through the dense darkness,  
the sun rises to greet him.  
Dazzling rays find their paths  
through the intertwined branches of  
emerald trees,  
and animate the eggshell walls.

In a steady and connected rhythm,  
his feet lead him to a swinging bench,  
Sitting, he sways gently,  
matching the flowing wind.  
He takes in a sound breath,  
the air a sweet composition  
of white lilies and lavender lilacs,  
of jade leaves on breathing branches,  
of fragrant nectar and ripe fruit.  
With an audible sigh,  
his problems and worries dissipate,  
like stains from a blank white shirt.

Soothing calls—  
tweets of vibrant birds,  
chirps of crickets,  
and low buzzing of cicadas—  
welcome the muted thumps of his  
heartbeat.  
The hushed symphony plays on,  
as the wind breezes over lush grass  
and plays a gentle lullaby.

The well-worn wooden boards of the bench  
cradle and rock him,  
like a kind mother calming her newborn.  
His cotton clothes swaddle him into a warm  
cocoon,  
coating him in warmth and protecting his  
frail body.  
In this place of comfort,  
he rests as time passes him by once more.

As the sun bows down to the shimmering  
moon,  
a kind and gentle invitation calls him inside,  
and he recedes from the frigid air to a warm  
embrace.  
Lying down to rest,  
a velvet blanket cloaks him from the stark  
darkness,  
and he awaits for welcoming morning rays  
to greet him again.

Before sunrise the next day,  
his heartbeat ebbs into the silence.  
But the sun treks through the night sky  
and animates the eggshell walls,  
the inaudible symphony plays on,  
and the bench swings,  
back and forth,  
back and forth,  
like they had before.





## A Med Student's First Day in the OR, Trying Not to Break Sterile

**JEFFREY BUSH**

Photograph

“1”

**NING MCKENZIE**

Photograph





## Red String of Fate

SARAH KIND

Digital



## Untitled

ZILIN XIANYU

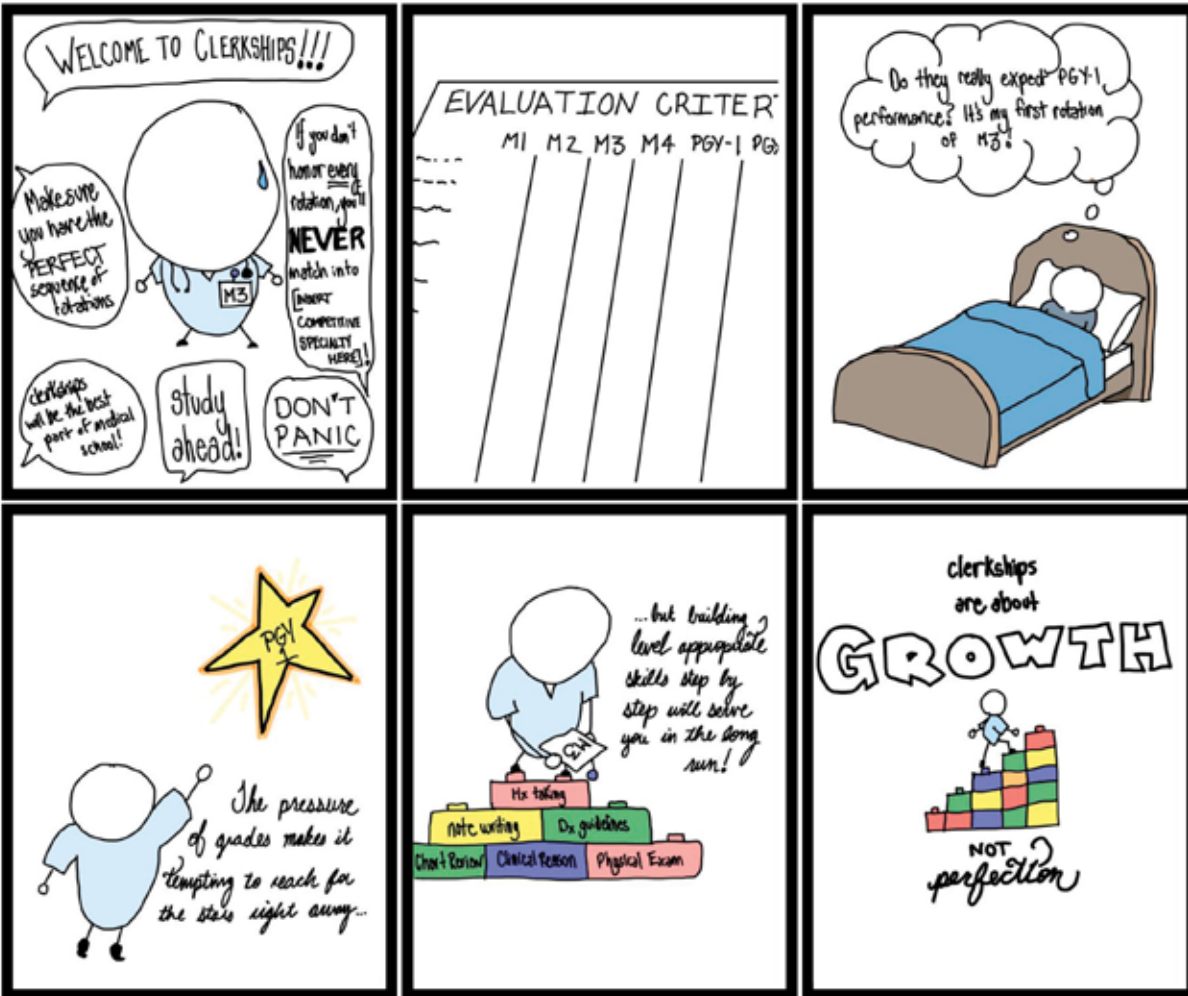
Photograph



# Welcome to Clerkships

TIM RENGERS

Ink pen on paper



# The Importance of [Reading] in Medical School

DANA ELLIS

Though it may sound overly dramatic, you should know that what you are walking into is a story about my first love: reading. One of the earlier signs that I was growing up to be a “reader” was at age 8. I remember my grandparents taking me on a week-long trip, and my mom and I packing my suitcase. We argued about the contents of that suitcase, specifically, about how many books I could pack. She cited a silly reason that five books exceeds what an 8-year-old can read in a week when my grandparents had all sorts of excursions and other things planned. She didn’t want me hauling a heavy bag of books all week, but if I remember correctly, she eventually gave up and let me pack all five. My point is, as far as solitary activities go, reading books has been at the top of my list for quite some time

You should also know that I am a very nontraditional medical student. I came to medical school with a lot of things in tow: namely a husband, a dog, and three daughters (ages 2, 8, and 11). What we left behind was also pretty substantial: an entire support system of friends and family who had known my husband and I since we were kids, and a career as a critical care nurse practitioner with the most fantastic group of intensivists you’ve ever met. None of that was easy to leave behind.

The move to Arizona and transition to med student life was hard. The first few months I spent in denial. Did I really uproot my family and move them here to the hottest desert on earth so I could study biochemistry pathways?? No, no not possible. That doesn’t sound like something I would do. This must all be a really nerdy, scary, busy dream. So on top of the denial, and because of all that busyness, I “didn’t have time” to read anything, other than what I was told to read for school. That went on for about a year.

At some point I hit a wall. Most people in healthcare call it “burn-out”. Sometime after this wall-hitting turning point, we made a well-timed trip back home to Washington. A group of all my best girlfriends and I reconnected while we were there. During a group dinner, we decided to start an asynchronous book club. We would each choose a book to read, and when we finish it, we would send it on to the next woman in line alphabetically, so that we would be all reading something different at the same time. We also each committed to a unique ink color, and wrote actual physical notes in the books, so that we could read each others’ reactions to their content, underline things that were meaningful to us, and brag about how we saw the plot turn coming a mile away.

Through this new book club, I was able to reconnect with some wonderful friends, and rekindle not only the daily habit of reading for pleasure, but also the practice of having a life outside of school and medicine. This process I went through changed something in me. I stopped thinking about school around the clock. Paradoxically, my study time became more productive and efficient. I started learning how to “turn it off” when I needed to. (Here, I’d like to emphasize that I only ‘started’ learning this. It’s a work in progress.) I implemented a practice of “observing the Sabbath”, and on Sundays, I try to just be present at home with my family, resting and attending to the things that get neglected the other 6 days a week.

I tell this winding tale to remind any reader to stay connected to the things that are essential to you and your well-being. I have heard that advice parroted over and over and yet, did not expect to have to learn that lesson the hard way. Only one year into medical school, and I nearly allowed the pressure of becoming a doctor to squash me. If I, a wife and mother of three, can find time to read and rest throughout my week, then chances are, any medical student can. We all need time for introspection, for daydreaming, for being human. If reading doesn’t do it for you, place any activity that energizes you between the brackets in this story’s title.

To me, reading is the stuff of dreams, of ambitions, of love and art and fantasy. These ideas are fuel for the human mind. They are some of the best things about being human, and for me to stop reading is to starve myself of the very fuel that gave me the passion and strength to pursue my dream of becoming a physician. So ask yourself, what fuel did you use to get where you are? Have you refueled lately?

## Desert Hues

**KRISHNA SINHA**

Photograph



## Untitled

**MATTHEW VAN LIGTEN**

Photograph

## Ripple Effect

**ADDISON SMARTT**

Photograph



# Broken, Not Shattered

## HYO-BIN YOU

Dazed from last night's events, Evan groggily woke up, eyes blinking lazily open. He looked at his four white walls—the same walls he saw every morning for almost a decade now. His shaking hands gripped tightly on to the thin blanket, the little veil that gave the illusion of protection from the robbing winter. Eyes shut closed once more, he choked down a gulp of somber air, the breath bringing needles to his lungs. His head felt heavy and throbbed with guilt, the pounding like a blacksmith's hammer. Frozen feet slowly came to life, and the blanket peeled from his body as he stood up on unsteady feet. Vulnerable, he stepped away from the porcelain room and down the carpeted stairs, the soles of his feet scuffing on the rough fabric. Sleepy legs dragging behind, Evan pushed forward to the kitchen: past the frosted windows, abandoned rooms, and long-gone embers of the ash-filled fireplace.

His father had jumped from his seat to shield him, putting his life on the line to protect his son. When the ambulance arrived, Evan didn't cry: the shock had left him wide-eyed, staring as paramedics laid his father on a flimsy stretcher. In the hospital, the doctors told Evan that he didn't belong there. His father was surrounded by beeping machines in the ICU, wounds in bandages that seeped red. But Evan was perfectly fine: not one scratch on his head. They had told him he would only be in the way, so he carried his hope through the waiting room and headed home. Not long after, he got the phone call that his father took his last breath at 1:42 am.

The kettle whistled its soprano song, tearing through the threaded silence. Like the sun on the first day of spring, the incandescent lights above painted the room in brilliant gold, sharp corners calmed by rounding shadows. He poured the boiling water into a plain ceramic mug, then grabbed a packet of powdered cocoa, nestled safely between chamomile and honey lemon teas. Pleasant steam drew an opaque masterpiece in the frigid air, the feeling of warmth something new. He tore open the package and a cloud of precious powder bloomed as he poured. The slightest hint of chocolate pervaded the air.

He sat mesmerized on the wooden kitchen chair: fairy dust dancing on its sweet liquid surface, calmly disappearing beneath the steam. With a decorated teaspoon, he stirred, watching the marshmallows bob. The cold in his fingertips dissipated as warmth spread through his body—the mug now the only beacon of comfort. He relaxed on the well-worn maple chair, his feet above the icy tiles. Facing the double window doors that opened to the backyard, he gazed upon the blanketed wonderland. Snowflakes drifted lazily down.

Lifting the hot cocoa to his trembling lips, he imagined himself floating above the clouds. Stress and burdens quietly faded to a mere haze, erased by a heavenly sensation. Rich and creamy, the mixture flowed like honey, soothing his frozen body.

Then, his hands gripped the handle of the mug tightly, just like he had held the leather steering wheel—paralyzed with fear. Tired eyes drifted to the picture of the two of them, one standing stoic and proud with a delighted grin and the other slouching in boredom, his messy hair barely above his father's broad shoulders—the shoulders that sometimes seemed tired. The shoulders that carried all their burdens. The shoulders that often belied his protective smile. Evan's grip on the superficially warm mug tightened, his hand now almost a perfect fist. He couldn't remember the last time he looked at his father and loved him as much as his father loved him. Another frame fell under his watery gaze. In this one, they stood together by a brand new car, polished and navy blue. His father's eyes shone grey, the tiredness of picking up extra shifts for his son. The tiredness of which Evan seemed oblivious. He bit his tongue to silence the despairing scream that was caught in his throat, and cradled his head between his shaking hands, elbows resting on the cold marble table. A drop of warm tear fell on his hand, and he looked at it, then looked at his hands—the hands that had failed him when he needed them the most.

His hands gripped the handle of the mug tightly, just like he had held the leather steering wheel. For the last time. He stood from his chair, heaved all his weight forward, and then threw the half-filled cup at the eggshell wall. It shattered the weighty silence, and the ceramic pieces fell like rain, the brown stain running like ugly paint on clean canvas.

## Silver Lake

XIANYU ZILIN  
Photograph



## Eye Project

MELODY WU  
Digital





## Sweet Treat

JUHI SALUNKE

Gouache on paper



## Fireball

JUHI SALUNKE

Gouache on paper



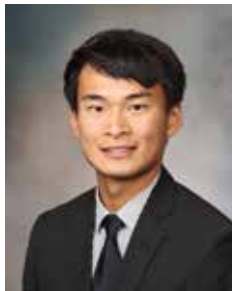
## More About the Artists



Jackson Bloch is a second-year medical student on the Rochester campus. He is originally from Maine, where he grew up enjoying outdoor adventure. He was a college cross-country ski coach in a previous life and spent his free time chasing birds with a camera and paintbrush. He has loved exploring the natural history of Minnesota since moving to the midwest and is interested in illustrating vascular anatomy and pathology during medical school.



Annika Hiredesai is a second-year medical student at Mayo Arizona. Her work consists mostly of anatomical illustration, creative writing and editorials. She hopes to pursue a career in orthopedic surgery and is passionate about health economics and outcomes research. She is currently an editor for The Tempest and on the Applied Medical and Health Humanities Distinction track. She enjoys reading, playing and watching sports, cooking/baking for others, trying new restaurants and collecting VCoterie lapel pins.



Guozhen (Gordon) Xie is a fourth year medical student on the Florida campus. He was born in China and grew up in Ohio, where he stayed for college at the Ohio State University. Gordon hopes to complete residency in anesthesiology with a fellowship in intensive care. In his free time, Gordon enjoys nature, exercise, and art. He has been sketching and painting since he was a child, and the iPad that he purchased “to take notes” has been entirely relegated to artistic endeavors.



Krishna Sinha is a third-year medical student at Mayo Clinic Arizona, originally from Phoenix, currently on the Applied Medical and Health Humanities Distinction Track. He went to college at Duke University, majoring in Neuroscience. He enjoys traveling, painting, photography, playing music, listening to podcasts, baking, and keeping his Wordle streak. Check out his artwork on his website ([ksgallery.org](http://ksgallery.org)), where he sells original greeting cards and donates profits to Hospice of the Valley!

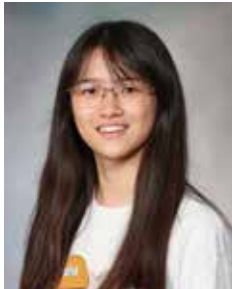
## More About the Artists



Taylor Witter is a second-year MD-PhD student on the Rochester campus. Growing up in Honolulu, HI, her favorite hobby is surfing and she hopes to surf Lake Superior (when it's less of a lake) before graduating. She has always enjoyed reading and writing as a way to understand the world and people around her, and aims to use her involvement in the medical humanities to portray and humanize people's experience with illness.



Elizabeth Farkouh is a fourth-year medical student at Mayo Clinic Rochester and is applying into Internal Medicine. After spending her childhood in New York City and Toronto, she went on to receive her Bachelor of Science in Human Development from Cornell University. Outside of school, she enjoys acting in film and local theater, singing, and photography. She is passionate about medical humanities and addressing social and behavioral determinants of health.



Xianyu Zilin is a PhD student in the Mayo Clinic Graduate School.



Kyndra Long is a first-year GREP student from Gardiner, MT, the North Entrance of Yellowstone National Park. She attended and played collegiate volleyball for Rocky Mountain College in Billings, MT. While at Mayo Rochester, she works in the Orthopedic Surgery department with research interests in the field of biological functionalization of medical devices, as well as cell-based regenerative medicine. She is currently applying for the 2025 medical school cycle and hopes to pursue a career in sports medicine. In her free time, she continues to play competitive volleyball, read an array of fantasy books, and attend as many concerts as her bank account will allow.



Cathleen Huang is a second year medical student at Mayo Arizona from Arcadia, California. She enjoys karaokeing, hiking, gaming, thrifting, and walking with friends. She loves gazing at the night sky and at marine animals, and she hopes to visit the Monterey Bay Aquarium (again) during a Super Bowl Sunday when there are less crowds.



Sherry Zhou is a fifth year M.D.-Ph.D. student and third year BMB Ph.D. candidate on the Rochester campus. Her professional interests lie in medical oncology of endocrine neoplasia and use of biochemistry and chemical biology to investigate tumorigenesis. She grew up in Vancouver, Canada, and has lived in the Bay Area and in Cambridge, MA. She is passionate about sustainability, teaching and mentorship, and working with underprivileged and underserved communities. She enjoys all things philosophical, literary, sportsy, tinkerable, outdoorsy, exploratory, culinary, and creative.

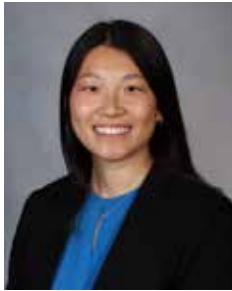


Addison Smartt is a first year medical student at Mayo Clinic in Arizona. She grew up in Utah and graduated from Brigham Young University. Her academic interests include medical education and the role of humanities in medicine. She enjoys various visual art forms and photography, even working as a wedding photographer during college. Outside of school, she is a devoted dog mom to two dogs, Bear and Harley, a wannabe chef, and connoisseur of true crime podcasts.



Hyo Bin You is a second year medical student at Mayo Rochester interested in pursuing neurosurgery. He hopes to apply his experience in developing machine learning algorithms to better care for patients. His hobbies include gardening, playing music, and engaging in sports.

## More About the Artists



Kathryn Xu is a second-year medical student at the Rochester campus, originally from St. Louis, MO. She is passionate about advancing healthcare access for all and fostering excellence in medical education. Outside of medicine, Kathryn loves budget-friendly travel, discovering unique coffee shops, and experimenting with new recipes in the kitchen.



Grant Welk is a second-year medical student at Mayo Rochester. Originally from Iowa, he completed his undergraduate studies at the University of Iowa. Growing up, Grant was always searching far and wide for new adventures, often through travel and the outdoors. While these passions remain, he has come to appreciate and embrace the beauty found in the simple moments of everyday life.



Dana Ellis is a second-year medical student at Mayo Arizona. She was a critical care nurse and nurse practitioner for 12 years prior to coming to medical school. She is interested in pursuing a career in cardiothoracic surgery. She and her husband have three daughters and a needy Bernadoodle. She enjoys reading books of all kinds, watching movies (preferably while crocheting), learning Spanish, and bantering with her sassy, brilliant daughters.



Evani Patel is a first-year medical student at Mayo Clinic Arizona, originally from Atlanta, GA. She went to college at The Georgia Institute of Technology, majoring in biology and minoring in sociology. She enjoys puzzling, canyoneering, homebrewing, and perfecting her recipe for paneer tikka masala.





Ananya Pappu is a third-year medical student at the Arizona campus. Although she has spent her more recent years in San Francisco and now Scottsdale, she is an east-coaster at heart, having grown up in New Jersey and attended college in Baltimore. Her artistic interests include nature photography, “junk journaling,” and dancing the Indian classical style of bharathanatyam. This year, she is excited to apply to internal medicine residencies and continue to explore subspecialties.



Kai Yuan Chen is a first-year medical student at Mayo Clinic Arizona, originally from Toronto, Canada. He attended the University of Toronto, majoring in Laboratory Medicine and Pathobiology. In his spare time, he enjoys drawing, gaming, photography, and playing ping-pong and badminton. You can check out more of his photos and art on his Instagram (@kyc767\_photography and @kyc767\_art)!



Laura Budvytyte is a third-year medical student at Mayo Clinic Arizona. She immigrated from Lithuania to the San Francisco Bay Area in California. Her professional interests are underserved medicine and pathology. She took a brief hiatus from medicine to “work” in a brewery and in rehabilitating seals and sea lions. Her passions include environmental sustainability, traveling, hiking, finding good coffee, and hearing new ways to mispronounce her last name.



Alex Panrudkevich is a third-year medical student in Rochester and is originally from Tucson, Arizona. She is excited to pursue a career in neurology. In her free time, she enjoys walking her dog Chewy, running, hiking, and napping.

## More About the Artists



Juhi Salunke is a first-year medical student at Mayo Clinic Arizona, originally from Rocky Mount, North Carolina. She went to college at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with major in Biochemistry. Whenever she has free time, she loves to learn new recipes, draw, read, explore new spots in the city and try out new things with friends.



Lindsey Trinchet is a third-year medical student at Mayo Clinic Arizona interested in cardiothoracic surgery. Originally from Florida, she trained at art-focused magnet schools for seven years as a Digital Media major. She continues to enjoy graphic design, snowboarding, and playing chess in her free time.



Tim Rengers is a fourth-year medical student at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN pursuing a career in general surgery. Originally from Metro-Detroit, MI, he previously toured the world as the drummer for pop-punk band Fireworks. He has clinical interests in surgical oncology and works in a basic science research lab studying the therapeutic effects of oncolytic viruses against intrahepatic cholangiocarcinoma. When not in the OR or lab, he enjoys lifting weights, Dungeons & Dragons, and playing drums with a local medical student band, Scuba Steve. He has limited experience in visual arts but grew up reading graphic novels/comics and was excited for the opportunity to put together a comic strip in the Graphic Medicine selective with Dr. Justin Kreuter.



Trisha Pecoraro is a third-year medical student in Rochester, MN planning to pursue a career in ophthalmology. Growing up in a military family, she spent her childhood in various locations throughout the United States and Japan. In her free time, she enjoys cooking, DIY-ing, playing volleyball, learning how to not kill plants, and spending time with her husband and two cats. Though more familiar with traditional paper-and-pencil drawing, she became interested in the use of software to create digital art through the Medical Illustration Selective.



Isra Abdulwadood is a fourth-year medical student at MCASOM Arizona. She grew up in Dallas, TX where she also went to school and graduated with a B.S. in Neuroscience and minors in Art History and Political Science. She is interested in the application of the principles of palliative care to reconstructive surgery. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, hiking, baking bread, collecting postcards, and café hopping.



Jeffrey Bush is a first-year medical student at the Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine. He is from Syracuse, NY and escaped the cold, only to end up in Rochester, MN. His hobbies include playing and watching basketball, reading any book he can get his hands on, telling people he's from New York but not the New York they're thinking about, and spending quality time with his fiancé.



Ashley Battenberg is a 3rd year medical student with an interest in women's health and internal medicine. She grew up on a hobby farm in Reeseville, WI and lived in Providence, RI and Boston, MA before medical school. In her free time, she enjoys running, camping and backpacking adventures, audiobooks, and trying new recipes.

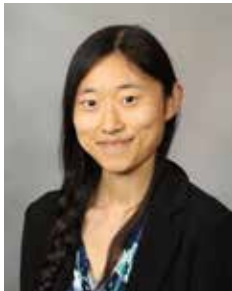


Melody Wu is a 1st year MD-PhD student on the Rochester campus originally from Los Angeles, California. She has an interest in using visual art as a form of scientific communication and making new ideas more accessible and exciting — like with animation! She's interested in immunology and immunotherapies for both cancer and autoimmunity, clinical trials, and community advocacy. She enjoys crocheting, doing yoga with friends, reading, learning to climb, trying to recreate dishes from home, and facetimeing her family to see her shepsky mix back in LA.

## More About the Artists



Matthew Van Ligten is a 4th year student on the AZ campus. He is interested in emergency medicine.



Stella Ma is an MD/PhD student on the Rochester campus.



Sarah Kind is a first-year medical student at the Alix School of Medicine and has been pursuing art as a hobby for the past ten years, with a particular focus on and fascination with color, light, and fabric. Sarah's favorite artist is Caravaggio and favorite movie is The Thing.





