

Forever Always

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Abstract

The following poem attempts to capture the perspective of a doctor who can no longer empathize with their patients. Throughout the medical education literature, many studies have shown a decline in empathy that occurs as individuals progress through their medical training and professional practice. While this decline is the focus of many educational interventions, the reasons for it are poorly understood aside from quantitative and correlative research. I wrote this poem as a preface to my thesis, which seeks to understand this phenomenon. Empathy is essential to practicing medicine. We cannot accept this decline as an inevitable reality.

she closed her eyes
one last time.

she was gone.

one life
one love
one last moment
spent together
with her.

yet I feel
Nothing.

for there were and
always will be

countless lives
countless loves
countless last moments
spent together
with *other* hers

before
after

and forever always

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