

By the Bedside

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HOW TO CITE: Zhang E. By the Bedside.

Fam Med. 2023;55(4):270–270.

doi: [10.22454/FamMed.2023.592578](https://doi.org/10.22454/FamMed.2023.592578)

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Passing time, I imagine myself
a fish. Unable to move, risking
entanglement. Perhaps, only
my imagination, but sometimes,
it's hard to breathe. I wake in
the middle of the night, drenched
in sweat. Gasping. Reminders of
rise and fall of ribs, beating of lungs.

When you come visit, I feel the
lack of something. Memory snags
on banks, drifting in shallows. Almost
tangible. Completely unreachable.
You grasp my hand until I feel stirrings
of was & has been's. I withdraw
to dive back into drowning—
world more manageable when lost.

You sit beside me, waiting as the
air thins, shoulders unwind, every
breath of mine becomes confession.
Inside this four walls, perhaps
even within me—sterility and fragility.
The cost of diving deep, you remind me,
is acclimated ascent. You take my hands.
This time, I squeeze them tightly.