

The Symphony of the Hospital Corridor

Jiaxuan Tan, MM; Hongmei Shen

AUTHOR AFFILIATION:

Department of Medical Ultrasound, Ultrasound Medicine Teaching and Research Division, Yanbian University Hospital, Yanji, Jilin, China

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:

Hongmei Shen, Department of Medical Ultrasound, Ultrasound Medicine Teaching and Research Division, Yanbian University Hospital, Yanji, Jilin, China, shenhongmei75@163.com

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The first rays of morning sunlight stream through the tall floor-to-ceiling windows, casting mottled shadows on the white walls. As usual, I arrive at the clinic early. I change into my white coat, and everything is ready, as if a carefully rehearsed performance is about to begin. In the clinic, the humming of the machines and the glow of the screens create a soft, steady rhythm—like the adagio opening of a symphony that will soon shift in tempo. I sit in front of the operating console, take a deep breath, and immerse myself in the working state. Patients come in one after another, some anxious and restless, some silent and reserved, but every gaze is filled with a longing for health. I greet them with a smile and attempt to soothe their nervousness with a gentle voice.

An elderly patient is wheeled in. He looks very frail, with rapid and labored breathing, as if each breath requires all his strength. His face is etched with the marks of time, his hair is white, and his eyes hold what appears to be confusion and helplessness. Accompanying him is his equally aged spouse, who holds his hand tightly, her eyes brimming with worry. “Doctor, I’ve been feeling short of breath these past few days, and my chest feels so tight.”

The patient’s voice is soft, yet each word comes through clearly to my ears. As I adjust the position of the ultrasound probe, I gently say to him, “Don’t worry, let’s first do an examination to see what’s going on.”

I move the ultrasound probe slowly over his chest, and the screen displays a series of black-and-white and color images. My heart tightens with each beat of the image. Ventricular septal rupture—this diagnosis hits me like a bomb. I know it is an extremely serious condition that endangers his life every second.

While comforting him, I pick up the phone. On the other end, my colleagues in the cardiology department respond immediately. They know this means a race against time. The steady hum of the morning has quickened now, a staccato rhythm taking hold, its pace accelerating like a drumroll building to a crescendo.

I push his bed swiftly through the long corridor toward cardiology. Sunlight falls across our path, but I feel no warmth—only tension and urgency. His ragged breaths echo in my ears, each one heavier than the last, and my heart races in sync. Time feels palpable, each moment stretched thin. When we arrive, the team is already prepared. They take over quickly, beginning a thorough assessment. I stand by, watching their busy figures, feeling both anxious and reassured.

The patient’s wife sits on a chair in the corridor, hands clasped, eyes full of anticipation and unease. Time ticks by slowly, and the office is so quiet that only the beeping of the medical equipment can be heard. Meanwhile, medical staff move hurriedly between rooms—their footsteps a percussive contrast to the waiting silence. The hours that follow are tense. I return to my duties, but my thoughts linger. Later, in the corridor, I see the patient’s wife staring at a crumpled photo, thumb tracing its edge, “This is our family photo,” she says, noticing my glance.

In that moment, I see beyond the patient to the life he carries—the family, the memories, the love that depends on him. This isn’t just another case now.

As night falls, I make a special trip to the cardiology department to check on his condition. His complexion has improved significantly, and his breathing has stabilized. His wife sits beside him, gently holding his hand. Seeing me enter, his face lights up with a look of gratitude. “Doctor, thank you,” he says in a faint voice.

“You’re welcome. It’s our duty,” I feel deeply moved as I reply.

This experience has profoundly made me realize that as a doctor, we are not just treating diseases but also safeguarding the sanctity of existence. Behind every patient is a

family, filled with endless love and hope. And we are the ones who light the beacon of hope for them in the darkness.

In the hospital corridors, the footsteps rise and fall incessantly: family members rushing in, medical staff hurrying about, patients being discharged after recovery. These steps intertwine, composing the ever-evolving symphony of healing. Each note carries a story—some joyful, some sorrowful—all worthy of witness. In these halls, the music plays on. And I will continue to play that small note in this endless symphony, dedicating my efforts to composing its chords.