



The last girl

Kamna Kakkar, MBBS

Postgraduate Student, Department of Anaesthesiology and Critical Care, PGIMS, Rohtak

Corresponding Author:

Dr Kamna Kakkar

Department of Anaesthesiology and Critical Care

PGIMS, Medical Road, Rohtak 124001, Haryana

Email: drkamnakakkar at gmail dot com

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Smoked a cigarette
- one or two -
a life of no regrets.
A laddy boy
aged twenty-two
in my hospital
I met.

He tries hard,
neck stretched,
to catch
some precious breaths.
To avert death
he labours, treads,
but there's
no room for air -
his chest, to him, said.

Rings Code Blue,
I arrive soon
with my tubes,
drugs and steth.
I hear them lungs,
I hear them twice,
I hear something-
some crepts.

"Respiratory distress,"
the nurse said.
"Pulse weak-
almost a thread."

Graves await
this young boy,
as he looks at me,
almost dead
(but, not yet.)

I slide a tube
into his throat,
into wind pipe,
into his core.
He breathes easy,
plugged to machines
that work hard
for him,
of him instead.

I walk back,
in a prayer-
"Please let him
live a life ahead.
'Coz
I don't want to be
the last girl
for a young man
to have met."

Poet's note: This poem sums up my life as a doctor of anaesthesiology during the time of the Coronavirus pandemic. Anaesthesiologists stand at the forefront of this crisis because the sickest of the sick patients who test positive for Corona eventually require intubation and mechanical ventilation in the Intensive Care Unit. Some of them do not survive, making our job challenging not just medically, but even emotionally - heart-wrenchingly so.