



Healing touch

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People enter my dimly lit halls through wide metal gates.
My tall ceilings with green signs dangling,
are decorated with instructions in shiny white letters-
"Take a left to reach the medicine OPD"
"Oh, you have a fractured bone?
Orthopedic operation theatres are on your right"

Young kids in white coats, with stethoscopes,
wonder aloud, "What makes a good doctor?"
I chuckle when they think it's listening to murmurs, grading reflexes,
prescribing medicines, or suturing wounds.
Care providers, they should know, are incomplete
without their magical healing touch.

My walls are witness to
teary goodbyes by nurses to patients dying
despite the soothing of their hands;
to stories of air pulsing from Ambu bags
expanding lungs in ambulances.

ICU patients shrink in pain, while their tears swell;
Their wrists, riddled with punctures,
struggle against restraint bands.
How they pine for a caress,
for latex-gloved hands to free them,
and to hold them when they're scared and alone.

I've seen touch leave in pandemics,
with viruses, and bacteria wreaking havoc
in isolated booths in Quarantined wards,
yet the distance weakens against the courage and love
of PPE donned doctors.

I've seen young children learning to walk
into their mothers' arms after healing
from broken bones;
fathers clutching their tiny newborns
against their chests to keep them warm.
I've seen love spill through their skin.

So now, when you ask how you can treat
your patient's body, mind, and spirit,
I say feel the rising pulse underneath your fingers,
honor the rhythm of life, and
let your touch do the healing.

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