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ธฺ||ロ|ロகி ..... 04
Silver Threads of Memories; ..... 05
A Medical Batch's Chronicle - Dr. Junais K
A Medical Batch's Chronicle - Dr. Junais K
06
The Uphill Trek
The Mother's Gift ..... 08
Dr. Manu Bhasker
09
Who was she?
Dr. Priya Velayudhan
Dr. Priya Velayudhan
10


 ..... 12

18


The Summit ..... 19
Dr. Nabil Sherif Mahmood
20
Am I Going To Be All Right?
Dr. Nilima Rahael Muthachen
 ..... 21
Sixth Sense ..... 24
Dr. Wales T. George
 ..... 26

29
Memories From First MBBS Days
Dr. Sheeba P.M.
 ..... 32
 ..... 33
The Revelation ..... 34Dr. Vidya Ramdas
m0jo. ..... 35
 ..... 36
 ..... 37
Justlooks? ..... 41
Dr. Padmini Hannah Noone
Eight Haikus
Dr. Anish P K ..... 42
 ..... 43

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# "Silver Threads of Memories: A Medical Batch's Chronicle" 

Dr. Junais.K



In Kozhikode's embrace, we gather this day, A quarter-century since we found our way, Nostalgia swirls like sea breeze in the air, College love and laughter, memories rare.

Oh, how time has flown, like a fleeting dream, From nervous freshers to a confident team, In anatomy's cadaverous abode, We formed bonds that only time could erode.

Through late-night studies in the college hall, And chai breaks at junction cafes, we'd recall, Those days of innocence, laughter, and fun, 42 nd batch, a medical journey begun.

Amidst the spices that danced on our tongues, Kozhikode's flavors, sweet melodies sung. Now, we raise a toast to twenty-five years, Through successes and struggles, through joys and tears,

To the friendships forged, ever so tight, A batch united, shining bright in the night. As we rekindle the flames of the past, Our alma mater's love, forever steadfast,

In the corridors of time, we find, The legacy of 42nd batch, intertwined.

# The Uphill Trek 

Dr. Jaheersha Pakran

I trod upon the same steep path
The peak of which lies beyond my sight
How much longer can I hold
When my mind is numb and limbs so worn
Surely it's impossible
Will end up as wasted bones
Which someday a passerby
Will remark, a poor lost soul
But wait, look back my heart
How much have you tarried b'fore
No feeble feat was it
What you have done so far
If I can climb this far
Can't I go furthermore
Tired mind and limbs pause
But giving up, don't think of yet
The trees give me fruits And streams, water poured My weary soul, rest a bit Rest a bit, and praise your Lord

Get up now, travel at your pace This journey is no fast race An endurance test t'is That none compares at it's cease

Why is it so dark, in a place so low
With tears gagging and drowning me slow
Ask help, of ego, let go
Kinds spirits of friends and clan
Will form a chain to get you out Get you out from the dark well

That you stumbled unknowing
Unknowing that this too was decreed
As part of your test
The darkness within raised walls But served its purpose too well

Now you are consoled Put down some of your load The sack that burdened your back Is light and ready to go

Miles fly fast, in company of pleasant fellow
Yet this journey you must make solo
Enjoy both rain and shine
In storms take refuge in Divine
And still journey on
If you will
What! Wait, the peak is reached!
The valley below is sublime
Peace of mind and gentle breeze
Weaves through my troubled heart awhile
But my startled eyes catch the sight
Of the next sharp hill, yonder my site
Will this trek never end
Shall I give up, lose hope and stop

My dear soul please discern
The hills and valleys are replete
With rich experience and people to learn
And provisions and trials to beat
Smile through the varying landscape
Through it all enjoy, endure
For what awaits you
No eyes have seen, no hearts have felt
A return for the final rest
What have you left behind, I'm asked
Is it wealth, glory and havoc
Which others will ache now
Now that you are gone
No! I say. I left behind A smile, some cool water And few soft words to comfort Comfort other weary souls
Who are tired or feeling lost
I left a seed on my path That has turned a shaded tree For those who started late On this journey of the soul

Then come My servant to this spring
Let me wash you off all sin
Recline and enjoy in this shade
Fresh and shining like a jade
Don't ask the time, dear one
For it's duty is done
Finally, find the missing piece
You were yearning till now
Your heart is now complete
Your excellent company, behold
Would you have travelled differently?
Now that, of the truth, you know.
Never! The journey was worth't
Every jump, trip and fall
For those were but stepping stones
In the journey of my soul
Believed I was a broken quill
But, can't a broken color give hues still? A frail rainbow besides the darken cloud That'll as yet inspire a wounded soul.

## The Mother's Gift


"Sir, this is the only occasion, my child will get to go out and see the world. As a family we hardly travel to such destinations." requested Nandini's mother to the class teacher, who was planning to take the students on a trek to Annapoorna Base camp, in Nepal. As the admission to the trekking group was restricted, Meenakshi, took the extra effort to ensure that her daughter got to be in the group. Meenakshi always remained an indulging mother. Whatever her daughter wanted, she would get it for her. Having grown up in poverty, she did not want her only daughter to suffer the limitations of resources. She had to raise the daughter single handed and it was not an easy job, as Nandini had a flair for the best and the extravagant. Decades later, after marriage also, Nandini continued with her old ways of spending. Exasperated, at times, her husband, Rajan, would complain to the old lady, for being so over indulgent with her daughter. With time,

Meenakshi, became a loving memory in the hearts of Nandini and Rajan. Nandini always longed for a particular piece of diamond jewellery. " whatever she wants, you just buy it for her. That is the easiest way to peace" Rajan remembered the old Meenakshi's words and they both went to the jeweller's shop. As they were discussing the price of a particular earring, which Nandini had selected for herself, Rajan realized that they were short by one lakh rupees. Interestingly, Nandini's phone rings. Her uncle calls up to inform her about a sum of one lakh that would be credited to her account which was the annuity of the life insurance sum that Meenakshi had taken long back. Even after having left her earthly existence, the mother's desire that her daughter should be happy always, manifested as the unexpected cash at the most appropriate time.

## Who was She ???

Dr. Priya Velayudhan



She stood there...
Amongst the merry youth donning Their academic regalia with pride
Their eyes glittering with joy
Tongues spilling mirth, stories and memories
The hustle bustle of crisp outfits
The glorious purchases of the first earnings
Faces prepped, nails painted, hair done
The smiles beautified by pictures
Walks shining with effects
Music rushing to the skies
Lights panning the floors....
Their new lives stretched brightly ahead
Glory of future leading them on....
Like a mirage at the horizon...
The masts of friendships they had built
Were to help them sail smoothly
Through the seas that lay unconquered
They knew the little world they inhabited
Was a cocoon that helped the butterflies emerge
She listened ..the rush of emotions inside the mask of serenity
Remembering the days past, surrounded by fun Reminiscing the longer walks she walked alone...
About hoping that her decks would be her forever heaven

But finding they were creekboats in a raging sea And how quickly did autumn come, the leaves fallen As if they were always meant to fall She had been drowned in misery of losing Treasures she had meant to hold a lifetime The roung peg in square hole that took a lot of moulding The scars adorning now as tattoos of courage

She was a bird now...not longer a butterfly There was the nest ...nd she needed her rest She had foraged, soared and browned in the sun The spring was coming,,,her folks did call She had been wishing....now she had to go The warm den $n$ food was waiting for her

They met, they shared, they sang n danced The gay colours wrapped over bruised souls Some smarting, some healed, some healers too The ways were different...the struggles were not The stories were different...the hopes were not There was no loss, just strengths gained There were no slights... just flights and lights The ships were back at sea again Built better $n$ painted in regalia of life.

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Red rose－Love－Rs 10／

Yellow rose－Friendship－Rs 10／
White rose－Innocence，Purity－Rs 10／
Green chilly－Jealous－Rs 5／

## Red chilly－Anger－Rs 5／－．




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"Why should boys have all the fun? றணைைை















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"Dosthom ke beech mein no sorry, no









































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"Till what age is a human skull malleable..?'

## The Summit....



Dr. Nabil Sherif Mahmood

The year was 2000. A group of young and enthusiastic medical students, most of who had just turned 20 that year were gathered around a patient in a busy medical ward. It was a 43 year old male who was admitted the previous night with an acute myocardial infarction. He was sat upright comfortably in his bed. His relatives who were beside him , appeared quite concerned by the herd of whitecoaters gathered around him. You could almost hear them say (Kurachonnu maari nikku kuttigale. Angerke kurach Vaayu kittikotte).

The gathering was however very brief. From an academical point of view he was of no interest to a bunch of young budding medicos who were scavenging a post admission medical ward, clinging onto their stethoscopes with their senses widely opened, eager to hear that pansystolic mur mur, or perhaps feel that splenic tip, or maybe get a smell of that fetor hepaticus or see that pulsating pupil. Whilst we swiftly walked to the next bed, my friend asked me " Can you get a heart attack when you are forty ? ". I told him " Of course. Why not? Its not like he is in his 20 s or 30 s. 40 is still old -"

Years have passed on. The clock has indeed ticked fast. Pan systolic murmurs and the splenic tip don't mean anything to me now. As I stare into the CT scan of a 43 year old male with metastatic colorectal cancer, I think to myself " Gosh! He's so young!"

Over the years, the generation of people who used to address us as " son " and " young man " have ventured off to a
different world. Now a days " bald", " potbellied, "white bearded " or "grey haired " are more befitting adjectives.

But that is just the circle of life and it will keep revolving whether we like it or not. I like to think age is just a number and that I may survive till I am 80. But even within that optimism, I cannot escape the fact that I have already lived at least half of my life and now the end is getting closer each day ! But rather than worry about what lies at the end of this journey, it's perhaps better to pause and look behind at the trail we've left behind. There is no better place to do that than at the half way mark....right here at the summit.... the best place also to look ahead and plan the onward journey. So far the road has been mostly uphill. We have carried a lot of unwanted luggage as we raced individually towards the top. Those heavy packages of pride, rivalry, jealousy and division we burdened ourselves with over the years are better dropped off now. Bones will get weaker and joints will start to complain. We need to free our hands now...to hold on to another or cling onto a shoulder, as we take those slow and careful steps down. It is better done together so that we don't fall.

Yet, as I stand on the summit today, I cannot completely hide that sense of anxiety of the journey ahead. But there is something I know for sure. No matter how difficult that journey is, I will never be on my own. I will never be short of finding that supporting shoulder or that outstretched hand, if my 42 nd batch mates are there with me along the way.

# "AM I GOING TO BE ALL RCHT?" 

Am I going to be All right?" She was wheeled into the ICU one busy evening-an elderly lady, with her head placed in mechanical cervical traction. Her elderly husband walked beside her to the door of the ICU, and then watched as the doors closed behind her, a look of concern on his wrinkled face. " 60 year-old female, well till two days ago, when she developed weakness and numbness of the upper and lower limbs. Radiology shows metastasis from the breast to the cervical spine. An acute fracture dislocation of the lower cervical vertebrae. She is posted for a cervical spine fixation tomorrow." said the neuro surgical resident as he handed over the patient. I walked over to her bedside and smiled hello. She looked apprehensive, in this unfamiliar place. She had been diagnosed two days ago, and it was, understandably, a lot to take in a short amount of time. I quickly went through my checklist of questions. She answered my questions, but all the while I could see her struggling to process what was happening around her. Meanwhile, the nurses took her vital signs and spoke reassuringly to her. I was called away to another patient, and saw her next about three hours later. She had settled down, but still looked apprehensive. She was posted for surgery the next day and I carried the consent forms in my hand. Having spoken to her husband, and having explained to him the anaesthetic process that she would receive tomorrow, I had to walk her through the process as well. As I spoke to her, I saw tears well up in her eyes. She asked "Am I going to be all right?" I tried to allay her fears as much as I could, telling her about what to expect
when she went in for surgery the next day. But the question stayed with me as I worked through the night - That is the basic question that all of us worry about- in sickness, in tragedy, in difficulties- "Am I going to be all right?" She had an uneventful surgery to correct her cervical spine, and was shifted out of ICU after a day.

A couple of weeks later, on rounds, a team member mentioned that the lady was starting chemotherapy for her breast cancer. Time flew by in work and life, and I did not think about her for the next few months. About eight months later, as I shifted a patient to the ICU for postoperative monitoring, I saw a face that looked familiar in the next bed. She was sitting up in bed and smiled at me. She had a huge smile on her face. "Do you remember me?" she asked, recognising me. My smile of recognition confirmed her words. I spoke a few words with her. She had come in for a minor surgery the previous day, and was due to be discharged. She said she was back to her usual routine at home, and doing well. It is a blur sometimes, because you see patients come and go in the ICU. But sometimes, just some times... their words stay with us.
(In the twenty-odd years that we have been doctors, we have all come across patients that have stayed with us- it could be something they said or did, or their diagnosis... or the way they dealt with their circumstances... that made us stop in the middle of our busy days and nights and ponder awhile. This is one such patient that I met a couple of years ago. As we approach a milestone in our path as the 42nd batch of Calicut Medical College, I wanted to share something from my journey as a neuro anaesthesiologist and intensivist.)

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42nd in Kadawu - Nov 2013


42nd in Georgia


42nd in Cherai - Aug 2015


42nd in Kapad - Nov 2022



42nd in Maldives Iune 2023


## Sixth Sen



Dr. Wales T. George
"James, Have you had the buffet at the Bellagio? Its good... totally worth it, with the all you can eat crab legs, steaks, ribs..."

Derek sounded elated. He doesn't need to do this. A successful American neurosurgeon, standing in line for a buffet in Las Vegas. Height of Irony. Remember the joke? What's the difference between God and a Neurosurgeon? Well, God knows he is no neurosurgeon. Ha ha..

It's not all that strange for me though. Brings back memories, like your wait at the Amma Restaurant. Except you are probably drunk, has lost a lot of money gambling, and yes, it's the palatial hotel with artworks, murals, museum replicas, air conditioning. Hasn't this been fantastic? A week vacay at the Las Vegas Strip. Party all night, binge on delicious food, sleep till noon, rinse and repeat. I don't even remember all the things that happened, the people we met, the exotic dancers we... spoke to.
"Sleeping or day dreaming, James?" Sunny Mathews is mad. That's not good. When he is ready and at your hotel door, you should be ready too. At least that's the expectation. Afterall, he paid for your stay at the Westin, next to the New York financial district. He is taking you to the Sushi restaurant at the Empire State Building. But in my defense, its only noon. Lunch can wait, until I take that Aspirin and Coke. Anyways..
"Sunny, you are the best friend I have. You visit me often, we spend quality time together, you invest in our friendship. One needs to do that. Yeah, sure, we were med school friends. But how many of our batch mates call me now? A handful. That's it. I love you man"

[^0]And yes. The sushi was great. The fish melted like butter in my mouth. Chef didn't talk
much, but he did share some secrets to Sunny, about his formative years in Japan. So, what if we spend 500 dollars for lunch.
"Grand Canyon is just breathtaking for me. Every time. It's like a huge mountain range has been carved out of ground. Have you taken the chopper tour, James? Or the white water rafting? Once in a life time experience."

Shilpa gets so excited taking about the Grand Canyon. She got the opportunity to move to US, and was given a few options about where she would be working, Phoenix Arizona, Chicago Illinois, Cleveland Ohio, New Orleans, Louisiana. Four cities with nothing in common. Weather, terrain, people, even politics so different. She had no idea whatsoever though. She had seen an Arizona Jeans ads in a magazine, and chose AZ. Little did she know about the Sonoran Desert, the scorching heat or the sprawling highways with breakneck traffic. But she is loyal. Loves Arizona with all her heart. Goes to Prescott to see the snow, Meditation retreat in Sedona and annual Grand canyon trips- just to be awestruck. God, isn't she fantastic. This is going to be a great Vacay too.

## "Mike, what time is it?"

"Oh good morning sunshine! Rather good afternoon.. James, you said you would come with me to the ER today. Boy aren't you a sleepy head?! Okay now, I have to go to the inpatient unit now. You wanna tag along?"

Minneapolis Winter is beautiful. A foot of snow is but another Wednesday for a Minnesotan. Sure, Schools would be 2 hrs. late, but hell yeah, we will be working! The drive to University hospital was as uneventful as it could be. You just drive 55 miles an hour behind a snow plough truck. When we got there, no one was outside the hospital, but the parking lot was full. Even the Air Ambulance on the
helipad.
"Good Morning Dr, how are you?" The security guard was as ready to take on the world, beaming in high spirits.
"I am good, how are you?" Mike said. But it was awkward. He didn't introduce me. What's up with that?

To get to the Psych unit, you need to go through two sets of locked doors. One set of doors will stay closed when the other is open. It's fun to see consultants trying to rush through them, trying to pull open the doors, realizing the issue, and sigh in despair. Not all badges work here. Any visitors will have to go through a metal detector and lock away their belongings. Good, I didn't have to do any of that, Afterall, I am the esteemed guest of the inpatient psychiatrist.
"So James, you see that young lady? She is here because of a first psychotic break. Since admission, she hasn't really talked to me. Yesterday, out of the blue, she came to me and told me that she is no longer intimidated to talk to me. Why? Because I was wearing the sweater backwards. How can a man wearing the sweater backwards judge her? That was her reasoning"

Interesting. I had an elective psych rotation during residency. Totally not necessary for ophthalmology, but I did it for the fun of it. Surprised to find out that all the movie archetypes were wrong. Psych units were largely quiet. Patients and staff getting along with their own business. Sometimes you hear screams. From locked rooms at the far end of the hallway though.
"James, you are day dreaming again"
"Yeah, Mike, I have caught myself doing that a lot, recently. I am a little worried. I can't say that everything that happens around me make complete sense now. There are gaps in my memory. Yes, I have been known to drink a little, perhaps a few blackouts here and there. But this is ridiculous."

## "Why what happened?"

"Mike, I was in Las Vegas 2 wks. ago, then in NYC, then at the Grand Canyon, and now here in the Midwest. I don't remember traveling. I don't remember anything in between. I am only 45, it's not

## like I have dementia"

"Hmmn.. that's interesting.. do you want to talk about it?"
"F... you and your psych crap - I am serious. Listen. All the more strange, it was Fall in Las Vegas, Summer in New York, Spring in Arizona and Winter here now. How is that even possible? These seasons should be many months apart, and they are out of order. As I remember it, they all happened in the last month."
"Interesting, James. That sort of experience is rare. Let me tell you something. You might want to sit down for this..."

What Mike said afterwards didn't make full sense either. But it was a start. It was profound. He told me I had died a couple of years earlier. Rather, I killed myself with my Glock 19. But before I died, they were able to transcribe my brain to a computer. All the cells, neural networks and the memories. This process was expensive. So, bunch of my med school classmates chipped in and paid for it. Why? Because I was the best drink buddy they had. They ever had....The whole architecture of my mind was uploaded into an AI. And now I was capable of new memories. New experiences with my friends! Party, travel with them, even have intimate relationships. They are able to add templates, have me share my experiences, edit my emotions or even problem solve. The gaps in memories are glitches. My friends, in different parts of the country, deciding to get my company would download me to their app, and the party begins! When they want it, when they can. But this sometimes create conflicting environm ents and schedules. BTW, the memories and emotions around my last days were eliminated on purpose.
"Mr James Joseph, can you confirm your date of birth? We need to draw blood for your weekly clozapine monitoring"

Man! You startled me. But what the actual F. The system even accounted for this scenario? As soon as my dear friend revealed a no-share-secret to me, made up a plausible explanation for me. In a matter of seconds! Clozapine? Sure. Is it so that I don't self-destruct? Brilliant. Just Brilliant. Sure, phlebotomist, you can draw my blood...

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[^0]:    "Yeah, James, sure, sure.. cut the crap. Are you getting ready or what?"

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