

POETRY | FALL 2017

Specimen A

By Tharshika Thangarasa

He held me in the palm of his hand,
Fixated and firm – Specimen A.

Four chambers, four valves,
Slightly hypertrophied, slightly calcified,
Serves to pump, serves to perfuse.
Anterior interventricular artery, patent ductus arteriosus.

Identify the structure.

Provide the name and function of the part of me
That he has pierced with the tip of his needle,
You have two minutes.

Two minutes.

Two minutes during which you will scramble,
Oblivious to the scent of formalin,
Damp with perspiration,
On autonomic overdrive.

Two minutes during which you will stare,
At every feature I possess,
Every tortuous vessel and muscular wall,
Thinking, analyzing as you have been trained to do.

Two minutes during which you will not stop,
To contemplate what I once was.
What had once made me beat,
Where I once lay,

In the thoracic cavity of
A person.
Who fought and fell,
Who loved and lost,
Who was and no longer is,
A person with whom you share a similar fate.

The buzzer sounds.

You frantically move on to your next station,

Specimen B.

Tharshika Thangarasa is currently a daughter, sister, friend, amateur artist and third year medical student at the University of Ottawa. She completed her undergraduate degree in Neuroscience at the University of Toronto, Scarborough. She has an insatiable hunger for knowledge and a love of trying new things. She hopes to travel more, inspire others and positively influence the lives of many as a future physician.

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