Cardiac Anesthesiologist: The Friend of the Heart

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I STAND at the head end of the patient,
a speechless witness to the kind cruelty of the surgeon’s scalpel.

I have seen myriad hearts
some dilated, some with abnormal orifices,
some with rickety-going valves,
similar to my flow in the stagnant city traffic stream.

Sometimes, I draw analogy,
between emotions in the heart and cardiac anatomy.
What do people mean, when they say,
“a big heart!,” “a kind heart!”
Are emotions nurtured in the heart?

I have seen bureaucrats, politicians,
both from emotional and anatomical viewpoints.
They do not have a big heart morphologically or emotionally,
in spite of bearing the people’s mandate.
I brood, “Is politics a game of the heart?”

Often I wage a war against
the stubbornness of the failing heart,
with inotropes in my armament,
each a soldier, combating,
the stimulated receptors as opponents.

Sometimes, I become emotional,
when I watch the returning cars in the light-bathed streets
and the chirping birds in the azure sky,
through the window screen
with the music of the pulse oximeter,
reminding me not to sway,
in the emotional stream.

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I nourish dreams of early home coming.
I have learnt to accept time expansion
is meant for me only.
I have cultivated my patience, and driven
the ravens of restlessness during my prolonged shifts,
and stay in the fate changing recovery units.

I am proud of being adept,
in maintaining normal hemodynamics,
amidst the autocracy of the surgeon’s scalpel.

I am more powerful; a friend of the patient’s heart.
Applause and laurels are miles away.
My unsung ‘Swansong’ is only known to me,
ever revealed.

I have learnt to enjoy my work as an art,
My power to curb the physiological insults
of the surgeon’s action.
I reap the fruits of my toil,
when I see the smiling faces of the patients
in the recovery units.