

# AN OBSERVATION

Alyssa Marie Frey

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of wisdom;  
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and badges  
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in fortunate  
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*What is medicine from an innocent and uneducated view? As a premedical student, it is very hard to get a true glimpse into what medicine is. When I was an observer in the Interventional Radiology Department at Tampa General Hospital this summer, I wrote this in an attempt to see past the jargon and science that I have not had the opportunity to learn yet. I believe I saw the truth of medicine that day.*

**T**here is a man directly five feet and six inches in front of me. The man has dark hair and kind eyes. In the corners of those kind eyes, the furrows are forming. When he smiles, they manifest. When he frowns, they remain. His constant companions, the furrows are heralds of joy and harbingers of pain.

They are signs of wisdom; wounds accumulated in a time of war and badges of experience forged in fortunate moments. I wonder at what they have seen. How many babes did they welcome into this world? How many souls did they watch depart it?

Perhaps their omniscience should frighten me.

It does not.

Perhaps I should have heeded their ominous foreboding.

I did not.

I catch my reflection in the monitor. I see my own kind eyes and dark hair. I see the bright glow of youth and passion. I do not see the furrows. No badges of wisdom or wounds of experience grace my familiar features.

The furrows reappear as the man removes a small stack of photos from his white coat. He passes them to a woman.

She has the furrows, too. Deep, long lines that cascade down her smooth forehead. They deepen. They seem like canyons sculpted over time with pressure. They have the elegant curves and finish of an old ravine. Time and stress have created a finite wound from a long and strenuous war.

A frail and trembling hand obscures my observation of her life-lines.

A large, kind hand is placed on the frail, trembling shoulders.

The large, kind hand unconsciously shudders with the grief of the body beneath it.

The woman sits on the bed.

There is a boy directly six feet and six inches in front of me. There is a boy in the bed. The boy has a still, blank face. There is a frail, trembling hand on the still, blank face. The kind eyes close, and the dark-haired head falls.

The furrows return. The canyons deepen. The face is blank.

The photos are grey. The coat is white.

The face is blank.

The man leaves.

I follow.

There is a piece of paper directly eight feet and six inches in front of me. The piece of paper is pretty. The pretty paper hangs on the wall.

I want a piece of pretty paper.

I want a white coat.

The large, kind hand is on my shoulder.

I see the kind eyes.

I see the furrows.

He turns away.

I think about my observation. I catch my reflection on the glass door.

I see my own kind eyes and dark hair.

I see the bright glow of youth and passion.

I see the furrows, small and fleeting.

I smile.

The furrows deepen.

*Alyssa Frey is a junior at Florida State University, majoring in English Literature and Chemical Science. She enjoys playing the piano, reading, and writing, and hopes to pursue a career in medicine at FSU.*

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