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tick

William Fung

The clock hand moves.

Another minute passes.

I wring my hands slightly, feeling the smooth curvature of my nails. They feel foreign and alien, like hands that aren't my own. I take a deep breath, and the slight burn of fresh air mixed with the faint unfamiliar odour around me hurries down my throat.

A low thunder echoes in my ears, the rhythmic pounding shifting ever so subtly as I breathe. I start studying the wall, trying to ignore the insistent rumbling. But it is still there, a constant reminder of something else creeping over the horizon.

Tick. Another minute.

Does anyone else feel the same? What thoughts lie behind the tired eyes of the woman in the corner? Does the man reading the magazine understand the words running by before his eyes?

Suddenly my eyes meet someone else's, and we both quickly look away; it is an unspoken rule to make no contact. The room is quiet, but it is a

heavy silence. You can hear breathing; someone has a slight wheeze.

Wrapped in our invisible cocoons, here we sit, four strangers. We each carry a story that we guard against all eyes. And yet, here we are, waiting for the chance to tear down every wall and lay that story bare.

Tick.

It is because we do not understand. It is our story, and yet it defies all comprehension. And on the great scale of fear upon which we have weighed sharing against not knowing, the four of us have chosen to know.

We seek a retelling.

But the fear is still there. For while it is our story, it also is not. Here we seek its ending, its denouement. Here is where we wait for the detective to reveal everything, and for the cul-

Tick.

I wring my hands.

They call my name.

William Fung is a 3rd-year medical student at McMaster University. Outside of medicine he enjoys spending his time pursuing the arts in their many forms, including music and literature. He plays piano, flute, and piccolo, and enjoys reading English as well as Chinese and Japanese literature. Email: william.fung@medportal.ca