

To Doris, On Her Retirement

By Elisabeth Preston-Hsu, MD, MPH

This poem is dedicated to Doris Armour, MD.

Leaving this season lush with life, you'll connect
to a greener one. You've sketched a map
of terrains traveled to lay out the journeys ahead.
You've seen the microscopic proof of cells and vessels,
how grafting injury fastens matte finish of skin, its divinity
pinned on your hands, yet unfinished. You've written
an atlas of these wonders for me, shown me how
an injury may bring kindness, unexpected
nourishment, or a life undone. Where dusky tissue
leans into a penumbra of viability. Where epithelium

charts a sunrise. Where a pulse aches for its finding.

No matter that these roads may be uncanny:

Guide me through mysteries and wonders

where you've already stepped. For now, we stand

rooted in this season you've blessed. Soon,

you'll be drowsing with books, settled

among family along far flung archipelagos strung

like charms on your bracelet. Listen to their

clink and rustle. Clasp God's hand and look

to the sky where we watch the same stars.

About the Author



Elisabeth Preston-Hsu, MD, MPH is a Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation physician at Emory Healthcare in Atlanta, Georgia, where she focuses her practice on wound care and hyperbaric medicine. This poem is dedicated to her recently retired colleague Doris Armour, MD, with whom she worked closely. Find Dr. Preston-Hsu's other creative work in the *Bellevue Literary Review*, *Chicago Quarterly Review*, *CALYX*, *The Sun*, *North American Review*, and elsewhere. Follow her on Instagram @writers.eatery.