**Main submission**

**Title:** The Silent Teachers

**Category:** Poetry (Medical Humanities, respect for cadavers)

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**The Silent Teachers**

The day I entered medical school,

Memories I so much cherish;

With dreams and expectations, which

I marvelled, if would ever perish.

On a marble table in the dissection hall,

There lay that pallid cadaver,

Far beyond the books and the blades,

There was much more to discover.

“O young minds,” said our tutor,

“Remember your stepping stones.

Here are your silent teachers,

Not figures of flesh and bones.”

And so in the quest of healing

For the sick and the diseased,

We all stepped into the dreary world

Of the dead and the deceased.

Oh! Aah! Phew and puke!

Spurts of shriek and squeak,

Sight and stench of lifeless creatures,

Our senses becoming weak.

As time elapsed…

Why this disgust? I pondered

With each new passing day,

“The amazing abodes of creation”,

Why shouldn’t we say?

Cutting through the fat and muscles,

Unfolding the mysteries of humankind,

Loads of respect and honour for them

Filled up my enlightened mind.

A breadwinner? A philanthropist? Or an orphan?

“Who were ‘they’?” none of us knew,

The sheer epitomes of unseen splendour,

Great treasures of knowledge and learning,

Indebted to them, I wonder.

And I recall ….

The words of Vesalius, verity no less vital,

“Genius lives forever. All else is mortal.”