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poems  
by  
doctors

## Lovely young consultant charms my husband

Kate Compston

'Look! here and here,' she breathes. I note  
her intentness, as the three  
of us pore over her strange map.  
I see his greying face

light at her nearness, how he floats  
in her interest in him. I could be  
half in love with her myself, lap  
at her kindness greedily, but brace

myself to hear her verdict. Poet  
in an alien tongue and territory, she  
rhapsodizes about gaps  
where gaps ought not to be. 'We trace

low dopamine uptake . . . ' (she strokes her throat,  
addressing me): 'Dementia – DLB.  
Given the other signs – the overlap  
of dream and real, the slowing pace,

visual hallucinations, remote  
expression – this scan wraps  
up my diagnosis . . . '

(stops and holds his hand, devotes  
herself to him): 'Together, we  
will deal with this thing, yes?'  
Embraced  
by her concern, he throws aside  
encroaching night, flings his windows wide.

The trap door of my heart slams shut.

From *The Hippocrates Prize 2015: The Winning and Commended Poems*, selected by T Dalrymple, R Gross, F Oyebo and S Rae, eds MW Hulse & DRJ Singer. The Hippocrates Press, 2015. © Kate Compston. Reprinted with permission. Kate worked in the NHS as a BACP Senior Counsellor and is now retired.

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