



## Couplets to a Pre-Existing Condition

By Ronald R. Louie, MD

- For H.J.R.

O Solomon! what wisdom is needed for the physician  
 who deals with a child and a "pre-existing condition":  
 of all known miseries, the one that presupposes  
 a definable beginning, and presumptively imposes  
 a linear relationship of time  
 to illness, with no respect for the sublime  
 that turns lugubrious, ending with antecedents circular,  
 and predicated upon a bureaucratic vernacular;  
 Which for the peripatetic pediatrician  
 presents a peculiar imprecision:  
 when caring for very sick children or infants,  
 with cystic fibrosis or leukemia, for instance,  
 whose spirits hold hostage parental emotions;  
 Are these children just some post-conceived notions,  
 begging their epistemic question, with exons existential,  
 full of knowing and pre-knowing, (the code confidential)?  
 Can we now really judge origins, without pre-maturity,  
 or assess a person's, or a population's risk-pool purity,  
 and not mock the politics of self-determination?  
 Yet Media-tricians trumpet the research's implication  
 for these progenitor cell products in our age of new genetics,  
 these innocently assorted alleles, (admittedly, at times, pathogenic),  
 whose critical pre-existing condition is birth,  
 with no consideration of bottom-line net worth? ❖

## Retirement

By Gopal Nemana, MD

Whither your journey, Oh lonely man?  
 In this forest of health care  
 Prowling as a hungry wolf  
 Realizing nobody will care.  
 It's time to play your game of golf  
 and be joyful that you are again a man.

When you are through with  
 unsalvageable code blues  
 Realize you should start singing  
 your own life's blues.  
 Lately, I have been kept awake  
 by the rumor of a golden handshake.

In reality it's a kick from a golden boot  
 It hurts more than one from a leather boot  
 It doesn't matter, no one will pay a hoot  
 It is a horn you can no more toot.

Pay attention to that call from yonder  
 Go on the trail, be lonely and ponder  
 Appreciate nature's beauty and wonder  
 At God's creation and all its splendor. ❖

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