

The Weight of a Palm

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There's his cry!

I exclaim

to my tearful patient as

she shivers beneath the palm

I gingerly placed on her shoulder

moments after a stat c-section

while standing in her pooling blood.

I wonder why the miracle of life

far too often places us

in the wanting reach of death.

about | poet

ADEL

Shirin Adel is a third-year medical student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, her alma mater, where she also received her bachelor's degree in biology. She is interested in hospital medicine, women's health advocacy, and investigations of health outcomes in high-risk patient populations. Shirin demonstrates her dedication to advocacy through nature photography, painting, and prose that reflect on the lived experiences of women, work she has published in previous issues of *Iris*.