

Even our 'fresher' GP colleagues can be bemused when receiving a call from unhappy patients requesting an inaccessible service. It can be discouraging and confusing when a hitherto positive therapeutic relationship over several years is reduced to nothing or generates a complaint, as a consequence of failing to meet a patient's expectations.

My heart goes out to all of us, who have been 'set up to fail'. Take heart and glove up – the work must go on ...

HEALTH WARNING TO A YOUNG CLINICIAN

*Beware –
in our profession, we must beware
of what might come through the door,
what might be waiting on the other end of
the line
what we summon up with a push of the
button.*

*Names
masquerading as innocent,
posing bright as soft blossom,
waiting with hands outstretched:
smiling, nodding,
gently
Self-obsessed.*

*Beware.
And when you reach out to take those hands
And offer to ease those burdens,
Dress the hurt, and pill away the pain,*

Wear gloves.

For sharper than the flick of a neon switch

*The bond can dissect;
A searing rip that tears
right the way down to the root of the heart
driving out breath with pain.*

*That traitor unseen,
That lurking aneurysm
ruptures;
and floods the room, hot anger
that pulses
and sucks
and burns wild.*

*We are not allowed to move,
Just to stand.*

*And after the rage, we
Unpick
our
way
out,
desperate for air
Clawing for equilibrium;
upsetting the layers of discarded words
and the charred ash of good intentions.*

Beware the thorns.

*The scars make for tougher hands.
But still, my friend
Glove the heart, before you call.*

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