

Poems

I'm Running Late

I'm running late, the daily mantra of a working GP.
 I'm running late, not an uncommon sight to see.
 I'm running late, stuck behind a tractor on my commute.
 I'm running late, the laptop has some updates to compute.
 I'm running late, my patient didn't arrive on time.
 I'm running late, I don't want to rush this person's whine.
 I'm running late, the next patient arrives with a list.
 I'm running late, lots of people are waiting and they won't get the gist.
 I'm running late, a rash, a headache and some hair lost from their mane.
 I'm running late, an angry patient whose pain will not wane.
 I'm running late, speed up my hospital appointment is their plea.
 I'm running late, I really need caffeine and an overdue wee.
 I'm running late, slowly having to break some bad news.
 I'm running late, a new-born check that ends with projectile poos.
 I'm running late, the dreaded 'whilst I'm here can you also look at this?'.
 I'm running late, taking time to make sure there is nothing I miss.
 I'm running late, as I sit on hold waiting for a hospital speciality.
 I'm running late, I realise I've not managed to drink my cup of tea.
 I'm running late, a lonely patient who just needs a chat.
 I'm running late, my day brightened by photos of fancy dress on her cat.
 I'm running late, a home visit, is it legal to eat lunch behind the wheel?
 I'm running late, maybe I'll avoid fruit you need to peel.
 I'm running late, more results to file and letters to read.
 I'm running late, it's an ever-growing pile so I must do it with speed.
 I'm running late, another task alert appears on my screen.
 I'm running late, an unexpected patient at reception who wishes to be seen.
 I'm running late, with naïve hope we discuss weight, exercise and smoking.
 I'm running late, a weird lump I spend a long-time poking.
 I'm running late, lots of pop-up messages to close.
 I'm running late, as I listen to my patient narrate their highs and lows.
 I'm running late, it's the end of the day and I've not had to weep.
 I'm running late, but by the time I'm home my babies will already be asleep.
 I'm running late, I chose general practice with the hope of work-life balance.
 I'm running late, instead apologising for missing things has become one of my talents.
 I'm running late, does a different career path lay ahead?
 I'm running late, no time to consider that as I'm ready for bed.
 I'm running late, as I lie there thinking about the clinical decisions I've made.
 I'm running late, I realise this is the mental workload through which we must wade.
 I'm running late, it is finally time to hit the hay.
 I'm running late, hopefully tomorrow will be a better day.

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Reflection On My Practice

Over the shoulder, at the door
 'I still love you, you know.'
 After we talked about another treatment
 He won't want
 And agree to life as it is.

'You saved my friend's life.'
 Said a second time, insistently
 When I shrugged
 In unlikely dismissal.

Halfway to the door
 Arm-around hug
 The tearful first of the two-part loss
 Of a wife to Alzheimer's.

It has been a hard week.
 These are unexpected things.
 They leave me puzzled and filled.
 Keep going.

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