This week is a poem from the 3rd place winner of the UMMS Gerald F Berlin Creative Writing Contest written by Supreetha Gubbala. Her images will leave you feeling that feeling that many of us may not have felt for some time, the feeling of being without others - a loneliness so many are feeling in this age of social isolationism. Supreetha graduated on Sunday and we had a moment where she thanked me for encouraging students to write and I thanked her for her gift of words, and encouraged her to continue to find ways for expression during her career that will enrich the experience.

On that note - if you are graduating from UMMS and want to continue receiving TMM - please email your private email to Linda so we can continue to send you the TMM each week!

You can respond to Supreetha at supreetha.gubbala@umassmed.edu or to the list serve directly. Enjoy.

**Where Loneliness Lives**

There is a pit
carved into the center
of my chest
filled with swollen
moth balls,
themselves coated in dust
or leaves,
forgotten attempts
to preserve
the stored away heart.

At high noon
in mid-June,
the Orange line
readies, packed
for a Saturday ball game.
Boston thaws,
inviting the warm skin of strangers
to ebb against mine,
sticking only slightly,
then peeling off at the stops.
I watch them
adjust their caps
and step off into the
rays of light veering
rarely through subway
station windows.
Relieved for space,
I exhale.
I miss them.

I jog in Sacramento
because this is
what one does
in Sacramento.

Foliage is slow here,
falling amongst rows of gentle houses
in rhythm with the couples
that appear so suddenly,
that the side walk feels infiltrated
fingers wrapped around fingers,
and rose gold bands
with their dogs and trees
that drape over yards filled
with wooden rope swings
and stability.

I jog past.
I attempt a smile
Look happy
Completely satisfied
without your dog
wooden tree swing
or rose gold.

It is 2pm.
The high tide crashes in,
swirling pools of muddled foam
invade my well-kept cave.
The mothballs,
they float aimlessly to the surface
popping out their
white balmy, balding heads,
coating me with slick discomfort.
There is no place for this kind of ugliness in Sacramento.

Sometimes loneliness just has to live between tides, and skins of arms on subways. Only to suddenly appear as vulgar, bubbling garbage floating in clear blue waters, passing by gaping vacationers and disrupting holidays in Cancun.

An uninvited reality between engagement rings and tree swings.