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Editor's Column

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EDITOR'S COLUMN

We have all been in rooms
We cannot die in, and they are odd places, and sad.
Often Indians are standing eagle-armed on hills
In the sunrise open wide to the Great Spirit
Or gliding in canoes or cattle are browsing on the walls
Far away gazing down with the eyes of our children
Not far away or there are men driving
The last railspike, which has turned
Gold in their hands.

James Dickey

The last few months of my residency have been a strange time for me. Half-way out the door and half-way in, I find myself simultaneously saying hello and good-bye. This in itself is not unusual. There are many situations in life that arouse varying degrees of separation and stranger anxiety. Perhaps this time is unique because it marks, at least superficially, the end of a prolonged adolescence. Or, as a friend of mine who is also finishing his professional training wrote to me recently: "Good students that we have been, we face a sudden decline in the steady flow of encomiums so often thrown our way. Self-respect will come much more through self examination rather than through good grades or fine recommendations from professors."

In another way, too, I think this time is unique. For the first time, *it is my business to leave people gracefully*. By this I mean that the success of the therapy I have done may depend in large part on my ability to handle separation issues with my patients. Hemmingway's idea that courage is grace under pressure applies nowhere if not to leaving patients.

In this last paragraph I would like to take my final editor's prerogative to thank those people who have most influenced me during my residency: Drs. George Ainslie, Salman Akhtar, Susan Ball, Tom Benfield, Roy Clouse, Bill Dubin, and Paul Fink. Special thanks to Harvey Schwartz, M.D., the life force of the journal, and Ron Serota, M.D., the greatest influence on my evolution as a psychiatrist and the kindest person I know.

Peace and health.

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The Jefferson Journal of Psychiatry