HEALING ARTS

Materia Medica

Theory of Relativity

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You'll be one of those people who gets used to the long hours.
You'll beat the traffic going in and coming home.
Weather will not stop you. You'll know every shade of night.

You'll know the facts and when and how to share them.
You'll take call and look like you slept in it or stepped in it.
You'll know how to get the blood out. You'll dress wounds

you couldn't imagine, then eat lunch while walking fast.
Everyone will look familiar. Kids so bald you'll want to shave your head.
Loved ones lurking outside units, clutching phones, texting hope

and faith, rage and disbelief, biopsy results. Whatever room you're in
you'll know where to find the Kleenex. You'll know how to operate the bed,
how to drive a stretcher. You'll know every shade of soiled

and won't get used to any. You'll wash your hands as often as you should,
and more, for good luck. If you're lucky you'll get stuck on an elevator
with housekeeping or food services or patient transportation

or anyone who forever after treats you like a friend.
You'll know when and how to say you're very welcome.
You'll make mistakes, be sorry, say it, forgive yourself last, if ever.

You'll be one of those people who finds a few minutes
to just stand there or sit there as if nothing else could matter.
A minute lasts an hour at the speed of indoor light.

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