

STUDIO ART | SPRING 2021

Five Liters (A Tough Problem)

By Steven Scaglione

During my first year in medical school, I observed a surgery whose symbolism I will never forget. The patient had what her surgeon called "a tough problem" — simple language that neatly cut through the nuance and complexity of her highly vascular tumor. In the late hours of the grueling 12-hour case, the exhausted surgeon continued to operate, eating next to nothing except for the occasional LifeSavers candy the circulating nurse would slip behind his mask. And as the seventh month of "quarantine" ends with record-breaking case numbers, I feel that surgeon's fatigue differently now, wondering what we will do when the candies run out.



© *Five Liters (A Tough Problem)*. Steven Scaglione.
Two-color reduction print from hand-carved linoleum block; September 2020.

Steven Scaglione is a third-year medical student and amateur printmaker living and working in Nashville, Tennessee. He plans to pursue residency in pediatrics and is passionate about reflecting on the “front seat to the human condition” that a career in medicine provides. His past work has included photography, prose, and visual art on the power of eye contact in anesthesia, the voices behind contact tracing during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the beauty of H&E stains. A portfolio of Scaglione’s printmaking can be found at artprintsbysteven.bigcartel.com or Instagram [@stevenscagli_one](https://www.instagram.com/stevenscagli_one).

© 2021 *Intima: A Journal of Narrative Medicine*