

STUDIO ART | SPRING 2020

Opium's Hold

By Sapana Adhikari



© *Opium's Hold* by Sapana Adhikari. Spring 2020 *Intima: A Journal of Narrative Medicine*

“The painting depicts the scene of a couple, ravaged by the opioid epidemic. The gaunt woman holding the deceptively pretty opium flower stares ahead lifelessly. She has succumbed to the addictive forces of the drug. Her body slowly turns into a skeleton as the opium plant climbs up her leg, foreshadowing her impending death. She is comforted by her partner, who protectively shields her against the impending crop of the opium plants close by. The framed picture on the wall is an ode to anatomist Santiago Ramon y Cajal, who first depicted the neuron and improved our understanding of brain neurochemistry. It reminds us of the altered brain chemistry that occurs with addiction, showing us how truly helpless we are against it.”

— Sapana Adhikari, MD

Sapana Adhikari, MD is a practicing Emergency Medicine physician in Charlotte, NC. Her artistic goal is to document the human experience from her unique perspective, as a physician. Adhikari wants her viewers to get a glimpse into her world, her thoughts and her opinions, relating to health, disease and the human body. She hopes to share the beauty of the emotional highs and devastating lows that make up the human experience and share her small contribution to it. Her artwork has been shown in The National Academy of Medicine permanent online gallery, the Frederic Jameson Gallery at Duke University, in *Intima* and several private collections. She has also donated her art to the charity Musa Masala, to raise money for the Wongchu Sherpa Memorial hospital near Everest base camp.

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