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An emergency doctor's silent prayer

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“Cardiac arrest. Baby. CPR in progress. ETA 3 minutes.”
And so it begins.
First. The Science.
Plan.
Call backup.
Check equipment.
Review algorithms.
Breathe. Breathe. Don't forget to breathe.
Then. The Waiting.
Gloves on.
Team assembled.
Roles assigned.
Please God, give me the knowledge to save this child.
Please. Not on my watch.
Paramedics roll in.
Panic in their eyes, desperate.
Compelling us to save her.
No words. It's in their eyes.
We work.
A beautiful, well-rehearsed, well-choreographed, and violent
dance.
And once in a blue moon, we succeed.
But mostly not.

Then. Breaking The News.
That primal scream of horror. A mother's heart ripped out.
There is no other sound. Quite. Like. That.
It haunts me. Every single mother. Haunts me.
Then. Healing the team.
Check on the nurses. Many parents. Some pregnant.
The students. Never seen CPR before.
Crumpled in a corner of the room. Shaking.
I must help them, so they may heal others, one day.
And not be irreparably broken.
Quick cry. Breathe. Breathe. Don't forget to breathe.
Numb. So numb.
And then, the next patient. And the next. And the next.
Then home to pray. Again.
This time for that mother, that father, those brothers and
sisters.
May you find wholeness and peace, again.
Home. To kiss and hold my children in their sleep.
To relive the night. And to restlessly dream of sweet babies,
safe in mothers' arms.

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