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Dr Tan is a psychiatrist in private practice and an alumnus of Duke-NUS Medical School. She treats mental health conditions in all age groups but has a special interest in caring for the elderly. With a love for the written word, she makes time for reading, writing and self-publishing on top of caring for her patients and loved ones.

**United in Empathy**

Red. White. Pink.

Another year, gone in a blink.

Flags flying high, jets sailing through the sky.

The nation remembers and cheers

For fifty-nine years of blood, sweat and tears.

It's easy to forget, amidst the daily grind

We so quickly cast our humanity from our minds

All that matters is getting through the day

Working, adulting, earning our pay

We cease to understand

That beneath the veneer of the ordinary man

Is a fellow human being

Who just wants to be seen

I give you this example

It's not representative, just a sample

The aged doc desperately clinging to what he can

He can't grasp his hearing or his eyesight in his shaking hands

But what he hopes is just to leave a legacy

*Of the foundations he's built, kinda like a tree
Strong and tall, with roots so deep*

*To be remembered with fondness and respect,
the day he goes to his eternal sleep*

*For one cannot discount this man; he's not a bygone relic
but a chest of treasure*

Brimming with pearls of wisdom, to be sure

Oh, he isn't easy to deal with; he's stubborn and forceful.

*But when you've endured the things he has,
couldn't I say the same of you?*

Take this illustration

Of a junior doc standing by her workstation

You think she's just a tender berry

You call her certain names to make harmless merry

Yet think of the hitherto unknown challenges she faces

Walk in her shoes and just see the traces

Of the daunting things she has to do.

We've all been there and done that, gritting our teeth, that is true.

But every generation endures a different type of struggle. Didn't you?

All I'm saying is – just because we have a vendetta

Don't use each other for your own agenda

Have some perspective

Create a united narrative

We're all doctors operating

In a landscape that's ever evolving

(This goes for the tree and the fruit and everyone else in between)

So as we barrel into the nation's sixtieth year

I wish you all plenty of good cheer

Here's to our goal

For doctors, for patients

Let's do it as a whole. ♦

