

Inspirational Quotes

Ilen Li, BA

I plaster my walls with quotes like “PICK YOURSELF UP” and “DON’T STOP UNTIL YOU’RE PROUD”

But no matter the many times I yell “I’M INDEFATIGABLE,” voice cracking aloud

The mirror reflects a girl so disheveled, defeated, distressed

Thank God for face masks because a depressed expression is hard to suppress

Sometimes I think that I and my problems don’t really count

Since others’ medical, financial, familial concerns seem paramount

My daily reminder, “REMEMBER THAT ONCE YOU DREAMED OF BEING WHERE YOU ARE NOW,”

Screams thanklessness for all the people and powers that helped me make it this far somehow

I scare myself by watching YouTube vlogs by emotional residents

I prepare intensely for classes, only to realize that third-party resources take precedence

I see classmates nod and smile at concepts I know not of; yet I do the same

Then I make myself smaller, burning alive from the unspoken shame

“YOU DIDN’T COME THIS FAR TO ONLY COME THIS FAR”

“SOME OF US WEREN’T SUPPOSED TO BE IN MEDICINE, BUT HERE WE ARE”

For each print-out, post-it, fridge magnet reminding me I must have *grit*,

An external power says I don’t work smart; I am slow; I am wholly unfit

Stuck in this nightmare no number of quotes can help comprehend

It petrifies me to *have to* lean on my family and friends

But as I don my ill-fitting scrubs, ID badge, and short white coat

The girl in the mirror grins because without a word, her uniform denotes

That behind the pain, there is a purpose—it shows

In every hand I grasp, hug I give, smile I get, the sun rises from the shadows

Just because the training is crushing, does not mean the career’s not meant to be

It’s a privilege for nothing less than excellence to be expected from me

Yet this fortitude need not be well-verbalized, I’ve learned,

Taking care of myself, to be able to take care of others, will be rewarding in turn



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