

At the New York Academy of Medicine*For Vernon Ingram*

Father of molecular medicine,
mentor to me,
you were to lecture
on the hemoglobinopathies,
and I traveled by subway
after a Bellevue shift,
on call every other night,

to hear you speak; you who taught me
the foundation of good science—
knowing what came before,
reporting with accuracy, thinking
what next could be done.

The Hall packed with notables,
I in my white coat and pants
sat at the back.
I heard your first words.

Awakened by a janitor
to an empty hall near midnight,
I thought of the people next to me
who must have thought
“Let him sleep,”
smiling to themselves.

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