

"Anaesthesia and Pain"

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On 21 October 2023, my 111 kg body was put on a stretcher and dragged inside a surgical room for an abscess removal.

I was placed under a jarring bright white light as I observed the staff flitting from one corner of the room to another, getting everything set for the surgery.

My torn cotton stuffed teddy bear has long been my source of comfort, but in the operation theatre, even the fluffy cotton in their hands seemed like a threat.

The Hospital had provided a consent form and an overworked nurse suggested that I don't bother about what it said, hurriedly pointing her finger to where I needed to sign.

I wondered, however, if it was necessary to make a face and question me about the nail polish on my hands and feet before surgery.

Usually, I ignore such comments, but this time, I felt like I needed to signal guilt for the adornment that brought me happiness and peace. I feared that they could do anything to me as I lay there: naked, completely naked, and powerless, devoid of strength, just a robe on for namesake keeping me steady. That day it was just not the clothes that were stripped of me.

The scars from surgery still linger, but the real evidence lay deeper within.

It turned out that the surgery was unsuccessful. A different surgeon in Calcutta told me that post-surgery, they had forgotten to pack the wound. Only I knew that they had deepened it.

The infection was neither removed from my body nor the system nor the staff who expressed loudly their discomfort lifting me. Don't they know that anesthesia does not numb mental pain?

Surgery is supposed to fix you, but I am still broken.