My Father Wilts

Ellen Zhang, BA

and when he cries
I am caught with realization
that I know him like
the front of my hands
which is to say
not at all
the elderly crying is
like that of children
our eyes
wanting to
peel away but unable
yet it is different because
elderly know things that
little ones do not
and what could
my father not know
the same man who
taught me to
ride a bike
apply for college
do my taxes
things more quantifiable
than sentimental
instead I put
my arms around him
not needing to know why

Author Affiliation: Harvard Medical School, Boston, Massachusetts.
Corresponding Author: Ellen Zhang, BA (ellen_zhang@hms.harvard.edu).
Section Editor: Rafael Campo, MD, MA, Associate Editor.
Conflict of Interest Disclosures: None reported.