The Walls of Your Room Are Jaundiced
by Callie Bateman (BSN 2016)

The walls of your room are jaundiced.

A couple weeks ago I leaned against them and laughed because you tied glowsticks to the ceiling fan, videotaped them spinning around until the colors faded. You looked ridiculous staring up at them like that, with your mouth hanging open.

This morning I went to the hospital and stood over the yellowed body of my newborn patient while his chest stuttered and after a few minutes, I watched it stop.

That night you ask me if I saw the light leave his eyes, as if he had lamps beneath his pupils or maybe glowsticks because light leaves in all kinds of ways but it doesn’t look like that. It looks like a spinning ceiling fan. It looks yellow.