

# Myocarditis

My heart races  
Nearly as rapidly as his.  
Though mine brings a flush to my cheeks,  
His musters only the faintest of pulses.

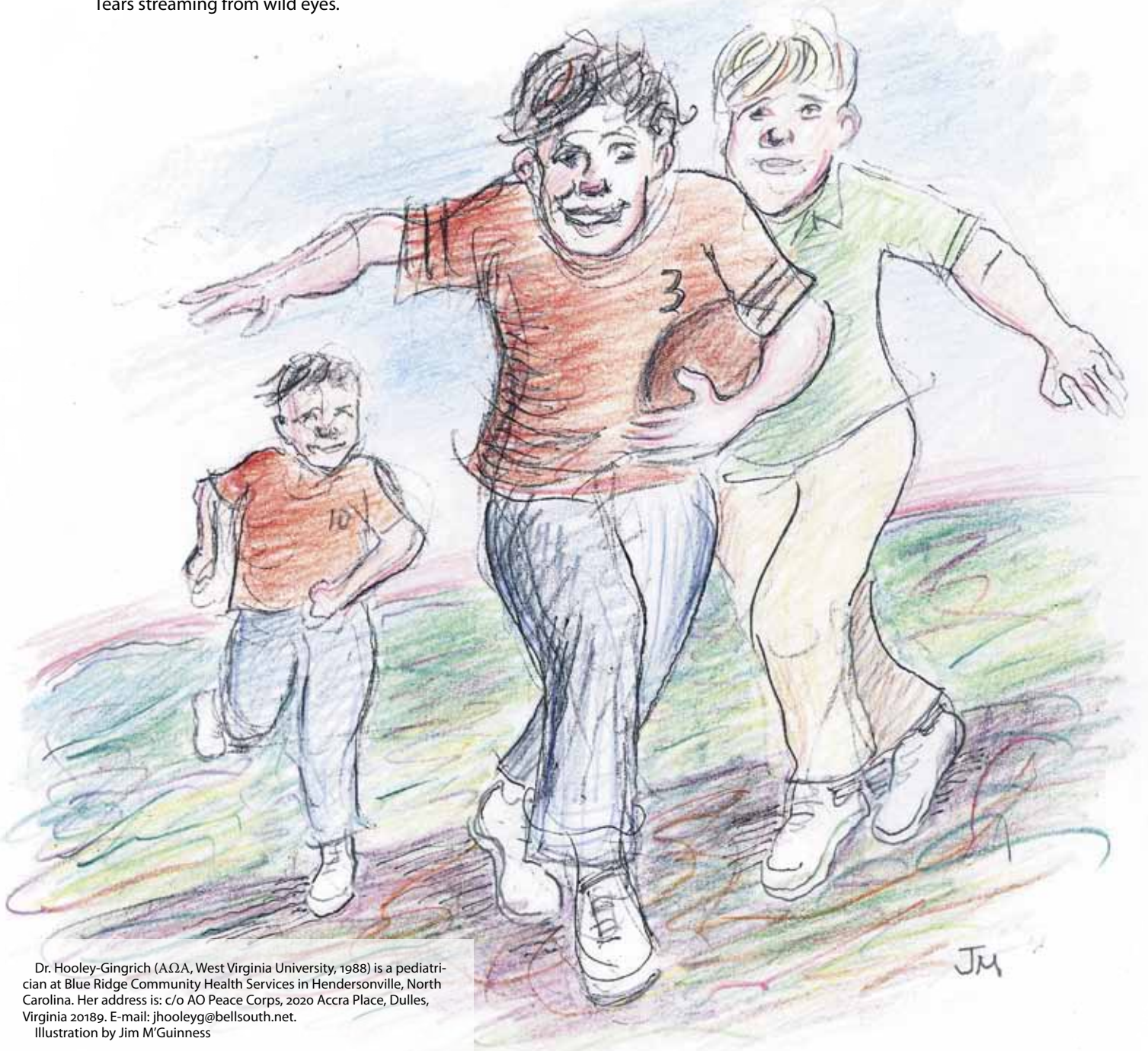
My heart sinks  
As I recognize this three-year-old boy  
I last saw racing down my clinic hallway,  
His heart a tireless engine.  
Now lying limp and pallid, dwarfed by the long ER bed.

My heart aches  
For his terrified mother,  
Hands in mouth,  
Tears streaming from wild eyes.

My heart skips a beat  
As the helicopter, that angel from the heavens,  
Rises with him aboard.  
His heart, exhausted and feeble, has not given up.

My heart swells  
Now, ten years later,  
As I watch him race down the football field,  
Collide with his opponent,  
Fall, rise,  
And jump for joy.

*Joyce Hooley-Gingrich, MD, MPH, FAAP*



Dr. Hooley-Gingrich (AΩA, West Virginia University, 1988) is a pediatrician at Blue Ridge Community Health Services in Hendersonville, North Carolina. Her address is: c/o AO Peace Corps, 2020 Accra Place, Dulles, Virginia 20189. E-mail: [jhooleyg@bellsouth.net](mailto:jhooleyg@bellsouth.net).  
Illustration by Jim M'Guinness