

Senior Division, Short Fiction

Ian Foster, St. John's

**Hang in There (an excerpt)**

The first thing I'd like to establish on record, Your Honour, is that the health and welfare of our patients is our top priority. It says so right there on our website.

Secondly, I know we're here to discuss our "Inspiration Heals the Nation!" medical campaign and its failures, but I also think it's important to look to its successes—

*Let's stick to the line of questioning, Dr. Howard. First, tell us where this began.*

Of course. As you know, we are but a small group perched upon a rock in the unforgiving sea. More shipwreck than settlement. More damned soul than settler—

*Objection, your honour. My client is being unnecessarily honest in his personal stance regarding his fellow citizens.*

*Sustained. Mr. Howard, please stop telling us how you really feel.*

Understood, your honour. The problem is, having it bad for *so long* can only last for *so long*. It worked for our grandparents: they had the wars to die in. It has continued to work for our current elders: they came from nothing, got everything, and either left or are now resigned to going out with nothing as penance. But this new generation, they expect the world. A doctor to see them if they get sick. Medically proven drugs to assist with every little whim they fancy, like depression, anxiety, or suicidal ideation. Tests for serious illnesses within one year of requisition, and then, sometimes...*follow ups*. This is the gimme generation. Nevertheless, they are the future, and the future must change incredibly slowly to not fully meet their needs.