

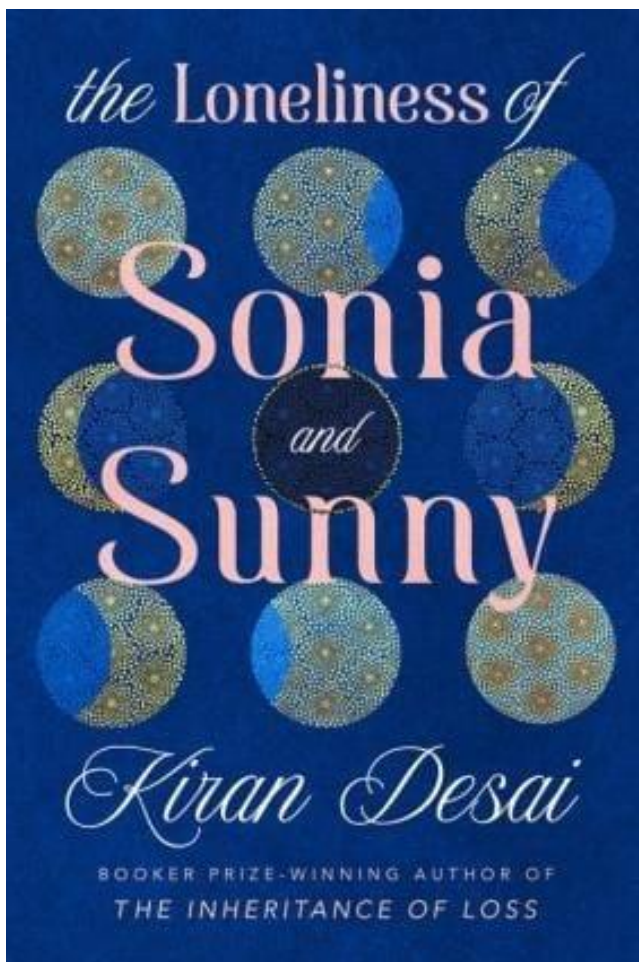
dear residents

Reflections on IMG Week through the Lens of a Novel

October 26, 2025

Dear Residents,

When I began to read [Kiran Desai's *The Loneliness of Sonia and Sunny*](#), I was struck by how closely it mirrored stories I've seen unfold in our own hallways: stories of longing, reinvention, and belonging. Desai writes of people who leave home chasing a promise of modernity, only to find that the closer they get to it, the less certain they feel about where "home" really is.



I thought of our international medical graduates when I read her book; colleagues who have crossed oceans not only of geography but of meaning. They arrive here after years of study and (sometimes) service elsewhere, asked to prove again what they already know, to speak medicine in a new language, to fit inside systems that were not built with them in mind. And yet, they do. They learn, adapt, teach, and care - with extraordinary grace.

What Desai exposes in fiction, medicine enacts in daily life: the tension between wanting to belong and trying not to disappear in the process. It is easy to forget that medicine itself was built through such crossings, that its knowledge, its languages, and even its ethics are the result of countless exchanges across borders and centuries.

The physicians who come from other places remind us that excellence has no single language. They show us that medicine, at its best, is a shared act of translation, not only between illness and cure, but between worlds, histories, and hopes. As you move through this training, whether you were born here or arrived here, I hope you'll remember that to practice medicine authentically is not to erase where you came from, but to let it deepen the way you see, listen, and heal.

The postcolonial writer [Edward Said](#) reminds us that [exile](#) “crosses borders and breaks barriers of thought and experience.” It is a state of perpetual awareness of living between worlds that, in medicine, becomes empathy. Within our hospitals, that restlessness transforms into the capacity to meet patients where they are, informed by the crossings we ourselves have made to stand here

Let's continue to build a community where no one feels like a guest, and where every story, of origin, of journey, of rediscovery, is treated as part of the architecture of who we are.

With admiration and gratitude,

Dino Kazi