

## **FM REVIEW COMMENTS 2009-2012 13**

**COMMENTS TO EDITOR:** This submission has the kernel of a wonderful poem in it, but it needs a lot of work. The reviewers provided outstanding reviews which should help the author revise and improve her work. I recommend that she rework the poem significantly following their guidelines.

**COMMENTS TO AUTHOR:** I am very appreciative that you took the risk of sharing this very personal experience in poetic form. The idea of contrasting numbers (so much a part of the language of medicine) with the implicit emotions triggered by this event is powerful. However, I think the reviewers are correct in assessing that the poem, as art, is in need of more work.

1) I'm not sure the title fits the poem. It is not clear what the "lesson" is; or if indeed there is really a "lesson" contained in this experience.

2) I'm not sure I agree with the reviewer who suggested "complicating" the numbers with multiplication, addition, and square roots, but it is true that the sequential progression leaves the reader hanging in the space between 5 and 10. Think about how to negotiate this transition.

3) The language in various places could be wordsmithed a bit. The first line reads awkwardly ("to deal with"), as does line 5.

4) I'd invite you to consider whether it is the right call to tie up the experience with the bow of "all clear." Could you end with "exhale"?

5) Please consider both reviewers' comments carefully. They are thoughtful and insightful. In particular, look at the haiku-like rewrite provided by reviewer #1. It contains some well-crafted lines and phrasings that might inform your own revision.

**COMMENTS TO EDITOR II:** The author has revised this submission and it now is a better poem that engages the reader in the narrator's simultaneous joy at the birth of her infant and the frightening uncertainty of her own diagnosis. I recommend acceptance with one suggested minor revision.

**COMMENTS TO AUTHOR II:** Dr. Rosenberg, thank you for the obvious effort you expended on this poem. It more clearly and movingly tells a story of certain joy and uncertain sorrow. The way the poem returns full cycle to the baby is very satisfying. One small request - do you think you can find another adjective to describe baby? "Beautiful", though true I'm sure, seems a bit trite: "well-loved"? "beloved"? "precious"? "treasured"? Only a suggestion, it's hard to find a word that isn't saccharine.

**COMMENTS TO EDITOR III:** The author has thoughtfully considered my suggestion to change a word in the last line of this poem. She has requested to retain the original

**language. Upon consideration, I defer to the author's judgment, and recommend acceptance of this version.**

**COMMENTS TO AUTHOR III: Thank you for considering my suggestion. I agree it is difficult to find an adjective that is not a bit trite. As the author you know best the effect you are striving to achieve. I'm happy to leave the final line as is.**