

## FM REVIEW 2013 37 COMMENTS

**COMMENTS TO EDITOR:** Three poems are included in this submission. Based on reviewers' comments and my own judgment, I recommend accepting the haiku an almost perfect little gem about a skateboarding mishap.

The other two poems are more problematic. Both reviewers have significant criticisms, although they see a kernel of merit in both works. Regarding "x" I like the idea of the journal publishing a tribute to an experienced OB nurse, it seems to fit well with the current emphasis on intraprofessional teamwork. There are some problems with rhythm and language, as well as a weak ending.

The final poem "Y" is all over the place, and may not be salvageable, but I'd incline toward giving the author a chance because, of the three submissions, its theme is the most substantive.

**COMMENTS TO AUTHOR:** Dear Dr., sometimes shortest is sweetest. There was unanimous agreement on the excellence of craft and image employed in "Z," it is a little gem.

The other two poems have promise, but need a lot of work. Although one reviewer objected to the "sing-song" rhythm of the iambic pentameter, I found the meter well-matched to this essentially joyous event "framed" by an experienced OB nurse. Another reviewer was baffled by the metaphor of hammers, nails, and frame, but to me this made perfect sense as the "tools" necessary to build the "container" that "holds" a well-navigated delivery. I also liked your use of internal line rhymes.

However, the reviewers are correct that when the meter flags, it is disconcerting. Try to clean this up to make the rhythm more consistent. Line 18-19 in particular "the director to have back you" is very awkward; although it does make sense, it reads as if it doesn't. The concluding lines seem to fall short. Perhaps rather than "guide" (rather bland), you can return to the earlier building metaphor. And "peering behind the veil," although a good double entendre in some ways, strikes me as rather clichéd and weak.

There is a wonderful message somewhere in "Y" but it is compromised by the didactic tone of the patient's speech. Again, I like the internal and end rhymes and near-rhymes. I also don't mind the 3 characters of student, attending, and patient. But a lot of lines are awkward and/or ordinary. For example: "Perhaps afraid? (lacks foundation) Waiting for her to piece together/The parts I reached out (clumsy), touched her chart (in contradistinction to reviewer 2, I really liked this, as it upended my expectations of a line like "touched her hand.")/ Instead she slowly smiled and said (this seems pedestrian):" In the patient's advice to the medical student, I don't love the diagnosis of Communication Sickness, it is rather crude, although the concept is excellent. Much of what follows does not come alive, although it is certainly from the heart and absolutely the right "message" (part of the problem is that it reads too much like a "message"). Like reviewer 2, I find "a mouthful of Darkness" to be absolutely compelling. I agree with reviewer 2 about the two

**"whens," try to figure out a way to rewrite line 35 to remove that "when" but not lose the meter. The final two couplets are very good in my opinion.**

**As you can see from this discussion, our view is that in this poem there are great lines side by side with lines in need of considerably more wordsmithing. Reviewer 1 suggests that this story of what the medical student learns from the cancer patient might succeed better as a narrative, and this is certainly something to seriously consider.**

**We look forward to your revisions.**

**COMMENTS TO EDITOR II: I recommend accepting the haiku X, but rejecting "Y"**

**COMMENTS TO AUTHOR II: We are pleased to accept the haiku but unfortunately have decided to pass on "Y." While the idea underlying this poem - the celebration of the OB nurse - is laudable, and the revision shows considerable effort, the poem reads awkwardly. The strict adherence to meter has led to some odd language and constructions. Although the topic has resonance, we must be very selective in what the journal selects for publication. As a result, many worthy pieces are not accepted.**

**COMMENTS TO EDITOR III: This poem has been favorably reviewed by both reviewers, and I concur. I recommend accepting for publication.**

**COMMENTS TO AUTHOR III: This is a deceptively simple, beautifully crafted poem with a compelling central image which all reviewers appreciated and enjoyed.**