

FM REVIEW 2014 25 COMMENTS

COMMENTS TO EDITOR: I agree with reviewers that this is a heartfelt piece about the tragedy of child abuse. The author faithfully records her shock and emotional devastation. That the poem contains the sort of miracle we all long for in these situations and too rarely see is an added bonus. In contrast to the reviewers, I think the writing lags behind the sentiment; but I think with some fairly minor revisions it can become a good poem that will touch a lot of our readers. I recommend minor revisions.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR: This is a poignant poem addressing an important issue for family physicians - the tragedy of child abuse. I particularly liked how in touch you are with your emotions - both negative and positive - in caring for this patient; and how skillfully you were able to navigate between masking and sharing these feelings with the family. It is also wonderful that, as reviewer 2 points out, through a combination of medicine and miracle this little guy was restored to health.

That being said, I think the poem could benefit from some minor revision. In poetry especially, the dictum "less is more" is always a good one to follow. Look for where you can use fewer words, be simpler. Particularly in discussing such an emotionally evocative topic such as child abuse, avoiding overly dramatic language and adopting a straightforward style can be powerful. I've made some suggestions in the attachment. Please do not feel you need to adopt them in their entirety, but think about how to simplify and control the language a bit better.

Thank you for a moving and valuable contribution.

COMMENTS TO EDITOR II: The author has made almost all the suggested changes; and where she has elected not to, she has reworked the line with craft and care. The poem's essentially hopeful and uplifting message is now well supported by more skillful and aesthetic writing. I believe we should accept this version as is.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR II: Thank you for accepting so many of the suggested changes; and where you did not, thank you for revisiting the line and reworking it with craft and skill. As we shared before, we believe this poem will both strike a chord and continue to reverberate with family physicians who have seen many tragedies as well as the occasional miracle with regards to child abuse. Your experience will be meaningful to many and reminds us all of the inherent awe and mystery that are a part of clinical medicine.