

FM REVIEW 2015 9

COMMENTS TO EDITOR: This is a powerful essay about a sensitive family physician picking up on the trauma her patient suffered as a result of her immigration from Guatemala. It won the STFM Creative Writing Contest this year. Both reviewers liked the essay, and I agree. Reviewer 2 makes an excellent point about not painting the patient only as a victim, or the immigration experience only as terrible, and I will encourage the author to pursue this idea. The writing is generally good. I've provided light editing of an excessive reliance on run-on and fragment sentences. With minor revision, this will be a wonderful contribution to the journal. I strongly recommend if at all possible that we accept the beautiful artwork that accompanies the narrative.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR: Thank you for this lyrical yet devastating portrayal of some of the terrible risks people face when they make a decision to immigrate. Both your narrative and the beautiful accompanying artwork capture Maria's voice beautifully. As well, the essay is about the sensitivity and skill of the physician in not missing the small cues that indicate patient suffering, thus conveying an essential teaching point to our readership.

We would like you to consider Reviewer 2's comments about emphasizing the strengths and resilience of immigrants as well as their potential for victimization, as a way of nuancing the immigration experience. This could be done both in the last line, as the reviewer suggests, and by adding a bit more to the second-to-last paragraph, when you talk about the "sudden strength" of the patient and moment of readiness into which the story comes pouring forth. Perhaps (if it is true to your experience with these women of course) you could say something about how the process of speaking and listening that occurs between you and your patients is the beginning of healing, or at least understanding and facing. Please consider reviewer 2's thoughtful suggestions about noting themes of quest and re-authoring as they intersect with trauma.

Thank you for highlighting this compelling issue with such humanity and humility.

COMMENTS TO EDITOR II: This fine essay addresses the need for family physicians to locate their patients in larger societal contexts - in this case, the abuse and violence that often finds those attempting to escape their countries to find a better life. Only minor revisions were requested and the author has complied thoroughly. There are two very minor stylistic that emerged as a result of the rewrite, so I am not able to indicate accept at this time. Once the author approves my suggested edits or makes her own, this will be an essay that does the journal proud.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR II: Thank you for your conscientious revision of this essay. It is tighter and stronger. We like it very much, especially its desire to locate patients in their larger societal contexts and its emphasis on the importance of patients' stories. As a result of the rewrite, there are two very small stylistic issues that we would like you to address (comments on the attached are highlighted in yellow for your convenience):

1) P. 2, para 3, line starting "Something happened..." This has become a bit garbled, mixing a general idea about "these women" with the specifics of Maria's situation. I tried to sort it out. You are welcome to make your own edits so long as it reads more clearly.

2) Somehow for me the last sentence starts off very flat - "I have the opportunity..." I tried to punch it up by adding "I am grateful..." That may not be what you want, but please take another look and see what you think on rereading.

This is a lyrically written, passionate personal essay, and I'm very glad you've written it. It will remind readers of how much lies below the surface of their patients, and how much responsibility they have for excavating these stories.

COMMENTS TO EDITOR III: In my opinion, this is one of our best essays. It tackles patient care within the larger social context of immigration and trauma. We should definitely accept, and I strongly recommend including the beautiful accompanying artwork. There are a few minor punctuation issues, as well as minor revisions of the final paragraph which I would like the author to approve before formal acceptance.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR III: Thank you for your revisions. Before formal acceptance, please approve the minor punctuation changes, as well as minor revisions of the final paragraph, which address the concluding sentence fragment. I have also recommended inclusion of the beautiful artwork. This essay will make a powerful contribution to the journal.

COMMENTS TO EDITOR IV: Author has graciously accepted several minor recommended changes. I enthusiastically recommend publication.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR IV: Thank you for these small changes. This is a truly moving and thought-provoking article. We appreciate your choosing our journal as an outlet for your writing.