

FM REVIEW 2016 12 COMMENTS

COMMENTS TO EDITOR: This is a well-crafted essay that won Honorable Mention in the STFM prose and poetry writing contest. It describes how the physician-narrator misses a diagnosis of pregnancy because of cross-cultural factors; and how healing for both patient and doctor occurs. The form of the essay is organized by date, which creates a sense of forward momentum. With a few minor revisions, it will make a lovely contribution to the journal.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR: Thank you for this submission describing a missed diagnosis of pregnancy due to cross-cultural factors; and the eventual healing that occurs for both patient and doctor. It is particularly touching that it is only in your exam room that the patient can most fully claim her motherhood. Reviewers and editor both liked this submission a lot, and have only a few minor recommendations:

- 1) Per reviewer 1, can you clarify how you happened to run across the "post-partum discharge"? It is a small detail, but you don't want the reader's energy channeled away from the main thrust of the essay by trying to figure out how this happened.
- 2) Per reviewer 1, perhaps you could add just a bit more about the "shame" you felt. Help the reader understand what this was about - the missed diagnosis? Insufficient sensitivity to the patient's culture? Another sentence would point us in the right direction.
- 3) Per reviewer 1's request to hear more about the "healing," I'm not sure you need to say anything further about the patient's healing, since you eloquently describe the gift of authenticity that being in your exam room gives her. But can you add more insight into what healing occurred for you? Again, another sentence or two could make this ending more satisfying.

I did not agree with reviewer 2 that the Feb 12, 2105 entry was confusing, but please take a look at the transition, and see if you feel any changes are needed.

Thank you for this well-written essay which both highlights some challenges in cross-cultural encounters while also offering hope that such barriers can be transcended. The title is especially apropos because it reminds us how little we really know of patients, only fragments of their lives. We appreciated the humility that is a cornerstone of the piece.