

## **FM REVIEW 2016 16 COMMENTS**

**COMMENTS TO EDITOR:** This is a very well-written, powerful essay that deserves publication. It addresses a common phenomenon of family doctors being aware of patient problems about which they can do nothing; and how this is a necessary but difficult burden they must bear. It also touches compellingly about how the physician's life and the life of the patient intersect. There are some small edits that will improve the writing style. Once these are completed, it will make a valuable contribution to the journal.

**COMMENTS TO AUTHOR:** This is a very well-written, powerful essay. It addresses a common phenomenon of family doctors being aware of patient problems about which they can do nothing; and how this is a necessary but difficult burden they must bear. It also touches compellingly about how the physician's life and the life of the patient intersect. We liked the tough honesty in the authorial voice; and we also liked the empathic, nonjudgmental attention to a patient from a background often overlooked in public discourse.

Please consider the minor revisions suggested by reviewer 2; and consider reviewer 3's caution about the repetition of "I did not want to know." I've also included a very lightly edited ms.

This is already a compelling, authentic essay that resists the temptation to provide easy answers and neatly tie up loose ends. With a few very minor changes it will be even better. We believe this essay will provoke much thought and discussion among our readers. Thank you for selecting Family Medicine as an outlet for your work.

**COMMENTS TO EDITOR II:** In response to minor reviewer and editor suggestions, the author has made the majority of changes requested. In other cases, I am comfortable with the author having the last word so to speak. This is a well-crafted, well-told tale that reveals something of the patient and something of the physician-narrator at this intersection of their lives. I expect readers will ponder it and think about the burden of knowledge they themselves elicit from their patients. Definitely accept.

**COMMENTS TO AUTHOR II:** Thank you for your comments and revisions. All these suggestions were very minor, and the changes you made are good ones. Arguments could be made for or against the repetition of the "do not want to know" theme, and we are very content with you as author having the last word so to speak. Thank you for considering each point so carefully. This is a superb essay. I expect readers will ponder it and think about the burden of knowledge they themselves elicit from their patients. We could not hope for more.