

FM REVIEW 2016 21 COMMENTS

COMMENTS TO EDITOR: This is creatively contrived poem in the form of a caduceus that explores the relationship between a physician and a seriously compromised patient, organized around the word "mada" which is revealed to be a nickname for a sister. One reviewer loved it; one reviewer did not feel qualified to render an opinion. I recommend acceptance with a possible minor revision of the last line. One essential issue to consider is whether our journal has the capability to print the poem in its unique format. If not, I think it is preferable to reject the article only for this reason, and encourage the author to submit to a journal that can format it as he wishes.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR: Thank you for this creatively crafted poem. It speaks eloquently to the relationship between the narrator-physician and patient. It is impressive that the constraints of the format nevertheless did not compromise the quality of the writing.

One very minor puzzle to me is the reference in the last line to "unspoken" word. It seems as though the depth of the connection between doctor and patient is revealed through the patient's speaking a seemingly meaningless word, "mada," as well as through the nonverbal communication in her eyes and the narrator's own tears. Are you sure that the right phrase is "unspoken word"? Doesn't the realization occur through spoken word, as well as emotions conveyed through the patient's gaze and the narrator's tears? If you feel the phrase "unspoken word" best expresses your meaning, I am content to accept this wording.

EMAIL EXCHANGE: Dear, My apologies, the misunderstanding is on this end. Although your prose description of this event is illuminating, we do not publish "explanations" for the poetry we accept. Therefore, my expectation was that you might make minor changes to the poem itself. However, while there is some ambiguity about language and patient, such is the nature of poetry. I also respect your decision to leave the word "unspoken" as is. Your reasoning makes sense. On rereading the poem, I believe it stands on its own, and any ambiguities add to its interest. I will recommend accepting this intriguing work. It is both visually evocative and emotionally moving. Best, Dr. Shapiro

From: Herbert Rosenbaum [mailto:Herbert.Rosenbaum@utsouthwestern.edu]

Sent: Friday, July 08, 2016 4:51 AM

To: Shapiro, Johanna

Subject: RE: Family Medicine

Hi Dr. Shapiro,

Thank you for contacting me. Hopefully, I can help. As per previous request, I responded to each of the reviewers in the appropriate response area on the online portal. I also added the requested description

under "Abstract". However, no changes were made to the actual piece itself. (And none were formally requested). And so, it is indeed the same piece, now with a description.

Is there another section or additional change to which you were referring? Did the description not make it? I am happy to resubmit in any fashion needed for the editors. I apologize for the confusion.

COMMENTS TO EDITOR II: The author, at the request of one of the reviewers, elected to submit a prose explication providing background for the poem. After consultation with Traci, we concluded that the journal does not publish such authorial commentaries and that a poem should stand on its own. The author also chose not to alter a word choice which I had questioned; however, I felt his reasoning was persuasive. After rereading the poem, I feel the ambiguities that concerned the reviewer are minor, and become clear with a careful reading of the poem. Therefore, I recommend accepting this piece.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR II: We do not publish authorial commentaries; therefore, we cannot accept the "abstract" which you included in this version. However, after a careful rereading, I believe the poem stands on its own. While you chose not to alter the word choice I questioned, your reasoning on this point is persuasive. The poem is both cleverly crafted and emotionally evocative. It will make an interesting contribution to the journal.