

FM REVIEW 2018 14

COMMENTS TO EDITOR: My thoughts are mixed. I read the poem somewhat differently than you. I sensed more the futility of all the narrator's actions: in the end (the final stanza), the physician is lost in his patient's wilderness, and can only "proclaim" more darkness - perhaps death overcoming suffering? That being said, it seems a rather overwrought poem that goes for the clever wordplay rather than exploring the emotional context of what's happening. Some of the images I liked, many I did not (see attached). Overall, I felt there were so many metaphors and similes going on that the end result was chaotic. I would support a major revision, as I liked the first and last stanzas. But this would mean a big reclamation project in the middle. Bottom line, I'd say reject.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR: This poem portrays the death of a patient surrounded by his family and helpless physician. I appreciated its use of alliteration, internal rhyme, metaphor, and simile, but in the end I felt that these tropes overwhelmed the narrative. The ornamentation became too Rococo for my taste and in this sense detracted from the somberness of the topic.

You clearly grasp that poetry is more than short-line prose, and is reliant on image and metaphor. You have a talent for constructing arresting images; but perhaps they could benefit from a little more disciplined employment, more consistency, more attention to how a particular literary device should be used to enhance and deepen your work.