

FM REVIEW 2019 18 COMMENTS

COMMENTS TO EDITOR: This is a lovely poem portraying the challenges of a young physician starting a practice during WWII. It takes us back to a different era of medicine, a time when doctors charged only a few dollars for their services and made house calls - and still struggled! Both reviewers, themselves poets, liked it quite a bit, and I agree. I recommend tweaking in a couple of places, but think this will be a good addition to the journal.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR: This is a lovely poem portraying the challenges of a young physician starting a practice during WWII. It takes us back to a different era of medicine, a time when doctors charged only a few dollars for their services and made house calls - and still struggled! It captures very well the universal anxieties of being a newly minted physician, and how these can reverberate with spouse and extended family. I like how telling this story from the perspective of a (now presumably grown) child personalizes it. It offers a window for the reader into one of those cherished family stories handed down to the next generation, and makes us think about how the nature of doctoring has changed so radically, yet in essence remains the same.

There are two minor issues we'd like you to address. Reviewer 2 was confused by the opening stanza, feeling that the subsequent narrative took an unexpected and initially disconcerting turn. I don't think her suggestion of transposing stanzas 1 and 2 works, as it disrupts the flow of the narrative in the subsequent stanzas. I'm hoping you can figure out a simple way of giving the readers a hint of what's coming. In the attached, I make a suggestion, but you may have a better idea.

Also, the line "but wear your professional look" sounds a little stilted to me, not something a wife would say to a husband. Again, I've offered an option, but just think about this and see if there is a better way to rewrite. Initially I wondered if this stanza could simply be deleted, but I like the way the glasses reappear (removed, a nod to the authentic self behind the lenses) in the final stanza.

Thank you for considering Family Medicine as an outlet for your work.

COMMENTS TO EDITOR II: The author has deftly provided small revisions that successfully address reviewer concerns. I recommend publication of this touching poem about a by-gone era of medicine that still has a message for the insecurities and uncertainties of contemporary practice.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR II: Thank you for these revisions, which in both cases neatly solve the issues of concern. My parents, who were novelists, often told me that you should always pay attention to editors. Usually their ideas about fixing the difficulty were wrong, but their sense that the word, sentence, or section under consideration had a problem was right. With very minor revisioning, you've managed to create a touching tribute to a by-gone era of medicine that still in many ways resonates with the insecurities and uncertainties of contemporary practice.