

## FSH DECISION LETTER 2014 13

It is really exciting to see 55 word stories incorporated as part of a “resilient resident” curriculum. Kudos to your residency director!

We would like you to consider the following changes: 1) The submission does not require an abstract. Instead, please address briefly the concerns of reviewer 3: a) Briefly describe the “resilience curriculum” in which this exercise occurs b) is the writing prompt simply “Write about anything having to do with intern year”? c) Do these 55 word stories represent all the essays from your current intern year; if not how were they selected? d) What sorts of insights do you think these stories offer? e) This is not a qualitative research project, so you don’t need to evaluate the efficacy of story-writing, but if you have any anecdotal information as to whether interns think this was helpful in terms of developing insight, reducing stress please note this. Please keep this short – 250 words max.

2) We would like to see revisions of the following 55 word stories: “Prayer,” “Get ‘Er Done,” “Lost in Translation,” “On Time,” “Shoulders, Knees & Toes,” and “You Know You’re an Intern...” We are unable to accept “Intern Year: The Cinderella Year” and “The New Mom,” which although heartfelt writing, lack a certain originality and flow.

In addition to the reviewers’ suggestions, please think about addressing the following issues:

“Prayer” is a really affecting and exquisite poem. In my view, it is marred by the trite adjective “beautiful” modifying “sunrise.” Also, although I theoretically like its repetition on the next line, again, its overused quality detracts from the effect the author intends. Think about other ways to describe the sunrise and the “setting” of the patient’s life. For example, you could simply eliminate the “beautiful” to describe sunrise, and have as a last line “a good death.” This is just by way of illustration, but please rework these two lines with more evocative language.

“Get ‘Er Done” – This otherwise excellent poem is constrained by some confusion regarding who is speaking. The quotation marks are helpful to indicate the patient speaking vs. the intern. If the patient says all of the following “My daddy did not raise a weak woman.”/I’m gonna get ‘er done./”Get ‘er done, Jenny!” – it would be clearer if these were all treated as a single quotation (quotation marks at start and finish only). Otherwise, please clarify who says what. Also note, the “Er” in this last sentence should NOT be capitalized.

“Beautiful” to describe the baby; and “wonderful” to describe the mother are too common words to use descriptively. Find others. Also, as reviewer 1 notes, “wonderful mother” is very vague as to meaning. Maybe find an adjective that better conveys what the intern is admiring – her strength, her persistence, her gumption?

“Lost in Translation”: I liked this poem a lot. “Simple,” however, is a potentially patronizing term. I don’t know if you mean “uncomplicated” or developmentally delayed. Please find a better word. The last line is terrific!

**“Intern Year: The Cinderella Year”:** This 55 word story captures the hectic nature of this first year of training. The repetition of the word “year” in the title, however, is not very effective. I’d suggest changing it to “Intern Year: A Cinderella Story.” Also, who is saying these comments in quotations: “They always keep her hopping” and “Still they holler, keep a-busy!” If the first one is an editorial comment on the part of the author, you should remove the quotation marks. I believe the second line should be punctuated as follows: Still they holler, “Keep a-busy!” The last two lines seem a bit lazy. Can you figure out a more original way to indicate that when the patient is appreciative, it makes the intern’s day? Otherwise, a very enjoyable poem and a true portrayal!

**“On Time”** is a good description of how good it feels to be able to keep on-schedule. Inevitably, though, the unexpected happens, and the schedule is tossed to the wind. My only quibble is with the last line. Like reviewer 1, I find it overly dramatic. Please find some other way to express your understandable disappointment. After all, it is the exception rather than the rule to have a whole day that flows “on time.” Hopefully you don’t regard every day as “ruined.”

**“Shoulders, Knees & Toes”** – This is a well-written, grimly humorous tale of a certain patient presentation very familiar to many family docs. I did not experience the same confusion as Reviewer 1, but did find the final line (“Really, though?”) a bit tough. “Really?” seems to convey exasperation and disbelief. Is this your intention? Also, I was not sure what meaning was conveyed by the word “though.” It is difficult within the 55 word limit, but think about what you want the reader to take away from this essay and see if there is a better way to say it.

In addition, please review carefully the comments from the reviewers.

**DECISION LETTER II:** The Introduction is outstanding, it provides an excellent explanatory context for the 55-word stories. It is superb. The revisions are also very well done, and we appreciate you and your residents paying such careful attention to our suggestions. After reviewing your revisions and comments, I am now able to make an editorial decision.

Based on my review and on reviewer comments I am not able to accept your submission. However, with a couple of very minor changes, this manuscript will be in publishable form.

1) I would like the author of Prayer to consider the following substitutions for the word "exquisite." Describing death with this term just seems too precious. What about "illuminating," "luminous," "radiant," "awe-inspiring" on both lines? Or go back to "beautiful." I'm trying to capture something of the nature of sunlight, as well as the miracle of a good death. "Exquisite" really doesn't work.

2) In the On Time story, I had to google the word "welp." I am an old dog who doesn't use twitter (or watch Jim Carey movies) so perhaps this is a word now in common parlance that requires no explanation. Once I understood what it meant, it is perfect, as is the phrase "c'est la vie." I will leave this to the discretion of younger, hipper minds, but if you feel a footnote is in order, please add.

**DECISION LETTER III: I am pleased to inform you that your work has now been accepted for publication in *Families, Systems, and Health*. Thank you for considering minor editorial revisions.**