

However, relatively slight revisions will make this work eminently publishable.

All reviewers liked the piece for its honest wrestling with boundaries. They all had suggestions about how to improve it, not all of which can be incorporated simultaneously. (Reviewer 2 did not understand that this was a 55 word essay, therefore these suggestions for elaboration/expansion are not appropriate and may be ignored). These are the areas we'd like you to take a second look at:

- 1) Title: Reviewer 1 did not think the title well-expressed the point of the piece and suggested "Request" or "In Need." I agreed the title seemed "weak" (sorry). What about "Boundaries"? Please reconsider the title, and if you don't like any of these suggestions, come up with something new of your own.
- 2) Reviewer 2 objected to the phrase "professional demeanor." I, on the other hand, thought it very appropriate *because of* its contrast with the "plain speech" of the rest of the work. Think about it and decide if you want to revise or leave as is.
- 3) Reviewer 3 recommends moving the speech in the first line onto its own line. I strongly agree. As currently arranged, it is visually awkward.
- 4) Reviewer 3 also questioned the repetition of the word "now." I agree. In a 55 word piece, 3 nows is one now too many. Recast to lose the "now" in the line "tears in my eyes now too."
- 5) I wonder if you could find another word for "melts" which sounds too saccharine for this otherwise blunt, almost unstated work. Shatters, splinters, wavers, quivers?
- 6) Reviewer 3 thinks the last line was spoken by the patient. I think it was spoken by the narrator. In either case, in my view, clarification would spoil the ambiguity.

With all these suggestions, you will likely have to tinker to make the word count fit the form. The important thing is not to slavishly adopt any specific suggestion, but to critically revisit the piece paying special attention to words or lines that caused reviewers to stumble. We look forward to your revision.

COMMENTS II: Based on my review I am not able to accept your submission, only because of one small issue which can be easily resolved. This poem/piece now reads beautifully and I would be delighted to accept it exactly as is. However, my understanding is that it was submitted as a 55 word story. The definition of this form is that it contains exactly 55 words, excluding the title. This piece is 52 words. Our editorial policy is to adhere strictly to the 55 word form. Therefore, you can either add 3 words; or you can call it a poem!