

FSH DECISION LETTER 2019 4

I have now received the reviews of your manuscript and am able to make an editorial decision. This 55 word story resonated with reviewers who found it a moving description both of the devastation of AD, and the importance of not succumbing to hopelessness. The title is especially lovely and fitting for the piece.

Based on my review and on reviewer comments, we would like to request a few minor revisions. As Reviewer 2 notes, it is good practice to avoid associating the descriptor black (which is also applied to people of color) with negative connotations. Think about other ways of describing the brain; and in the descending line, perhaps Despair?

In terms of the more hopeful line, two small thoughts. Because it represents hope, it would be more effective if it were in an ASCENDING format, so that it contrastS rather than mirrors the descent of the earlier line. Also, while you have four nouns describing the negative, you have 3 adjectives and one adverb describing the positive. It would be more consistent if you changed "brightly" to "bright" which would still be a rather poetic way of describing the husband.

COMMENTS TO EDITOR: This is an excellent revision, the author has addressed all the concerns of the reviewers and editor. Unfortunately, I think the author intends this as a 55 word story, and the submission is only 53 words. I hate to be a stickler, but the definition of the 55 word story is that it is precisely 55 words. If this is to be considered as a 55 word story, the author will need to add a couple of words.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR: Thank you for this excellent revision. I absolutely love the term "empty space," it is so evocative and chilling. The descending and ascending lines work very well, and their dynamism really stands forth.

There is only one problem remaining. If you intend this to be a 55 word story (which I think it is, more than a poem), it must be precisely 55 words, as that is its definition. Can you possibly find a way to add two more words? One possibility would be to rewrite the second line: "Then she said that his brain is dead," which adds an internal rhyme. Perhaps you can come up with another, better idea. If you do not intend this as a 55 word story, and it just coincidentally is 53 words, please let me know.

Regardless, you have done a wonderful job of capturing both the despair that Alzheimer's Disease brings (in this case conveyed by an insensitive physician), and the hope of enduring love and light. Well done!

COMMENTS TO EDITOR: This piece was submitted as a 55 word story, but it was only 53 words. I suggested a couple of additional words that would bring the count up to the requisite number, which she accepted.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR: Thank you for these additions, which indeed make the submission a 55 word story. It is a touching and hopeful account, and reminds us that how we frame the situation always matters.