

FSH COMMENTS 2019 11

COMMENTS TO EDITOR: This one is a conundrum! I THINK it is about a sick kid, the mom, and the doctors who cared for the child. It took me THREE reads to figure out what was going on because of the format. It was clever, and definitely is an interesting way to express the interwoven roles of parents and health professionals, but it was very confusing. The first time I read it I thought words had been omitted; the second time I thought it might be trying to express the fragmented nature of the illness experience; and it was not until the third attempt I realized that every other line told a story.

The writing is often very good. I loved lines like "her tone...swollen with anxiety;" "threads...of waist-deep stardust," "falling...flakes shuddering..."

I think the poem meets the goals of the journal in hinting at the relationships of child, mother, healthcare professionals to each other and to pain.

My main objection is that our readership is not likely to labor over this poem as I did; and if they do not apply the same dedication, the entire point of the poem will be missed and it will be dismissed as a muddle. It is far from that. But it takes a lot of excavating.

Perhaps it does not belong in a journal like ours. If the author is willing to restructure the poem to make its meaning less complex, my view is that it has great potential. As is, it is simply too intricate.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR: This was both a beautiful and a frustrating poem. I THINK it is about a sick kid, the mom, and the doctors who cared for the child. It took me THREE reads to figure out what was going on because of the format. The structure of the poem is clever, and definitely is an interesting way to express the interwoven roles of parents and health professionals, but it was very confusing. The first time I read it I thought words had been omitted; the second time I thought it might be trying to express the fragmented nature of the illness experience; and it was not until the third attempt I realized that every other line told a story.

The writing is often very good. I loved lines like "her tone...swollen with anxiety;" "threads...of waist-deep stardust," "falling...flakes shuddering..."

I think the poem meets the goals of the journal in hinting at the relationships of child, mother, healthcare professionals to each other and to pain. Indeed, it does deal with families, systems, and health.

My main objection is that our readership is not likely to labor over this poem as I did; and if they do not apply the same dedication, the entire point of the poem will be missed and it will be dismissed as a muddle. It is far from that. But it takes a lot of excavating.

If you are willing to restructure the poem to make its meaning less complex, my view is that it has great potential. As is, although well-crafted and emotionally evocative, it is simply too intricate.