

## FHS REVIEW 2021 2 and 2a

### Comments to Editor:

I liked this poem, perhaps because I could really relate to the theme of committing to the academic/publication path without careful thought. Although not all readers will connect with the particulars of the poet's struggle, most people know what it's like to climb their work ladder not pursuing their own truth but their boss's or their organization's. I hope the abstract could be included, because it does provide a useful context and makes the poem easier to comprehend. On the whole, I thought it was well-written - I liked the image of an "empty face in the mirror" and the paradox of a "regenerative abyss."

There were a couple of lines I think could be reworked to improve the poem. The phrase "publishing palace" seemed too concrete, too reminiscent of a "publishing house," whereas in fact the author is referring to the entire machine of grant writing, research and publication. I'd like her to find a more comprehensive way to allude to the system in which she finds herself trapped. The line "I am going to be in awe..." I thought could be made more succinct. Otherwise, I appreciated the imagery and the narrative development of the poem.

At some point in their lives, most of us take a pause and question where we've been and where we're going. I think, with an assist from the abstract, this poem does a good job of triggering this sort of reflection as well as offering hope that, on the other side of the "regenerative abyss," we have the possibility of finding "our lost selves."

### Comments to Editor:

This poem has been revised and significantly improved. It is sparer and simpler and this is all to the good. I would not recommend further changes (one small change might be to break up the line about the lion and the child just for emphasis). The poem reminds us of the sometimes serendipitous and mysterious aspects of discovery, and suggests that while research is a meticulous and disciplined process, it should also be creative and at times even playful.

In terms of the Abstract and picture, these are my thoughts. An "Abstract" sounds very academic and thus at odds with a poem, but if we think of it as a few prose lines to provide context and interpretive hints, it seems more palatable, even beneficial. The author has done a good job of making this abstract less wordy, paring it down to its essence, and I'd actually recommend keeping it. I can see that the author really likes the little picture. For sure it is sweet; honestly for me, it doesn't add a great deal, although it does provide a complementary visual to the idea of a childlike spirit making a precious discovery. I don't think it is essential to retain, but it's a nice artistic "summary" of the point of the poem.

**Bottom-line, I like the idea of writing a poem about research and hope it can be published.**

**Comments to Author:**

**This revision is significantly improved, and I really appreciate the obvious effort and consultation you've put into this work. The poem is sparer and simpler than the original version and this is all to the good. The one small change I'd suggest might be to break up the line about the lion and the child so as to emphasize the reversion - or rebirth - into childlike wonder. The poem reminds us of the sometimes serendipitous and mysterious aspects of discovery involved in research, that research is a meticulous and disciplined process, but should also be creative and at times even playful. Although an Abstract does not usually accompany a poem, especially for a journal that is not primarily a literary one, to me it makes sense. You did an excellent job of distilling this Abstract to its essence, while using it to provide useful "hints" about the references in the poem to Babel and Nietzsche.**

**I like your poem and I like the idea of writing a poem about research. It brings together the cultures of art and science with a few well-chosen images that show us the ways in which the "two" are really "one."**