

## Manuscripting

**David Goldblatt**

'Twas brilliant. That, the authors knew;  
 A Nobel-winner, they were sure.  
 They hastened to inform a world  
 That would welcome a cure.

“Beware the Editor, my friends:  
 He has a bite. He loves to catch  
 A clause in which the subject and  
 The predicate don't match!”

The senior author took a pen  
 (He hadn't used a pen in years)  
 And tried to deal with modifiers  
 Dangled by his peers.

“Based on this data, we. . .” he read.  
 “That sounds OK. I'll let it go.  
 Grammar, a department head  
 Is not supposed to know.”

He FedExed in the manuscript.  
 The editing was merciless.  
 He got it back so ink-besmirched  
 It was a total mess.

“I told you so,” his sage friend said,  
 “You cut your high-school English class  
 And spent your time on calculus.  
 It's too late now, alas.”

'Twas brilliant, as the authors knew.  
 They should have won the Nobel Prize  
 But couldn't sneak their manuscript  
 Past an editor's eyes!

DAVID GOLDBLATT is professor emeritus of neurology and the medical humanities at the University of Rochester (New York) School of Medicine and Dentistry. He earned his BA at the University of California, Los Angeles, and his MD at Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland. Since retirement, he has published poems in *Annals of Internal Medicine* and *The Pharos* and articles in *Creative Nonfiction*, *the American Journal of Medicine*, and *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine*. He created, and published in, a section of *Neurology* devoted to neurology and the humanities.

Goldblatt admits to possibly being “completely wacky (or wocky)”, but he assumes that most readers pronounce “brilliant” as a two-syllable adjective, so his poem's opening words “scan properly with reference to the original” (that is, the opening words—“'Twas brillig”—of Lewis Carroll's famous nonsense poem “Jabberwocky”). He adds that “the last lines of the first and last stanzas jar the reader's expectations but, again, conform to the odd meter of the original.”

Biomedically oriented readers may be interested to know that his father, Harry Goldblatt (1891-1977), a long-time professor of pathology at Case Western Reserve University, devised the Goldblatt clamp, which helped to elucidate the kidney's role in causing essential hypertension; he also entered the lexicon in the terms Goldblatt hypertension, Goldblatt phenomenon, and Goldblatt kidney.