

Poetry Series

Kendall Marlia Cooper
- poems -

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Kendall MarliaCooper()

Man, I Love This Game

Man I love this game,
I know many have uttered the same,
Only I see it the way I do,
It can change my day when I'm down and blue.

Man I love this game,
The court always will be the same,
Be it victory be it shame,
Even if legends became,
At the end of the night, the court looks the same.

Refresh is just a day away,
Because basketball in my court is here to stay,
Its mine and not to be given away.
NO, it is mine,
From basket, wall, bleacher, and line,
And for me...that is just fine.
I swear I saw a man fly,
I swear I saw a man nearly die,
Struck down and ready to quit,
He could have asked to sit.
But that's not basketball,
Even if you fall,
Even if you get hurt, you can still crawl.
Man, I love this game,
...Aint it a darn shame.

Kendall MarliaCooper

The Pitcher

As a boy I was close with my mom.
Mom and I that's all I knew.
Then at seven my world flipped.
Mom said "Son, I have someone you should meet."
I was a third string catcher in the World Series.
Had to catch this pitch.
I caught hell.

Maybe ignorance is bliss,
Perhaps,
I held up seven fingers and a smile,
I was proud of my age;
however in a week's time I will be holding up seventeen and a frown.

Mother asked me the question,
Too young to comprehend,
"Kendall, should I go with him to California or stay here? "
A week too young.
I had no way to predict how my answer would change our relationship.
Missing teeth make canyons in my ear to ear smile as I answer indifferently.
"Whatever makes you happy mom."

A pause.

Forward a week.
Seven years on my bones but seventeen on my mind.
Mom's gone,
Chose a man over her boy.
She traded me for a drunk,
Traded me for a broken foot,
Pain that traveled up her leg flowed through me.

Staring blankly at a photo,
My baby sister and me,
Smiling like life was perfect.
Funny thing is... it was,
Drugs didn't exist,
Crying myself to sleep never happened,
And I would be inclined to push mother away not pull her back.

Then I caught that pitch.

I took a long drive to California,
In the tan of my grandfathers Lincoln I aged,
Im ten.

I reach the Mexican styled condos.

A girl rushes out to greet me,

I have to ask who she is.

My sister.

My own baby sister!

Even the lady who birthed me, I don't know,

I know her by face but not soul.

I eventually go,

Back to my home in Portland

minus my mom,

Maybe if she stayed there I could forget,

Maybe I would not be so upset,

Like a yo-yo she came and went,

Saying this time she would be here to stay.

Like a yo-yo she descended again leaving only a note on a brown paper bag.

Present day.

She's back now for good,

The pitcher is gone but his name lives on,

Her last name turned to his while she was away.

I'm a youthful fourteen years on my bones,

Fourteen abused and stretched years for I have had to grow up too fast.

Fourteen years on my physical stature,47 on the mind and trust issues.

One kid,

One story,

Countless more stories like mine.

Stories muffled in the noise,

Millions silenced for no one listens to you in a crowded room,

For no one takes the time,

Time to understand what is beyond skin deep,

Millions silenced for no one listens to you in a crowded room.

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Verselandia 2012

Verselandia 2012

Students of the 147 year old desks,
Students today we will discuss the urban legend of the white man who jumped,
Yes the white man who leaped just to grasp cold steel.
He however could not dunk a basketball,
He however could not grab a goal post,
No what chilled his palm was the ice from the eyes of those he told,
See this white man could not just jump but rap,
The fable tells of those who laughed and rolled on the floor,
Eyes swelled up with amusement.

He however was not so,
He was busy working on his flow,
The kind of noise,
In which gave him his poise,
In which let him explain to his boys,
Explain the message he wished to put in place,
The message he could deliver as though it were face to face,
But it was not face to face,

No he confidently rose out of the shadow of which cloaked him,
The bubble in which enclosed him,
Leaving vulnerable for fans to attack him,
They didn't though,
Instead they applauded as though waiting for a show,

Just as confidently as the man arose they cheered not knowing if it would be an
abomination,
They optimistically hoped for a sensation,
The very thing they crave...a domination.
They cheered as though the composed shell was the flag of our nation,
He soaked in the adoration.
Not out of inner confidence,
Only my outer shell would give you that sense,
The little boy inside was quivering like the bottom lip of a trauma victim,
So scared that he wished he could run,

Confidently my outer core cleared its throat,
To let my fire breath its needed air to present my magical quote,

My words in which I choked and gagged on as my inner little boy showed.
He had been playing hide n' seek,
His teenage stink made the rest of my dribbled words reek,
The utter thought of what I would receive in the end shook me,
Yes if you didn't catch on this is about me,
The white man who jumped and grasped the steel,
The man who prematurely took hold of the wheel,
And crashed his car of which were his dreams,
Seconds spill out like light from car beams,
The clock ticked down,
Huston had counted me down until my first word proved launch sequence,
However this mission crashed back down like Challenger.
And after all these 2 minutes of failure you know what shocked me the most?
The reception I got from her.
The warm applause as I had tip toed with the devil and lost,
Yet at what cost?
She imbrassed me with a hug,
From that moment on the white boy who couldn't rap had the bug,
From that moment on the white boy who jumped could do nothing but smile,
And wish he could stay for a little while longer.

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What's Up?

Parents told us,
'Do not talk to strangers.'
This might be your reason,
For we do not talk to strangers.

However no one said,
'Do not talk to friends...
Like strangers.'
Maybe this is your reasoning,
Reasoning for,
The two word conversation,
The four letters... apostrophe.. 's'.. than space,
Follow with the direction of the sky.

Yes, the sky no one forgets,
Not the cry everyone forgets,
Cry that leaks out of the mouth,
When friend begs for acknowledgment,
But heavens no we forget to mock,
The heavens when we reply.

The worse of it.
Worse than walking by,
By without a reply,
By without a bye,
Even that is not the worse,
You turned a loaded question into white noise,
That is not The worse.

The worse offence of this noise,
That you talk like i am a stranger,
You talk down five years,
You talk down tears,
You talk down cheers,
Worse of all i let you,
Worse of all i have committed,
This misdemeanor and given in.
I went back on my word,
I talked to a stranger,

For i turned my buddy into one.

I asked 'What's Up' to you.
Now a changed asker praying,
For a stamp of approval,
Go ahead... return to sender.

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