

Poetry Series

Callie Carroll
- poems -

Publication Date:

2011

Publisher:

Poemhunter.com - The World's Poetry Archive

Callie Carroll()

PH is what I do because I can't talk basketball with my neighbors. It is nice to know there are thousands of people out there reading and writing and thinking about poetry. At least I hope it is not just one person sitting at a keyboard making all of this up.

4 Photos In A Drawer (Not Forgotten)

</></>Photo 1

Baby sits
with diapered bottom
against gritty linoleum
Beauty (above baby)
 framed in gilded sunlight
Glossy hair caresses Beauty's face
Baby basks in mamma's halcyon glow
She doesn't know
the beginning of her sorrow.

Photo 2

Siblings sit
on an ugly, velvet couch-
Almond eyes and forehead frizz
evidence of a kinship
they will not know
Their eyes dart in different directions
The crack down the middle
 separates them permanently.

Photo 3

Beauty perched
on a rock
Framed by a loveliness
that does not surpass her own
Her smile beckons and bewitches
Beauty doesn't see their sorrow
She's happily alone.

Photo 4

An early morning photo
Mangled limbs on
a tangled bed
Alone, alone, and, oh so cold
No beauty here-
Just a splash of amber liquid
and a careless spill of pills
It's not the end of their sorrow.

Callie Carroll

A Fair Trade?

</>Exchange
bland white bread
for the round tang of basil

eau de artifice
with the scent of honest sweat

ringtones, mine and not mine,
for the reedy whirr of bee wings

the opulence of silk
with the grit of soil under nails

Become lost
in a pale, lime wing

against purple petunia.

Callie Carroll

A Fine Musician (You Played Me)

Anti- Love Poem

What a maestro!
(What a dimwit!)

What didn't I get about my depreciation?
I'm no genius,
but should I have understood it?
My gradual, but final reduction.
Until, - there- you have it-
a remarkably diminutive me.

Another perfect diminuendo by the Maestro.

Oh! I did not foresee
my demise!
(What a dimwit!)

Callie Carroll

A Walk

The stark white of a sycamore
glints in the dappled forest.
A towhee rings clearly in the distance.
A trio of deer stare across the glen.
Their dark eyes lock on mine
and ask 'Why are you here? '

You reject the longer path
while I draw back,
reluctant to leave
the calm and quiet.

Then I see them-
Pale feather-cut leaves
and two hidden hearts
nestled at the base of a tree.
Common, yet delicate and graceful.
I almost missed them.

Return to me, linger
to see the hidden treasures.
What might you miss-
Your heart?
Mine?

Callie Carroll

An Unexpected Shower (The Leonid)

You woke us
from our sleep-warm dreams
to lie close
on cold concrete
and watch Earth and Heaven meet.

Your gift to us-
Delight.

Callie Carroll

By His Side

Why do I remember most
my grandfather who hardly
spoke a word to me unless

you count a chortle of delight
as he revealed his peppermint stash,
his hum while shucking corn
to show the juicy pearls,
the patient click of his tongue
as he removed my corncrib splinter.

I never dreamed I would forget
my grandmother's endless litanies
of recipes, patterns and chickens,
canning jars and sassafras root,
the proper way to turn a hem,
how a lady acts in church.

Again and again my mind
settles by his silent side the same
way I seek an empty church for prayer.

Callie Carroll

Candela

You go about the business of your life
Gulping great gusts of air
Emitting an exquisite light,
Lovely luminary.

Bioluminescence, your birthright
Heir to the contained and continuous
explosion of the sun-
Star stuff in singular form.

Me?
I swim my murky night-cave,
Sallow,
blinded by a dismal, despairing darkness.
Memories of what i used to see return
to stab my heavy (my hungry) heart.

And yet,
and yet...
I marvel at my sighted offspring-
I marvel at your light.

Callie Carroll

Cannonball Practice (I'M Bedazzled)

(Rev.)

Arms tucked, legs askew,
You practice until you get it right.
With each crack of your skin against water
comes satisfaction, then delight.
You are resplendent, (I know it's true) ,
but I am illuminated too.

Day finally ends with a towel cocoon-
a futile attempt to calm and soothe.
I know you are reluctant to go-
I'm reluctant for you to GROW!

Callie Carroll

First Party

(5 Day Old Anthony Attends a 60th Anniversary Party)

Light increases
as he enters the room
emanating from him,
reflected in our eyes.

A pliable bundle
passed from arm to arm,
melding to each one
his Kith and Kin

Who delight to discover
a mosaic of familiar
and unfamiliar forms
in their newest guest,
their Best.

Callie Carroll

Flawed Gem

Your arm
an angry intaglio
Your secret
revealed

Oh, daughter
I did not
protect you

Callie Carroll

Gone Rampant In Your Absence

You returned from the North with good news-
Little Thomas, little John, found-
 in the sheltering arms of Protestant parents,
 orphans of the Boyne.

Allowing your family tree
 to remain stately, strong, and proud.
O'Carroll to Carroll,
Edwards, Alberts, and Johns, (trailing Mary Janes)
 following a straight and admirable path
across the drink to Maryland.

Arduously researched, meticulously inked-
A mighty shelter, whose roots firmly anchor you.

My bad news, no news to you at all,
 my family tree in disarray-
Junior lost in a pauper's grave.
Errant branches gone astray-
a bramble of tangled growth
badly in need of pruning,
 plagued by pestilence,
 gone rampant in your absence.

A gamy stew of Missouri horse thieves,
seductive wenches, and a noisy mob
with a thirst they cannot explain.
Artists without canvases,
Poets without paper,
Singers of curiously strident tunes
 (which i croon in secret at night) .

I'm heir to a brew of rogue genes
from no place in particular following
a crooked path to nowhere-
Bewildered to be there upon arrival.

Callie Carroll

Invisible Woman

At our first meeting, you had physical substance,
solid and weighty.

I made note of your presence, -

hooked nose, widow's hump, and your kind, but discerning eye.

No one else did;

They had ceased to years before.

Your gradual disappearance, indiscernible at first,
an insubstantiality as the years passed.

You, - reduced to

a clattering of china in the kitchen,

a faint humming in the background.

First your eyes went.

Were they blue or brown?

Finally your fragile bird bones

faded into the woodwork.

Your hands, the last to go.

You see,

we needed them.

Callie Carroll

Like A Bird

I move through my day
dully from point to point,
Straight and efficient
Up the stairs and down, but
In my mind I'm a feathered creature
soaring outside my normal range.

Darting and cavorting in puddles
Spiraling like a creeper,
I undulate, I hover, and I glide.

I move through my day
dully from point to point,
but Possibility brings hope
to my captive heart.

Callie Carroll

Meant For Flight

In my mind again-
a tanned Tarzan
 inching his way to the top
Rope in hand, taut hum of sinew,
Your Essential Self- meant for flight.

Meant for flight, you tried to take us with you
Earthbound, we bound you flightless.

Now

 I await the dawn
and bear witness to your first
and final flight.

 At the top of the tower-
 a gleeful king of thrilling heights
 hurtling with wild abandon.

On earth-

 the Truth is what I require:
Did you cry in anguish when the harness broke?
Or spread your wings
to taste the Joy of Flying
for the very first time?

Callie Carroll

On The Periphery

I have decided to doubt. I am
unable to accept belief on
the value of its good, clean face.

I focus
on the smudge,
the inconsistency,
the shadow in the corner.
I rely upon my doubt. I have
complete confidence in it.

Faith- that suspension of reason-
requires more of me
than I possess.

It takes
courage to stand
face forward in my
Isolation.

I doubt
that I can
change.

Callie Carroll

Spider Boy

You lie on warm pavement transfixed
Eyes down, end up,
you bridge the distance.
A drifting glint of gossamer
transports them, transports you,

Sheet after sheet of arachnid art cover my coffee table.
I glimpse fleeting moments in spider time.
You give complete attention to cribellum and spinnerets.
Hair, humps, and spines are beautiful to you.

You're beautiful to me
 because you bridge the distance
 caught in a web of your own choosing.

Callie Carroll

Spider Woman

I spin a new web every night-
repair and replace the damaged parts.
My eyes (too many of them)
 watch from different angles.
I have no bones; tough skin protects me.
People are repulsed by me, yet fascinated too.

I lurk in the periphery,
jump forty times my body's length,
accept a fly before I mate-
Do I repulse and fascinate?

For my babes a silken sac,
A foundation line,
a bridge, a hub,
I crisscross threads -a labyrinthe.
I am Myself. Can you relate?

To the top of the lamppost I climb
spinnerets in the wind-
It's sublime!
My blood, when I bleed,
is slightly blue.
Do I repulse or fascinate you?

Callie Carroll

Supplicant Arms

Freckled arms
long and lean
soft and supple
Wiping crumbs from messy tables,
Smoothing wrinkles from sloppy beds
Gathering dust from shadowy corners
Busy, busy, never still.

Freckled arms
beseechingly buoyant,
drifting, drifting
on soothing water-
Finally calm,
finally still.
Pale, cool arms
and a peaceful ride,
Calm and still
on a bittersweet tide.

Callie Carroll

What Happened In The Piney Woods

I knowed we shouldn't of went that way.
That trail weren't meant for no VW Bug.
But I didn't stop you, didn't even try.
Now muddy ole me's in a worrisome rut
counting the whippoorwill's call
While you sleep like an innocent
oblivious to it all.

Hit ain't a fer piece home
around the hill
and over that ridge,
Where Mama's waiting
a'wringing her hands cause
she knows what a mama knows.

I'm six steps towards twenty
and yore sleepin' body's warm
so I patiently plait my hair and
listen to the whippoorwill's song.
Soft wings part the air,
which rings with prophesy,
'Whippoorwill, will, will...'
'round and round my head.

This much I know right sure:
 Its treasure's nestled in the grass,
 Mine- precious, by my side.
T'aint fearful in these piney woods,
I thank what brung me here.

Callie Carroll