

The Lollipop Club

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For Joseph and Sabrina

Acknowledgements

Canary - Vox Poetica

Homerun and *Chirping* - KupoZine

Cover Photo by Sandy Sue Benitez

Table of Contents

Baby	5
Canary	6
Blowing Bubbles	7
Homerun	8
Chirping	9
The Playground	10
Little Sprite	11
A Smile for Sarah	12
Candy Apple Hearts	13
The Lollipop Club	14

Baby

Little fingers, little toes
that wiggle and play.
A gummy smile so wide
it causes me to giggle
and stop to gaze
at this amazing creature
lying before me.
Created from seeds of love,
binded by rings of trust;
a face to make the eyes water
and generations before
to dream of angels
who would fly down
to see the beautiful one.
Chubby, rosy cheeks
to pinch and caress,
such a blessing to touch
flesh of my flesh.
Powdery scents and baby smells,
a sweet, soft aroma
envied by the finest perfumeries.
Dark chocolate eyes
that melt my heart
mesmerize and delight
anyone who looks their way.
This tender child
who holds my gaze,
I give you my love to last
through all of your days.

Canary

Nine months, I carried a little
canary in my womb. Flapping
wings in slow motion, steadily
growing in a birdcage of pink
tissue and blue bars of veins.

Exhausted, I lay in bed. Welcomed
silence, that old friend. Together,
we perched our attention
on the gentle sweep, the fluttering, tiny

earthquakes; ribbons of waves
roll across the terrain of my
abdominal hill. Not a natural disaster;
natural perfection. I knew when

she was ready, she would leave
the cage. I would meet her, touch her,
hold her for the first of hundreds of times.
Hear her voice. Song of my heart.

Blowing Bubbles

The breeze is gentle today.
The children jump up and down,
impatiently waiting for their
bottles of potion and magical
wands.

Pouty lips pucker as they
dip their wands. The twinkle
in their eyes reminds me of
stars on a velvet blanket of
sky. Fierce yet playful, ever
burning bright to outshine the
moon.

I watch the bubbles being born.
Take their first deep breaths.
Some of them are too fragile
so they pop while others quietly
float away.

The children giggle and say
goodbye but I am not ready
to let go. I want to catch each
one, hold on to it as long as
I can.

Homerun

I watched my son proudly
from the stands, wondering
how someone half my size
could make me feel whole

again. Firmly, he gripped
the bat, choking the moment
so it wouldn't slip away.
Buried beneath sandy mounds

of unfulfilled dreams. I held
my breath as he swung,
hoping the ball would soar
higher and higher just like him.

Chirping

In fits of giggles, she perched
herself on my lap, mouth agape.
Her tiny fingers clasped, waiting
patiently for the cheese crackers
I cradled in the nest of my left
hand. As I fed her one morsel

after another, I thought of the
baby chicks chirping in unison;
their mouths open wide, clamoring
for bread crumbs and juicy worms.
Ever the doting Mother, I gently
swept the crumbs away and fed her
my love.

The Playground

welcomes kids into her arms
with a long smile that stretches
from east to west. She never
sleeps. What would be the point?

She watches the little girls
as they hopscotch across the
asphalt. Trails of pink and yellow
chalk dust follow on the heels of

leather Mary Janes like puppy dogs.
Meanwhile, the rough and tumble
boys see who can travel the farthest
on monkey bars. Challenge the

bravest boy to jump from a swing
that hurls itself up to the moon
and back. Laughter scents the air
as if it were fresh cut grass

and crying chimes in as booboos
appear on scraped knees and elbows.
She tends to their needs in her own
way; a part-time nanny when the

parents aren't there. Though she
can't bestow kisses or soothe them
with her touch, she knows they hear
her, softly whispering lullabies

and fairy tales in the wind.

Little Sprite

Walk with me my child,
take my hand in yours.
We'll wander across a meadow
of scarlet, violet, and topaz wildflowers
swirling inside a glass of sky.

Little sprite,
you are my rare butterfly.
Your lean arms outstretched
under layers of silky lace
which drape softly
over your dainty silhouette
like wings floating on air.

Sing with me,
taste the rhythm of sounds
as we hum across the meadow
while echoes of my love
for you travel across the spectrum
of space and time.

Little sprite,
you are my lone skylark.
Your tiny voice cavorting
under layers of feathers
tender yet bold
is your music
like notes floating on air.

Dance with me,
feel your toes brush the earth
as we glide across the meadow
while nature's sweet breath
proclaims we are mother and child
as one with the wind.

A Smile for Sarah

When she was a little girl of seven years
Sarah loved to play in the cemetery near.
Dancing and twirling about like a ballerina
near aged, moss covered headstones at St Lucia.

Humming a song she had created in her head
on the day her mother's breath had gone away,
she felt peace and serenity when alone
with only her song, dancing near her mother's grave.

Mother was just asleep, a deep restful sleep she mused
but she knew her mother would awaken one day.
Sarah would dress her in pink slippers and a tutu,
Mother would wake and together they would play.

Next to mother's grave was a statue,
an exquisite statue of an angel with no smile.
Her wings were folded inward, her head bowed
and in her arms she held a little female child.

Sarah imagined it was her mother...the angel,
holding her so close and tight to her womb.
And she would talk and tell secrets to the angel
until the sun retired and welcomed in the moon.

And then one day something happened as she played.
The statue had awoken and smiled at little Sarah.
The angel's feathery wings opened wide as she beckoned
and together the angel and Sarah flew away to Heaven.

Candy Apple Hearts

Memories scatter like children
across the fairgrounds, eager to
relive the fun moments; roller coasters,
bumper cars, and cotton candy fingertips.

Moms cradle newborns in their arms
curved naturally into nests of skin
while dads hover around water pistol
booths, aiming at 9 to 5 monotony.

Children scurry through the maze
of carnival rides; mice on a mission
to find that one plump piece of cheese.
Curiosity leading the way. Underneath

their chests, tiny, fragile hearts beat
fast as drums. Such sweet innocence.
Lives just beginning to crack, delicate
as candy apples melting beneath the sun.

The Lollipop Club

is a rickety tree house
perched atop an ancient oak.
Rumor has it that fairies
once occupied the lower trunk

but disappeared when feral cats
trampled the walls of catnip.
The sign on the tree house door
still reads "NO ADULTS ALLOWED!"

Inside, childhood seems locked in
time. Bubblegum wrappers line the
floor like paper flowers, shoe-
boxes overflow with Babe Ruth

and Mickey Mantle stats, while a
broken ballerina precariously
pirouettes inside a music box
that still plays Swan Lake.

The only thing missing...children.
Sounds of their laughter echo
through the walls. I stand at the
threshold pondering jars of fireflies,

butterfly nets, and taffy. Anything
to keep the memories close by; the
candy bowl continuously stocked,
overflowing with colorful lollipops.