

Pittsburg State University

Pittsburg State University Digital Commons

Poems

Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg Collection

March 2023

Your Tenant

Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.pittstate.edu/cm_g_poems

Recommended Citation

Mirriam-Goldberg, Caryn, "Your Tenant" (2023). *Poems*. 98.
https://digitalcommons.pittstate.edu/cm_g_poems/98

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg Collection at Pittsburg State University Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Poems by an authorized administrator of Pittsburg State University Digital Commons. For more information, please contact lfthompson@pittstate.edu.

Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg

603 N. 3rd
Lawrence, KS 66044
913/843-0253
Wk: 864-3666

Your Tenant

I. The Kitchen

You'll lean on the sink;
me, the stove. This is how
we always drink our coffee.

"How is work, the kids?
How are things going?"

Your mouth will open,
about to say something else.
You'll stop. "Oh, they're going."

The sun in the window
will silhouette
your lovely head.
"Are you happy?"

You'll smile, pour more coffee,
nod. We'll stir in the milk.
Look how it loses itself so fast.
"Do you still
(eclipse the sun)
love me like that?"

II. The Garden

Almost midnight we remember
the first frost and rush
through straw, twigs,
dry clumps of earth
to dig long rows of potatoes.

"Look at the moon, it is full
and ripe." Our faces watch.

Then your face to mine,
"Wait, I must tell you
how you eclipse the moon
and so much more."

From the porch your wife calls.
I jump, trip the potatoes all
over and run
past the house and the moon,
now old and yellow.

(cont.)

Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg
603 N. 3rd St.
Lawrence, KS 66044

Your Tenant, p.2

III. The Driveway

In the car we stare so hard
at the house,
its wood blurs
back to trees.

Your hand, like a map
unfolded, lies across my thigh.
"I can't."

You slam the dashboard,
say, "Shit." Later

your wife kisses me,
cries in relief. I see you stand
in the dark hall,
like a cracked statue soon to fall.

IV. The Living Room

All winter you say,
"I'll wait for you." Your eyes,
grey green, don't give up.

One night while I drink my tea,
I hear your bed upstairs.
She calls your name. You sigh.
As your bodies touch, I tear.

All ache, I arch toward you both.
I love you, I love you blind.

V. The Bedroom

This time it is daylight.
You can sit on my bed.
Look at all the books
I pack. Look at my eyes.
They tell stories. Foolish ones:

A dream of your white-
on-white face kissing mine,
the lips so much like flesh
I walked fast and guilty
past you each day
to get the mail.

(cont.)

Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg

603 N. 3rd St.

Your Tenant, p.3

Lawrence, KS 66044

So quiet, are you crying?
You lean the mattress on
the wall. Lilac, like tiny
purple stars, strain against
the window screen. I do not
bring them in. "We will all
visit soon."

When your wife comes,
her billowy yellow dress
almost floating, she helps
take apart the bed frame.

We carry the pieces,
carefully and slow,
out into the sun.