

Poetry Series

barbara clifton
- poems -

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barbara clafton(01/08/1969)

Interested in poetry from a very early age, I have written for pleasure and as a stress reliever sporadically over the years. It was not until my late 20's that I ever told anyone that I had a collection that I had written or that I shared them with anyone.

Sometimes I plan to write, other times it's as if words spring into my head and then pour out of the pen nib onto paper. I don't consider myself to be particularly talented, but I enjoy reading what I have written and have created some pieces for other people's special occasions. I hope you will enjoy what I share on this site. Comments are welcome, but please don't be too harsh :)

A Chance To Dream.

You came into my life, answered my dreams
and God created you especially for me.
At the beginning, this was how it seemed,
but somehow, it was never meant to be.

We had so many good times, you and I.
I thank you for those happier days
and promise I'll not sit alone and cry
when I think about us going our separate ways.

Routine life is to begin again,
the hardest time, when 'singleness' re-starts.
I take my place as loser in life's games
and join the others with gentle lonely hearts.

I know the love we shared isn't over, is not gone.
it is just frozen in time and in our hearts,
to linger like a memory, holding on,
to save myself from falling apart.

Of your feelings, I was never very sure.
I was afraid that we'd not make it to life's end.
Although I always wanted so much more
at least, you'll be forever more, my friend.

So, for every word that ever went unspoken,
for every smile that left behind a promise broken,
for each apology we made, but did not mean -
I love you, and I thank you -
for giving me the chance to dream.

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Alcoholic Lover

Beautiful. wretched, alcoholic
I love you so!

Beautiful darling
I have to let you go.

Beautiful baby,
with dreadful moods
with spiteful actions
and words so rude.

Beautiful taker,
with nothing to give.

You are draining away my will to live.

barbara clafton

Baby Feet

Wrigling
tickling
sticking to your shoes...
feet, nearly always, come in two's.
On your feet are two tiny rows
of
wriggling
tickling
soldier toes.

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Becoming One.

Kiss me with your lips
that taste of wine.

Hold me with your body
so divine.

Love me from dusk
till morning sun.

And at daybreak
us two become ONE.

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Bit On The Side

I don't want to be a spare part
the little attachment to a lover's heart.
I don't want to be the one to feel
like I have been the one to steal.

I don't want to be the one invisible
the one who has to act invincible,
the one on the outside, the one looking in,
the one who's committing the worst mortal sin.

I don't want to be without the man I need
I don't want to be seen as full of envy or greed
I don't want to keep losing my dignity and pride,
because I am the other woman, the bit on the side.

I keep praying to the great lord above
please deliver me from this destructive love.

barbara clafon

Cost

Cheat

cheater

cheated.

all of my self will, depleted.

fool

fooler

fooled.

heart over head has ruled.

lose

loser

lost.

true love at such a great cost.

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Dancing With The Devil

They say the Devil finds work for idle hands to do.
But the Devil never really knew he'd met his match in you.

Darkness surrounds you and shadows you have cast
but the emptiness you left me with
has now passed.

Because I danced with that Devil
and I stamped on his hooves.
I swapped my shackles for some shiny new shoes.

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Don'T

don't empty my soul
and leave an abyss like before
don't look through my eyes
down into my core.
Don't say you love me
for the sake of saying so
don't take my heart
then leave me to watch you go.

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Dreams

In the still of the night
when I have taken flight and cannot sleep,
you dream.

I wear sweat upon my brow,
sleepless, aware somehow of whom
you dream.

My heart, pumping, it tick-tocks,
echoing sounds of alarm clocks set to break
my dreams.

When sleep comes, it's cruel, unkind
playing tricks on my troubled mind, I have nightmares,
not dreams.

Maybe, one day, in a time not yet here
I will find there is nothing to fear anymore from
my dreams.

perhaps, in the future, you will be
standing where I want you, next to me, in life
not in dreams.

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Dusk

Everwatchful, darkness lingers
waiting for the light
of each new day to appear.
Lazy, navy blue of night
lightens slowly
to a yellow crested morn.

Like ghosts,
the shrouded fog, it creeps
along the hedgerows
where it sleeps,
like silver winged shadows
until dawn.

A fireball, the sun,
will gently rise
tickling at the lashes
of your eyes,
until, at last
you can no longer keep
yourself
within night's realms of sleep.

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Eyes Wide Shut

I close my eyes and try to see
the perfect place where I want to be.
Where you are near to keep me safe,
I brush my hand across your face.
I kiss your lips so soft,
run my fingers through your hair,
hold you close to my heart
and promises of love I swear.

But then, of course, my eyes are open.
My perfect place is shattered, broken.
For, you're not mine, and all this means
I only have you in my dreams.

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Fallen

I have fallen
fallen from grace
into the depths of love
the depths of despair.
My only choice
is to keep falling
and hope I see you there.
There where I land.
Will it be on solid ground?

I cant scream
cant make a sound
voiceless
choicelless
hopelessly lost.

Dreadfully undone.
that wicked cupid
has shot me.
I am speared.
All I ever feared
is realised all at once.

My dreams will never be.
Nightmare life for me.
Empty, cold and undone.

You heard my voice
I made my choice-
wrongly.

I need to pick myself up
and walk away strongly.

barbara clafton

Heart Beat

Beat.....beat
Heart.....Beat
Beats faster
Faster

Stop

Skip..a..beat
Flutter
Butter.....butterflies
Butterflies dancing
In the chest
Need to rest....
Sleep...

Sleep....
Can't sleep...
Dream..
Dreaming
Heart screaming
Pounding
Pushing
Blood rushing
Pumping....passion
Red lights flashing..
KISS..

Kiss lips..
Lips tingling
Tingling bodies
Bodies mingling
Fingertips.....
Touch

Hands
Hands holding
Hearts unfolding
Entwining
Bodies touch

Body heat...

Heat...

heat..beat

Beat...beat...

Heart beat.

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Hopeless Romantic

Heat, rising up to melt my face.
Burnt soul, angel falls from grace.
I can't resist the power that's shaken me.
Hopeless romantic, in love with thee.

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Internal Monologue On Roles

There are many roles I play upon this stage of life -
worker, friend, daughter, sister, mother, wife.
Creator, maker, giver, but rarely the receiver,
but the one I fear the most is the most innocent believer.

Naïve and sometimes even stupid,
especially at the hands of Cupid
under the power of another's charm-
My heart can only come to harm.

Actors can chose from which sheet they read,
yet whenever I chose I cause my heart to bleed.
Receiver, believer - could I play the deceiver?
Could I do that to another innocent believer?

Could this actress play the interloper in another's life?
Borrow the leading man on stage from an innocent wife?

Would the hearts broken then, though not just be mine?
Wouldn't those actions of betrayal be unjustly unkind?

But, if all the world's a stage,
can't we just pick up and start again?
Why do leading ladies always
need the roles of leading men?

Why cant the leading lady stand isolated on the stage?
Show the ultimate emotions like fear and rage-
Empty their hearts without shame or guilt
but stand tall before him and never wilt.

I don't like these characters I am forced to portray
I feel that, I myself I betray,
betray all of that I hate inside of me
while wanting to just live my life and be free.

barbara clafon

It's Only Words But Life Is This...

Its only words
one eye closed the other eye open
part of the heart broken
the other part hoping

to have and to hold seems
to stand steadfast,
but its not,
all it means
is someone dreams
that it will not be forgot

but it will be.
there's an end
just as there's a beginning
in everyone,
every relationship.
we are born
we live
if we are lucky-
we procreate
then we die

not much in between.
we forget what all that means

love, partnership, family friends-

but when we are gone
too soon
too young
alone

it never ends
someone cares
is there-

remembering us.

till we and ultimately, they
are dust
as one
with the ground, the earth the sun.

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Just One Week

I saw you on Thursday, you smiled!
You were as happy as a child
With your new car, just like a topy
Given to an excited little boy.

I saw you on Friday. When you left
I couldn't help feeling bereft.
My heart was so heavy filled- with pain.
I sensed I'd not see you again.

On Saturday came the phone call.
When I took it, I punched the wall.
I hovered there with shallow breath
As they told me the news of your death.

On Sunday, I don't know, I wasn't here.
My body filled with an intense fear.
Wondering, worrying just what to do -
Now that I was without you.

On Monday the black car came
With flowers that spelled out your name
I tried very hard to be brave
As they lowered you into your grave.

On Tuesday I was all alone
Just waiting by the telephone.
When I realised you weren't going to ring,
My heart was empty, I felt nothing.
On Wednesday I spoke to you.
The doctor said it would help me to.
To say all the things that I should have said,
But now I can't because you're dead.

This morning
It's Thursday just one week
Since you could laugh
And love
And speak.

And now I'm alone
You've left
You've gone
And I wonder
How on earth
I can carry on?

barbara clafton

Just Words

My poems are the lyrics
of songs that go unsung
are the toll of a bell
that is never rung
are the unchained melodies of my heart.

My poems are a mixture
of letters, shapes and rhyme
ways to express emotions
counted syllables, given time
but mostly, they are Just Words.

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Kindness

I saw a glimpse of kindness
it lingered for a while,
sticking to the memory
of the handsome stranger's smile.

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Leftovers

Cupid drew back his bow, taut-
aimed and fired.
Shot you straight at my heart.
You landed, bolt out of the blue.
Landed and ripped my world apart.

Climbing into my world
a cat burglar in the night.
You stole everything from me.
Brought darkness where once was light.

Raining affection on me like Heaven's water, poison!
Drawing me closer, a moth to a flame
burning my soul.
Shards of glass in my throat when now I speak your name.

You took a twelve bore shotgun-
pulled the trigger, peppered me with shot.
Filled me, my life, my world with holes,
left me dying in a place that time forgot.

Cockroaches creep and crawl in the darkest places-
feeding off the death of my soul.
Yet You live in glory, master of your life
The master with your wife-
totally in control.

I used to sing of bluebirds
flying over rainbows
of lemon drop flavoured skies.
My skies are black
filled with vultures, pecking at my eyes,
gnawing at my bones
torturing my mind.

Feeding of the scraps of me that you left behind.

barbara clafton

Missing You

When the night sky no longer glistens gold
and the air begins to feel a little cold,
when the sofa feels too big when sitting on my own
... I miss you.

When I fall into bed so tired and all alone
when I fall asleep and dream of being home
when the pillow becomes your substitute
... I kiss you.

When I am old and grey and ready to pass on
I can think about the way my life has gone
and remember that throughout all my life
... I have loved you.

barbara clafton

Monday Morning Feeling

I wake, reluctantly
And then I rise
Wipe the sticky mass out of my eyes.
Yawn, quite loudly
Stumble on my way,
Dreading the start of yet another dreary day.

I wait, impatiently
As the kettle slowly boils,
Thinking, frantically of life and of its toils,
I pour, haphazardly
The water to the cup
And realise that I'll be late if I don't hurry up.

I dress, quite hurriedly
In rather scruffy clothes
And squeeze my swollen feet into shoes that hurt my toes.
I turn, confidently
The key in the ignition,
My car starts faithfully whilst bashed beyond recognition.

I arrive, on time
At my lowly placed of work,
And start my job as usual, but the boss is still a jerk.
Lunch time, what a laugh
We get just half an hour
And listen to the management spouting words of power.

Five o'clock, time for home
The end of another day,
Give a lift to somebody who lives along the way.
The dog, crossleggedly
Waiting by the door
Let him out to do his thing, then feed him once more.

Bath, relaxingly
Takes all your cares away.
I guess Monday's not, after all, such an awful day.

barbara clafon

Night Night Dad

I said a little prayer today
for one who, sadly went away,
to somewhere he can watch from high
and wipe away the tears I cry.

This really makes me feel so sad
I never said 'Goodnight' to Dad.
But somewhere in the sky tonight
another little star's alight.
All regrets and shames are gone
and in my heart he will live on.

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Ode To Lost Children

Ours is not to reason why,
why ones so very young should die.
They touched our hearts in every way,
our thoughts are of them every day.

Let not the guilty ever rest
and when their sins are all confessed,
let them suffer for their evil games.
Let us never forget their names.

Let not the tears leave pattered traces
upon your young and saddened faces.
Let the memories keep you smiling on.
'Tis a kinder place to which they have gone.
And at those wondrous pearly gates,
little angels there will wait.
For when at last your own time comes,
they'll be there to meet their dads and mums.

barbara clafton

Off For A Walk

Out the back gate, left open mindlessly by daydreaming children,
She sneaks happily, belly low to the floor.
Backward looking over the shoulder, half expecting to be caught
Down the alley and past the butcher's
Sniffing tentatively for stray sausages
"Git outer it" shouts Fat Sam,
The bloody handed butcher, cleaver in hand.

Screaming inwardly she runs a little then stops
Road
Cars, have to wait till it's clear
Don't get too near
And
Away

Skipping happily along Gunnels path, down to the field
And heaven.

The sweet sickly smell of the newly mown grass
Rolling over and over until white with black patches
Becomes Green with slightly greener.

Ah, bliss
Play dead
Sun shining over head
Not bothering a soul here
No one to tell her off for sneaking away

Now, to sniff the bushes to find that bone
The one she stole from Fat Sam last Friday
Should be nicely decomposing now
Ready to eat
A tasty treat

Sniff scratch dig
Green paws now muddy brown
Ah, heaven, lay down
Lick the scabby tendons drying on that bone
Wouldn't be allowed to do this at home!

Gnawing grinding to her heart's content
Chewing on that grissly ferment

A sudden chill breeze catches her fur
Maybe it's time to return
Dig, scratch cover up
Save it for another day

Check no one is watching and
Slowly sneak away
Over the shoulder backward glances
She is not taking any chances-
No stray mutt can have her prize!
There are no prying eyes.

Over the road, steady
Skip back along Gunnels Path
Ready?
Waiting for a telling off when through the gate
Where had she been, it's so late—
Nope, all busy, no one knew
Creep into her basket all warm and cozy
Wash off the green and act all dozy

"Such a good dog, look at her there
Any one would think she didn't care
That we didn't walk her today"

Sly smiling dog winks
Well, what's to say?

barbara clifton

Peace Of Mind

Restless in sleep, terrified in dreams,
wondering what life really means.
An emptiness consuming the soul,
an unrealistic lifetime goal.

Why, when I reach out to touch
the things that, to Me, mean so much,
do I always have to struggle and fight
and then watch them slip out of sight?

I never give in order to receive.
I've given so much, now I believe
it's my turn to ask for a small return,
but when I reach out, my fingers I burn.

I wait endlessly for what I desire,
filled with an intense raging fire.
Why is it always so hard to find?
A desperate need for Peace of Mind.

barbara clifton

Photograph

A picture,
a memory, frozen in time.
Children's faces,
long lost places,
edged in gold.

Mantlepieces
hold the frames
of those with forgotten names,
but remembered
in ageing pictures.

Smiles,
captured forever
on your face..
in a special place..
a Photograph.

barbara clifton

Rain

White.
pale blue
and tinged with grey.
in the distance a hint of black,
reflected on dingy wetness..
flapping angrily to and fro.

Tall
green elegance
tossing and bowing..
arms outstretched,
waving
whispering...
to the carpet below.

People rushing
people pushing
hair tangling
flying
annoying.
Papers rustling blowing again.

Smell it
feel it
sense it coming.
Gentle
ice cold
showering the earth.
The sky
at last
has given birth
to rain.

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Returning

That silent, deft hand crept slowly
into the cavity that once was my chest
squeezed
squeezed harder
did not rest
until all my life was gone.

Bony fingers, gripping tightly,
tighter still.
Crushing
Crushing my core, depleting my will
until it was gone.

Becoming a soul less life form
floating in the darkness, unaffected by other mortal souls
at the centre of Hell's abyss. Untouchable
unreachable
Life becomes purgatory.

The eternal winter six years long
began to thaw
to the melody
of a lover's song.

The silent deft hand crept slowly
back into the cavity that once was my chest.
Rubbed
rubbed and massaged gently
did not rest
until signs of life returned.

Warm hands grip lightly
lighter still
encouraging
encouraging my heart
encouraging my will
until
My soul returns.

barbara clafton

Shall I Compare Thee?

Shall I compare thee to an Autumn day?
Thou art more humid and more hot.
Rough winds do blow your newspaper away
as you pour another drink out from the pot.

Sometimes, too hot, your clothes you must remove
and show your strong complexion that is tanned.
Your masculinity somehow to prove
when holding me so tightly in your hand.

But thy eternal Autumn will not fade,
nor lose possession of your lingering kisses,
nor shall I lose the gentle love we made
when for eternity I am your Misses.

barbara clafton

Ten O'Clock Newsflash

She argued with her parents,
decided to leave home,
packed her small school bag
and left, feeling alone.
Took a train from the station,
destination London - so easy!
But she was young, naive, so pretty
and London was so sleazy.
She soon ran out of money
cardboard box bed in shop doorways,
nowhere to wash, feeling dirty
and not eaten for days.

Ten o'clock newsflash - MISSING TEENAGER.
Parents pleading, police description
offering a substantial reward
for any genuine information.
Heard nothing for ten days now,
she's caused them so much trouble,
if only they would find her,
she would come home at the double.
Eleventh day - they found her
beside her cardboard bed.

Ten o'clock newsflash - MISSING GIRL IS DEAD!

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Wedding Day.

As we stand before the altar at this time,
my hands entwined in yours and yours in mine,
our hearts united by our vows exchanged,
the promise of a love that will remain.

Joined together in holy matrimony,
your heart in me and mine in thee,
two souls united, now are one,
to live in love, till life is done.

Our future starts today with our new life.
Standing side by side, husband and wife.
We face the church, our friends, the congregation,
our smiling hearts filled with true elation.

Golden bands upon our fingers bind
the strongest love we ever hoped to find.
The peel of bells rings out to mark the start
of new life, living, growing in our hearts.

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Why?

You hit me.
It hurt.
You hurt me again,
a different way.

You laughed.
I took a bath
to wash away the hurt, the pain,
the guilt, the shame.

I loved you.
I hate you.

I'm so confused.
I feel so used
- so empty.

How can you do this to me?

WHY?

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With Me.

Tears, shards of glass escape from my eyes.
The lump in my throat, a butcher's blade.
Pain I feel
because of the love forbade.

Leave her and come to me.
Let my heart be where it wants to be.
Where it needs to be.
With whose heart beats and pumps
idiosyncratically.

Be with me

barbara clafton

You

I can sense you before I see you,
feel you, yet have never touched you.
I taste you but have yet to kiss you
and return to you before I ever miss you.

I know I'll lose you long before I find you
and see light fade from what you leave behind you.

I dreamed of you so long before I met you
and deep inside I never could forget you.

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