

A Few Words

from Jan Carroll

Summer 2022



In the Summertime

After softball, we, sixteen, *ONLY talked* in Cliff's truck. Dad pictured more.

Realization

I didn't understand what you meant about maybe sometime, about tulips in bloom, about city gardens not far off until I excused myself a moment from the table and in the public restroom, waving my hand in front of the paper-towel dispenser, nothing happened. This the kind with a simple mechanical handle, hands held out waiting to be dried, I finally realized. Maybe, you meant, there'd be two or three pieces in your puzzle that were almost the same as two or three in mine. Maybe on a Tuesday in the rain, I'd sigh, and you'd interpret that as a jazz phrase on which you could riff and we'd go back and forth like that, switching to instruments of words and looks. Maybe, with luck, I too would—it turns out—LOVE that movie where the man ties a gazillion helium-filled balloons to his lawn chair, gets in, grins, and cuts the tether. Maybe, when your alarm clock broke, I'd know how to fix it. I'd have the tools. Maybe when I fell in the river not knowing how to swim, you'd know what to do, how to keep me from drowning, possibly having to jump in too after taking off your shoes—but quickly, before I was swept downstream, too far to reach. Maybe we'd agree after careful consideration which peaches were best to buy that day at the open-air market and take home with us along with asparagus and apples in our wire bike baskets.





THE LAZARUS EFFECT: *Northern Exposure* Lives Again!

Are you a fan of the 1990s TV show *Northern Exposure*? Do you wish you could hear more of the adventures of the citizens of Cicely, Alaska?

I have written a sequel to the series, called *The Lazarus Effect*, with many of the residents you remember, along with a few interesting new ones. The sequel contains some poems, some dialogue, some poetry with dialogue in it, some dialogue with poetry in it.

If you'd like a copy, it is available in two formats: a PDF (free) via email OR a hard copy printed out by me at home (\$7 to cover printing and mailing costs).

Email jan.carroll333@gmail.com or Facebook message me if you are interested.

Because the Petal Will Soon Fall

I tried so hard to cram wire mesh
in all the breaches, but again this morning
a squirrel running back and forth
in the attic, gnawing on rafters.
We set a trap but the next day
the food was gone, no captive.

Nine years at the peace talks neutered
by harsh words uttered after weeks
of insomnia, the negotiator so long here
then home then here, he's not sure *where*
to lay his head anymore. So, war now?

The window washer shows up
unpredictably on his bike with a bucket
and squeegee, catches his breath
in the waiting room, this time tells
the receptionist he has a daughter
out West he almost never sees
because he has trouble keeping away
from drink. For ten dollars he clarifies
her perspective as she swivels in her chair
behind her desk before the plate-glass
thinking *There but for—that could be me!*
How silly my petty issues seem now.

I open the screen
freeing the bee.
How did it get in here?
How brief its life
storing up what honey it can
in the precarious hive
chamber by fragile, golden chamber.
Live! Live while you can.
The *flowers!*

Some readers have asked how they can support my work with this newsletter. First of all, the newsletter **remains FREE of charge**. But, if you would like to donate something to the cause, you can do so via Paypal (use my email, jan.carroll333@gmail.com). All donations will be much appreciated and will go to sharing my poetry. THANK YOU!