

**Newfound Magic:
A Collection of Poems by Caroline Chiaroni**

*Gold Key and American Voices Medal Recipient
2010 Scholastic Art and Writing Awards*

Dawn in wintertime

A powerful ghost breaking through darkness
Golden shadows dance on my skin
Bright rays crowing snow-tipped petals

Screeching sirens masking morning prayer
A suffocating stench invades Kabul
Seemingly asleep in a sea of red lava

Forest Epiphany

A feeble obstacle to the wind
Overshadowed by powerful leafy elders
Pushing, weaving into the sky
Rooted firmly in the ancestral soil

It will withstand time
A spectator at the heel of generations to come
A mummy to be unearthed
To tell the stories of life after death

Hidden Secrets

In O’Keeffe’s City Night
Giant black buildings loom in sight
The night sky peeking through the holes above
Calm and peaceful as it seems

Not visible to you or me
Seeking light to face the depth of darkness
Are the wandering ones

As the buildings close inward from above
And the innocent blue of the sky
Turns jet black

Below, between the high-rises
Walking into the open
They make themselves known

The shadows of the skyscrapers
conceal the brutal grief
of the hidden ones

Having nothing
except for that which is on their back
Each leaf avoids their path

Running towards that streetlight
as it glistens in the distance
Signaling hope for a way out
Promising a new beginning

They anticipate a world
away from the heavy shadows
where all is white
like the moonlight warming their skin
And when dark would come
the shadows would not have to hide them
They would be seen by all.

Faded with Age

the glow from the crescent moon
comes to rest on the peeling, faded
red paint of the Chinese pagoda roofs
splintered and cracked on their own
from old age

neglect of others shows in the wear
darkness unable to unfold its mask to hide it
still maintaining original beauty
while its purpose irrelevant to most

in a time when its ornaments glistened
and the marble steps beckoned to each who passed
a newfound magic hung in the air
with a hint of sadness
and recollection on how it came to be

a symbol of a people and their home
built so memories remained
and now as each shingle falls to shatter
with crimson smudge behind it
left with nothing but
forgotten past and unknown future

Trip to Summer

I break open the door
 as the sweltering Florida summer heat envelopes me
 I breath in the fresh air
sprinting on the red brick pavement
prickling my toes with its warmth
 over the worn wood of the bridge
 across the lagoon
 the sweet salty swamp scent
 lingers on my tongue
and then I see it
the great god with his whitecaps
calling out to me
 squishing through
 damp grainy sand
 the tepid water washes upon me
and wipes away the troubles of the long year
recalling the tough times in school
 overcome
 to arrive here

Grasping Time

Keeping tabs on time
How many moments until
None are left

Each cycle done
With great ease
Caressing each stop gently
A breath caught each time

A fear of stopping
Is left upon the hand
It passes seconds
Quickly and swiftly

The importance of each
Not lingering on its hand
But with us instead

Here boundaries are drawn
Limits exist

Waterskiing Lesson

The water blanketing and holding me down
Restrained and tied by ropes
Attempting to break loose
Once again the skis rise up
Relief and joy sweep through my veins
As the familiar scent of Lake Wylie sprays in my face
My reflection looking up at me
To see it now as if I have broken the barrier
Risen up above the mirror of waves
The exuberant faces of my loved ones
Looking back at me from the safe-haven in the white boat
Pulling me, my life, behind it
One look down and the water engulfs me once more
But, at least now I am secure away from the shore

Fire in the Night

Fear in the fire, the fire in the night
Reflecting on the calm waters of the bay
Stay silent my dear one, put up a fight

Heat sneaking up, as if taking a bite
Eating through darkness, ending the day
Fear in the fire, the fire in the night

The one who ignited this murderous light
Had some blazing intention to slay
Stay quiet my dear one, put up a fight

Even as the wood continues to splinter as it might
And the ashes of the lost rise as they may
Fear in the fire, the fire in the night

And as their faces become sheets and go pale with the sight
While the flames dance and continue gay
Stay calm my dear one, put up a fight

The candle on the mantle burns at its small height
Glad and merciful are the ones who keep it at bay
Fear in the fire, the fire in the night
Watch, but stay peaceful my dear one, put up a fight

The Arrival of Change

Having fallen
Softly swaying
In harmony with nature

Lingering for moments
In the midst
Of the living
The prosperous ones

Fighting back
Against the torturous winds
Which morph and color it

While others arrive
And work as blankets
To delay the arriving gusts
Which bring change
And a new beginning