

Four in a Room

Daughter <It's over. She's clear> 3:27

Dad <Good> 3:27

<Celebrating?> 3:27

Daughter <We going to China Doll> 3:28

<Join us?> 3:28

<Dad?> 3:35

<Busy?> 3:35

Dad <Yes> 3:35

<Can't do baby girl> 3:36

<What she eating?> 3:36

Daughter <Coln't hear phone sorry for late reply> 3:50

<Couldn't> 3:50

<Eating helathy veggies with bonless chicken> 3:50

Dad <That's good> 4:11

<Make sure she don't try a fifi ;-)> 4:11

Daughter <What?> 4:12

<Dad?> 4:19

<Hello?> 4:25

Dad <Work> 5:00

<On route to home> 5:30

<Are you coming home tonight?> 5:34

Daughter <Maybe. The doctor said she'll need some one to help> 5:35

<Using one hadn to type> 5:35

Dad <Alright> 5:48

<Call me tonight> 6:10

Daughter <Kay> 6:10

Dad <Hey> 7:00

<Call me> 7:15

<Call me now> 7:37

<Answer the phone> 7:42

<Hello?> 7:59

Daughter <Sorry. She had the runs and made a bit of a mess> 8:18

<Wouldn't let me in bathroom> 8:18

Dad <What happened?> 8:20

Daughter <Chinese+Coke—meds=Runs×messy floor> 8:23

<It's clean now and she's asleep> 8:24

<I'm sleepy too can I call tomorrow> 8:30

Dad <Go to sleep baby girl> 8:30

<I'll call you in the morning> 8:31

Lullaby of an Old Maid

I love coffee I love tea, I sang. Another verse to fill the porch's reticence with my own. *I love...And she loves me*. Not a name I could chirp. There was no other to sing to, not a little girl for me; my dead mother's voice frightened me as the words passed my throat and the melody startled me in my chair on the porch.

Houseguests (and the Act to Rid Them)

My Aunt caulks the window frames unfazed and then I tell her about the Baby Roach in the Cat's bowl. "The Cat ate her food anyway." I tease. She scrunches her face. A Wasp? (or Bee?) lands on her hair bun. (I don't tell her.)

August-October maybe is how long my Aunt and these---stay.

My Aunt bangs the French doors as my 'possum eats. The next day Lady Bugs invade. They die in the chandelier. The Cat naps and we clean out the little black dots. (Quickly, they pool after a week.)

I wake up to a Spider dancing into the A/C's unit. Commits suicide. There are Mosquitoes. We have their kisses on our arms and legs. (Zika vaccine?) (Nope.) Another Roach. (too easy to kill.)

Three more kisses on my feet. The cream, as the Cat, does little. I am itchy.

The insects roam. My Aunt barricades her room possessive of the Cat. Another Spider I find on the ceiling. It can live. Maybe eat the other guests.

New Marriage

Martha wedded a child's father.
The child paid no mind to her.
Each morning, Martha cooked bacon,
which went unnoticed by the child.
In a terrible rush, the child left for school
every morning leaving the newly wed bride
to weep. As she cleaned the table, she thought
of the man who brought her love and a house;
the child was less apparent, so Martha calmed
herself and let the child go as she had a husband
to watch over and a house to clean. The child
grew without a second mother and Martha
stopped cooking breakfast as the child went away.

For a Chilled Bone Marrow Woman

Yes, Trump is on. Stop watching CNN; it upsets me. Here, let me read to you. Don't! I'll do the dishes. Use the left hand when your right cannot hold. I am fine. Do you need your blanket? Breakfast? One waffle. Eggs and strawberry preserves too. No, I am not cold. Blanket? I'll put it on the couch. Don't forget your cane, please. Let's go outside. No? Back pain. Okay. Rest then do stretches. It's good for the muscles. I don't like rom-coms. Get up, stretch. Lie down, you're yawning. You've been up two nights. I can read to you. I'll stay 'til you're asleep. Yes, I can play Harry Belafonte. Let me cover you. No, really I'm good. It is 90°F outside and the A/C's on 74°F.