

Carol Ann Duffy

We Remember Your Childhood Well

Nobody hurt you. Nobody turned off the light and argued with somebody else all night. The bad man on the moors was only a movie you saw. Nobody locked the door.

Your questions were answered fully. No. That didn't occur. You couldn't sing anyway, cared less. The moment's a blur, a Film Fun laughing itself to death in the coal fire. Anyone's guess.

Nobody forced you. You wanted to go that day. Begged. You chose the dress. Here are the pictures, look at you. Look at us all, smiling and waving, younger. The whole thing is inside your head.

What you recall are impressions; we have the facts. We called the tune. The secret police of your childhood were older and wiser than you, bigger than you. Call back the sound of their voices. Boom. Boom. Boom.

Nobody sent you away. That was an extra holiday, with people you seemed to like. They were firm, there was nothing to fear. There was none but yourself to blame if it ended in tears.

What does it matter now? No, no, nobody left the skidmarks of sin on your soul and laid you wide open for Hell. You were loved. Always. We did what was best. We remember your childhood well.