

"Daddy's gone on the train," the mother looked at Anne soberly over the child's head.

"Daddy gone on train," the child repeated wisely.

The woman tried to smile at Anne, but it wasn't much of a smile.

At the corner by the chapel, Anne glanced down the street—only the barracks, the steps, and the silent trees beyond. Don had left no message for her at the guesthouse. When she called the orderly room of his company just to make sure, there was no voice to speak and stop the faint incessant jangle in her ear.

She put the phone down and her hand slipped from the phone as if it had no bone to hold it stiff.

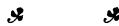
She drew a deep breath, "There's nothing to wait for. I guess I'll take the night train home." Home, that didn't mean Don laughing and teasing her—that meant going back to her parents—where the army always said a woman should stay in the first place.

Anne felt tired and her whole body ached. She had a queer sense that she would know this feeling well in time.

The woman looked at her. "Have a nice trip!" she said.

Anne turned to go. "Yes, you have a nice trip, too," she said.

As she turned away neither of them was smiling.



## Interim

Carolyn Carlson

A spring afternoon . . . .

Deep tones drifting through fingers curved over the  
keyboard,

Climbing at last on dust chains that cling to the  
sun.

Recessed chatter of blue-ringed cups—amber air  
twisting upward from amber tea.

And flame balls in adagio at candletips;

In the background, a delicate shuttle of voices.

Time draws her cape over her swiftly moving shoulders—  
and softly glides on.



her face was a prettiness of color . . . anonymous mouth, eyes ever oblique,  
soft eggfoam bangs.