5-1-2019

Card Not Accepted

Joslynn Howard
University of the Pacific

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/calliope

Part of the Poetry Commons

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/calliope/vol50/iss1/8

This Poem is brought to you for free and open access by the College of the Pacific Journals at Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Calliope by an authorized editor of Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact mgibney@pacific.edu.
Card Not Accepted

Joslynn Howard

Waiting in line at the grocery store, 
an infant (that drooling, cooing thing) 
peers her sweet, darling face 
over her mother’s shoulder directly at me. 
(The red ribbon, knotted 
like a new shoelace in my abdomen, 
loosens — 
it begs for unravel. 
So far, I’ve kept it secured around 
my vacant womb, a nest of crimson 
caution tape 
signaling immense 
danger ahead. 
It keeps me orderly).
The mother turns, proffering a polite smile 
in my direction. I cannot conceal my juvenile 
amazement over such a tiny creature. 
(I’m late for many things; 
for class; 
for practice; 
for work; 
for love. 
I’m always too late. 
Seconds slip out from under me. 
Time, fickle as it is, 
manages to keep me on a 
loose schedule). 
I place my box of tampons on the conveyor belt. 
(My bodily clock works overtime 
in order to stay on task with the 
rigorous demands of life). 
The infant coos, gurgling. 
(I feel a tinge of awareness, 
of sadness 
for the inevitable unravel).