



1-1-2014

# If My Mother were a Poem

Christine Viney  
*University of the Pacific*

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/calliope>

 Part of the [Poetry Commons](#)

## Recommended Citation

Viney, Christine (2014) "If My Mother were a Poem," *Calliope*: Vol. 46 , Article 26.  
Available at: <http://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/calliope/vol46/iss1/26>

This Poem is brought to you for free and open access by the College of the Pacific 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](mailto:mgibney@pacific.edu).

## *If My Mother Were a Poem*

CHRISTINE VINEY

If my mother were a poem,  
she'd forget the other half of her simile,  
leave it on the other side of the room, like—

She'd be the poem you always read when  
you were crying or angry, but the piece of  
paper it was written on would float away  
in the wind on the strength of its own belief,  
maybe coming to land in another country, or  
maybe just doing a little turn before coming  
back to settle in your hand like it never left.

There would be no proper rhyme or reason.  
Effervescent, evanescent, eloquent, she'd  
want to use all the words because it's only fair  
and she can't exclude. A plethora, a pastiche,  
she'd be editing forever, writing over  
to give everyone a chance.

Style would be questionable,  
whatever pretty goes:  
a dash of scarlet symmetry and a  
pinch of purple prose;  
slightly surreptitious sibilance and a  
rhyme scheme that doesn't fit.  
Everyone would read it, and then most would forget,  
until it drifted back into their lives, scratched on the  
seat of the bus station or written in the stars.

It'd be the first page, it'd be the last page.  
The first you picked up and the last you put down,  
until you checked and the words were gone,  
and you'd find them a month later,  
written in the pattern of hibiscus petals  
or spelled out in the first light of dawn,  
there at 5 am and then gone by 6.