

POETRY/FICTION

Poems

DO I HAVE ENOUGH COURAGE?

Do I have enough courage to witness your pain?
To hear how it hurts with little to gain?
To ask for a number when ten is too little;
to watch for a grimace in a non-verbal riddle.

Do I have enough courage to work through the barriers
which keep us from knowing you as a person?
A father, a brother, a friend or a mother;
a sister, an aunt, a partner or other.

Do I have enough courage to stay the course
when ignorance and arrogance pose such a force?
A formidable dyad gently eroded
by evidence, mentoring and empathy loaded.

Do I have enough courage to listen and hear
of the wishes and dreams believed to be near?
Of the anger and pain simmering above
the level of need; the depth of love.

Do I have enough courage to contemplate choices
which don't sound like options regardless of voices.
Considering lives curtailed by time or extended out
beyond reason or rhyme.

Do I have enough courage to reflect and grow,
no matter what age or how much to know?
With help from beside me, below and above
the answer is "yes," the outcome is love.

—Candace C. Coggins