

Caroline Wellman

The Archer

Summer after summer,
all your sons struggled
to string your big bow,
as if you'd been born
Odysseus. Where
are they now, the old
leather guards for forearm
and fingers, the thick brown
cardboard squares you painted
with bright circles and fastened
to excelsior bales?

All in one motion, you'd pull
an arrow over your shoulder,
notch it, line it up quick
and let go, your bow-arm
so unerringly straight
the arrow thwacked home
loud and swift and true,
hard as your words
when we had done wrong
And we knew it.

Caroline Wellman's poetry collection *Presences* was published by Parallel Press in 2013. Her most recent work has appeared in *Solstice*, *The Hopper*, *Lindenwood Review*, *The Green Light*, *Tiny Seed Journal*, *Jalada Africa* and an anthology *Coronavirus Silver Linings*. She holds an MFA in Creative Writing and a doctorate in American Literature from the University of Arkansas. She has taught creative writing, literature and composition at colleges in the Midwest and the South. She currently works for the U.S. Postal Service in Illinois.