

Calligraphy – Carroll Taylor -- Georgia

Miss Alma loved the magic
of hand-written words.
The fancy, the flourish,
ascenders and descenders,
majuscule and minuscule.

She taught us a hand
of cursive font.
She said we're judged
by the way we write,
and sending notes to others
in our best handwriting
is more than mere flair.
It is a gift of art,
a sign of respect.

Q and D or W and Z,
loops of b and p,
triple and double
humps of m and n.
The purposeful crossing
of x or dotting each
i and j with precision.

We scribed with fine nibs
of leaky fountain pens,
our fingers smudged with black,
our ink and ideas
blending on milk-white paper
in wispy swirls and twists.
Letters slanted to the right
in perfect italic style,
sensing their master's pen
might someday wield
power over tyrants.

Elegant strands of letters,
serif and sans-serif,
etched into fibers
of parchment or linen.
Now seen as cryptic shapes,
like hieroglyphics
scratched on rolls of papyrus,

indecipherable to many
who were never taught
or never tried to learn,
those who cast aside
graceful elegance
for their own devices—
dull plastic keyboards
and wiggling emojis.