

"The Night Visitor" A Short Story

In June's heat stirs the critters of the night - and tonight was no different. A light brown cricket crept underneath my prison cell door. Her frame gave way to the illuminated hallway. I layed on my bed as she inched her way in. Within "15" minutes she started to sing. I sat and listened to my visitor - as she was the first to visit me in the hole, and solitary confinement can be a lonely place.

When her music stopped I decided to see who my little entertainer was. I turned on the light & noticed she was badly hurt - her two big hind legs were almost severed, so I performed surgery removing both legs. Within days she was back to health.

She enjoyed cooked green peas, corn, beans, and peaches. It was fascinating to learn how shy this little creature was but she grew to trust me.

At night I would lower her bed to the floor that I made from a toilet paper roll stuffed with bits of tissue inside. At night she'd go to the shadows of my door and sing - and sing she did. Inmates were a little upset with this noisey little bug - but I didn't disclose I was harboring her. Night after night she'd sing to attract another cricket then return to her little bed after none would answer her call. I cared for her until she could manage on her own. Some times she'd sit & clean herself just like a cat does. I am amazed that a bug like this - that I used to kill without giving it

a second thought - has a unique personality.

Upon the final night she went to the door to sing, however this time her song was answered. I turned on the light & there he was next to the little house I made for her. I realized I was intruding on something special, so I clicked the light back off. ~~They~~ they both exited under the door, but before she left - I would swear she said good bye with 2" little squeaks that were very different than before.

By James Collins

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* Identifying a cricket's sex. A female is a light brown - A male is a midnight black -
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