

The Card Players

By Calvin Forbes

A fourth was needed so one of the three
Invited a friend and I came along as a spare
In case a chair was empty since I could fill
In as easily as I could shout out a rhyme.

As the jive flowed like the River Jordan
And Joshua and his trumpets sounded the alarm
The winning cards slam damned on the table
And I laughed along with morning noon and night.

My three big brothers: bold smart handsome.
One slim as a stick of dynamite, the second solid
As a line backer and the third crazy enough
To fight them both if they let it roll beyond talk.

Treated me like a child even after I had my first.
The three of them (ace king and a wild card)
Improbably born within four years as if Daddy
And Momma were trying to break a record

Or win a bet about how many diapers a woman
Could change in a single day without cursing
The hand God had dealt her; the odds were even
Until I came along years later to tell their story.