

**2012 Roger M. Jones Poetry Contest  
Fourth Prize: Hannah Cheriyan**

**Rhapsodies in Gossamer**

Hazy, lazy summer  
And the sunrise  
Casts bright tangerine shadows  
On the wall

Staring into the window to the world,  
A wall of shivering green  
Whispers in the hush,  
“Masterpiece, masterpiece”  
As the maple trees  
Shimmer emerald green

Perspective is everything.

For instance, the monument,  
When you lie flat against it and look  
Up,  
Turns into a road.  
And if only you could manage to  
Run vertically,  
You could find the rainbow at the end

And if you peered inside  
A hydrangea bush,  
You would see dewdrop fairies  
Frantically composing minuets, waltzes, rhapsodies  
In gossamer  
Presented to them by those spiders you fear the most  
Who are, indeed, patrons of the arts

But perhaps the wall and the bushes intersect,  
Somewhere near the  
Path to the Sun,  
That scintillates in gold on the waves  
Beneath the sunset

And perhaps the clouds are reality,  
And we are floating  
This side of the gossamer,  
Underwater,

The wispy clouds, ripples  
In the calm sea of the sky

## **My Song**

A song caught me today  
Tangled in my hair,  
Flying in halos around my feet  
It perched on the edge of my eyelash

Songs don't let go easily  
This one jumped into my keyboard  
Danced on my bacteria cultures,  
And conducted an orchestra inside my head

What am I to do with you, song?  
It laughed as my piano tried to capture it,  
Defying my flute,  
And twirling through my books.

And for one day, music was everywhere  
I saw the theater ghosts on the wall  
Heard the ballad of the paintbrushes  
Tasted the notes of the molten sunlight

Oh, song,  
I know now-  
As I walk through tunnels  
Of golden, leafy canopies  
And music floats around me,  
You found me, my song, so-

I sing.

## The Inconvenience of Running in Slippers

How exhilarating  
To whisk down the  
Gradually  
    sloping  
        hall

Faster and faster and faster  
As if you might  
Sprout wings and

Fly

And just in mid-leap,  
Before you burst into blossom,  
Your slipper flies off

The momentum is  
Lost  
Your footfalls no longer airy  
But elephantlike, clumsy, and  
You trip,  
Stumble,  
And burn your knees on the  
Rough, unsympathetic carpet

What madness!  
Ah, there it sits, foolish slipper,  
Taunting your nearness to the heights,  
Your searing fall  
Pain perches on your knee all day in reminder  
With sharp pecks, whenever you're not  
Expecting them

It's not as if it's a useful fallen slipper

Princes are rare nowadays,  
And they only pick up glass slippers anyways

## **Forgotten F(all)**

It is raining.

Summer  
gasps  
as gravity pulls it underwater,  
So that emerald is frozen without a hint of a blush,  
And the lines between green and gray are  
blurred.

Everyone is gray, walking,  
                  falling,  
                  floating.

I don the orange hat,  
Cheerily glowing golden,  
And defy the rain  
But under the hat  
I am just as gray as any of them.

We have forgotten

How to burn our costumes in vermilion flames,  
Shed our coverings,  
And bare the branching skeletal roots of our souls.  
Because despite masks of green, vibrant life,

Under the stifling blankets of snow  
We are dead anyway.

I am choking on an overdose of irony and green leaves.

## **The Music of Life**

A trumpet fanfare, sounding loud,  
Heralds the rising blooms of sun  
Leaves drip gold in dewy clouds  
To mourn the summer, so undone

Audio-graphic stains are framed  
Upon the mind, thus laid bare  
Moments caught and memories claimed  
By roses, yet the thorns are there

The keening of a violin  
Into words such feelings pound,  
An almost-waltz, what could have been  
Had the glass slipper been found

Yet onward, those persistent drums  
Lifting wings into the sky  
Silent breath, a heart-string strums  
A smiling melody of bright eyes

Symbolic, shimmering red-gold tones  
Embrace at last the rising sun  
The lurking monsters merely bones,  
In truth, the play has just begun