

**2015 Roger M. Jones Poetry Contest  
Fourth Place: Antonina Malyarenko**

**Metaphor**

Euphoric and morose, you juxtapose, make poetry into prose  
Or do you just find words, reclined, enraptured and intertwined  
In combinations that have the prompt luxury of being pre-defined?  
No, you never misidentify, never create a fix that fails to adequately  
Personify the trail-mix in my head or the inexplicable thought-thread  
I can never quite deny. By design you're invincible, infallible, since  
You bring to life the latent meaning in my otherwise hapless prints  
Yes, I've got it, now I've won; you exist to light the sun when candles  
Break, shake, suffocate without oxygen in this intoxicated 3D world  
In the fabric of space-time you're the quantum, the small, the nuclear  
Oh, let me remain in your atmosphere for just a little while, my dear  
I'm aware  
That you're proof of the extension of the mind beyond dimension  
You allow creation of this sentence to stir recognition devoid of pretense  
Could a sentence stir anything without you? Could a word ignite you?  
If what were logically true were all it took to fully explain this life  
I'd be a tautology. I am not a tautology, won't partake in ignorant strife  
I refuse to be reduced to something algorithmic when I'm rhythmic  
So inherently contradictory, structurally malignant, morally indignant  
You leave room for all my burning incense, pinch the blooming pigments  
In the palette that my paintbrush yesterday ignored when it found  
New meaning elsewhere to explore. Oh, I can see how you adore  
Mocking me, seducing in dissonant disharmony because you see  
I've reached a point where I can assess the depth of the chasm of  
My ignorance.  
Don't leave me now though now's the perfect time to leave me  
Turn out your pockets and let me perceive me, grant me reprieve  
In these last seconds when no one believes me, don't you see  
I can't prove anything but I know you're the past incarnate, concept  
Dolorous allegory, poetic diction will always reduce the friction  
Between nature and man, mythology, whispers of doubt in human  
Psychology. Lexical meaning aside, words have depth, substance  
Inner sustenance outside of our minds, heavily lodged in the networks  
Of time, rhyme, of bread and wine. It's ancient and contemporary  
But never temporary.

These words were never mine.

## **These Are the Things**

These are the things you wish you wrote  
One, to the boy with sapphire eyes-  
The gold in your armor really offset  
The blank, frank, palpable regrets  
That glossed your worn demeanor  
Yeah, live a little  
Shake off the sick enmeshments that  
Bind you so stiffly to the quick maelstroms  
Of the sea, the sand, unyielding, knees  
Skimming, rocks and pebbles that have been  
Worn down, for months and years, like  
The synaptic junctions of your being  
No one can do it for you.  
Two, to the girl who is ostensible  
Your very existence caught unquestionably  
In mortal synergy with mine  
Thick cataracts of misconceptions  
Yeah, they peel with age, with time  
We glint, we glow, we watch, we grow  
We've reached a point and we now know  
There is too much to know  
But still  
We learn, we learn to love and lose  
To trade, to choose, to give the parts up  
For the wholes  
The very universe is throbbing, full of these  
Cravings, dreams and nightmares in our souls.  
Three, to him, thanks  
For showing me the way,  
With my own hands, to change the world I see  
For proof that true beauty  
Is fleeting, unattainable by nature, truly free  
For wanting to skip dinner,  
Skip out on jealousy and prayers for  
Absolution, in favor of intrusion of a  
Different kind.  
Half our opinions come from our first loves  
But no one person ever fills

These gaps, breaks in the lines  
Of paradigms.

## Album Leaf

I tell myself that timing isn't everything  
That echoes aren't instant pressure from an unseen source  
I know you'll never come to trap me the way she can  
The way she had her sordid, selfish grieving way with you...  
There wasn't anything for us, I know, I knew, but still  
My mind is fluctuating  
Full to the brim with frothing thoughts, with worthless molecules, at your discretion  
If you were wondering, it was your eyes that blinded me  
Slick whirlpools of serenity and pain that arced in cadences  
When I smeared on my chap-stick  
In one fell swoop, a jagged line across my waiting lips  
How blue, how mercilessly indigo, then violet  
The spectrum thick, a signaling cascade that merged from one iris to the next  
Like calcium-calmodulin  
I knew that my unwitting hook had brushed your stitches  
The ones you tried so hard to mask but ended up engulfing  
In liquid obsolescence  
I told myself I knew your fears, mistook your pain for fervor  
Transcendence that you didn't have, hadn't tapped into yet  
But timing isn't everything  
Unwittingly I shut myself out  
Poured out lies upon lies in search of the correct dynamic  
I'll never learn that once my fingers hit piano keys  
There's nothing I can do to stop the slew of sound  
Vibrato whispers send us, quivering  
In periodically hushed sequences, the aftermath of an explosion  
A padded hammer strikes steel strings, heartstrings  
Another signaling cascade makes love with thirsty metronome  
Thirsty for minutes, hungry for seconds, starving for a way to harness time  
Not a subunit, instead a submachine  
Embedded systems reeling in a new regime  
But I'll admit  
That one mistake, one soft discordant note  
A flitting insecurity  
Could be enough to fuel the ruin of a melody  
A quiet misstep, a vulnerable fumble, another way to stray from the meridian  
If fate existed it would laugh at us right now, caught in a maze  
Musical haze

Feverishly reading between the lines, inky on note-paper  
Stifled by the grand staff, suffocated with treble trembles  
Making decisions with nuclear consequences  
But timing isn't everything.

## **Delirium**

Perched at the window waiting for rain to come  
When it has gone we'll be alone again  
Disquieted by this, by us, but not by you, yourself  
By all the unknown brilliance we will create together

Your pillowed arms covet a steadfast core  
Solemnity becomes your green, expressive eyes  
Our seasons bring well waters' cresting rise  
Our whispers break veiled shuttered prison bars

In colored flares the scenery is swiftly shed  
Unnerving crispness blankets scents of change  
To lie on trains these stormy daiquiri days  
With fingers knotted in bouquets of lavender...

It's venerably quaint and thoroughly elusive  
But time can never firmly tell us no  
The way we feel is malleable and mobile  
And now our thoughts are littered with the ghosts of then

We're inked in paths that end in arrowheads  
The quickenings, the in-betweens, the roads less traveled by  
A line is just a circle at infinity  
Therefore we know, beginnings never end