## 7 a.m. in June

it is yellow spider's hour to catch the sunlight, her silks draped over the barberry like disrobed lingerie

it is the hour for cottonwood seeds to flash their fairy wings and birds in stereo to sing the morning news

I close my eyes,
pulling close the freshly-baked sunshine,
like savoring a lover;
my silent breaths and
swallows of hot coffee
selfish luxuries in the brevity
of hover-time between
waking and waking

upstairs
you sleep with the determination of
a man set on waking up to a fresh start;
your brow furrows against a darkness
that cannot be driven away by daylight

## Flight of the Abecedarian

Actually they were just bits of cardboard boxes decorated with every color of old paint we could "Great day to fly," she announces hand on hip, insisting that I squeeze in just behind her. "But you'd better keep your seatbelt on." Looking back, she waits for me to buckle before adjusting her dials and knobs. "Next stop outer space!" I hold on tight. Pressing the gas, she quickly revs the engine with spitting and sputtering lips. We take off in our rainbow spaceship, accelerating until we are lightyears from our driveway, coasting velocity reached somewhere around the Little Dipper. Wearing princess crowns as helmets, we explore the depths of the universe. "You take the wheel," she demands and pulls out a Ziploc bag of pretzels.

## Drip

tip tap tippity tap drippity drippy drip drap "I've got to clean those gutters" you say annoyed again by the drip splatting its syncopated backbeat on the jutting glass of our new kitchen window you pause to lean over my shoulder as I wash the dishes looking up with distracted disinterest the slanting window was my idea to expand the inside space of whining children and looping rhythm of plan cook clean repeat into the green and blue tamed wild of middle America to be 18 inches closer to the visiting squirrels and sparrows lunching al fresco on the other side me on display for them peering out like a fish in an aquarium wide-eyed and enclosed drippity dap tip tap rain always seems to refuse its containers gutters barrels swales riverbanks sometimes it sweeps away small boys and pulls towering trees up by their roots but now it is gentle tippity drippy drap tap like a wink

its refusal to be tamed

beckoning me with its friskiness and

## The Far End of Tanbark Street

while the earth is shaking with fear and the humans run skittering like kicked ants to hide behind made-up battlelines

somewhere
down at the far end of Tanbark Street
the split trunk of the climbing tree
yawns her open palm
to hold lounging children and beach towels
drained and dripping
like afternoon lions
toes hang wrinkled
fringed with bits of green and brown

while the cities rage and crumble and the humans scream from behind keyboards to disguise their softness with memes and slogans

somewhere
down at the far end of Tanbark Street
squealing giggle-jumps
burst through hose-rainbows borrowed
from forgotten thunderclouds
making shiny goosebumps quiver
like eel-skin
and sticky red chins gleam with
cherry pit spit

while the bobbling heads build blame and the humans point fingers and guns to evade their leering past and teetering future

somewhere
down at the far end of Tanbark Street
the preteen forgets to be cool
and the neighbor boys team up to
soak the girls
they are the Avengers
or maybe unicorns
or aliens with laser eyes
either way the click-click-click of the
approaching sprinkler is their biggest threat

somewhere
while the humans forget
that the purpose of life is to be alive
today is still yesterday
and yesterday will become tomorrow
down at the far end of Tanbark Street