

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
find.
“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.

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