



“serqet” by r'r'r © 2009

The Scorpion Prize of Issue IX:2

The first time I read through the *ku* section of May’s *Roadrunner*, I realized just how foolish I had been in offering to judge the Scorpion Prize from among its contributions. There were at least a half dozen works that stood out for me from a very strong collection overall. My immediate thought was that whomever I designate, I will surely be guilty of an injustice to several others. Rereading the selection several times – mostly with the names “turned off” (tho I know none of the contributors personally) – did not change this initial sensation of guilt, but I did gradually keep returning to two works that lasted with me long after I had stopped reading. Both are thoroughly worthy of the Scorpion Prize & therefore they must share it. The first of these poems is Lorin Ford’s

their wings like cellophane remember cellophane

which jolted me both for its perceptual accuracy & its originality. It reverses our expectations of “nature poetry” in a way that is entirely true to the greater tradition. The second, Doug Kutney’s

the wasp
makes the window
more English

does much the same thing, albeit with a somewhat more subtle & ironic slant to it. Once you have read either of these poems, they are impossible to let go of. You start seeing the world through their almost shared lenses.

Having said this I also want to acknowledge the poems by Paul Pfleuger Jr, all of which are quite good, as well as the Latin-flavored trio by Michael McClintock & especially the humor in Michael Dylan Welch’s fourth “neon buddha” poem – the one laugh-out-loud moment in the entire selection. All of these writers make me want to read more.

Ron Silliman