

Fern Dancing

by George E. Curran, III

In passing, you felt for years and years unexplained,
Creeping, wet coolness - like despair -

Where the forest opened to settling mist, quivering
Shadows, and primitive green things sucking on rot;

But you stopped once when the wind rose
To watch the ferns splash and dive and bend

In a weird dance that reminded you of
Waves breaking on rock, or stones thrown in a pond,

Or the sting - like nausea - of her tears
On your cheek as she pressed pity,

Wrenching sour wine, or the spurt of that last
Gasp that went unheard, being too heavy.



And you thought to run, but the ferns calmed
In resolution and then rose en masse

To sway the wind, all of it - the music!
And a tender hand, green-white, clasped you

By the neck, drawing ice through
Arteries, to dance to the airy dirge

For the thousand green corpses entombed in
Mouldering earth. Eyes frosted quartz and

Ferns pulsed kaleidoscope in geometric rhythm,
Throwing you into the dirt where you found

Your regrets dipped in quicksilver,
Wrapped in moss.

And with hands blue as the vein over your
Lover's breast and with thoughts running Fire-

Cold, you plucked a fern while it still fanned coolly,
Dipped it in a mushroom, and with that -

Wrote poetry.

