

"The Wishing Fountain"
by An-Dinh Nguyen

A small, copper-haired boy
Steps up
To the edge of the circular,
Rippling pool.
He closes his eyes,
Flattening his wish
Against palms lined with hope
And life,
And softly murmurs a dream
As he drops it
Into the water.

A large old lady,
Silver streaming through her hair,
Glasses gliding off her nose,
Shuffles toward the fountain.
She digs into her purse,
Fingers brushing the
Soured perfumes,
Unraveling mittens,
Images
Coated with melancholy.
Luster that has flaked away
From her portable pieces of fancy
Surges back
As a single coin flies
Off her hand,
Vanishing
Beneath the water.

A tall, slender man
Stops to gaze
At the lively liquid fan.
With crinkled brow,
He looks down,
Edgily,
Enviously,
At its floor,
So dotted with drowned wishes.
Sighing, he fishes for pocket change
And slings it all
From his hand,
Into the air,
Over the water.
Each coin twinkles
Coldness,
Clarity,
Plunking unceremoniously among
Rustier friends.
The man smiles emptily.

He blows away,
Past the lady,
Past the boy,
And thinks no more
Of his wishes,
To be lost and forgotten
Until,
Somehow,
They all
Come
True.