

ILONA KARMEL WRITING PRIZES

ELLEN KING PRIZE FOR FRESHMAN WRITING

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# 1

we talked  
and we talked  
but I didn't listen  
because your hair  
framed what a face  
you have

and when we talked  
you talked  
and I listened  
because your voice  
whispered what would  
we become  
one day

and the time stretched  
and I became regretful  
of the seconds half-buried  
fingers reaching up  
through the refuse  
and sandy shells  
empty  
oblivious

## 2 Symphony

grandmothers and uncles lounge in thrones  
kindly bestowing tapestry  
knit of lucid sinewy streams pulling  
my bones  
resonant warm  
gravity's vibe strings  
heavily blanketing the city

I breathe helium

### *adagio*

dusky rain unzips coat and troubles  
coaxing off clinging daily grit  
patient love was never a wrong answer  
until the city childishly splashes more on  
through the shuddering gasp ordeal my dusky companion envelops me

### *crescendo*

delivered thus to the doorstep of the palace  
royal fingers dance upon the stage  
the fabric of the universe responds in kind  
lifting the eavesdroppers into sacred ritual  
piercing arrows and ancient bows stirring

### *presto*

the regal procession agitates  
traffic stampedes as it did centuries hence  
now the city crashes its cuss horn  
heedless of bicycle lanes and docile tinkles

### *ritardando*

hauntingly solitary flecked with rays of interaction  
the newspaper vendor and tea shop server  
do not deserve such scorn  
but the city, oh the city  
perhaps it rushes to a hospitalized grandfather

### 3 Today

peaceful thoughts dreamt fresh blue skies  
the morn did not erase

dusting of fresh powdered steps

sidewalk clear unchaste

sun-tanned homes yawn politely  
burping well-clothed burps  
who bustle bust bounce keen light green  
deaf-blind to curvy curbs

under bridge sneak flakes of wind  
unique ice-fractal form

over banks stretch naked trees  
soft swaying  
hiber-warm

gazing over tundra'd Charles

sun lights, lifts lips numb cheek

the staler burp right next to me  
sees, puzzles: why unbleak?

running-morns are funning-morns  
see, while I prance-dance on,  
these burps outstrip me every way

I choose my race to run

## 4 Can we again?

glances meant nothing  
before eggs benedict with avocado  
there in the sun  
with melting joy all around  
beam smile in my heart

then you left

a bond you don't yet feel  
each day  
though the spider's web be not so thin  
I am hopeful for the morrow