

Ashwani Kumar

## A Daughter Dies

The summer in the city stammers in disgust,  
The flowers around me recline in sorrow.  
My cousin informs me  
her daughter just died in a strange accident.  
In my last dream  
She shut her tired eyes,  
Told me about her desire to drive a fast car  
And play hide-and-seek with the light winter drizzle.  
Now I hear her tears from the ceiling fan,  
Her wild heart dances on the wretched rope,  
Her bright, uneven teeth gleam;  
She smiles over my silly jokes.  
I imagine  
She just died with all her faithful belongings:  
Few half-grown seasons, countless rotten blueberries,  
And a kiss on the face of the moon.  
Now I see her sprawled on a dirty plastic sheet.  
As I collect her postmortem report,  
I lean over,  
Chew my nails like she used to  
And vomit a vague surprise.