

life of noone (in that pretty how town)

after “anyone lived in a pretty how town” (E. E. Cummings)

Nina Smetana

POETRY, 2ND PLACE (Grades 10-12)

anyone was a love of mine
his name still frozen in my time
summer autumn winter spring
always more than everything

he thought he wasn’t (i knew he was)
he lived alone, just because
he said his love was only his
he’d stay that way as long he lives

and so he went, faceless and lost
his eyes cast downwards, legs kept crossed
he cursed the sky and wept the rain
that noone loved him more by more

he didn’t know he’d said my name
he didn’t know he’d seen my rain
he only lived to die alone
(but still I loved him more by more)

the invisible man does his dance
he sings his songs and laughs his laughs
spring summer autumn winter
never seen and never heard

but anyone wasn’t, he never was
he lived alone, just because
he buried himself and lost the world
never seen and never heard

i met him on a summer’s day
i can’t forget that hollow gray
i seeked to cure, i longed to love
for him it never was enough

i laughed his cryings and did his dance
and yet i never stood a chance
i laughed his joy, i cried his grief
(and still i loved him more by more)

and so i married my everyone
moon stars rain sun
(anyone's any was all to me)
but all my nothing was none to him

i slept i woke i hoped and then
i watched him hide himself again
invisible man, invisible thoughts
i was his but he was not

(but who was i if not his love)
for him it never was enough
sun stars moon rain
and so i lost my always name

and through the empty gray i saw
anyone's icy pathways thaw
but cold grew mine with passing years
and frozen grew those salty tears

i watched him grow to gray and old
a thousand stories never told
summer autumn winter spring
i listened to his silence ring

well one day anyone died, i guess
it wasn't much change, i confess
invisible man, invisible thoughts
he was mine but i was not

he was anyone, he always was
he loved alone, just because
i was noone of concern
(and i was his, more by more)

but aren't we all noones just the same
our faces blank, our lives unnamed
who are you to say i'm wrong
that i wasn't noone all along

we are noone, we always were
becoming nameless hims and hers
we watch our everyones disappear
not too far but never near

never close but never distant
anyones sit and wait and listen
you say the name will make us weak
purposeless and bittersweet

that who are we if we don't know
what will we be if we don't grow
the answer's hidden, hard to find
(i guess it never crossed my mind)

who can i be if i am not
am i not me without his thoughts
only everyone if i am his
can i not dance, can i not live?)

the thought it passes, slow and sure
i'd never thought of it before
he wasn't anyone, i wasn't not
we aren't just someone's fading thought

we live to see not to be seen
we make ourselves in the in-between
and i'm not noone, i have a name
sun stars moon rain

Nina Smetana is a senior at St. Paul Academy. Her interests include theater, cross country running, reading, and music. In her spare time you can find her doing a crossword, composing a song, or playing games with friends and family.