

Junior Division, Poetry

Yuvarna Govender, Mount Pearl

### **White Wedding**

They stand wreathed in flames

The gold and red of their costumes flit and spark with the light of the artificial stars overhead

Clothes as red as blood,

as fire,

as the petals of a rose,

as the dye stained onto her skin,

as all the best

things are

We sit at round tables, equally unimportant as phoenix bride and groom walk down the painted aisle

Silken wings adorned with gems

Slender necks curved and rigid

They know the steps to this dance

They know it like baby birds know that to fly they first must fall

And oh how they've fallen

They perch now on a double throne of white leather

I've known her since I was a child

I remember birdwatching out of kitchen windows, sleepovers in front of the tv

And now I watch her be given away

My eyes prickle and for a second I can't tell if it's from whatever's bubbling in the depths of my chest or the mascara clumped to my lashes

It's the mascara

The room is lined with linen

White as the flowers that litter the ground,

as the couch,

as the stage lights  
blinding as they are

If I close my eyes and imagined I could take myself to a forest of silk

Filled with flowers that would never truly bloom

The fantasy form of the reality before me

But my eyes remain wide open, caught in this spiderweb moment

She looks radiant, there's no other word for it

She's shining like the sun and we are all satellites trapped within her gravity

Snagging ourselves on the comet trails of her sari

Hoping to hold onto a part of her as she leaves

No longer the little girl so many knew

She's going supernova now, and we are all caught in the explosion

Walking hand-in-hand towards the open doors

They take their flame with them as they go

They leave us bereft

There is an ache in my chest and I think its name might be loss

I hope that wherever their joined wings take them the fire is bright enough to light their way

I blink, and for a moment I let myself dream of the future

This is the turning of a page,

this is the start of a new chapter,

this is a beginning,

this is the end

The phoenixes are burning themselves to ash

And I wonder if this is what rebirth feels like