

# Nepenthe

*by* Gary Hardaway

Before our language made its way  
to papyrus, stone and clay,  
we sought escape from stress and boredom  
through discoveries of beer and wine  
and medicinal powers of herbs and fungi.  
While the kings invented architecture  
as stones thrown against impermanence and death,  
lesser folk explored the more  
deliverative effects of biochemistry.  
Alas, the wind, the rain  
and plate tectonics take temples,  
fire and sediment papyrus and clay,  
and those still breathing wake from stupor  
to confront another day.

