

# When the Moon Blooms

*by* Paula Ray

Your faded presence in sepia dream returns,  
firelight whispers and vanilla scented ash.  
We were a beautiful knot: sinew and hemp,  
burlap and magnolia petal, concrete and vapor.

Gray kisses hovered overhead, misty visions,  
a strong invisible grip inside a prayer,  
hands folded into origami chapels  
where our heart-shaped bells rang.

Time swayed, quiet, slow-dancing in starlight.  
My heart, skipping across the water,  
only to sink before reaching your shore.

And somehow, a magnolia moon has found you.  
You, with your shovel, beaded brow, and purpose,  
digging up roots to set me free.

