

The Enchanted Clockwork

by Marija Milacic

An infant with an old man's face visits my dreams before disease takes loved ones across the Styx River. Baby feet, vicious eyes. Can I break the spell fast enough?

I pore over books and parchments, the child screaming in my arms. No magic words make those lips smile. No magic potion calms the hungry cry. The horror multiplies. I search my pockets for the winning two cents.

Too late. The clock is faster. The monster escapes.

Two copper coins cover beloved eyes of my kin. Coins to pay the Styx boatman. A pass to the Underworld through educated helplessness.



One

by Janice Allen

A crackle draws my eye downward,
to where a pile of oak leaves has collected
haphazardly in the gutter.

One specimen catches my attention,
a fossilized remnant preserving the shape, only,
of the presumably vibrant original.

What path did this one leaf follow, to reach
its current abode, nestled inconspicuously
among so many similar copies?

How far was it tossed on the fickle wind, as it brushed,
casually, past one and another, leapt, paused,
sharing momentarily the uncertain ride.

Each path has been lost. Only the original form,
indistinguishable from the crumpled multitude,
and a final resting place, are preserved.

