

2026 TMA Poetry Prize

3rd Place, Adult Category

Kathleen Meyers

Oregon, Ohio

Fractal

Inspired by Dale Chihuly's *Confetti Chandelier*

Scientific literature used to describe
a "fertilization fairytale."

The knight advancing, the princess waiting.

Life framed as rescue, as conquest.

But look closer.

At their meeting there is no sword.

There is light –

a zinc spark opening

in the dark of a single cell,

a brief arc of fire.

Once the universe was smaller than breath,

plasma cooling to hydrogen,

space widening into stars.

That first light still travels – caught

in color,

in glass,

in us.