

A Forgotten Bridge Recalls the Moss Folk

Where a stream once ran 'neath my timbered span
skulks a dank ditch leaching a putrid stench.
Its diminished flow, a pallid echo,
evokes remembrances I cannot quench.
For many a year have I bided here,
wistfully awaiting their blithe return.
My vigil I keep for those elfin feet,
their woeful fate is my foremost concern.
How they skipped and danced and sometimes, perchance,
trilled in silken tone a secret refrain.
In mantles of moss they capered across
my arch in an emerald daisy chain.
'Til the bodeful sounds of his baying hounds
heralded the Wild Huntsman's arrival.
On that darksome night those sprites took flight
seizing their only chance of survival.
With gossamer tread o'er my boards they sped,
tumbling like fallen leaves caught in a squall,
as helter-skelter they sought out shelter
urged on by midnight marauders' footfall.
With slavering maws and heinous hooked claws
those fiendish curs gave relentless chase.
My flesh bears the grooves of his horse's hooves;
the path of that pursuit forever traced.
Thus were they banished, entirely vanished,
ne'er more to dwell in this sylvan domain.
Not all have perished, the dream I've cherished.
Oh, to hear their melodic song again.

Amy Clennel