

## **Joyce Wilson – Three Poems**

### **The Provider: This Bridge Will Get You**

Where water has no memory,  
The bridge across it will remember.

In this, it is like our parents,  
Reaching, over-extended, tense,

Eager to please those who cross it,  
Aware how much we need their help.

Yet we walk all over it, steps  
Clacking rudely, or wheels rumbling.

The span provides, laborious,  
Leaning with certainty, purpose.

It cannot fail to keep its grip  
As it bears traffic over rivers

Whose currents writhe against the pull  
Of lunar influence and weathers.

We can be re-assured and know  
That though the roads are stalled for miles,

This bridge remembers us, and at  
the least, will get us on our way.

### **The Captain: Of the Seas**

All up and down the coast, the land  
Is joined by bridges like this one.  
Limited by scope and time,  
They soon fall short of nature's work,  
Confusing dreams with amplitude.  
I keep my bow turned toward the sea.

You cannot depend on a bridge  
That masks the poorly charted course.  
The journey is the searching for  
The next good harbor, where you find  
Temporary peace at anchor.  
One can be free on the water.

## The Naturalist: River Gods

We underestimate the power of rivers:  
Swollen, rushing, receding, renewed,  
Harnessed by commercial enterprise

Until problems arise. We turn away.  
What made us think the river would accept  
This layering of planks? This crossing bridge?

I came here looking for a life to live.  
The river seemed a likely place to start,  
A place to study man's and nature's art.

I built my dreams and aspirations here.  
Now I find some dreams fulfilled, some flown,  
A house paid for, children fully grown.

All that I have the river would dissolve.  
My face reflected in its surface sheen,  
I see my need in old age, infancy—

Frozen, then breaking; thawed, and then flowing.  
Conveyance of trade and commerce all year.  
In spring, it proves to be a herring run.

**Joyce Wilson** has taught English at Suffolk University and Boston University. Her first poetry collection *The Etymology of Spruce* and a chapbook *The Springhouse* both appeared in 2010. She is creator and editor of the magazine on the Internet, *The Poetry Porch* ([www.poetryporch.com](http://www.poetryporch.com)), which has been on-line since 1997. Her poems have appeared in many literary journals, among them *Alabama Literary Review*, *American Arts Quarterly*, and *Ibbetson Street Magazine*. Her profiles of the poets Eavan Boland, Julia Budenz, and Etel Adnan (TBA) can be seen at the *Mezzo Cammin* Timeline of American Woman Poets.