

ROBIN CHAPMAN

Harlequin Frogs of the Cloud Forest Preserve, Costa Rica

Say you lived in mist, near streams,
your red toes grasping hard
the slippery stems of things.
Say your voice made rain.

And say your kind are dying—
the warmer nights breeding
a killing fungus; or that the rain
is poisoned now.

Say silence falls, a disappearing.
And though you shine in your bright skin
in the photograph, though you are the music
in this poem, say elegy is not enough—

it's the triage of the battlefield
we should be making—the whining ambulance,
emergency medic who packs you up
in his suitcase

and smuggles you into his research lab,
aquarium arks for your species,
with his eye on the slides
under the microscope

and his anger hard

