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FOUR AND TWENTY



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ASTERISKS INDICATE UNTITLED POEMS. UNDERLINED TEXT INDICATES A HYPERLINK.

Found among the essential
oils, myrrh carries a label,
promising to aid introspection. Fittingly,
its lid resists opening.

CRADLED

How easily we slip, tonight,
into the leavened heart of our history,
another rise and fall
of the cradling world.

RICK BORSTEN

THE RAIN

I think I hear the rain
it sounds like applause
anyway, I finished a poem



IVAN JENSON

TELLURIC FORCES UNDERFOOT

Inside bus, umbrella becomes a cane,
a divining rod pointing out
rivulets' ragged paths,
leftovers from lightning dowsing us all.

KEVIN SPENST

FALLING LEAVES

How generous are
the trees to blanket the earth
before the first snow.

LIZ FISCHER GREENHILL

TRUE LOVE

Her soft cheek
upon the stone of his face

STEPHEN JARRELL WILLIAMS

PRIMARY GROWTH

As tall as a tree
I feel stretched
Growth at my apex
Forgetting the carvings left below

BETSY CHRISTIANSEN

REVELATION

Beyond the great bar where
the Columbia collides with the Pacific,
a pair of Monarch butterflies
hovers above the waves.

JOSEPH A. SOLDATI

RISK

what if I jump
through the wrong window
of opportunity

SHELLEY HARRISON RAE

EVENSONG

Mockingbird
matches
the feral cat's
meow.

MARTHA CHRISTINA

RECURRING DREAM

In my dreams my dad
isn't divorced. He screams
things like: I want to be homeless.
But he never leaves.

RENÉE LAMIE



another birthday—
crumpled wrapping paper, left
over bitter tastes

BRENDAN SLATER

PLAY TIME

The wind bothers
bushes like little
children screaming
at the top of their lungs.

DREW DeGENNARO

STICK 'EM UP

Denuded of leaves
Trees, craggy old cowboys
Reach for the sky.

CARA HOLMAN

TERROR

In the dappled, dark night
a high pitched tone,
is not repeated.
I wonder in terror.

JEFF GREENE

INVERSION

I press my palm against
Mother's forehead to
check for a fever.

CORA GOSS-GRUBBS

AGAPANTHUS FLOWER

Globe of fifty lavender trumpets
Mom calls you *angry panther*
Yet she doesn't know my name
Anymore

NANCY MONTAGUE

BEFORE THE X-RAY

It could be dramatic ... falling,
the Dipsea trail. But actually we were arguing,
and I tripped stepping off the curb.

CAROL DORF

22ND BIRTHDAY

I have wasted
the prime
of my reality
television career.

BRYAN BECK

REMNANTS

Only dead stamen remain
of flowers you left behind
in vases on the window.
Like petals, love dries in vain.

ROBERT FRANCIS FLOR

SECRET OF THE ROSY CROSS

A Rose within a Cross, twofold—
petals as paths, manifold—
birthing mystery upon mystery:
the secrets of infinity, folded inward.

ANDREW ABANG

RECONCILIATION

the coffee percolates,
siphoning the chill,
torching the distilleries
between thinkers.

JENNI B. BAKER

NESTING

Scissors flashing like wings,
you flit out the door,
to pull all the world's sensuous beauty
back into your nest.

RICK BORSTEN

WINTER

She arrives at Autumn's backdoor,
waiting impatiently on the steps.
Though her days are cold,
she whispers promises of Spring.

DAVID WATSON

AUTHOR BIOS

Andrew Abang is a poly-medium artist, mystic, and esoteric poet. Following a spiritual vision, he is composing a book of themed poetry that combines Goddess archetypes with mathematical concepts, gematria, and Qabalah. <http://sevenspiration.vox.com>

Jenni B. Baker is a nonprofit writer and editor living in Bethesda, Maryland. Her poetry is forthcoming in *The Newport Review* and *5x5*.

Bryan Beck was born in southern Germany in 1987. His poetry and reviews have appeared in *Left of the Dial*, *Portland Review*, and *The Oregonian*.

Rick Borsten is the author of the novel, *The Great Equalizer* (Permanent Press), a finalist for the 1987 Oregon Book Award for Fiction, and *Rainbow Rhapsody* (Breitenbush Books, 1989).

Betsy Christiansen is a student at Washington State University. Writing is something she does for fun and for personal growth. Her poetry has been featured in previous issues of *Four and Twenty*.

Martha Christina is a frequent contributor to *Brevities* and *Bear Creek Haiku*. Recently, longer work has appeared in *Main Channel Voices* and *The Orange Room Review*. She lives in Bristol, Rhode Island.

AUTHOR BIOS

Carol Dorf's poems appear in *Poemeleon*, *Fringe*, *Midway Journal*, *Babel Fruit*, *A Capella Zoo*, *Runes: A Review of Poetry*, and *Feminist Studies*. She lives in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Drew DeGennaro lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota. His work has appeared in *Word Riot*, *Boston Literary Magazine*, *unFold*, and others.

Robert Francis Flor graduated from Seattle University and the University of Oregon. His poems appeared in the *Wanderlust Journal* and the *Field of Mirrors Anthology*. He is a member of Pacific Northwest Writers Association.

Brigitte Goetze, biologist and writer, lives in Western Oregon. Her poems and creative writing can be found in *Creative Highway*, *Oregon Humanities*, *Outwardlink*, and *Thresholds*.

Cora Goss-Grubbs lives in Woodinville, Washington. Her poems and essays appear in *Pontoon 10* (anthology of Washington poets), *Calyx*, *Between the Lines*, *hipMama*, and online at [Literary Mama](#).

Jeff Greene, a Washington native and graduate of Princeton University stretches language to encompass experience. This is his second publication in *Four and Twenty*. He often reads at King's Books, Tacoma. (poet.jgreene@gmail.com)

AUTHOR BIOS

Liz Fischer Greenhill is a writer, artist, and acupuncturist living in Portland, Oregon. Her work focuses on the natural world, the body, and the exchanges between them.

Cara Holman lives in Portland, Oregon. Her personal essays, poetry, and creative nonfiction appear online and in print anthologies. More of her writings can be found on Prose Posies, her personal blog, at <http://caraholman.wordpress.com/>.

Ivan Jenson's poetry has been published internationally. He wrote "The Rain" at age thirteen. A collection of Jenson's poetry will be released by Bygawd Books. He is also a novelist and an artist. <http://www.ivanjensonartist.com/>

Renée LaMie recently moved to Fargo-Moorhead, North Dakota, from much warmer Las Cruces, New Mexico. She spends her days playing Scrabble, teaching English 101, and reading poetry to her students (much to their chagrin).

Nancy Montague is a graduate of Oregon State University and holds an MFA in Writing for Children from Vermont College. When not writing poetry and memoir, she paints portraits in watercolor and pastel.

AUTHOR BIOS

Shelley Harrison Rae is an international workshop presenter, journalist, manuscript coach, grant writer, and teacher at Capilano University. In her heart she is a poet. Her book of poems and images is *Life Leaves Stains*.

Brendan Slater is a writing-up research student at Aston University, United Kingdom. He has recently moved with his wife and son to Overijssel, the Netherlands. You can read more of his poems at <http://haikustudent.blogspot.com>.

Joseph A. Soldati, Portland, Oregon, has published numerous poems in literary magazines, journals, and anthologies. Most recently: *Oyez Review*, *Beloved on the Earth: 150 Poems of Grief and Gratitude*, and *New Millennium Writings*.

Kevin Spenst has been writing three poems a day at <http://twitter.com/kevinspenst> since December 16, 2008.

David Watson, of Saint Paul, Minnesota is a photographer and writer in his free time. This is his second publication in *Four and Twenty*.

AUTHOR BIOS

Stephen Jarrell Williams loves to write, listen to his music, and dance late into the night. His poetry has appeared in *Anthology*, *The Broome Review*, *Chronogram Magazine*, *Hawaii Review*, *Mirror Dance*, *POEM*, *REAL*, and others.

ARTIST BIO

This month's cover art, "Chinatown," is by **Larissa Pham**. Larissa is a clear-eyed dreamer from Portland, Oregon. One of her favorite words is *ineffability*, which she attempts to overcome via poetry and illustration. Her work, words, and ephemera can be found at shutlow.tumblr.com.

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Say it like you mean it.

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