

FOUR AND TWENTY



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DEAR READER

Please be ready
to speak this poem
in my absence.

JOHN SIBLEY WILLIAMS

THE JAZZ FAN

He loved everything from fusion to Dixieland,
but his creative juices were spent designing destruct packs
for million dollar Tomahawks.

NANCY SCOTT

PLAYING CATCH

Dust off the old glove,
catch in the backyard,
He is growing up
my hand throbs with every throw.

DOUGLAS POLK

DREAMCATCHER

Our conversations are always pleasant. I forget names of places and things. The waking is problematic.

ALICIA BANASZEWSKI



Severe thunderstorm
silver shadows on the wall
goosebumps on the cat

DEB FOWLER

ON THE UP AND UP

I nosed the heavenly fragrance
of bergamot, clove and vanilla
but did not smell a single rat.

C. B. ANDERSON

ALPINE

I pocket the image of cowbells
as a textbook 'poetic moment'
as our friendship falls apart
around us.

JULIET WILSON

WHINE

What if
I *had* been able
to turn
a cartwheel?

JOAN GRAVES

AS IF SPEAKING FOR THE HOUSE

A mantle of precious items
of former utility — a vase
and a single, crumpled leaf;
inside me a cold place.

TIM HAWKINS

THERE NOW

soft rain of catkins hushes
the noise in my too-full head,
gentles the day like a good mother

ROBIN TURNER

TOBIN

mud-caked trace of paw, rim of absent bowl
plump stuffed duck, happy purple beak
found behind a door ajar

ERICA N. JOHNSON

THE CATCH

Westport fishermen
scrub blood from slick decks, silent
at a work of love.

SALLIE TIERNEY

CRADLE TO GRAVE

collecting four coupons
birth, old age, illness, and death
in exchange for
How to Love for Dummies

CHEN-OU LIU

AMBIGUOUS POSTCARD

new hat
got blown
off my head

EMILY MANGER

IT'S ELEMENTAL

storm surging spray
rises widgeon falls
coots whisper reeds
flute ancient music

NEAL WHITMAN

OPEN MIC

I don't remember the words
though some were brilliant;
but I can still hear
the breath, see the trembling.

KELLY EASTLUND

AMERICAN BIRTH

Ichi, ni, tres, then four
little monkeys jumping on the bed.
This is how he became an American.

HAROLD HORTON

AT FIRST SIGHT

Now, ask fast love,
“Car crash or boyfriend?”
Quick— who’s ready to decide
the difference, the greater wreck?

STEVEN MINCHIN

STILL LIFE OR PORTRAIT?

Like a small family:
five clementines
on a crystal plate.
Oh! my darlings!

MARTHA CHRISTINA

THE NATURE OF THE PARTS

The center, stable;
the edge, flexible.
How could it be otherwise?

MICHAEL C. RUSH

POLYGRAPH

The easiest way
to tell if your lover is lying
is to check where he hides his heartbeat.

JENNIFER-LEIGH OPRIHORY

12 WORD POEM

Ok, You're hooked by the title, right?
Or else seeking some deep meaning here?
waaaaaay past the promised twelve words?

ED HIGGINS

CANDLELIT ARGUMENT

Only the candleflame
dancing between us
appreciates the breath
that fuels our words.

KIP KNOTT

#LITERARYTRENDS

A miniscule bird
In shades of varying blue
Chips a magnum opus:
140 characters (though not all unique).

COREY DEMAS

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BIOS

This month's cover art, "Earthquake," is by **Saira Malik Rahman**. Saira is a painter and practicing pediatrician residing in South Bend, Indiana. She received formal art and biology training at the University of Chicago. She further delved into medicine and art at the University of Illinois College of Medicine.

C. B. Anderson of Maynard, Massachusetts, was the longtime gardener for The Victory Garden, a television series of the Public Broadcasting System. His poems have appeared widely online and in print.

Alicia Banaszewski's work has been previously featured in *Right Hand Pointing* and *Outrageous Fortune*. She loves jalapenos on her pizza.

Alicia's website: sleptthroughmyalarm.blogspot.com

Martha Christina is a frequent contributor to *Brevities*. She was a featured poet in the fifteenth anniversary issue of *The Aureorean*, and has recently published in *Avocet*, *Main Street Rag*, and *Newport Review*.

Corey Demas grew up on a dairy farm in the San Joaquin Valley. His parents weren't fond of his poetry, but the cows encouraged him to keep writing.

Kelly Eastlund lives in the Pacific Northwest. Her poetry has appeared in *A Handful of Stones* and the anthology *Pay Attention: A River of Stones*.

Kelly's website: www.starsandwillow.com

Deb Fowler of Burlington Iowa is a member of The Society of Great River Poets and has had her work published in *Lyrical Iowa*, *Stand Forth*, and *Spoon River Anthology*.

Joan Graves is a slightly uncoordinated poetess, living in Hillsboro, Oregon. She can be reached at foracanthus@gmail.com.

Tim Hawkins lives in Grand Rapids, Michigan. His writing has appeared in numerous print and online publications, most recently in *Iron Horse Literary Review*, *Lucid Rhythms*, *The Pedestal Magazine*, *Shot Glass Journal*, and *Verse Wisconsin*.

Ed Higgins teaches creative writing and literature at George Fox University. He and his wife and two whippets live on a small farm with a large menagerie. His writing has appeared in *Monkeybicycle*, *Pindeldyboz*, *Otoliths*, *Tattoo Highway*, and *Dark Sky Magazine*, among others.

Harold Horton lives in Seattle, Washington. He studied English at the University of Washington. He has two poems coming up in the debut of punksoulpoet.com and one in the second summer issue of twenty20journal.com.

Harold's website: verseoneandotherlines.blogspot.com.

Erica N. Johnson is a dog-lover and MFA candidate in Creative Writing at San Diego State University. She is at work on her first novel as well as a collection of poetry. This is her poetic debut.

Kip Knott is the author of three poetry chapbooks: *The Weight of Smoke* (Bottom Dog Press), *Everyday Elegies* (Pudding House), and *Whisper Gallery* (online at www.unf.edu/mudlark).

Chen-ou Liu is a freelance writer. His poems have appeared in *Four and Twenty, Ribbons, Modern English Tanka, Gusts, Magnapoets, Simply Haiku*, and *Concise Delight*.

Emily Manger is a performance poet and PhD candidate living in Melbourne, Australia. Her poetry occasionally appears in various local journals, anthologies, and TV programs. This is her first international publication.

Steven Minchin lives in Albany, New York. He has studied at The Museum of Modern Art, and has appeared or is forthcoming in *Kerouak's Dog Magazine, mad swirl, Fashion for Collapse*, and *Heavy Hands Ink*.

Jennifer-Leigh Oprihory is a poet, writer, editor, activist, scientist, caffeine-junkie, and connoisseur of all things carpe diem and light.

Jennifer's website: phoenixpoet.info

Douglas Polk is a writer of poetry. Feeling persecuted most of his life, he has published three books of poetry: *In My Defense, The Defense Rests*, and *On Appeal*. He lives with his wife and two boys on the plains of Nebraska.

Michael C. Rush currently splits his time between northern Arizona and upstate New York, and has most recently published poems in *Shadowtrain*, *Word Riot*, *A Hudson View Poetry Digest*, and *Literary House Review*.

Nancy Scott, author of four books of poetry, has been published extensively in print and online journals. She is also the editor of *U.S.1 Worksheets*, the journal of the U.S.1 Poets' Cooperative in New Jersey.

Nancy's website: www.nancyscott.net

John Sibley Williams is a poet and freelance publicist. He's the author of five chapbooks, winner of the 2011 HEART Poetry Award, and Pushcart nominee. Publications include *RHINO*, *Rosebud*, *The Evansville Review*, and *Poetry Quarterly*.

John's websites: www.johnsibleywilliams.wordpress.com, www.TheArtOfRaining.com

Robin Turner lives on a wooded creek in North Central Texas with her husband and an old yellow cat. Her poems have appeared in *Friends Journal: Quaker Thought and Life Today*, *Referential Magazine*, and elsewhere.

Neal Whitman writes general and haiku poetry. This spring his free verse lyric won the White Buffalo Chief's Award and he was awarded honorable mention in the Haiku Society of America's Brady Senryu Memorial contest.

Juliet Wilson is an Edinburgh-based poet and adult education tutor. Her chapbook *Unthinkable Skies* was published in 2010. She edits the online poetry journal *Bolts of Silk* (boltsofsilk.blogspot.com).

Juliet's website: craftygreenpoet.blogspot.com