

13

seasons
of poetry
on the buses

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SEASON

13

October 2023 - September 2024

Cherish

Laurie Cutter

Ridgefield, Washington

OCTOBER 2023 | 013-01

I confess, I cherish a few pet peeves—
soggy pasta, the ugly word *puce*,
screechy cell phone talkers, sting-nettle leaves,
unruly canines scrambling loose.

It calms me when I close my eyes—
dream of cobalt, carmine, fresh apple pie,
campfires, kites, the tiny bones of the spine.

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Alberta St

Em Gallup

Vancouver, Washington

OCTOBER 2023 | 013-02

You said you worry for me when it rains
This year, spring is still spilling into July
Flooding the ramp to 84—I take I-5 home now
Like in August, my thighs sticking to your porch
Summer stopped at the crosswalk on Alberta St
Your tongue dripping with our single scoops
My lungs crowded with hope and blackberries.

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It can wait, they won't

Tanya Gipson

Vancouver, Washington

OCTOBER 2023 | 013-03

TV on for background noise,
Child has dumped out all the toys.
I'm doing dishes and trying to clean,
My kiddo saying, "Play with me!"
So put it down, just go and play
'Cuz they won't wait to grow up on another day.

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one year reflections

Bethany Kim-Yin

Vancouver, Washington

OCTOBER 2023 | 013-04

does it feel like home?
no, but it is
familiar

some shards of glass are
mirrors every way
you hold them.

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Bending Down

Sherri Levine

Portland, Oregon

OCTOBER 2023 | 013-05

I never thought I would fall in love
with a tree—
strong wide boughs to blossom.
Towering a hundred feet
you bend down
to kiss my lips, rub my back
and wish me a good day.

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Post-Covid Sijo

Brittany Mishra

Battle Ground, Washington

OCTOBER 2023 | 013-06

Long flight to Singapore,
a woman & I talked about quitting
our corporate jobs. Her: Open a tea shop.
Me: Write poems. We failed to give
name and number—Does she wish
we have a future tense?

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Mammal

Claudia Saleeby Savage

Portland, Oregon

OCTOBER 2023 | 013-07

Let me be your boat, your fretful antidote, let me
mollusk your invertebrate weight to my chest,
rest, my love, rest. Let me be your bed at first light
through afternoon, your first spoon, your sun
& evening room. Let me enfold your pliant ribs as circle.
We live on a sphere, let me fold my elbows,
wrists, breasts, chin around you. Cohere.

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Haiku #1

Marcia Smith

Vancouver, Washington

OCTOBER 2023 | 013-08

A crescent moon hangs

As by invisible thread

A dangling pendant

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Cat's Lament

Stephanie Spencer

Vancouver, Washington

OCTOBER 2023 | 013-09

Despite her many clocks,
the woman forgets the hour
constantly.

She is always saying “It’s not time yet” when clearly
my bowl is empty, and I am perishing
before her eyes.

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Beach Trip

Louise Wynn

Camas, Washington

OCTOBER 2023 | 013-10

I'm writing this poem for
my grandkids, which is
why it's full of sand:

Sand castles,

Sand dollars,

Sand-and-egg-salad sandwiches, and

Sand with seagull tracks.

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SEASON

12

October 2022 - September 2023

Last Dance

Teresa Anderson

Battle Ground, Washington

SEPTEMBER 2022 | 012-01

Sliding past the nerves with hidden reserves
Forget the fear just bring your gear
A last look in the glass the shadow the pass
Step into the lane swagger the vain
Movement across time and freedom of space
A breath of sublime rewards motion with grace

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Lessons I'm Learning From My Garden

Sossity Chiricuzio

Portland, Oregon

SEPTEMBER 2022 | 012-02

Roses don't survive because they are beautiful.
Their roots are deep and stubborn, twisting underground,
foot by unlit foot. Bypassing borders and paths alike.
Pushing up through domesticated landscapes
into a spot of sunlight they choose. They bloom
as resistance. They hook their thorns into thin air
and climb the sky.

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Shape Shift

Genevieve DeGuzman

Portland, Oregon

SEPTEMBER 2022 | 012-03

An iceberg's color is determined by how the ice interacts with light. What color would I be under your absent gaze? You're not here anymore to greet me at baggage claim and there's a shift of light and understanding as the carousel whirls around, beading and un-beading, missing you.

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Transient Ambitions

Betty Fullard-Leo

Camas, Washington

I thought I'd walked this way before

Past shells and driftwood—

Hermit crabs galore.

I thought I'd made my mark

When in the dark

The tide came up

And now my footprints are no more.

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Backyard Observances

Julianne Hudson

Vancouver, Washington

SEPTEMBER 2022 | 012-05

A child's laughter
Ripples through the courtyard
A melodious twinkle of joy
Reminding me
Life doesn't have to be so hard

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Friendship

Jody Katopothis

Vancouver, Washington

SEPTEMBER 2022 | 012-06

Moving toward desired destinations
you and I sit side by side
sharing small talk and carefully chosen secrets
humor, regrets and longings as we ride
our ten minute friendship comfortably unfolds
until reaching our stops and while the brakes hiss
we part as strangers, our newfound bonds untied

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Powell Butte

Dvora Robinson

Portland, Oregon

SEPTEMBER 2022 | 012-07

Coyote on Powell Butte in tall grass.
Conifers growing
glowing green tips
under cloud swooped sky,
dark with promise.

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Longing

Raúl Sánchez, City of Redmond Poet Laureate 2019-2021

Seattle, Washington

SEPTEMBER 2022 | 012-08

Call me immortal
call me everlasting
just call me—
call me something
call me to tell me
Just call me. Please,
Just call me anytime.

call me eternal
call me alive
call me sometime
you already know
what I do not know
call me—
Call me, please...

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Octopus

Monika Spykerman

Washougal, Washington

SEPTEMBER 2022 | 012-09

I have a beak

But I'm not a bird

I fly through water

Wingless, changeable as a cloud

Many-armed as Vishnu

Hiding in a cave or plume of ink

Grasping for a moment then letting go

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Avian Guru

Anand Tawker

Vancouver, Washington

SEPTEMBER 2022 | 012-10

Walking in the woods at dusk
Attentive to the travails of the trail
Your call suddenly piercing the stillness
Looking up, I see I'm in this cathedral of trees
In the nave and by the filtering light we connect
Awe, mystery, reverence and gratitude
Raising my sights every time, a spiritual uplift.

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SEASON

11

October 2021 - September 2022

Affinity

Margaret Chula

Portland, Oregon

OCTOBER 2021 | 011-01

Claws anchored to the riprap, a great blue heron dozes.

I stand on a sandbar, on the edge of earth and water
alone and discontent waiting for a sign.

Then, alerted by sound or motion or perhaps a shadow
across his great closed lids, the hunched Rodin awakens—
lets out a squawk that hoists him beyond water into sky,
wings flip-flapping against the ebbing light.

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A River's Voices

Daphne Clifton

Portland, Oregon

OCTOBER 2021 | 011-02

Song sparrows ardently sing up the sun
as a quiet river moves through our town.
Look closely among the maples and oaks
for signs of the first peoples who named
this river. Listen carefully—the river
has memorized their voices, their songs.
Listen. She's singing to us now.

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Footprints

Paulann Petersen

Portland, Oregon

Each day you leave—
wherever you've stepped—
the shape of your journey.
Go where you're needed.
Step with care. From that earth
left behind as you walk,
your faint trail shines.

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A Map of the Universe

Rena Priest, Washington State Poet Laureate

Bellingham, Washington

Someone once told me,

“The longest distance between
any two points is a shortcut.”

Maybe so, but only if you get lost.

Luckily, getting lost is impossible
whilst living for adventure.

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Cloud-wisp Patterns

Gay Garland Reed

Vancouver, Washington

OCTOBER 2021 | 011-05

This morning I greeted a tie-dye sky
Clouds were streaks of white
against a pale indigo backdrop
as if someone had bunched up the sky
in the corner of the universe
and dipped it in pale indigo dye

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Transition

Stephanie Spencer

Vancouver, Washington

OCTOBER 2021 | 011-06

Wind applauding in trees
the final curtain for a villainous summer
after a stale encore of still dry days.
Geese harkening in clouds
the sanguine change for a somber audience.
Move on, they say,
it's time.

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Squid Jigging Midnight

Armin Tolentino, Clark County Poet Laureate

Vancouver, Washington

OCTOBER 2021 | 011-07

Like ghosts, gauzy across
the winter sheen of the sound.
The jigs glow and dance,
dazzle with their crown of hooks.
A séance. Prayer for contact.

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Catch and Release

Emmett Wheatfall

Portland, Oregon

OCTOBER 2021 | 011-08

For what is left of me be it known to you
When you fall, I will catch you, then release you
so that again and again—you will fall for me

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Shorthand

Christine Lamb White

Vancouver, Washington

OCTOBER 2021 | 011-09

Poem is a short word written by hand
powered by adding up the story's total sum
pieces of mystery's clues—waves of raves or rants
talking to each other by relating rhythmic chants.
Patchwork quilt of words in pieces,
comforts like a friend that greets us. Passions burst
and take their stand, I wonder where this poem will land?

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Trance

Elizabeth Wood

Vancouver, Washington

brush teeth and shower

absorb the coffee

daily puzzle online

feed the dogs

muscle memory

while my thoughts are

far away

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SEASON

10

October 2020 - September 2021

The Name for This Season

Tiel Aisha Ansari

Portland, Oregon

OCTOBER 2020 | 010-01

Sunny days after frost. Chinook on their redds
their flanks crimson as elderberry leaves.

Egg-spent corpses float to the shore.

Gold and scarlet leaves in windblown heaps.

If I had the naming of this mild season

I'd call it in an ancient tongue:

Chinook summer.

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Love as a Bee Sting

Genevieve DeGuzman

Portland, Oregon

OCTOBER 2020 | 010-02

How can I call myself lucky walking through tall grasses,
when I've never been stung? Furry butts with lancets
scooted off petaled pedestals. Why so gentle,
yellow-striped flying pandas, so shy
to sting my cheek? Your soft landing closes my throat
but swells my heart too.

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Gaining Time

Tanna Engdahl

Vancouver, Washington

OCTOBER 2020 | 010-03

The sun talks through crackling leaves
when summer heat tolls the day.
We measure time in moon shapes
losing hours to nonsense
reclaimed holding a grandchild.

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Mornings

Hillary M. Marshall

Washougal, Washington

OCTOBER 2020 | 010-04

I crawl from under my shell
peer out wondering what the world beholds
When the sun yawns
yellow, orange, red across the sky
hazily exposing new wonders
so far undiscovered

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Seeker

Madeline Martin

Vancouver, Washington

OCTOBER 2020 | 010-05

She'd find her fingers trailing up the stairs
and into a silent room
where eyes would sit upon a speed-dialed computer screen,
together testing whims of patience and fury
for the time it took to operate to her speed.
This taught her to think and contemplate.
Knowledge arrived on time serenely.

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Haiku for Grandpa

Dave R. Muñoz

Battle Ground, Washington

OCTOBER 2020 | 010-06

“Gramps, how did you work a sickle all day?”

“Swing right, body—
swing left, soul...”

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Doors and Mirrors

Álvaro Tarragó

Portland, Oregon

OCTOBER 2020 | 010-07

One door leads to another
And another leads to more,
An infinite number of mirrors
Fixed against opposite walls.
I spoke to the prophets and from them I learned:
Freedom is an illusion
And we all remain in the cave.

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Poetry Matters

Anand Tawker

Vancouver, Washington

OCTOBER 2020 | 010-08

Between the ineffable and the eloquent
In that liminal space, like the time before the dawn
You exist as a mélange of words and feelings in some inchoate form
Intimations of lines to come, as word silhouettes become emergent
Your presence is felt ever more, and you are determined to be born
Midwifed by emotion, long labor, and nurtured with care
You become the poem.

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Half a Sonnet Stepping Into Tomorrow

Armin Tolentino

Vancouver, Washington

OCTOBER 2020 | 010-09

I slept and missed my stop. I froze and missed
my chance to say I'm sorry. Just today
I counted out one hundred private ways
I blew my only life. But as I wished
for a dozen do-overs, the future
waved to me outside. A blessing I'd
done nothing to deserve. Not too late. I'd just arrived—

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Only You

Emmett Wheatfall

Portland, Oregon

OCTOBER 2020 | 010-10

Only you can nudge the northern lights,
make sleepy clouds whisper good night.
Force winter winds to ebb and flow,
kiss weeping willows in yesterday's glow.
Only you.
Only you.

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SEASON

9

January - September 2020

Soft Serve

Ian Caton

Vancouver, Washington

JANUARY 2020 | 009-01

Got two kids in the Hyundai
driving down HWY 99
to get chocolate dipped soft serve
listening to Springsteen
this is your home town

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Earthworm

Lisa Demoreno

Battle Ground, Washington

JANUARY 2020 | 009-02

His lies were like the earthworm,
Tunneling silently beneath my feet in the loamy subterrain
Sometimes glimpsed at dawn or after a heavy rain
A flash of brown tail and rubbery rings
Stretching quickly back into the secret earth again
Leaving behind only a thin fluorescent trail
of shimmering doubt.

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Saudades

Leigh Hancock

White Salmon, Washington

JANUARY 2020 | 009-03

On the avenue to Gilgamesh
the elephants are saying their good-byes.
We were not here yesterday,
nor the day before.
Too cold, too cold, the summer snows,
the boxcars hurrying south.

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Grasshoppers

Rainy Knight

Vancouver, Washington

JANUARY 2020 | 009-04

Upon opening my door one morning
a grasshopper, uninvited, hopped in
I looked up and the ground undulated
with grasshoppers
I looked beyond and my large garden
was in the process of being ravaged
It was May, the sun shone as I closed the door

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Recipe

Claudia Castro Luna, Washington State Poet Laureate
Seattle, WA

JANUARY 2020 | 009-05

Not the paper, not the pen, nor the ink
but the hand that glides across the page
stringing words one after the other
like bright lights on an outdoor garland
illuminating the feast over an old table laid
that would otherwise in shadows remain

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Write Yourself a Love Poem

Toni Lumbrazo Luna

Vancouver, Washington

JANUARY 2020 | 009-06

Tonight
late in the calendar year
light a fire, take your
wool sweater from the closet
while water boils for tea
then write yourself a love poem
to outlast the cold months of winter

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At the Station

Robin O'Brien

Vancouver, Washington

JANUARY 2020 | 009-07

Tracks demand attention, their lines define the space
and lead away somewhere.

The trains themselves screech and roar
and as they charge past, the pigeons reshuffle on the wire.

Those wheels are bearing you away. As my feet meet pavement,
I walk into the hush that follows the leaving.

The pigeons begin to doze, the day now hollowed out.

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Life Soup

Jennifer Pratt-Walter

Vancouver, Washington

JANUARY 2020 | 009-08

We are our own daily miracle, linked
by water's wet abacus that never stops
its counting. We simmer in
Life's cauldron, flower and mouse and
bee and you and even me, all seasoning
water's broad unspeakable soup.

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Stopping Time

Stephanie Spencer

Vancouver, Washington

JANUARY 2020 | 009-09

The unexpected joy of

Slowing down to follow a bus

With tiny sleepy faces peering out the back windows,

Allowing me to spy a heron's morning silhouette on the lake

At the bend of the road

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Old Man

Terry Vetter

Kalama, Washington

JANUARY 2020 | 009-10

Yestertime is a remembery of her
walking with one hand swallowed in mine
her free hand thrust forward announcing “Me Two.”
Today Daddy time is up.
She marches in a pink hat.
Me Too?

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SEASON

8

July - December 2019

Fox

Layali U.

4th Grade, Sprouting Seeds School

JULY 2019 | 008-01

Fox, softly stepping,
Your brush of a tail suddenly quivers,
A flash of orange against the snow.

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Cats

Nafisa U.

2nd Grade, Sprouting Seeds School

Bold and daring, eyes are stars,
sleek, smooth body, long, long whiskers.
Ears that prick with a nick.
Lazy, maybe grumpy, spunky,
hilarious, brave and smart.
Cats are cool, they always are.
I love cats all the time!

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Fern

Lyla B.

3rd Grade, Sprouting Seeds School

Fiddle head fern, unfurl, uncurl,
Lushness, green, down deep, mountain deep,
Swirling life, thy teachers say,
A moment now we fly away,
The secret ivy spindly,
Deep, the secret hidden,
Fernly creep.

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Bus Dogs

Mikaylee F.

9th Grade, Vancouver School of Arts and Academics

JULY 2019 | 008-04

This is a poem for the dogs on the bus,
The most loyal of friends to travel with us.
For the lap dogs, the service dogs,
the “you’re not allowed on so we’ll pretend you’re a toy” dogs.
This is a poem for the dogs on the bus.
Kindly share it with them, because they can’t read.

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Give Some Kind

Natalie W.

4th Grade, Chinook Elementary

Kindness can be a big hug
Kindness can be giving love
Kindness can be a dream come true
Kindness can have something to do with you
Just have a kind mind
And sparkle and shine
And just give some kind

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In My Basket

Anna C.

2nd Grade, Southridge Elementary

JULY 2019 | 008-06

A Bunny can be
Chocolate, Marshmallow, Honey,
I eat the ears first.

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Frog's Song

Madeline C.

12th Grade, Camas High

JULY 2019 | 008-07

In the midst of the night
Hear the frogs singing
Their soothing, peaceful lullaby
As it lures me into deep, restful sleep

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Kindness is a Match

Cass K.

4th Grade, Chinook Elementary

JULY 2019 | 008-08

Kindness is a match.

Light it.

Spread it.

And let it burn like a wildfire.

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Moose Wearing a Tie

Emmy P.

Kindergarten, Lakeshore Elementary

JULY 2019 | 008-09

Moose wearing a tie,
He likes eating pancakes in the sky.
Have you seen him flying by?
Moose wearing a tie.

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Honeybee Haiku

Gwendolyn Morgan

Clark County Poet Laureate 2018-2020

JULY 2019 | 008-10

Honeybee, winged light
there's enough room in my heart
for joy, gold-leaf combs

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SEASON

7

January - June 2019

Untitled

Suzann M. Baldwin

La Center, WA

JANUARY 2019 | 007-01

Remember all those
feelings you left twisting in
the wind?

Here they come again.



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Old Memories

an'ya Bartolović

Florence, OR

JANUARY 2019 | 007-02

old memories
like tangled fish hooks
impossible
to pick up only one
without all the others



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Hole

D.H. Carol

Vancouver, WA

JANUARY 2019 | 007-03

There was a hole put
into me so very long ago.
It will never fill with
me.
No radiant self.
Part of me gone before
I could say no.



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Wildflowers

Laurie Cutter

Ridgefield, WA

JANUARY 2019 | 007-04

The quick delicious
dropping away downhill
Onrush of honey—
suckled air, mingled swirl
of earth and sky, blurred
leaves, buttercups,
morning glory



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I remember

Lauren Duquette

Vancouver, WA

hawk feather smoke
cedar bough crackle
heat red brick fireplace
our home, our shell
all cheeks ablaze atop
precious sweated bodies
smiling and round



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Soaked

David Hubka

Vancouver, WA

JANUARY 2019 | 007-06

Circles scatter across curbside puddles

Dancing erratically to

The hidden pattern of the

Percussive falling rain.

Foolishly, we skip from street to curb

As if we can avoid getting wet;

Like we aren't already soaked.



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Historical disaster

Holly Miller

Vancouver, WA

JANUARY 2019 | 007-07

If I was with Aaron, I wouldn't feel so lame.

If I was with Elias, I might have a cool last name.

If I dated Ben, my trust issues would be worse.

But if I dated Bryan, I'd probably be in a hearse.



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Queen Anne's Lace

Gay Garland Reed

Vancouver, WA

JANUARY 2019 | 007-08

When Queen Anne's Lace,
in all its delicate grace,
appears along the roadside
we know that
we are sliding
down the back of summer.



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Untitled

Jacob Salzer

Vancouver, WA

JANUARY 2019 | 007-09

empty theater...

the weight of trash



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note to the letter carrier

Mark Sargent

Agia Eirini, Sparti, Greece

JANUARY 2019 | 007-10

If the intended
is absent
or dead
please,
forward to the void.



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Untitled

Melissa Clarke Ward

Sisters, OR

JANUARY 2019 | 007-11

my uphill shadow
soft and composed
the edge, radiant



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SEASON

6

July - December 2018

Ode to Summer

Annie S. — 3rd Grade, Eisenhower Elementary

Poets in the Schools Program

Summer, I love you.

Touching the tulips that glow
as the river gently flows.

Looking at the ocean as the waves crash
as the sun comes out

all the people play and shout.

Summer, I love you!



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How the Phoenix Flies

Christina S. — 12th Grade, Vancouver School of Arts and Academics

Poets in the Schools Program

Sometimes we forget that
the fire will not again burn
and kindling refuses flame
'Til the eyes dry their tears
and the hands steady their course so again
Hope may blaze from phoenix wings.



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Strangers

Christina S. — 12th Grade, Vancouver School of Arts and Academics

Poets in the Schools Program

JULY 2018 | 006-03

When our televisions scream, wailing grief
and the papers bleed tragedy from ever' leaf,
When hope has seemed to run her course
and our very touch it seems does shame endorse,
It is the strangers, human neighbors
Who in kindness of random labors
That remind us that we are worth it.

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Across the River

Ella J. — 4th Grade, Hough Elementary

Poets in the Schools Program

JULY 2018 | 006-04

Feeling weary, afraid to jump

Crossing the river

gathering courage

to take flight.

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To be a Book in 2068

Grace W. — 5th Grade, Union Ridge Elementary

Poets in the Schools Program

JULY 2018 | 006-05

I hold many pages of wonders and stories,
Perhaps that is why I used to get so much glory.

But now I sit here on this dusty old shelf,
and I have tried but I just can't open myself.

Oh, if only they knew all the things I could do,
They would get off their phones and come down here too.



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The Butterfly that Stands Out

Hanna P. — 5th Grade, Union Ridge Elementary

Poets in the Schools Program

Hi, hi butterfly

You love to sing and dance, oh my!

You may not always like the song
but you always try and dance along.

I love that you like to try new things
As you glide around with your colorful wings.



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Land of Magic

Lillianna K. — 5th Grade, Union Ridge Elementary

Poets in the Schools Program

JULY 2018 | 006-07

This is a place where no worries come out during the day
Where you can run around and just play
No parents to wave you hello or goodbye
No homework or books just the beautiful stars
in the black night sky
Here you have no bedtime at all
Here in this land of magic you will no longer be afraid to fall.



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The Beach

Margaret H. — 4th Grade, Hearthwood Elementary

Poets in the Schools Program

To the west, to the beach
Soft sand covers my feet
Like a blanket, warm and relaxed
Wind whistling, salt water crashing
on the sand
Seagulls sing
Like a choir.



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Spaceships

Noah S. — 5th Grade, Union Ridge Elementary

Poets in the Schools Program

JULY 2018 | 006-09

Discovery

Helpful Fearless

Soaring Flying Falling

“One small step for man, one large step for mankind.”

Blasting Shaking Flying

Large Important

Apollo



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Snowy Mountains

Nyomi S. — 4th Grade, Hough Elementary

Poets in the Schools Program

High and low
the mountains go
there up top
with white blank snow
When you look below
there's not a home
where you will feel
all alone.



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SEASON

5

January - June 2018

Reflections

April Bullard

Vancouver, WA

A bright reflection of my face
shimmers on the window like a ghost,
flickering a million emotions
in disconnected frames of a living movie.
What does that spectral image expose?
What face do I show the world?

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Elevate the Floor

Diane Cammer

Vancouver, WA

When our glass dreams range impossibly high
we brush aside bruised clouds with open palms
turn to our toes to lift us up
fill our lungs with tempest air
and everyone will watch us rise.

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One Heart's Desire (an excerpt)

Denise L. Campbell

Vancouver, WA

whatever song
had fluttered there
within the confine of my ribs
still sings deep among the briar,
the only bed
that's fated for the gentle rose.

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In A Pow Wow

Stella Jeng Guillory

Vancouver, WA

I am the drum.

A dozen drummers sit surrounding me.

They sing and howl, like coyotes.

I am the circle. The circle of dancers is forming.

Its tail curls up to its beginning.

Two dancers embrace each other.

The circle of loving continues.

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At Home

Jennifer Pratt-Walter

Vancouver, WA

Here the mossless stone
has settled.

Here where peace unstirs a restless mind,
your primal home is waiting,
door open.

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Time

Pat Sciuchetti

Vancouver, WA

Scoop it up in your fist.

Squeeze it through your fingers.

Rip it. Shred it. Grate it on a cheese grater.

Breathe it. Taste it. Slurp its tangy juice.

Stare it in the eye.

Swirl in its fierce current.

Wring it dry!

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Daybreak

Gary F. Suda

Battle Ground, WA

The lift of morning,
caught between
dense fog of coffee's kiss
and first light.

The hydrangea lumbers up
the red brick wall.

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Bus Stop

Susan Williams

Vancouver, WA

Find a seat and sit a spell.

Close your eyes,

take a breath,

smile a smile.

Feel the motion as you move

to the next stop in your life.

Open your eyes.

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In-Between

Angela Winfield

Vancouver, WA

It's in the grey spaces
Between the yin and yang
Where fresh waters meet the sea
Brackish and sweet
The sonnets we sing

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Who Rides?

Louise Wynn

Camas, WA

You never know who you'll see on this bus.
Not Shakespeare, for sure. But what if
you did see him? Here's what I'd do:
I'd ask for a rhyme,
we'd rap, double time,
then I'd say, "Thanks a lot, Bro,
I flunked English because of you."

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SEASON

4

July - December 2017

North Carolina

James B. — 4th Grade, Hearthwood Elementary School

Clark County Poet Laureate Christopher Luna's Poets in the Schools Program

In North Carolina

I see different types of birds, trees, and flowers.

I see different types of rocks.

North Carolina has buzzing bees and birds,
flowering dogwood, southern pine and
my Grandma and Grandpa, still watching.

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Arizona

Gavin B. — 4th Grade, Hearthwood Elementary School

Clark County Poet Laureate Christopher Luna's Poets in the Schools Program

Red rocks dancing

in dust devils.

Red Robins riding rain drops.

Wrecked nests dropping down

on dying red roses.

Running runners working hard.

The red Phoenix red hot.

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Picture of Your Heart

Brooklyn C. — 2nd Grade, Hough Elementary School

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Picture of your heart.

Outrageously cool.

Everything is awesome!

Makes everything better.

Special for everyone.

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If

Ellie G. — 8th Grade, Amboy Middle School

Clark County Poet Laureate Christopher Luna's Poets in the Schools Program

If you ever got the chance
to see yourself through someone
else's eyes, you'd be surprised at
how extraordinary you really
are.

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The Way Earth Is

Allison K. — 5th Grade, Union Ridge Elementary School

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Planet is turning,
hued places circumvolving,
revolving the sun.

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Lady of the Sea

Kaylee K. — 5th Grade, Union Ridge Elementary School

Clark County Poet Laureate Christopher Luna's Poets in the Schools Program

Laying in the sea
where she's longed to be.
Tiny sailboat
afloat in the water.
Lime green grass
after a morning's splash.
Lady of the sea.

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My Loving Prince

Berenice L. — 6th Grade, Discovery Middle School

Clark County Poet Laureate Christopher Luna's Poets in the Schools Program

His warm, friendly smile welcomes me.

It welcomes me like the way the night
welcomes the moon and stars.

His sweet light blue eyes sparkle,
they sparkle like the ocean surface.

I love him for the type of person he is
and for his personality.

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The Right Way

Jacob R. — 8th Grade, Amboy Middle School

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Look forward, up
never look down and back
the right way is the hard way, but
the wrong way is the easy way.

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Book

Johanny S. — 6th Grade, Discovery Middle School

Clark County Poet Laureate Christopher Luna's Poets in the Schools Program

Closed, lonely.

Just sitting there waiting to be opened again
like dead grass waiting for someone to play
or a flower slowly dying.

It reminds me of a lonely old man,
no grandchildren, no kids, alone
wishing its pages were flipped again.

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We'll Remember These Days

Christina S. — 11th Grade, Vancouver School of Arts and Academics

Clark County Poet Laureate Christopher Luna's Poets in the Schools Program

We'll remember these days
Poised taut on the precipice of adventure
With the rain polishing our way
The future crooning beyond the next swooping gorge
For who can forget the home which taught us
The sun doesn't need to be shining
For a day to be ours for the taking?

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SEASON

3

January - June 2017

from With Apologies to Andre Breton

Tod Marshall, Washington State Poet Laureate

Spokane, WA

Line up to the left if you believe in magic.

Line up to the right if you're here for wisdom.

Line up in the middle if you live driven by the feeling that
you've just fallen in love.

Go to the back of the line if you've never fallen in love.

Go to the front of the line if you believe love can save the world.

Go home if you think this is getting sappy.

Go to sleep if you're tired; it's okay. Here's a pillow; it's called a poem.

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pavement pastoral

Christopher Luna, Clark County Poet Laureate

Vancouver, WA

there is a determined melancholy
to the suicide dive of
autumn leaves
as they tear themselves
from the limbs of trembling trees
to spiral earthward like eels
caught in zoetrope flicker

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Hope, embossed

Gwendolyn Morgan

Vancouver, WA

Each one of us has an owl, sparrow, crow,
an ordinary bird that follows us around our home.
Kali, Ganesh, and a host of gods and goddesses,
step over the hearth. We pick up maple seed pods,
hope embossed in several languages,
yellow swallowtail, butterfly wings
ten thousand things.

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A Long Ago Memory of Calmer Times

Bruce D. Hall

Vancouver, WA

Lightning flash, flash, and another flash
walls shake, china rattles, chest vibrates
in rhythm with kettledrum thunder
wind howls, fire crackles, kettle bubbles
buttery bread sizzles in skillet
we savor our meal by fireglow
listening to the music of the storm.

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Calling

Jennifer Pratt-Walter

Vancouver, WA

The Earth is calling,
even if you don't listen.

Get lost in Nature,
and you will find
yourself.

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Camilla

Alex Vigue

Ridgefield, WA

She lets her son dress up in leftover pastels
does not scorn him when he twirls in a dress
only laughs and notes the skirt's shape as it swirls
an opening flower, the pink of a cheek
her own and his
her father taught her how to garden
so that she may cultivate a rare child

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Joy

Cherish DesRochers-Vafeados

Battle Ground, WA

The dawn has gone, the sun has risen
I'm finally free of my temporary prison

my heart's at ease
my mind is still and
joy is real

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Just Breathe

Bridget Nutting

Vancouver, WA

Breathe in, deeply – exhale, slowly.

May the eternal spirit of all that was,
all that is, and all that will ever be

Surround you and caress you with His healing touch,
Bringing you unending comfort and peace.

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Subsequent Layers of Existence

Bill Lucking

Vancouver, WA

We exist in a present that is fleetingly fast
swiftly moving our now towards a vanishing past.
Too soon our new-present too swiftly arrives,
replacing the place where our present-now lies.
Subsequent presents come sliding on in
and are quickly supplanted, again and again.

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from how to love

Desiree Wright

Battle Ground, WA

she's just a woman
like me
making her way in a world
not meant for her
to make it in

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from Why We Don't Belong Here

Livia Montana

Vancouver, WA

All day it was raining and you told me,
“That’s just how it is in some parts of the world.”
I prayed then, we wouldn’t stay
on this planet for long.
You’ll think me particular, but you can’t blame
me for desiring the dark of space, or how we’ve learned
to make comets come to heel in our wake.

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Eulogies Are for the Living

Angeline Nguyen

Vancouver, WA

Do not wait
until the flower wilts
to praise the gift of its aroma.

Celebrate
the buddings and bloomings
before Winter extends its pale hand.



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SEASON

2

July - December 2016

A Candle, A Light Bulb, A Glowing Fire

Colwyn B. — 9th Grade, Fort Vancouver High School

Clark County Poet Laureate Christopher Luna's Poets in the Schools Program

Midnight black hair. Glowing, smiling, sending
love wherever she goes. Eyes as wide and blue
and deep as the ocean she lives across. Beautiful
in mind, body, and spirit, wholly innocent as the
sun. And she is mine, and I am hers.

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Still I Rise

Elora H. — 6th Grade, Discovery Middle School

Clark County Poet Laureate Christopher Luna's Poets in the Schools Program

Someday I will grow the rest of the way up

I will do anything I set my mind to

I will do anything people with full sight do

But I do have full sight

I see the world differently

No one can stop me

Still I rise



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Don't Be Afraid

Ashley S. — 10th Grade, Fort Vancouver High School

Clark County Poet Laureate Christopher Luna's Poets in the Schools Program

Don't be afraid of love
love will find you when you're ready
love will find you when you learn to love yourself

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From the Airplane

Jaden L. — 7th Grade, Vancouver School of Arts and Academics

Clark County Poet Laureate Christopher Luna's Poets in the Schools Program

Blinking lights, midnight silhouette, wire of a river,

Tiny headlights of automobiles commuting.

My circuit board of a city at night

bears infinite intrigue.

I, spectator, sit transfixed.

Never has a simple town

been so significant to me.

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Ego Poem

Andrew H. — 9th Grade, Fort Vancouver High School

Clark County Poet Laureate Christopher Luna's Poets in the Schools Program

My eyes are the ocean

My breath carries the wind

My palm holds the word

My essence is the light

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Space

Marley J. — 4th Grade, Hearthwood Elementary

Clark County Poet Laureate Christopher Luna's Poets in the Schools Program

I am sitting on
a star inside the milky way
looking at the planets
looking at them from far away
they are very fascinating

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Slowly Sinking

Rheanna N. — 9th Grade, Fort Vancouver High School

Clark County Poet Laureate Christopher Luna's Poets in the Schools Program

Fear is quicksand
it holds you captive,
threatens to drag you down.

If you hold on to other people
you can pull yourself out.

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Stoney Surprise

Emma L. — 10th Grade, Vancouver School of Arts and Academics

Clark County Poet Laureate Christopher Luna's Poets in the Schools Program

Hermit crabs in minuscule shells

snails leave slime trails

slick on the ragged stone.

Anemones wave hellos before returning to their dinner party.

The barrel chest bear says it's time to leave.

The small hands wave goodbye to new friends,

and the tiny feet walk happily away.

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Snow

Breanna K. — 3rd Grade, Riverview Elementary

Clark County Poet Laureate Christopher Luna's Poets in the Schools Program

We are freezing cold and are very icy and light.

We make you feel way beyond jubilant.

We are millions of tiny balls of frozen rain with a white coat.

We cover the ground with a humongous white blanket.

We sound like a peaceful warning.

We are snow.

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Love

Jessica K. — 9th Grade, Fort Vancouver High School

Clark County Poet Laureate Christopher Luna's Poets in the Schools Program

I am my father's gentle goodnight kiss.

I am the aroma of pancakes with coffee in the morning.

I am the laughter of my childhood.

I am the sparkling stars in my father's loving eyes.

I am love.

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SEASON

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January - June 2016

Excerpt from “Extern”

Neil Aitken

Vancouver, WA

Sometimes I dream of the ghost of a bird
its eyes dark like mine
asleep in the fold of a tree
its shadow the shape of a harp.

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Everything Settles

Tiffany Burba-Schramm

Vancouver, WA

The frost settles upon the ground.

Snow settles upon the limbs of trees.

The ceiling in my house settles; creates small cracks.

The floor creaks and settles the weight of dogs approaching.

We settle, let the weight of the world crack our ambitions.

We let others' harsh words and criticisms drape us
like settled winter fog.

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We could fly

Diane M. Cammer

Vancouver, WA

yet we stand, feet bound to ground
arms spread wide, wings in
another world, another time
waiting for wind, an updraft
when all that's required
is a single bold step into the unknown.

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Pilgrimage, 1988

Sherri H. Hoffman

Vancouver, WA

Start at Dodger Stadium, Chavez Ravine, most perfect field. Onward to Candlestick, Wrigley, Three Rivers, Shea. Until Cooperstown, Holiest of Holies. Blessed with field grit rubbed into our salted skins, we'd say the sacred names. Koufax. Drysdale. Marichal. Campanella from the Brooklyn years. Jackie Robinson, born the same day as our Grandma Wildish. And Pee Wee Reese, who kept the faith, refusing to sign the petition to ban Robinson for being black. The game transcendent.

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Excerpt from “Ours”

Erin Iwata

Ridgefield, WA

I have to believe that something of seventeen still lingers
though she pains me with her adolescent optimism

I return, hoping she wasn't wrong
that there is beauty in the stacked stones along the path
that there is a path indeed
mountains to be scaled and conquered
that the world is still ours

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Counterpart

Tim Klein

Vancouver, WA

At this very moment
someone
somewhere
is doing
the very same thing you are doing
for the very same reason.

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From *Ghost Town, USA*

Clark County Poet Laureate Christopher Luna

Vancouver, WA

the dirt beneath
Bonita's fingernails
did not discourage him
she was reading a bilingual edition
of Dante's *Inferno*
on the 37
and that was more than enough

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Honeycomb Prophecy

Toni Partington

Vancouver, WA

In the residence of your heart
I wish to be a cubicle made of beeswax
translucent, unfiltered, bright with buzz.

Together we will construct a confluence
of resin and lace; a suspension bridge
across hedge thorns and conflict.

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Journey

Jennifer Pratt-Walter

Vancouver, WA

We are the tide's twin, swimming
with the faithful senses of salmon—
we smell fresh river
from out of the salt, we are
drawn home under moon-watch
for as long as the journey takes.

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Fourth Plain Boulevard

Karen Read

Vancouver, WA

A home for hundreds walking—yet to name
the dreams that rise before they dare to speak.

Colorful signs that fly above—untamed
wave low and high, press forward, reach, and peak.

So often you find only what you seek.

Your power lines of old are not here sown.

They surge beneath this skin of place unknown.

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