

On my counter

In a small ceramic dish
a carved stone turtle and
two pewter worry stones one love and one forever
cradle the ghosts of my father's hearing aids

JANIE BRAVERMAN

Poetry in Public 2023



My Way

A gentle turn
from path to prairie.
No distractions.
No commands.
My way, what I love.

KATHY DURBAND

Poetry in Public 2023



Detasseling

For Douglas Airmet

Detasseling, Doug parses lines
of Keats and Coleridge and Blake.
Past noon, as summer sun inclines,
the words get rearranged. They take
new shapes their husbandman refines
on evening walks, fresh verses spun
along Clear Creek by Lily's Run.

DAN CAMPION
Poetry in Public 2023



We Crave Megaphones

I'm sitting with feelings until they go. Only honey for air, I stop to breathe.
Does anyone know the secrets we keep? As women we're told anger is not shown

Still, sipping silence and forgoing stone. Undoing resentment just like disease.
Injustice is simply living for free. Incredible strangers you'll never know.

But why is it these creatures go unnamed? Buried deep in nonsense and careless lies.
They make us believe we should be ashamed. Convinced they could just make a compromise

If only they knew words spread like flame. We deserve to live with our peace of mind.

JESSALYN ELDER

Poetry in Public 2023



Sentinel of the Nighttide

Place faced creator of contradictions

Tracing patterns of gentle curves among snow-laden trees

Flinging herself across the rough frozen facade,

Highlighting the blanketed tundra between.

While illuminating contrasts bright

Amid secrets of her night,

An unbroken veil of impartial light.

LISA PIPER

Poetry in Public 2023



Avocado

Every avocado looks wrong--lopsided, too small.
Hold one between your fingers,
Find if it's ready for choosing.
The one you really want is always left behind,
Bottom of the bin,
Green as a grasshopper in the sun
Inside its pitted, midnight skin.

PHILIP BECK

Poetry in Public 2023



Luminary

Certainty, like a firefly,
darts and hides in the dusk.
Under a leaf it blinks once
and I palm it into a loose fist.
I peek between my fingers—
it lights and unlights.

NANCY LAEL BRAUN
Poetry in Public 2023



Haiku

Lowly wee acorn
Dressed in her best brown hat
Promising an oak

DANIELLE ZIMMERMAN

Poetry in Public 2023



In My 80's

I don't know if I am living on borrowed time
or skating on thin ice.

Skating sounds like more fun.

This time I will not fall backwards and crack my head.
I will be stretching my legs and striding forward at full speed toward the open water.

BETSY FISCHER

Poetry in Public 2023



Ruby-throated

I wished my sadness were a single still moment: fleeting, thoughtless, swift as a hummingbird's stillness; resting on a twig, then zipping along.

And happiness! My joy would be thick, slow as nectar, without which, not the smallest wing could beat; as sweet liquid rolls down the needling tongue; I'd drink, and drink; I'd come back for more as much as I pleased.

EMMA HODGES

Poetry in Public 2023



Bird Calls

When the bird that sings outside
my window grows
too wise to warble
I will let my own
voice break in its stead
and think of you
again.

CHARLOTTE BROOKINS

Poetry in Public 2023



holding

i've been

holding onto the edge of

Heartbreak

for a long many years

and yet here i am

letting go

and falling into an

endless slippery milky pool of light

LOLO

Poetry in Public 2023



Fossilize

Heavy limbs, concrete bones;
Blanket statue, turned to stone.
Molasses thoughts, dimmest glow.
Ask me anything; I don't know.

AMY FORD

Poetry in Public 2023



Who Me? Remember Details?

No need for strain
or unnecessary pain.
Allow me to explain
my new refrain:

"Sorry, but my brain simply doesn't retain."

MARY JEDLICKA HUMSTON

Poetry in Public 2023



burrow

burrow through

the furrowed brow

to mine

untouched

a fallowed ore

PARK G. COE

Poetry in Public 2023



The City of Dreams

Will you walk with me along the paved path?
Our hands held tight amid the bustle
Watching the streets trampled on by feet
And puddles formed by the dances of water,
Waiting for tomorrow to come.
If I could be with you forever,
Any city is the city of dreams.

MI TRINH

Poetry in Public 2023



Protect Us

we live in hallowed places
lined up neatly on shelves
our pages are yellowed
our words are quoted
we make room for the new
we lean on each other
beckoning to open minds

ROSALEA RAGLAND

Poetry in Public 2023



Earthsong

From the climate-controlled side of the window glass,
whether the low roar of wind rushing through midwestern woods
or the thunder of waves throwing themselves onto the seaboard sand,
the voices are indistinguishable,
the singular song of the earth, full-throated, unstoppable.
Eyes closed in the dark, I begrudge the window, the roof, shelter.
My skin craves feeling drenched in this song.

JENNIFER HORN-FRASIER

Poetry in Public 2023



Spring

Solid as a wave of starlings
the snow's hold
on that heat-hungry earth beneath
already holding the wildflowers
and the willows
in its soiled hands

RENÉ PAINE

Poetry in Public 2023



Not Anymore

I asked you a question.
You handed me a distraction.
Sparkly and shiny,
it did its job
for a while.

LISA M. ROBERTS

Poetry in Public 2023



Arabic at the Co-op

In the narrow aisles of this bazaar, I hear my mother tongue words that sailed across the ocean long ago.

Why, every shelf holds Arabic, reminding me - of you. Apricots and oranges, sugar in a jar, golden saffron strands . . . Coffee, don't forget! As if I could forget. Caravanning to the checkout, I scan the magazines. Somewhere, a lute? No - a guitar. I hear you raining softly, a warm embrace

EMAN MOHAMED & CECILE GODING

Poetry in Public 2023



العربية في المتجر

من مضائق المتاجر العتيقة هاتفتني لغتي الأصيلة.
عربيةً محملةً عبر المحيطِ بالزمنِ الطويلِ.
عربيةً فصيحةً تُطلُّ في رفوفِ هذه المتاجرِ.
مثلما تدلت من البرقوق و اللارنج الثمار وأبرق في الزعفران العسجد.
وحار في القهوة السكاكر. لانتسبها فإنني لن أنسها.
قافلة الكلمات تهدير في المجلات. اهي صوت عود؟ لا-هي قيثارة
تلك العربية الفصيحة أمطرتنا بدفئها الحنين.

Zooming With My Sisters

There's our host. "Hi Ann! Can you see me?" "Now I can. Hi Al!"
Ross' face pops onto the screen. Her lips move, but we can't hear her.
"Turn off your mute!" we shout. "Turn off your mute!"
Now Liz joins us. "Nice haircut!" I say. She reaches for her hair,
starting to explain, but her arm stops midair, her mouth agape.
"You're frozen, Liz!" "Liz, you're frozen!" Meredith appears, pixilated,
her voice distorted. "Hi guys! What's going on?"

ALISON MCGOFF
Poetry in Public 2023



To Apollo

Under an auburn, crescent sword moon,
we cross an empty field, and I gaze up
at holes in the dark construction paper of night,
starlight drizzling down on the listless earth.
While you pant, the off switch in my head clicks.
I rub my eyes, early fall gusts whistle to us,
emissaries of time calling us to dream.

MARIO DUARTE

Poetry in Public 2023

