

# I owe...

I

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I owe Iowa...

I owe Iowa an apology,

I owe Iowa an apology, because I feared I'd get lost in the cornfields.

But instead, the fertile soil nurtured me...

It stripped the fear that coated my seed, and allowed me to grow.

Alejandra Alvarez

Poetry in Public 2025



# A Real Day

I woke, reluctant to leave a dream  
In which the clocks first ran backwards, then not at all.  
What did it mean? Time is a myth, I decided.  
Looking backward and forward are the same. Endless.  
Love both your life and your death.  
Lean, unreluctantly, into it all.  
I tossed a coin in the air. It never landed.

Philip Beck

Poetry in Public 2025



# Evening Woods

The slight depression where the “pest house” stood,  
collecting leaves each fall, goes green in spring.  
Trust hickory limbs and wild geraniums.  
Trust deer and goldfinches. Their neighborhood  
preceded ours and keeps on flourishing,  
each reconciling debts with hoarded sums,  
and bracing for the drifts when winter comes.

Dan Campion  
Poetry in Public 2025



# A Legacy of Struggle

I see him a few times a week, I know that he is trapped.  
A beautiful black boy with a target on his back.  
Pages of his story stolen away, a systemic invasion.  
Childhood is passin' him by, a young soul so broken.  
I see the pain that's in his eyes, his voice, he keeps it sealed.  
He acts tough, with that poker face, his true self never revealed.  
I tell him his right to remain silent ain't required here.

Melanie Hester

Poetry in Public 2025



# Quinn tells us why

“Moon!”

Her three-year-old voice splashes delight over our backyards.  
While neighbors tend to the house on hold for the hospital,  
twilight gently plucks the soft white orb free of the treetops,  
and birds soundlessly lift themselves to high nested crooks for rest.  
Dark night is an approaching certainty, and yet  
the new-green buds of our hearts insist on opening.

Jennifer Horn-Frasier

Poetry in Public 2025



# Barefoot Child

Bare feet float on earth  
Heavy heat, soles run light  
Dirt cleans growing souls

Jessica Moore

Poetry in Public 2025



# Aging Haiku

Middle age must be  
when you finally grow up,  
But now you like it.

Anna Moyers Stone

Poetry in Public 2025



# A Duet in Refrigeration

On the first day of the zombie apocalypse,  
I saw you  
at the convenience store.  
In the flickering lights of the cooler,  
we reached  
for the same bottle of beer.

Rachel Schneberger

Poetry in Public 2025





# Capture

i tilt the finch in my palm. tilt its silences  
toward the light: toothless.  
where you mistake sky for all  
there is. where you see bone and wait  
for bite; and there  
is the bite. the bitter beak of it,  
sweetness on the tongue.

Arin Smithgall

Poetry in Public 2025

