

Catherine McGuire

Champoeg, Oregon

Washed clean in the Great Flood
(there's always a Great Flood),
the print of the town melted
back to fields, leaving only
carved stone markers—
gray obelisks with names
on four sides, like warning plinths
staring down vanished roads.

The old plat is picked out
in hoary trees—
oak, elm, chestnut, apple—
those watchers at the lintel,
those honor guards of the path.
Mute, knowing so much more
of old hearths and spoons,
knowing so much more
of flood and flesh.

Clinging where houses swirled off;
left to grow around empty space,
a feral forest rises, inviting us
to stand in the square plots,
pause on a stone hearth,
and imagine we can hear the leaves sigh,
“... and someday, you....”

Catherine McGuire has had more than 200 poems published in venues such as: *Adagio*, *FutureCycle*, *Green Fuse*, *New Verse News*, *Nibble*, *Portland Lights Anthology* and *Tapjoe*. Her chapbook, *Palimpsests*, was published by Uttered Chaos in 2011. She has two self-published chapbooks. Her website is www.cathymcguire.com.