

**ARISE**  
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**BY**  
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**BATES**



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**ARISE**



# This is not a Haiku

The recommendation has always been the same. To push you farther than you've been pushed before. The mind and body have different exercises that strain at the beginning, and then the activities get easier, so pushing begins again. A give and take. It's been difficult to abide by the recommendation without some hesitation. The difficulty—change. Like riding a bicycle for the first time. The choice isn't to fit with society by choice but by the stream of creativity, and sometimes the two gel together like they were meant to be, the marriage between the bride and groom, the poem rising from the written word and the ground of being, as the mind supplements the soul of the writer. The wish is not to worry but to live right here, when we can live up to the change from no longer lulling in the past or striving for the future. Nothing goes wrong right now. We catch ourselves looking back toward the wrong answer to provide a promising future.



# A Pond, Surfacing

This morning  
is a puzzle  
being drafted.

This new waking  
in the city  
of our birth,  
like this poem,  
is true.

And when you think  
anyone could write  
this poem,  
you will also think  
how does one create?

The words will rise  
like the moon  
in mid-day,  
imitating the mind's  
construction.



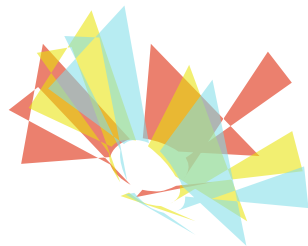
# Father and Son

The newspaper is  
written words,  
emerging, interacting,  
like a father  
teaching a game  
to his son,  
though the boy  
waits for strategy  
to end, so they can  
sit on the patio  
eating a Snickers  
and drinking Dr. Pepper.



# Obsession

I drank  
one final cup  
of coffee.  
Remembered friends  
who drank  
that afternoon  
while in my head  
I lapped the frontier,  
no longer populated.



# Skiing with Dad, Who Broke Ribs

Taking a shower,  
the bathroom window  
open, cold air  
funneling me  
like a tornado,  
a chill  
that collapsed water  
on my skin  
the way an avalanche  
collapses trees or  
lives, on the way  
down the slope  
we skied.



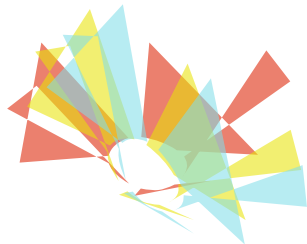
# Swimming at the Lake

The second floor view  
overlooking the dock,  
and the water settling  
its ripples past our home.  
The swimmer and the ice,  
warmed by his body,  
could suspend time.  
Dad teetered to the dock,  
told me it was too cold,  
told me it would be  
for the rest of my days.



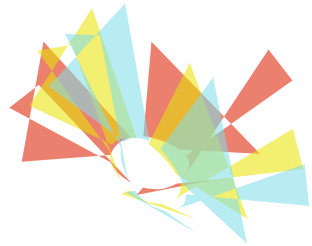
# The Mountain's Mind

Across the night  
lights lit black diamond  
moguls. The portrait  
of my youth. Now  
the same thoughts  
fester with no outlet  
to release the snow  
from the mountain's mind.



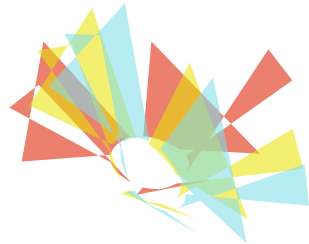
# I Want to Return

I just want to return  
to the kid  
who enjoyed swim club,  
basketball, and diving,  
the only trick he knew,  
though he spent hours  
trying to flip  
only ending  
with more dives  
twisting,  
curling,  
like a contortionist  
tying a knot  
out of their body,  
like Buddha,  
suffering,  
for mankind.



# Arise

I want to rise  
after the phoenix  
passes me in the ashes.  
I've been told  
the work's done alone,  
but it's up to you and me.  
Our names accrue like  
graffiti. Sometimes  
the words spell more  
than we could say.



# It was a Dream

It was a dream  
or something similar  
by daylight.  
I kept thinking  
of nightfall, how  
boredom rose  
like the moon,  
a shadow,  
and all I wanted  
was to calm  
the energy  
that triggered my legs  
moving back and forth  
in one place.



Bradley Bates received his MFA from Pacific University. He currently teaches Composition and Developmental Writing at St. Charles Community College and Critical Writing at the University of Phoenix online.



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