

# THE INKWELL

By Guest Contributor  
Christopher Sedlmeyer

Since the first poets dreamed their poems, the arrival of Spring has always produced an intense array of emotions and, in some cases, a masterpiece of literature as well. At least two of the greatest medieval poems we have in manuscript, written around six centuries ago, are both set in Spring. Geoffrey Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, takes place in April, when the spring rains have pieced the drought of March to the root and William Langland's Piers Plowman takes place on a magical May morning. For those who have endured the bleak darkness and grueling weather of winter, Spring comes with a sense of redemption, of wonder, of gratitude. From a seeming cold and gray death comes color, warmth, and sounds of life in abundance, if we will only wait and watch and have faith that Nature and, by extension, its Creator will keep its promise and return again to bring a new season of life and possibility. Such is the powerful archetypal symbolism of Spring that has pushed itself into the poetic imagination since the beginning of time and will no doubt continue to inspire poets to dream their poems of hope using Spring as their favorite metaphor.

This month's poem, "Promises," written by local resident Jack Tumulo, is truly a superb example of the exuberance and even awe that the first signs of Spring can bring. Despite the fact that Spring has come unexpectedly and the gardening equipment is still in their various places of short and long term hibernation, the poet focuses on the miracle of another passage of winter and celebrates every aspect of the coming season, from the "sloppy mud" to the "buzzing new life."

## Promises

This first day after many days of rain;  
The sun was bright, hot on my face;  
Shade became a Princess!  
All this ... with buds, leaves, flowers, bees, birds, songs, light and color !  
Tall grass way above mowing heights.  
Wild herbs...weeds to some,  
Growing everywhere as if this...this was to be the only day of light !  
Our lawn mower, hidden in the garage.  
A derelict brush hog out back;  
Buella, our long silent bulldozer, green seedlings growing from her iron tracks;  
Tools hanging in the garden shed  
Fences down from last month's snow storms.  
Sloppy mud thickening into twisted hard pans  
Empty red gasoline cans of faded plastic  
Everything basking, at last  
In warm rays of Sunlight!  
The sounds of buzzing new life, the excitement !  
Wait !!  
Be still. The Curtain is going up !  
Oh god !! Look !! Spring !! IT'S SPRING !!

----- Jack Tumulo

---**Writer's Idea:** The poet writes a hopeful poem, "as of this...this was to be the only day of light" using mostly negative images of grass too tall to mow, weeds, a derelict brush hog, an abandoned bulldozer, broken fences, thickening mud, and faded empty gas cans. Try to use seemingly negative images to contrast an inspiring poem to surprise your reader with the way your poem turns bad to good.

---**Writer's Tip:** The first written poems in English are over 1,200 years old. Don't be afraid to go back in time and uncover some of the startling fresh voices and perspectives found in old poems.

## ---WE ARE LOOKING FOR LOCAL POETRY. WE NEED YOUR POEMS!!!!

Please send your original submissions to InkwellVernonia@gmail.com or by mail: PO Box 333 Vernonia, OR 97064. Please include your name and contact information. **Write--Express--Expand.**

Chris Sedlmeyer holds an M.A. in English, specializing in archetypal criticism and medieval spirituality. He has published an article in the American Benedictine Review and currently writes a weekly blog on Carmelite spirituality and discernment for the American Province of the Order of Carmelites of the Ancient Observance.

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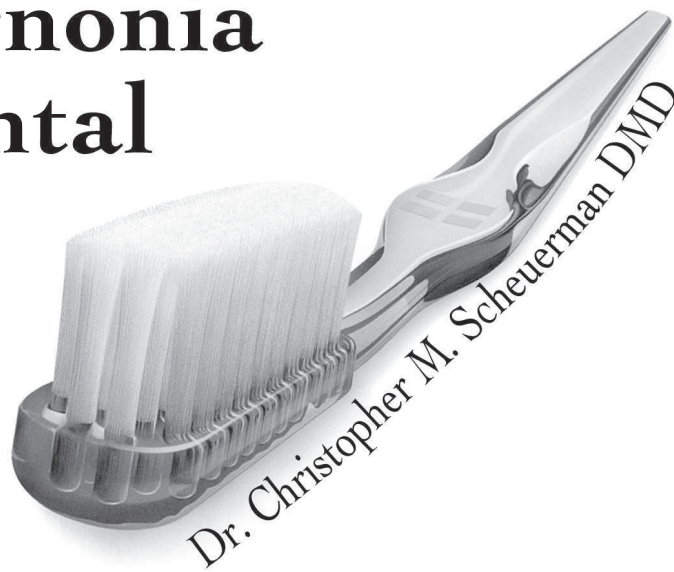


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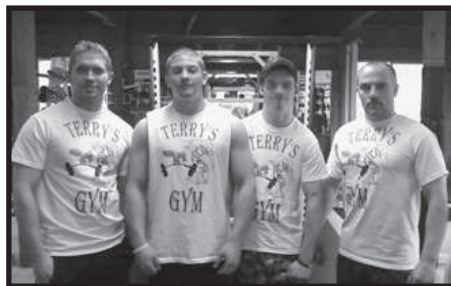
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