

# AMERICAN LIFE IN POETRY

A FREE COLUMN FOR NEWSPAPERS BY TED KOOSER, POET LAUREATE OF THE UNITED STATES, 2004-2006  
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## American Life in Poetry: Column 619

BY TED KOOSER, U.S. POET LAUREATE, 2004-2006

Fog carries mystery within it, and here's a fine poem about a day in which a memory approaches through fog and makes itself real. Michael Lauchlan lives in Michigan and his most recent book is *Trumbull Ave.*, (Wayne State Univ. Press, 2015). This poem appeared first in *Cortland Review*.

### Thaw

Plows have piled a whitened range—  
faux mountains at the end of our street,  
slopes shrinking, glazed, grayed. Fog  
rules the day. In woolly air, shapes

stir—slow cars leave a trace  
of exhaust, careful walkers share  
loud intimacies. My mother's birth  
slides across a calendar. Like

a stranger who jumps off a bus,  
crosses tracks and strides toward us,  
memory parts the sodden gloom

of our winter, as though, today,  
only she can see where she  
goes and track where she's been.

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