

ERIN REDFERN

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Secret Alphabet

The book squawks, lays three blue eggs,  
and the red-headed cranes stretch their necks  
and bend their black legs. Watching their knees,

we remember how things that look backward  
are just moving a different way. They laugh,  
and the rain writes its secret alphabet

on the surface of the lake. They guffaw,  
and poppies bend their stems, their fuzzy pods  
showing the seams, listening for each other

being born. Petals are bound wings, after all,  
as are curtains. Without houses, all the windows  
would take flight. Double doors spread

their feathered panes, opening back and back.  
A small girl weaves her brown wings in a braid  
down her back and closes her eyes. She knows

how doorways work, how words dropped on a lake  
reveal its name, how to fold paper into bird  
shapes, how wings drip their dark ink when it rains.



## ABOUT ERIN REDFERN

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Erin Redfern's poetry has appeared in *ZYZZYVA*, *Compose*, *Scapegoat Review*, *Crab Fat Magazine*, and *Blue Lyra Review*. In 2015 she served as poetry judge for the San Francisco Unified School District's Arts Festival and as associate editor of *Caesura*, the print publication of the Poetry Center San Jose. Online at [erinredfern.net](http://erinredfern.net).

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