

LARRY MORACE

Ocean Beach, 2014
Oil on canvas, 7 x 10 in



COURTESY THE ARTIST

WILLIAM TAYLOR JR.

Mission Street, December

The streetlamps, soft yellow dreams,
bring a sadness that pushes
the heart,

strange clouds gather and the air
smells of coming rain.

I wander Mission Street sidewalks
not wanting to be anywhere,

still haunted by the pretty dream
of being something more than death,

even now determined
to salvage some scraps of joy
from the wreckage of things,

maintaining a belief
in common miracles.

Bits of kindness scatter
like sidewalk leaves
not yet trampled,

and remnants of abandoned
beauty line the streets
in gilded flakes.

I collect them in my pockets
to carry home,

walking quickly now
as soon the rain
will come

down upon it all
like some god thing's
useless tears.

William Taylor Jr. lives and writes in the Tenderloin neighborhood of San Francisco. *An Age of Monsters*, his first book of fiction, was published by Epic Rites Press in 2011. *The Blood of a Tourist* (sunnyoutside, 2014) is his latest collection of poetry. He is a Pushcart Prize nominee and was a recipient of the 2013 Acker Award.