

Under an Illness of the Moon

Dixie Partridge

No words make a difference
against the child's cries and damp heat—
only the rocking, rocking,

like Grandmother in her metronome chair,
the low arthritic moans that assumed an order
aimed outward, under her control.

You rock together on some exquisite rim,
where cell walls seem shared between you.
Dreams may be dragged

into morning, held behind the tougher
faces of daylight, that ether of routine.
But for now, the only reality

is that you rock the child,
rock the child, not sure
the fevered nightmare will end.

DIXIE PARTRIDGE grew up in Wyoming and spent most of her adult life living along the Columbia River in Washington State. Her poetry has appeared in several anthologies and many journals in the United States and Canada. Her first book, *Deer in the Haystacks*, is part of the book series *Poetry of the West* from Ahsahta Press. Her second book, *Watermark*, won the national Eileen W. Barnes Award. Personal impact of landscape is most often at the root of her writing.